

Letters on "Oil company adviser named US representative to Afghanistan"

12 January 2002

A number of readers have commented on the article by Patrick Martin, posted January 3, 2002, which detailed the connections between Zalmay Khalilzad, the new US special envoy to Kabul, and the California-based oil company Unocal. Below we post a selection of these letters and some replies by the author.

Thanks so much for your comprehensive report on an administration figure most of us would never have heard of. Thanks to Mike Malloy (ieamericaradio.com) I heard him reading parts of your report.

Because of learning this information I forwarded it to many of my friends hoping to spread this needed report to as many people as possible. I consider you brave for searching and writing this document—YES BRAVE. As you know in our USA of today we must be so very careful in what we say and how and to whom we say it. Sounds like all those Hollywood movies I saw as a child during (the big one) WW2 when we all learned to “heil right in der fuerher’s face.”

So keep getting the word out so that people like Mike can give his audience the truth—and we CAN HANDLE THE TRUTH.

From a truthseeker,
EM

Norwalk, Ohio
3 January 2002

Thank you for the article on the new representative to Afghanistan. I didn’t read it anywhere else, although I am sure the *Wall Street Journal*, which I also subscribe to, will brag about it in a few days. This is my first day reading your e-mail and I am happy you are available.

RG
3 January 2002

You guys are doing a great job at providing an alternative to mainstream media.

H
3 January 2002

I’m surprised Patrick Martin didn’t pick up on the fact that Karzai also has Unocal links (as well as CIA links) according to several reports.

AV
4 January 2002

Patrick Martin replies:

Thank you for bringing this fact to my attention. Several readers have written in to point out that Hamid Karzai, the new head of state in Afghanistan, had previously worked as a consultant for Unocal in the preparation of its proposed pipeline across Afghanistan, a plan the company abandoned in 1998. This has apparently been more widely reported in the French and other European press (*Le Monde* ran at least one major article) but not as much in the American.

In my attempt to locate objective news sources that report about the current military campaign in Central Asia, I have been using your page as a reference.

I double-check your articles and find that the non-political aspect of the news you report has a strong foundation.

What are your research sources? You’re right about the oil component of the conflict being the ulterior motive. Why is this important element being suppressed in most American media outlets?

Sincerely,
CB

South Korea
6 January 2002

Patrick Martin replies:

The WSWS is the product of the intellectual collaboration of supporters of the International Committee of the Fourth International, the world Trotskyist movement, on many continents. We thus are able to draw on international resources for the development of the web site. This includes, but is certainly not limited to, a careful reading of the American, European and international press, as well as research on the Internet. Such a wide casting of the net to obtain information is essential in view of the gross distortion, amounting to self-censorship, which exists in the major US media, particularly the television networks, news magazines and the semi-official daily newspapers like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

The American media is especially reticent about the oil interests involved because of the glaring contrast between

the administration's claims that it has launched a "war on terrorism" and the reality of the US government seizing strategic positions in a region which, next to the Persian Gulf itself, is the richest in the world in terms of oil and gas reserves. While the US government and media claim that "everything changed" on September 11, the reality is just the opposite. The same social and economic interests who reaped the lion's share of Bush's record tax cut—i.e., the top one percent of American society—will be the sole beneficiaries of the administration's war in Central Asia. The American media must cover up these economic realities because the social and class polarization within the United States has become so acute.

The January 3, 2002 article on the appointment of Khalilzad to Afghanistan as our oil representative written by Patrick Martin was superb. Not only was it well written but it contained intriguing information. For many years I have kept a daily log of current events, especially on the Middle East and the United States foreign policy such as was demonstrated in Kosovo and now in Afghanistan. Without the alternate media, which in my case has been wsws.org, great amounts of context would be missing. The media, again in my case CNN and Fox TV, regularly omit any fundamental items of interest such as oil. I find Fox especially repugnant. My log is written for my own interest but it permits me to go back months or even years and read exactly what Clinton, Netanyahu, Milosevic, Holbrooke, et al., actually said.

Thanks and keep up the good work.

RB

7 January 2002

As do the majority of Americans, I take deep exception to your totally unfounded statement: "*After Bush was installed as president by a 5-4 vote of the US Supreme Court, Khalilzad headed the Bush-Cheney transition team for the Defense Department and advised incoming Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld*" (emphasis added—LA).

Bush was duly elected by a majority of the US citizens. He was installed through the established, time-honored method of our Constitution-based Republic. No, I do not like him and despise much of what he stands for in his hidden agendas, but like most Americans, I detest efforts to besmirch the election process here. The issue before the Supreme Court was not the election itself but rather the efforts by some to corrupt the process in Florida. The issues themselves should never have needed to be raised outside of Florida. It is so typical of Socialists to twist and distort anything to make their loathsome points that I doubt whether you can recognize the truth when it stares you in the face.

LA

Patrick Martin replies:

This is not the place to respond in detail to your defense of George W. Bush's political legitimacy. The WSWS has written at considerable length on the suppression of democracy in the 2000 US elections, especially in the relation to the December 12, 2000 ruling by the US Supreme Court. ["The 2000 election and Bush's attack on democratic rights"]

One of your assertions deserves comment, however: the claim that "Bush was duly elected by a majority of the US citizens." Not even the most diehard representative of the Bush campaign has ever made such a claim. Bush received considerably fewer votes than his Democratic opponent, Al Gore, with the final margin showing Gore ahead by over 500,000 in the popular vote. Bush edged Gore only in the Electoral College, the anti-democratic procedure established in the Constitution to distance the choosing of the president from the actual "will of the people." Even this victory was only possible because the Supreme Court awarded Florida's electoral votes to Bush by shutting down the recount ordered by Florida's highest state court.

As for a majority of "US citizens," no president in at least half a century has won such a mandate, since many American citizens are so alienated from the existing political system—with its two, virtually identical, right-wing big business parties—that they do not participate in the electoral process. In addition, there are millions of US citizens who are denied the right to vote, either because of past felony convictions (an estimated one million people in Florida alone) or because of residency and other restrictions on eligibility.

To be exact, Bush received just under 49 percent of the total votes cast, in an election in which only 51 percent of those eligible actually participated. The result is that barely 24 percent of all US citizens cast ballots for the man who is now president. The only majority that placed Bush in the White House was the 55 percent of Supreme Court justices who voted for him in *Bush v. Gore*.



To contact the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact