



The sight of human beings, most of them unarmed, being gunned down from above is jarring enough. But for many people who watched the video of a 2007 assault by an Army Apache helicopter in Baghdad, released Monday by WikiLeaks.org, the most disturbing detail was the cockpit chatter.

The soldiers joked, chuckled and jeered as they shot people in the street, including a Reuters photographer and a driver, believing them to be insurgents. "Look at those dead bastards," one said. "Nice," another responded.

In recent days, many veterans have made the point that fighters cannot do their jobs without creating psychological distance from the enemy. One reason that the soldiers seemed as if they were playing a video game is that, in a morbid but necessary sense, they were.

More...