



Liberally Lenient: Drones and the Hell They Rain

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“Liberally Lenient” is a counterpoint column to “Conservative Corner.” [Read this week’s “Conservative Corner.”](#)

The talk of drones usually leads to finger pointing. If you are from Pakistan, this is for good reason.

Since The President took over in 2009, the number of drone strikes and people killed has been staggering. And though Obama is king of the mountain, solely blaming him is just ignorance.

This country that we live in is not a monarchy. No one man has all the power and if he does, it came from somewhere where checks and balances are also in place.

For Obama to enforce or implement anything, it would have had to pass through the House and Congress first. Simply put, that means you and I are really to blame. We put these men and women into office and we are responsible for how the act, regardless of how we voted.

In an article he was featured in US News and World Report Online, Benjamin H. Friedman [discusses this very topic](#) saying, “Obama has gone too far in exercising war powers because Congress let him.”

Too far is an understatement.

The estimated total death count since Obama (according to drones.pitchinteractive.com) is over 3,000. Before his administration the figure is estimated under 200 (almost half of which were children).

Of those combined numbers, only 50 were estimated as high-profile targets. Infact, the estimated number of children killed by drones out numbers the high profiles by over 3 to 1. And this is where the issue with dornes lies:

If we were really out there killing “terrorists” and this unmanned aircraft was used solely to stop Al-Qaeda, then its proposed purpose would be necessary. But when numbers show that more innocents die than necessarys, we have a problem and that problem is transparency.

To this point the American Government holds all the cards on who has been killed and who hasn't and they claim that the number of civilians killed is small.

Yet in an [article written by Susan Cornwell and Mark Hosenball on Reuters.com](#), this “truth” is discussed, “Pakistan told the United Nations that of some 2,200 people killed by drone strikes in the past decade, at least 400 were civilians.”

If this is true, then the “near-certainty that no civilians would be killed” policy to drone strikes isn't being upheld.

Furthermore, quotes like these suggest that it would behove the US Government to at the very least release statistics showing those actually killed. They have done this in part but, but the explanations for who qualifies for what statistic is vague:

“The Obama administration classifies any able-bodied male a military combatant unless evidence is brought forward to prove otherwise,” says [drones.pitchinteractive.com](#). I'm not sure what that means to you, but for me that says if I'm standing next to a member of Al-Qaeda, I'm fucked.

We are a country founded on due process. Now I realize these people are not citizens of the US and therefore are not entitled to the same rights and liberties, but at the very least they should be given the opportunity of defense before we blow them away.

Especially the children.

Otherwise were just another country committing war crimes and it is never a good idea to appear to have committed war crimes. It's even worse to cover them up.

War crimes are a very serious matter and something we should not ignore. If current laws proposed by Congress and ratified by Obama are allowing for the innocent to die, then it is up to us to see that changed.

The innocent people of the middle east have had the rain of hell upon them long enough, we need affect change before they rise up and do it themselves.