

Beat: Politics

Where is the sympathy for the innocent ?

Real Stories

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USPA NEWS - You all have seen war in Iraq and Afghanistan and many more countries. You see it on the news, read about it in personal biographies, hear about it on the radio, and you probably feel pity for the people in the war zones, but then your day continues and other matters become so much more important and take their place in your mind. There are many western soldiers fighting in the wars in Middle Eastern countries, possibly joined the army by choice, possibly not by choice. Many died whilst they were fighting both bad and good people, and many returned home to their safe country fleeing from the devastation of war zones bringing with them a multitude of both mental and physical complications. As soon as they return home, they are overwhelmed with love, pride and security from their families, communities and wider society.

The department of Veterans offers a wide range of benefits such as educational assistance, high quality healthcare, assisted living and home loans. The Veteran Affairs provides compensation for disabled veterans who suffer from a medical disorder, by their military service, and which causes social and occupational impairment. The Veteran Affairs also provides many psychological services. British veterans receive special mental and physical care by the NHS as a result of their service. I think this is great! However, what is not as great is that in 2019 alone, around 160 million children were living in high-intensity conflict areas.

They were caught up in the middle of several countries each fighting for their own country and their own benefit, without having made the choice to see the bombs and dead bodies lying around, to hear airstrikes and screams of terror, and to get their lives unapologetically stolen from them. Not just children have been affected, all civilians in war zones have had to be affected by the war in some way or another and it has been shown in numerous studies that the most negatively affected by wars are innocent civilians. More than half of the Afghan population struggle mentally due to the effects of war, yet less than 10 percent get adequate psychological support from the state. What is not at all great, is that these innocents only receive sympathy through words and faces full of empathetic expressions by privileged people in front of their TV screens.

All my older family members have been through war. My parents have even experienced it multiple times since childhood and into adulthood. In 2001, there was a day that was particularly hectic with loads of airstrikes and bombs that to my then three year old sister was very scary, and to this day my sister has a phobia of thunder as it reminds her of that day. My brothers asked my parents several times throughout if they were going to get shot and why those men wanted to kill them. My parents' only answer was to stay close together. In 2003, my family's 19 year old neighbour was killed by an airstrike that went through the house's roof and landed straight at him. The family did not get any sort of help or even an apology.

In 2004 the radio had instructed civilians to raise white flags when they are in their cars and see American military tanks, because it often happened that innocents were brutally killed as a result of American soldiers being unsure if the vehicle approaching was armed or not. My family were in their car with multiple children as they saw a tank further down the road and had to take off white clothes and raise them in the air in order not to be aimed at. In 2004 there was a battle in the south of Baghdad in the primary school of my brothers during school time and the children did not get any psychological help after the traumatic incident. Hospitals were often overwhelmed and there was no psychological help provided at all.

Is it not strange that whenever someone knows that a person is a veteran, they instantly think of what some horrible experiences they must have had, yet when they meet people who come from countries of war zones, they do not directly think about what they must have gone through? After listening to my speech you will not feel pity for people in war zones, then let your day continue and let other matters become so much more important and take their place in your mind. You will remember this forever.

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