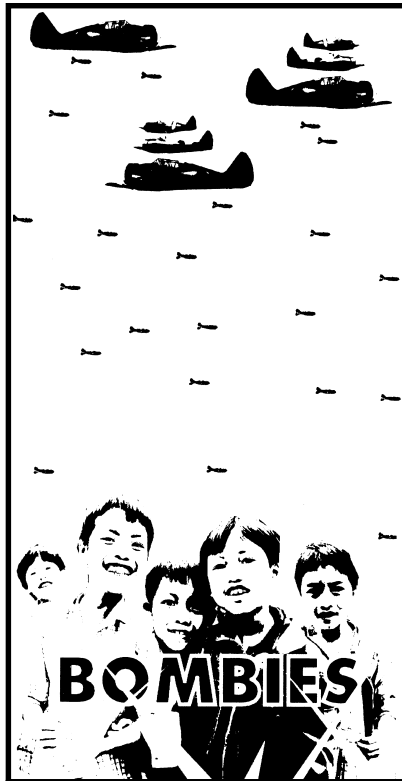


(6) AntiPersonnel Cluster Bombs: *Landmines by another name*

Cluster Bombs contain many smaller detonating bomblets, or “bombies,” that explode independently. They are used to “disperse” everything from shrapnel, tear gas, biological weapons to incendiary chemicals. After a cluster bomb is dropped from a warplane, its main canister breaks open. The small submunitions, or cluster bomb units (CBUs), are scattered over a wide area to maximize their deadly impact.

US air-delivered cluster bombs have killed thousands of innocents in Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Iraq, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

One of America’s most commonly used cluster bombs is the CBU-87. Although this 1,000-pound “Combined Effects Munition” is designed for “attacking soft target areas,” it is also effective against “hard targets.” (In military jargon, humans are “soft” while equipment or buildings are “hard targets.”) The steel casing of each bomblet breaks into 300 fragments. There are 202 bomblets in each CBU-87, so a total of 60,600 sharp pieces of steel go flying in all directions over a 200 x 600 square metre area. If that



These aircraft, known to carry CBU-87 cluster bombs, have thrilled crowds at many military air shows in Canada:

A-10A Thunderbolt II	F-15A Eagle	F-15E Strike Eagle	F-16CJ Wild Weasel
B-52 Stratofortress	F-15B Eagle	F-16A Fighting Falcon	F-16D Fighting Falcon
B-52H Stratofortress	F-15C Eagle	F-16B Fighting Falcon	F-16N Fighting Falcon
F-111 Aardvark	F-15D Eagle	F-16C Fighting Falcon	F-4D Phantom

doesn’t to kill everyone, the area is also showered in flames.

The US Air Force dropped 10,035 CBU-87s on Iraq and Kuwait in 1991, i.e., 2,027,070 CBUs. The US admits dropping about 1,100 cluster bombs, mostly CBU-87s, on Yugoslavia, i.e., over 220 thousand CBUs.

Although, each CBU is supposed to explode to create an instant kill, between 5% and 30% do not. Unexploded CBUs are, in effect, air-delivered landmines. Many may explode years later. The US military says the CBU-87’s “dud rate” is about 5%. Even with this very conservative estimate, Iraq was littered with 101,000 unexploded CBUs and Yugoslavia over 11 thousand. An official US document says unexploded CBU-87 bomblets can “be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person. When detonated, it produces an effect similar to a traditional anti-personnel landmine.”

Everyday Life with Cluster Bombs in Afghanistan **CBU-87 Cluster Bomb**

The US dropped about 600 cluster bombs on Afghanistan during the first seven weeks of the war alone. According to Kevin Kavanaugh, from the Federation of American Scientists, “Cluster bomb units are 1,000-pound deadly munitions that break into 202 bomblets, and each bomblet fractures into 300 fragments of steel. It covers a football field; it can turn an apple orchard into applesauce — or people into hamburger. It’s used against ‘soft targets,’ meaning troops and [other] people, though it can go through light armor to a certain point. Unexploded munitions are also a concern, the bomblets are yellow, with a little white umbrella, and they’re very attractive to children.”

Source: Frida Berrigan, “The Weapons of ‘Enduring Freedom,’” <www.worldpolicy.org/projects/arms/news/weapons120701.html>

Sunday, Oct. 21, 2001:

An F-18 dropped a 1000 lb. cluster bomb on a 200-bed military hospital and a mosque in Herat, missing its intended military target by 500 to 1000 meters. Around 100 people are killed.

Monday, Oct. 22, 2001:

Planes dropped BLU-97 cluster bombs (made by Aerojet / Honeywell) on the village of Shakar Qala near Herat, missing Taliban encampments located 700 meters away and destroying or badly damaging 20 of the village’s 45 houses. Fourteen were killed immediately and another died after picking up the parachute attached to one of the 202 bomblets dispersed by the BLU-97.

Wednesday, Oct. 24, 2001:

In a pre-dawn bombing raid, 8 or 9 cluster bombs fell on the mosque in the village of Ishaq Sulaiman near Herat, killing 20.

Source: <www.krysstal.com/democracy_2001.html#iraq>

Unexploded Ordnance

Afghan refugees returning to their villages are killed and maimed coming across unexploded cluster bombs. “As more people arrive in areas once abandoned, hospitals have been reporting an influx of wounded,” according to the *New York Times*.

Afghanistan is littered with unexploded cluster bombs, adding to the risk to civilians who routinely die from the estimated 10 million landmines remaining from previous wars. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, about 88 Afghans die every month because of land mine and cluster bomb injuries.

The US gives \$7 million for de-mining efforts but does not provide a list of areas where it dropped cluster bombs. This forces de-mining workers to find the bomblets themselves.

Source: <www.krysstal.com/democracy_2002.html>