

REPERCUSSIONS & REFLECTIONS

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The New York Times, the CIA and Opium, and the Vast Silence

November 7, 2011 by [pothanchand.yarr001](#) | [11 Comments](#)

Submitted to the Boston Globe Op-Ed page

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Monday, November 7th, 2011.

I wrote a version of this op-ed piece and submitted it to the *Boston Globe* shortly after the *Times* article appeared. The *Globe* op-ed editor replied to me that “we’ll steer clear of this.” Walid Karzai has since been assassinated, reputedly by one of his own henchmen.

On October 28, 2009 the *New York Times* published a bombshell story depicting the intimate relationship between the Central Intelligence Agency and Ahmed Walid Karzai, arguably the world’s kingpin drug lord, and also the brother of Afghanistan’s president Hamid Karzai. The fact that the same story could have been published years ago is another troubling matter. Nevertheless the article raised profound issues about what the United States is really attempting to do in central Asia.

Since numerous reports have shown that the Taliban, ostensibly one of America’s greatest enemies, profits greatly from the sale of opium and uses the proceeds to buy weapons to kill American troops, and since other abundant reports declare that Ahmed Karzai is by far the biggest purveyor of opium in the region, there is most obviously a mutual relationship between Karzai and the Taliban and the Central Intelligence Agency. The fact

that Hamid Karzai has done nothing to curb the opium trade or the cozy relationship between his brother (and now his replacements) and Islamic insurgents is but one element in the rampant corruption of his regime, and without question the worst.

Why so? According to President Obama defeating the Taliban and thereby preventing Afghanistan from becoming a haven for al Qaeda again is a vital necessity to protect American lives and maintain national security. Yet far many more American lives have been extinguished by opium and its derivative, heroin, than anything al Qaeda has thus far matched. Aside from the threat posed by HIV, or some other pathogen, nothing menaces national security more than the drug epidemic that has plagued this country since the late 1960s when a tsunami of heroin surged across the nation from its sources in Laos and Vietnam. A mountain of evidence, some of it ferreted out by a U.S. Senate Special Committee on Narcotics chaired by Senator John Kerry, documents the CIA's long standing association with the world's leading drug traffickers. During the "secret war" in Laos, pilots for the CIA's contract airline, Air America, jokingly referred to themselves as "Air Opium." Proceeds from opium sales were used to fund the top secret war waged in Laos since the U.S. Congress had appropriated only a marginal sum for the venture. So much of the substance was produced that criminal enterprises in neighboring Vietnam transformed the stuff into heroin and fed profits directly to top officials in Saigon's government, America's allies. Among other victims, it soon addicted many American soldiers. When the warehouses in Southeast Asia began to burst heroin "mysteriously" found its way into America's cities and towns. (See the PBS **Frontline** documentary *Guns, Drugs and the CIA*, if you can find a copy).

In the aftermath of defeat in Vietnam many in the U.S. government rankled at the humiliation. Blaming the Soviet Union for the rout (after all how else could little "yellow dwarves," as LBJ put it, have vanquished the American superpower?) Officials like Zbigniew Brzezinski contrived to draw the Soviets into Afghanistan and thus the "opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War." The CIA then recruited tens of thousands of Islamic jihadists known as the mujahideen from across the Muslim world to fight the Soviets. Since this was the largest covert operation ever conducted by the U.S., and Congress surreptitiously gave only a small portion of its cost, much of this war was also funded by the opium trade, just as in Southeast Asia. The official CIA explanation is that the war against the Soviets trumped any effort to choke off the drug traffic. Meanwhile the trade flourished and many thousands of Americans and others died from overdoses. Michael Levine, a decorated agent of the Drug Enforcement Agency, has written a number of books in which he states categorically that the CIA deliberately stifled his and the agency's efforts to halt the flow of opium and "got into bed with the biggest drug lords on the planet." (See the Australian documentary, *Dealing With the Demon*, Vol. 2; also, Michael Levine, *The Big White Lie: The Deep Cover Operation That Exposed the CIA Sabotage of the Drug War: An Undercover Odyssey*)

Ironically the Taliban, when it first came to power, suppressed the trade, causing near panic around the world since hundreds of billions of dollars were now *not* flowing into various arms bazaars, or being laundered by banks and stock exchanges. The current war on the Taliban has resuscitated opium production. Today Afghanistan produces about 92 percent of global opium but much of it is managed by warlords who are associated with the Karzai regime, many of whom were agents of the CIA during the Afghan-Soviet War. Again, there is an intimate relationship between these growers and the Taliban though they are purported to be enemies.

The *Times* story dropped like a stone to the bottom of the sea, not surprisingly since a conspiracy of silence has for decades surrounded this issue. A few apologists have made noises to the effect that Afghanistan is a tough neighborhood and the U.S. has to deal with unsavory characters. Slogans like “if you like sausage you may not want to visit the slaughterhouse” surfaced. One thing is clear. The 1682 American soldiers and marines who have died in that tragic country have given their lives for an utterly putrescent regime that was handpicked by the U.S. in 2002 in order to foster an unstated and highly secret American agenda. Lest we forget, 14,342 American military personnel have also been wounded.

What is the real agenda? It cannot be “freedom and democracy.” Much outrage was expressed in this country over vote fraud in Iran yet American soldiers and marines are propping up a government for which it is alleged that one million fraudulent votes were cast.

Pepe Escobar, who writes for *Asia Times*, notes the undisputed fact that the names of the countries Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Iran *never* appear in the establishment media in tandem with the word “pipeline,” while also emphasizing that the map of major American combat bases aligns perfectly with the proposed pipelines for major sources of oil and natural gas throughout the Middle East and Central Asia.

The CIA’s symbiotic relationship with the globe’s drug dealers should have alarmed and engaged many citizens, but the issue has now all but vanished, signifying that Afghanistan is not the only place where something is rotten.

(A more comprehensive, if dismal, perspective on this issue can be found in the following studies. Gary Webb, *Dark Alliance: The CIA, the Contras, and the Crack Cocaine Explosion*; Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Drug Trade*; Alexander Cockburn, *Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs and the Press*)

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best diet pills

November 22, 2011 at 12:53 PM

hey there and thank you for your information – I’ve definitely picked up anything new from right here. I did however expertise a few technical points using this website, since I experienced to reload the website a lot of times previous to I could get it to load properly. I had been wondering if your web host is OK? Not that I’m complaining, but sluggish loading instances times will often affect your placement in google and can damage your high-quality score if ads and marketing with Adwords. Anyway I’m adding this RSS to my e-mail and can look out for much more of your respective interesting content. Ensure that you update this again soon..

Delia

January 7, 2012 at 4:48 AM

Alakazaam-information found, problem solved, thanks!

Ann McLeod

August 5, 2012 at 7:56 AM

Another thing I have really noticed is for many people, bad credit is the reaction to circumstances outside of their control. One example is they may be really saddled with an illness so they have higher bills for collections. It may be due to a occupation loss or even the inability to go to work. Sometimes divorce can send the funds in an opposite direction. Thanks sharing your opinions on this site.

Anti fraud solution

August 7, 2012 at 4:26 PM

In 1-2 years will be the end of the internet fraud / spam emails, This year spam was cut with 50% from 2010, this is a good thing for us, our mailbox will be clean soon. Cheers

hcg diet canada gnc

August 26, 2012 at 9:36 PM

You really make it appear really easy together with your presentation however I to find this matter to be actually something that I believe I would by no means understand.
It sort of feels too complex and extremely vast for me.
I am taking a look forward to your subsequent put up, I'll try to get the hold of it!

247 payday loans

October 6, 2012 at 10:32 AM

Salary day loans are custom-made and created relating to our convenience.
Owners need not include a day shut off from your organization to visit how the money lender.
For such a reason people while using poor or slow credit are recommended as much compared to anyone else.

Pingback: [Walid karzai](#) | [Usedguitarsonl](#)

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October 31, 2012 at 4:04 AM

hey there and thank you for your info – I
have definitely picked up something new from right here.

I did however expertise some technical issues using this web site, as I experienced to reload the website a lot of times previous to I could get it

to load properly. I had been wondering if your web host is OK?

Not that I'm complaining, but slow loading instances times will very frequently affect your placement in google and can damage your quality score if ads and marketing with Adwords. Well I am adding this RSS to my email and could look out for a lot more of your respective fascinating content. Ensure that you update this again very soon.

Andres

January 29, 2013 at 8:36 AM

First off I would like to say wonderful blog!

I had a quick question in which I'd like to ask if you do not mind. I was interested to know how you center yourself and clear your mind prior to writing. I have had difficulty clearing my mind in getting my thoughts out there. I truly do enjoy writing however it just seems like the first 10 to 15 minutes tend to be wasted simply just trying to figure out how to begin. Any ideas or hints? Kudos!

Finance

January 29, 2013 at 9:20 AM

Have you ever considered about adding a little bit more than just your articles?

I mean, what you say is fundamental and all.

However just imagine if you added some great photos or videos to give your posts more, "pop"! Your content is excellent but with images and video clips, this website could definitely be one of the greatest in its field. Fantastic blog!

Cleaning Services Billerica

April 24, 2013 at 2:55 PM

I think the article was well-written. You can also check out QCS on the subject of Reflections. It might be interesting to see a company that places so much emphasis on corporate responsibility and Green cleaning strategies.

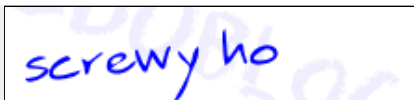
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