

By Chris Floyd

From [Empire Burlesque](#) | Original Article

Some people seem to think that the question of [which uniformed goober](#) is in charge of the imperial bloodbath in Afghanistan is a vitally important issue, worthy of endless exegesis. It is not. It is a meaningless sideshow. What does matter, vitally, deeply, urgently, is the imperial bloodbath itself, and the fact that it will go on, and on, no matter what Barack Obama does or doesn't do about Stanley McChrystal. [

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[Now we know](#)

what Barry did about Stanley. See update below.

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What *really* matters [is this](#) :

Ten civilians, including at least five women and children, were killed in NATO airstrikes in Khost Province, the provincial police chief said Saturday.

[And this](#) :

"We have received five bodies of civilians in our provincial public hospital," Khost provincial health director Amirbadshah Rahmatzai Mangal told AFP. "The dead include two female children of seven and eight years of age..."

McChrystal is in trouble for making disparaging remarks about fellow officers and civilian officials -- a military tradition that surely goes back to the armies of Hammurabi (and long before). Yet he faced no reprimand or remonstrance whatsoever for his admission, just a few months ago, that brazen war crimes were being carried out [under his command](#) :

"We have shot an amazing number of people, but to my knowledge, none has ever proven to be

a threat," said Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, who became the senior American and NATO commander in Afghanistan last year. His comments came during a recent videoconference to answer questions from troops in the field about civilian casualties.

As I noted [at the time](#) :

Now, what would the authorities say if you or I shot "an amazing number of people who have never proven to be a threat?" Why, they would call us murderers -- even mass murderers. Yet this is precisely what "the senior American and NATO commander in Afghanistan" has just declared, on videotape. ...

Again, just think of it, let it sink in, attend to the word of the commander: "*We have shot an amazing number of people, but to my knowledge, none has ever proven to be a threat.*"

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Again: what do you call it when innocent, unarmed, defenseless people who "have never proven to be a threat" are gunned down in cold blood? What do you call such an act?

But such acts are not to be punished -- because they are an accepted part of the process of the military domination of foreign lands. Wanton murder of the innocent? No problem, no scandal, a one-day story. "Insubordination" toward a few imperial satraps whose hands are steeped in blood? Shock, horror, wall-to-wall coverage.

But again: McChrystal's fate does not matter. [As Justin Raimondo notes](#) (see the original for informative links):

Our empire of bases and global military presence has engendered a whole new subspecies of American, a class or caste that derives its income, its tradition, and in many cases its family history from the long record of US military intervention overseas. They are the knights of the American imperium, not only military but also civilians whose social, economic, and political interests are inextricably tied to the growth of the empire. This includes but is not limited to the

military contractors, the administrators, the Washington policy wonks who come up with endless rationales for war – and, really, the entire political class in Washington, and their vassals among the coastal elites.

Indeed. If McChrystal goes, another bureaucrat of death will take his place. Until the militarist empire itself is rolled back and broken up, we will continue to see, month after month, year after year, "an amazing number of people who have never proven to be a threat" killed in cold blood -- such as the two little girls who were slaughtered last weekend in Khost.

There they are, their bodies torn, their slender limbs twisted and broken, their lifeless eyes staring into eternal nothingness ... and we're supposed to *care* about the professional fortunes and political fates of the depraved, power-drunk thugs who run this brutal war machine?

UPDATE: Keep the Change

"Another bureaucrat of death" indeed. Since the above post was written, [Obama has appointed](#) the top imperial proconsul of the age, bipartisan fave David Petraeus, to take direct control of the wars -- overt and covert -- in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Petraeus, as head of "Central Command" -- the core provinces of the eternal War of Terror -- is already in overall charge of the Af-Pak morass, having previously been in charge of the Iraq bloodbath.

This is No-Change with a vengeance -- as Obama himself made clear. The Washington Post reports:

[Obama] said [the move] should not be read by anyone as a change in the direction of the country's war effort.

"This is a change in personnel," Obama said, "but it is not a change in policy."

So the bitter harvest of dead children will go on. And on. And on. But the most *important* thing, of course, is that Obama looked "strong" in the savage squabbling for chunks of power amongst

the jackals of the imperial court.

UPDATE II: As you might expect, Arthur Silber [has some wise words to say](#) about the deeper implications of these unseemly rumblings in the bowels of the War Machine -- including the rather pertinent (and universally ignored) fact that every single official involved in the McChrystal imbroglio is, literally and legally, a war criminal.