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Ex-commander says UK troops pointlessly massacred Afghans

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A former UK commander has recounted his mission in Afghanistan, saying that US-led British troops ‘pointlessly’ massacred hundreds of Afghan villagers.

In a new book, Major Richard Streatfeild, who served in the town of Sangin in Afghanistan’s southern province of Helmand in 2009-2010, censured the UK soldiers for using “turkey shoot tactics,” which resulted in the “repetitive slaughter” of Afghan villagers, the Daily Mail reported on Saturday.

According to the ex-commander, the UK forces operating in Helmand from 2006 to 2009 had been authorized to open fire on anyone approaching their bases while carrying a weapon.

“These men, who lived in the villages surrounding our bases, did not want to fight us,” said Streatfeild, adding, “Sadly, there were many occasions when these men approached our bases and, as they were carrying a weapon, they were shot dead.”

The former commander further stated that the Afghan people who were targeted were, in fact, supposed to be protected by the British troops operating in the country.

The United States and its allies invaded Afghanistan in 2001 as part of Washington’s so-called war on terror. The offensive removed the Taliban from power, but the country is still gripped by insecurity.

Anger has been rising among the Afghan people and officials over the civilian deaths at the hands of US-led troops.

Political figures in Afghanistan have also heaped scorn on US-led forces for committing unforgivable crimes against Afghan women and children since 2001.

On March 15, Afghan President Hamid Karzai said more than twelve years of US-led war has been “imposed” on the Afghan nation.