

NEW YORK TIMES FINALLY ADMITS US LIED ABOUT ENDING AFGHAN WAR

I will go ahead and say it this time. I told you so. Back in December, the Obama Administration tried its best to create the fiction that the war in Afghanistan was coming to an end. I called bullshit then. Finally, four months later, the New York Times has come to the same realization as well:

Months after President Obama formally declared that the United States' long war against the Taliban was over in Afghanistan, the American military is regularly conducting airstrikes against low-level insurgent forces and sending Special Operations troops directly into harm's way under the guise of "training and advising."

In justifying the continued presence of the American forces in Afghanistan, administration officials have insisted that the troops' role is relegated to counterterrorism, defined as tracking down the remnants of Al Qaeda and other global terrorist groups, and training and advising the Afghan security forces who have assumed the bulk of the fight.

But the US military thinks nothing of gaming the system to bring action where they want it:

Rather than ending the American war in Afghanistan, the military is using its wide latitude to instead transform it into a continuing campaign of airstrikes – mostly drone missions – and Special Operations raids that have in practice stretched or broken the parameters publicly described by the White House.

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“They are putting guys on the ground in places to justify the airstrikes,” one of the officials said. “It’s not force protection when they are going on the offensive.”

And it’s not just field-level commanders making these decisions to circumvent the conditions laid out by the White House for fighting:

Commenting on the continuing military operations against the Taliban, the top American commander in Afghanistan, Gen. John F. Campbell, vehemently denied accusations that he was putting troops into harm’s way just to enable more airstrikes.

He has insisted that it is within his purview to target Taliban insurgents who pose a threat not just to American or NATO troops but to any Afghan security forces. And his options on the ground were clear, he said in an interview, even if Washington’s public description of them was not.

“Washington is going to have to say what they say politically for many different audiences, and I have no issue with that,” General Campbell said. “I understand my authorities and what I have to do with Afghanistan’s forces and my forces. And if that doesn’t sell good for a media piece then, again, I can’t worry about it.”

Honey badger John Campbell don’t care about selling a media piece when there are brown people to be droned.

But even this expanded role for US troops over what they are supposed to be doing isn’t helping, as our “trained” Afghan troops continue to lose the war. Buried deep in the article is a

leak of classified information that Afghan troop losses this year are running 54% higher than last year's disastrous level of losses. This will not be sustainable for very long at all. It seems likely to me that sometime this summer (or at the very least no later than next summer), the Afghan military will simply melt away in the face of Taliban wins on multiple fronts.