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# “War Against Terrorism” or “Killing for Oil”?

The Real Reasons for the Invasion of Afghanistan

Zabalaza

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# Contents

<b>OIL: A SLIPPERY BUSINESS . . . . .</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>THE US AND THE TALIBAN . . . . .</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>UNITY IS STRENGTH . . . . .</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>POSTSCRIPT . . . . .</b>	<b>7</b>



their surrender in Mazar-i-Sharif. In 1997, Mazar's Hazara defenders killed more than 600 Taliban militiamen who had taken over the city and then massacred dozens of Pakistani students who had accompanied the Taliban into the region. In later bloodbaths, thousands of Taliban prisoners were shot into mass graves, with dozens more Pakistanis. A Northern Alliance turncoat, General Pahlawan Malik, subsequently executed 2,000 Taliban prisoners of war who had been tortured and starved before being put to death. Many were drowned in wells. Others met a more carefully planned death. One of General Malik's generals recalled: "At night when it was quiet and dark we took about 150 Taliban prisoners, blindfolded them, tied their hands behind their backs and drove them in truck containers out to the desert. We lined them up 10 at a time, in front of holes in the ground, and opened fire. It took about six nights." On other occasions Taliban prisoners were locked inside containers in mid-summer; 1,250 were deliberately asphyxiated in this way, their corpses dragged from the containers, blackened by the heat.

Photographs in Pakistani papers on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2001 showed Alliance gunmen leading a small party of Western troops through the terrain of northern Afghanistan. It is highly unlikely that the US and British soldiers are distributing copies of the Geneva Convention to their new friends.

*This information is taken from various mainstream newspapers namely; The Independent (London), The Guardian (London) and the New York Times of November 13<sup>th</sup> 2001. Whether to believe them or not is up to you.*

The giant country of Kazakhstan, situated to the north of Pakistan, struck oil in the eastern part of the Caspian Sea a few years ago. It has been estimated by geologists that there are about 50 billion barrels worth of oil sitting beneath the wind-blown steppes of Kazakhstan. This is by far the biggest untapped reserves in the world. The world's largest oil producer today is Saudi Arabia which is believed to have only about 30 billion barrels worth of oil left. So, as you might guess, this find has come just in time for the oil-greedy Capitalists in the USA. The capitalist economy that we live in, and that the US Capitalists benefit the most from, is heavily based on petroleum products; from the big gas-guzzling cars that pollute our air to the billions of non-recyclable non-biodegradable plastic products that are presently suffocating our streets, rivers and countryside and of course, the highly profitable arms industry

Kazakhstan was the second-biggest republic in the former Soviet Union. When the Kazakhstan soviet-subsidised economy collapsed in 1991, the country was driven into extreme poverty. In 1997 the average monthly salary was about US\$20. Nursultan Nazarbayev, the former Communist Party boss, and now president, of Kazakhstan has been trying to find ways of getting the oil out of land-locked Kazakhstan and to the sea. If he can do this, Kazakhstan will become the new "land of Benzes and ugly gold jewellery" as stated by Ted Rall, a cartoonist for the Universal Press Syndicate.

## **OIL: A SLIPPERY BUSINESS**

To get the oil to the coast it will have to be piped overland. This is expensive and leaves the oil open to theft and sabotage and the longer the pipeline, the more expensive and dangerous. The shortest route is through Iran, but as Iran is not exactly good friends with the USA, Kazakhstan doesn't want to upset its new friend (the US). Another way to get it out is to take the offer made by Russia which will connect Kazakhstan's oil rigs to the Black Sea. This however

is also not a good option because neighbouring Turkmenistan has had its oil stolen by the “helpful” Russians who tend to divert the oil for their own use. There was also a plan to build a 5300 mile long pipeline through China but this would be too long and would not therefore generate enough profit.

The most logical plan would be to extend the system that exists in Turkmenistan west to the Kazakh field on the Caspian Sea and Southeast to the port at Karachi in Pakistan. To do this, they would have to pipe it through Afghanistan. Therefore, without a stable US-friendly power in control of Afghanistan they can forget their oil. Hence the invasion. Pakistan would be happy with this arrangement as well as they would pick up massive revenues from the use of the port at Karachi.

## THE US AND THE TALIBAN

In 1994, the US and Pakistan decided to install a stable US-friendly regime in Afghanistan. The Taliban, just emerging as a power at this time, was willing to cut a pipeline deal with the US in return for certain “benefits”. The US State Department and Pakistan’s intelligence agency, the ISI, agreed to supply the Taliban with arms and funding in their war against the Northern Alliance. Apparently, in 1999, the US taxpayers even paid the whole yearly salary of every Taliban government official. All this just to have access to the oil they need to maintain their power and wealth as a world super-power.

However, because of the Taliban’s links to Osama bin Laden’s al Qa’eda terror network, their invasions of their neighbours and the fact that they produced 50 percent of the worlds opium before 1998, the relationship between them and the US was bound to get worse. After the September 11<sup>th</sup> attack, supposedly by an Egyptian group who had trained in Afghanistan, the US decided that the Taliban had to go. They now had the excuse they needed to install a more

stable regime in Afghanistan. The US government, in their lust for power and control, cares as much about the 6000 dead as they do about the oppression of women in Afghanistan. Make no mistake, the war is about oil, power and control.

We, the workers and poor of the world are just here to be used as pawns in their game and, if we get in their way, they are fully prepared to move us out, using force if necessary.

## UNITY IS STRENGTH

It is time to realise that there is no “war on terrorism”, there is only a war between those at the top with the power and wealth and those of us at the bottom who need to sell ourselves to some fat boss for a small amount of the money we produce for them. Capitalism is an inhumane system that breeds war, poverty, exploitation and oppression and that, to be free, we need to organise ourselves against the bosses and their defenders, the Police, Army and Courts.

Our class is being killed left, right and centre; in New York, in Kabul, in Berlin and in Durban and It is high time we fought back. So...

**NO WAR BETWEEN NATIONS!**

**NO PEACE BETWEEN CLASSES!**

**FIGHT THE REAL ENEMIES: COPS; BOSSES; POLITICIANS AND RACISTS!**

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## POSTSCRIPT

A few days after writing this article, I received news of atrocities committed by soldiers of the Northern Alliance. These atrocities include more than 100 pro-Taliban Pakistani fighters shot dead after