**How many bombs?**

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The Pentagon has finally published its first Airpower Summary since President Biden took office nearly a year ago. These monthly reports have been published since 2007 to document the number of bombs and missiles dropped by US-led air forces in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria since 2004. But President Trump stopped publishing them after February 2020, shrouding continued US bombing in secrecy.

Over the past 20 years, as documented in the table below, US and allied air forces have dropped over 337,000 bombs and missiles on other countries. That is an average of 46 strikes per day for 20 years. This endless bombardment has not only been deadly and devastating for its victims but is broadly recognized as seriously undermining international peace and security and diminishing America’s standing in the world.

The US government and political establishment have been remarkably successful at keeping the American public in the dark about the horrific consequences of these long-term campaigns of mass destruction, allowing them to maintain the illusion of US militarism as a force for good in the world in their domestic political rhetoric.

Now, even in the face of the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, they are doubling down on their success at selling this counterfactual narrative to the American public to reignite their old Cold War with Russia and China, dramatically and predictably increasing the risk of nuclear war.

The new Airpower Summary data reveal that the United States has dropped another 3,246 bombs and missiles on Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria (2,068 under Trump and 1,178 under Biden) since February 2020.

The good news is that US bombing of those 3 countries has significantly decreased from the over 12,000 bombs and missiles it dropped on them in 2019. In fact, since the withdrawal of US occupation forces from Afghanistan in August, the U.S. military has officially conducted no air strikes there, and only dropped 13 bombs or missiles on Iraq and Syria - although this does not preclude additional unreported strikes by forces under CIA command or control.

Presidents Trump and Biden both deserve credit for recognizing that endless bombing and occupation could not deliver victory in Afghanistan. The speed with which the U.S.-installed government fell to the Taliban once the U.S. withdrawal was under way confirmed how 20 years of hostile military occupation, aerial bombardment and support for corrupt governments ultimately served only to drive the war-weary people of Afghanistan back to Taliban rule.

Biden’s callous decision to follow 20 years of colonial occupation and aerial bombardment in Afghanistan with the same kind of brutal economic siege warfare the United States has inflicted on Cuba, Iran, North Korea and Venezuela can only further discredit America in the eyes of the world.

There has been no accountability for these 20 years of senseless destruction. Even with the publication of Airpower Summaries, the ugly reality of U.S. bombing wars and the mass casualties they inflict remain largely hidden from the American people.

How many of the 3,246 attacks documented in the Airpower Summary since February 2020 were you aware of before reading this article? You probably heard about the drone strike that killed 10 Afghan civilians in Kabul in August 2021. But what about the other 3,245 bombs and missiles? Whom did they kill or maim, and whose homes did they destroy?

The December 2021 New York Times expose of the consequences of US airstrikes, the result of a five-year investigation, was stunning not only for the high civilian casualties and military lies it exposed, but also because it revealed just how little investigative reporting the US media have done on these two decades of war.

Excerpted: ‘Hey, Hey, USA! How Many Bombs Did You Drop Today?’

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