

# Is Enron Behind The War In Afghanistan?

From Robert Lederman

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I've added a few url's from oil industry websites to this forwarded email as further evidence of Enron's involvement in the motivation for the war in Afghanistan. Reading this material will allow you to see the Enron scandal and its ties to Bush-Cheney in a whole new light. To find thousands of other energy industry website articles on this do a GOOGLE search (at [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) using these keywords:

Pipeline Enron Uzbekistan Cheney Halliburton

--Robert

## Enron and the oil pipeline deal

"Uzbekistan has difficulties finding venues for its gas," *Alexander's Gas & Oil Connections*, 22 Oct 1998  
<http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/news/ntc85031.htm>

"Enron/Uzbek Oil and Gas: Represented a multinational energy company in connection with its joint venture to develop an oil and gas deposit in Uzbekistan."

"Mayer, Brown, Rowe, & Maw / Project Finance Practice Group

[http://www.mbpprojectfinance.com/transactions/s\\_oilgas.html](http://www.mbpprojectfinance.com/transactions/s_oilgas.html)

"LIST OF AMERICAN COMPANIES AND JOINT VENTURES IN UZBEKISTAN", *Bisnis*, 1996

[http://www.advancenet.net/~k\\_a/uzbekistan/companies.htm](http://www.advancenet.net/~k_a/uzbekistan/companies.htm)

"The one serious drawback companies have faced is getting the supplies to the right market, the energy-hungry Asian Pacific economies. Afghanistan -- the only Central Asian country with very little oil -- is by far the best route to transport the oil to Asia. Enron, the biggest contributor to the Bush-Cheney campaign of 2000, conducted the feasibility study for a US\$2.5 billion trans-Caspian gas pipeline which is being built under a joint venture agreement signed in February 1999 between Turkmenistan, Bechtel and General Electric Capital Services."

Source: "Drillbits & Tailings: October 31, 2001", reprinted in: Project underGround  
[http://www.moles.org/ProjectUnderground/drillbits/6\\_08/1.html](http://www.moles.org/ProjectUnderground/drillbits/6_08/1.html)

UZBEKISTAN - The U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corp. (OPIC) has agreed to provide \$400 million in financing for a joint venture of Uzbekneftegaz and Enron oil and Gas Co. (Houston) to develop a clutch of gas fields in Uzbekistan. It is the largest OPIC commitment in Central Asia thus far."

Source: "Drillbits & Tailings: August 1, 1996: Page Seven", reprinted in: Project underGround  
<http://www.moles.org/ProjectUnderground/drillbits/0801/96080107.html>

Here's an email I recieved this morning. You may already know about the oil pipeline deal in Afghanistan and the Bush threats to the Taliban to invade *before* 9/11 but these links show how Enron and the new Afghan leader we just installed are all directly connected to Bush, to the so-called war, Cheney refusing to reveal who he met with and the supression of the 9/11 investigation Bush has threatened Congress with.

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FORWARD:

From: *The Daily Brew*: <http://www.thedailybrew.com/>

### **The Motive**

For years, US oil interests have been trying to build a pipeline across Afghanistan to access the oil and gas around the Caspian Sea; efforts that have continued past the 9-11 attacks.

Source: "Unocal Still Pushing Afghan Pipelines", *Indymedia*, 1 Oct 2001  
[http://www.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=69078&group=webcast](http://www.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=69078&group=webcast)  
REPRINT: *Women living under muslim laws*, 23 Oct 2001  
<http://www.wluml.org/english/new-archives/wtc/at-stake/unocal.htm>

Enron was a key player in this game. Way back in 1996, Enron had cut a deal with the president of Uzbekistan for joint development of the nation's natural gas fields.

Source: *Houston Chronicle*, Date: Tuesday June 25, 1996, Section: Business, Page: 4, Edition: 3 STAR

Enron had also done the feasibility study for the pipeline.

Source: "Afghanistan, the Taliban and the Bush Oil Team," by Wayne Madsen, *democrats.com*, Jan 2002  
<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/MAD201A.html>

For a time, the Taliban appeared to be a potential partner. They had even visited Sugarland, Texas to talk things over.

Source: "Taleban in Texas for talks on gas pipeline," *BBC News*, 4 Dec 1997  
[http://news6.thdo.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/west\\_asia/newsid\\_37000/37021.stm](http://news6.thdo.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/west_asia/newsid_37000/37021.stm)

### **The Crime**

Unfortunately, the talks broke down, and by late last summer, the US Government was threatening to commence war against Afghanistan (an attack which would have violated every precept of international law).

Sources:  
"US 'planned attack on Taleban'," George Arney, *BBC News*, 18 Sep 2001  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south\\_asia/newsid\\_1550000/1550366.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/south_asia/newsid_1550000/1550366.stm)  
George Arney Audio of report on US intentions to invade Afghanistan *before* 9-11 (above citation)  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/olmedia/1550000/audio/\\_1550366\\_afghan01\\_arney.ram](http://news.bbc.co.uk/olmedia/1550000/audio/_1550366_afghan01_arney.ram)

At least twice, Bush conveyed the message to the Taliban that the United States would hold the regime responsible for an al Qaeda attack. But after concluding that bin Laden's group had carried out the October 2000 attack on the USS Cole, a conclusion stated without hedge in a Feb. 9 briefing for Vice President Cheney, the new administration did not choose to order armed forces into action.

Source: "A Strategy's Cautious Evolution, Before Sept. 11, the Bush Anti-Terror Effort Was Mostly Ambition", by Barton Gellman, *Washington Post*, 20 January 2002

PART I: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A8734-2002Jan19?language=printer>

PART II: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A8802-2002Jan19?language=printer>

Simultaneous with making, but not following through on these threats, Bush took a number of actions to make the US decidedly more vulnerable to a terrorist attack. He ordered the Naval strike force, which Clinton placed in the Indian Ocean on 24 hour alert so he could hit Osama as soon as he had solid intelligence, to stand down. Bush threatened to veto the Defense Appropriations Bill after Democrats tried to move \$600 million out of Star Wars and into anti-terror defense. Bush opposed Clinton's anti-money-laundering efforts, which were designed to stop al Qaeda's money. Bush abandoned Northern Alliance leader Ahmed Shah Massoud, or as the two-star general Donald Kerrick told the *Washington Post*, reflecting on his service to both President Clinton and President Bush: Clinton's advisors met nearly weekly on how to stop bin Laden and al Qaeda. "I didn't detect that kind of focus" from the Bush Administration. So Cheney has strong -- but bad - reasons to oppose an inquiry into 9-11.

Source: "Democrats.com Chat with Paul Begala", 30 Jan 2002

<http://democrats.com/view2.cfm?id=5714>

I don't have to tell you what happened next.

## **The Cover Up**

Dick Cheney is openly breaking the law by defying GAO requests to turn over his records of meetings with Enron.

Source: "GAO V. CHENEY IS BIG-TIME STALLING: The Vice President Can Win Only If We Have Another *Bush v. Gore* -like Ruling," by John W. Dean, 1 Feb 2002

[http://writ.news.findlaw.com/scripts/printer\\_friendly.pl?page=/dean/20020201.html](http://writ.news.findlaw.com/scripts/printer_friendly.pl?page=/dean/20020201.html)

At the same time that Cheney has refused to turn over his records, Enron and its accountants have shredded millions of pages of documents.

Source: "Enron Says Shredding of Records Was Not Stopped Until Recently," by Barnaby Feder and Michael Brick, *NYT*, 30 Jan 2002

<http://www.nytimes.com/2002/01/30/business/30SHRE.html?pagewanted=print>

The Bush's themselves may have destroyed evidence. When the Justice Department instructed the Bush administration to preserve any documents related to Enron Corporation, a senior administration official said that until now, "the White House had not been making any formal effort to preserve or catalogue information about Enron contacts."

Source: "Justice: Preserve Enron Papers, White House Says It Will Comply," by Susan Schmidt and Mike Allen, *Washington Post*, 2 Feb 2002  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A10918-2002Feb1?language=printer>

While all of this law breaking, stalling, and destruction of evidence has gone on, Bush has asked Daschle to limit Congressional probes into Sept. 11.

Source: "Bush asks Daschle to limit Sept. 11 probes," *CNN*, 29 Jan 2002  
<http://www.cnn.com/2002/ALLPOLITICS/01/29/inv.terror.probe/index.html>

Note that the supposedly "liberal press" has so far failed to put all of these pieces together. They are too busy giving Bernard Goldberg and Bill O'Reilly the airtime to sell a canard called "Bias."

TheDailyBrew.com

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Centre for Research on Globalisation  
<http://globalresearch.ca/articles/MAD201A.html>

## **Afghanistan, the Taliban and the Bush Oil Team**

By Wayne Madsen  
Democrats.com, January 2002

Centre for Research on Globalisation (CRG) [globalresearch.ca](http://globalresearch.ca)  
23 January 2002

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According to Afghan, Iranian, and Turkish government sources, Hamid Karzai, the interim Prime Minister of Afghanistan, was a top adviser to the El Segundo, California-based UNOCAL Corporation which was negotiating with the Taliban to construct a Central Asia Gas (CentGas) pipeline from Turkmenistan through western Afghanistan to Pakistan.

Karzai, the leader of the southern Afghan Pashtun Durrani tribe, was a member of the mujaheddin that fought the Soviets during the 1980s. He was a top contact for the CIA and maintained close relations with CIA Director William Casey, Vice President George Bush, and their Pakistani Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) Service interlocutors. Later, Karzai and a number of his brothers moved to the United States under the auspices of the CIA. Karzai continued to serve the agency's interests, as well as those of the Bush Family and their oil

friends in negotiating the CentGas deal, according to Middle East and South Asian sources.

When one peers beyond all of the rhetoric of the White House and Pentagon concerning the Taliban, a clear pattern emerges showing that construction of the trans-Afghan pipeline was a top priority of the Bush administration from the outset. Although UNOCAL claims it abandoned the pipeline project in December 1998, the series of meetings held between U.S., Pakistani, and Taliban officials after 1998, indicates the project was never off the table.

Quite to the contrary, recent meetings between U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Wendy Chamberlain and that country's oil minister Usman Aminuddin indicate the pipeline project is international Project Number One for the Bush administration. Chamberlain, who maintains close ties to the Saudi ambassador to Pakistan (a one-time chief money conduit for the Taliban), has been pushing Pakistan to begin work on its Arabian Sea oil terminus for the pipeline.

Meanwhile, President Bush says that U.S. troops will remain in Afghanistan for the long haul. Far from being engaged in Afghan peacekeeping -- the Europeans are doing much of that -- our troops will effectively be guarding pipeline construction personnel that will soon be flooding into the country.

Karzai's ties with UNOCAL and the Bush administration are the main reason why the CIA pushed him for Afghan leader over rival Abdul Haq, the assassinated former mujaheddin leader from Jalalabad, and the leadership of the Northern Alliance, seen by Langley as being too close to the Russians and Iranians. Haq had no apparent close ties to the U.S. oil industry and, as both a Pushtun and a northern Afghani, was popular with a wide cross-section of the Afghan people, including the Northern Alliance. Those credentials likely sealed his fate.

When Haq entered Afghanistan from Pakistan last October, his position was immediately known to Taliban forces, which subsequently pinned him and his small party down, captured, and executed them. Former Reagan National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane, who worked with Haq, vainly attempted to get the CIA to help rescue Haq. The agency claimed it sent a remotely-piloted armed drone to attack the Taliban but its actions were too little and too late. Some observers in Pakistan claim the CIA tipped off the ISI about Haq's journey and the Pakistanis, in turn, informed the Taliban. McFarlane, who runs a K Street oil consulting firm, did not comment on further questions about the circumstances leading to the death of Haq.

While Haq was not part of the Bush administration's GOP (Grand Oil Plan) for South Asia, Karzai was a key player on the Bush Oil team. During the late 1990s, Karzai worked with an Afghani-American, Zalmay Khalilzad, on the CentGas project. Khalilzad is President Bush's Special National Security Assistant and recently named presidential Special Envoy for Afghanistan. Interestingly, in the White House press release naming Khalilzad special envoy, no mention was made of his past work for UNOCAL. Khalilzad has worked on Afghan issues under National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, a former member of the board of Chevron, itself no innocent bystander in the future CentGas deal. Rice made an impression on her old colleagues at Chevron. The company has named one of their supertankers the SS Condoleezza Rice.

Khalilzad, a fellow Pashtun and the son of a former government official under King Mohammed Zahir Shah, was, in addition to being a consultant to the RAND Corporation, a special liaison between UNOCAL and the Taliban government. Khalilzad also worked on various risk analyses for the project.

Khalilzad's efforts complemented those of the Enron Corporation, a major political contributor to the Bush campaign. Enron, which recently filed for bankruptcy in the single biggest corporate collapse in the nation's history, conducted the feasibility study for the CentGas deal. Vice President Cheney held several secret meetings with top Enron officials, including its Chairman Kenneth Lay, earlier in 2001. These meetings were presumably part of Cheney's non-public Energy Task Force sessions. A number of Enron stockholders, including Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Trade Representative Robert Zoellick, became officials in the Bush administration. In addition, Thomas White, a former Vice Chairman of Enron and a multimillionaire in Enron stock, currently serves as the Secretary of the Army.

A chief benefactor in the CentGas deal would have been Halliburton, the huge oil pipeline construction firm that also had its eye on the Central Asian oil reserves. At the time, Halliburton was headed by Dick Cheney. After Cheney's selection as Bush's Vice Presidential candidate, Halliburton also pumped a huge amount of cash into the Bush-Cheney campaign coffers. And like oil cash cow Enron, there were Wall Street rumors in late December that Halliburton, which suffered a forty per cent drop in share value, might follow Enron into bankruptcy court.

Assisting with the CentGas negotiations with the Taliban was Laili Helms, the niece-in-law of former CIA Director Richard Helms. Laili Helms, also a relative of King Zahir Shah, was the Taliban's unofficial envoy to the United States and arranged for various Taliban officials to visit the United States. Laili Helms' base of operations was in her home in Jersey City on the Hudson River. Ironically, most of her work on behalf of the Taliban was practically conducted in the shadows of the World Trade Center, just across the river.

Laili Helms' liaison work for the Taliban paid off for Big Oil. In December 1997, the Taliban visited UNOCAL's Houston refinery operations. Interestingly, the chief Taliban leader based in Kandahar, Mullah Mohammed Omar, now on America's international Most Wanted List, was firmly in the UNOCAL camp. His rival Taliban leader in Kabul, Mullah Mohammed Rabbani (not to be confused with the head of the Northern Alliance Burhanuddin Rabbani), favored Bridas, an Argentine oil company, for the pipeline project. But Mullah Omar knew UNOCAL had pumped large sums of money to the Taliban hierarchy in Kandahar and its expatriate Afghan supporters in the United States. Some of those supporters were also close to the Bush campaign and administration. And Kandahar was the city near which the CentGas pipeline was to pass, a lucrative deal for the otherwise desert outpost.

While Clinton's State Department omitted Afghanistan from the top foreign policy priority list, the Bush administration, beholden to the oil interests that pumped millions of dollars into the 2000 campaign, restored Afghanistan to the top of the list, but for all the wrong reasons. After Bush's accession to the presidency, various Taliban envoys were received at the State Department, CIA, and National Security Council. The CIA, which appears, more

than ever, to be a virtual extended family of the Bush oil interests, facilitated a renewed approach to the Taliban. The CIA agent who helped set up the Afghan mujaheddin, Milt Bearden, continued to defend the interests of the Taliban. He bemoaned the fact that the United States never really bothered to understand the Taliban when he told the Washington Post last October, "We never heard what they were trying to say... We had no common language. Ours was, 'Give up bin Laden.' They were saying, 'Do something to help us give him up.' "

There were even reports that the CIA met with their old mujaheddin operative bin Laden in the months before September 11 attacks. The French newspaper Le Figaro quoted an Arab specialist named Antoine Sfeir who postulated that the CIA met with bin Laden in July in a failed attempt to bring him back under its fold. Sfeir said the CIA maintained links with bin Laden before the U.S. attacked his terrorist training camps in Afghanistan in 1998 and, more astonishingly, kept them going even after the attacks. Sfeir told the paper, "Until the last minute, CIA agents hoped bin Laden would return to U.S. command, as was the case before 1998." Bin Laden actually officially broke with the US in 1991 when US troops began arriving in Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm. Bin Laden felt this was a violation of the Saudi regime's responsibility to protect the Islamic Holy Shrines of Mecca and Medina from the infidels. Bin Laden's anti-American and anti-House of Saud rhetoric soon reached a fever pitch.

The Clinton administration made numerous attempts to kill Bin Laden. In August 1998, Al Qaeda operatives blew up several U.S. embassies in Africa. In response, Bill Clinton ordered cruise missiles to be launched from US ships in the Persian Gulf into Afghanistan, which missed Bin Laden by a few hours. The Clinton administration also devised a plan with Pakistan's ISI to send a team of assassins into Afghanistan to kill Bin Laden. But Pakistan's government was overthrown by General Musharraf, who was viewed as particularly close to the Taliban. The CIA cancelled its plans, fearing Musharraf's ISI would tip off the Taliban and Bin Laden. . The CIA's connections to the ISI in the months before September 11 and the weeks after are also worthy of a full-blown investigation. The CIA continues to maintain an unhealthy alliance with the ISI, the organization that groomed bin Laden and the Taliban. Last September, the head of the ISI, General Mahmud Ahmed, was fired by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf for his pro-Taliban leanings and reportedly after the U.S. government presented Musharraf with disturbing intelligence linking the general to the terrorist hijackers.

General Ahmed was in Washington, DC on the morning of September 11 meeting with CIA and State Department officials as the hijacked planes slammed into the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Later, both the Northern Alliance spokesman in Washington, Haron Amin, and Indian intelligence, in an apparent leak to The Times of India, confirmed that General Ahmed ordered a Pakistani-born British citizen and known terrorist named Ahmed Umar Sheik to wire \$100,000 from Pakistan to the U.S. bank account of Mohammed Atta, the lead hijacker.

When the FBI traced calls made between General Ahmed and Sheik's cellular phone - the number having been supplied by Indian intelligence to the FBI - a pattern linking the general with Sheik clearly emerged. According to The Times of India, the revelation that General Ahmed was involved in the Sheik-Atta money transfer was more than enough for a nervous

and embarrassed Bush administration. It pressed Musharraf to dump General Ahmed. Musharraf mealy-mouthed the announcement of his general's dismissal by stating Ahmed "requested" early retirement.

Sheik was well known to the Indian police. He was arrested in New Delhi in 1994 for plotting to kidnap four foreigners, including an American citizen. Sheik was released by the Indians in 1999 in a swap for passengers on board New Delhi-bound Indian Airlines flight 814, hijacked by Islamic militants from Kathmandu, Nepal to Kandahar, Afghanistan. India continues to believe the ISI played a part in the hijacking since the hijackers were affiliated with the pro-bin Laden Kashmiri terrorist group, Harkat-ul-Mujaheddin, a group only recently and quite belatedly placed on the State Department's terrorist list. The ISI and bin Laden's Al Qaeda reportedly assists the group in its operations against Indian government targets in Kashmir.

The FBI, which assisted its Indian counterpart in the investigation of the Indian Airlines hijacking, says it wants information leading to the arrest of those involved in the terrorist attacks. Yet, no move has been made to question General Ahmed or those U.S. government officials, including Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, who met with him in September. Clearly, General Ahmed was a major player in terrorist activities across South Asia, yet still had very close ties to the U.S. government. General Ahmed's terrorist-supporting activities - and the U.S. government officials who tolerated those activities - need to be investigated.

The Taliban visits to Washington continued up to a few months prior to the September 11 attacks. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research's South Asian Division maintained constant satellite telephone contact with the Taliban in Kandahar and Kabul. Washington permitted the Taliban to maintain a diplomatic office in Queens, New York headed by Taliban diplomat Abdul Hakim Mojahed. In addition, U.S. officials, including Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Christina Rocca, who is also a former CIA officer, visited Taliban diplomatic officials in Islamabad. In the meantime, the Bush administration took a hostile attitude towards the Islamic State of Afghanistan, otherwise known as the Northern Alliance. Even though the United Nations recognized the alliance as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, the Bush administration, with oil at the forefront of its goals, decided to follow the lead of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan and curry favor with the Taliban mullahs of Afghanistan. The visits of Islamist radicals did not end with the Taliban. In July 2001, the head of Pakistan's pro-bin Laden Jamiaat-i-Islami Party, Qazi Hussein Ahmed, also reportedly was received at the George Bush Center for Intelligence (aka, CIA headquarters) in Langley, Virginia.

According to the Washington Post, the Special Envoy of Mullah Omar, Rahmatullah Hashami, even came to Washington bearing a gift carpet for President Bush from the one-eyed Taliban leader. The Village Voice reported that Hashami, on behalf of the Taliban, offered the Bush administration to hold on to bin Laden long enough for the United States to capture or kill him but, inexplicably, the administration refused. Meanwhile, Spozhmai Maiwandi, the director of the Voice of America's Pashtun service, jokingly nicknamed "Kandahar Rose" by her colleagues, aired favorable reports on the Taliban, including a controversial interview with Mullah Omar.



The Bush administration's dalliances with the Taliban may have even continued after the start of the bombing campaign against their country. According to European intelligence sources, a number of European governments were concerned that the CIA and Big Oil were pressuring the Bush administration not to engage in an initial serious ground war on behalf of the Northern Alliance in order to placate Pakistan and its Taliban compatriots. The early-on decision to stick with an incessant air bombardment, they reasoned, was causing too many civilian deaths and increasing the shakiness of the international coalition.

The obvious, and woefully underreported, interfaces between the Bush administration, UNOCAL, the CIA, the Taliban, Enron, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, the groundwork for which was laid when the Bush Oil team was on the sidelines during the Clinton administration, is making the Republicans worried. Vanquished vice presidential candidate Joseph Lieberman is in the ironic position of being the senator who will chair the Senate Government Affairs Committee hearings on the collapse of Enron. The roads from Enron also lead to Afghanistan and murky Bush oil politics.

UNOCAL was also clearly concerned about its past ties to the Taliban. On September 14, just three days after terrorists of the Afghan-base al Qaeda movement crashed their planes into the World Trade Center and Pentagon, UNOCAL issued the following statement: "The company is not supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan in any way whatsoever. Nor do we have any project or involvement in Afghanistan. Beginning in late 1997, Unocal was a member of a multinational consortium that was evaluating construction of a Central Asia Gas pipeline between Turkmenistan and Pakistan [via western Afghanistan]. Our company has had no further role in developing or funding that project or any other project that might involve the Taliban."

The Bush Oil Team, which can now rely on the support of the interim Prime Minister of Afghanistan, may think that war and oil profits mix. But there is simply too much evidence that the War in Afghanistan was primarily about building UNOCAL's pipeline, not about fighting terrorism. The Democrats, who control the Senate and its investigation agenda, should investigate the secretive deals between Big Oil, Bush, and the Taliban.

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