



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on September 15, 2016

Report Reveals U.S. Aid Funds Taliban in Afghanistan

Further evidence of America's failed foreign policy is highlighted in a new report by the "Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction" (SIGAR). The report indicates that the U.S. government's failure to identify and combat corruption allowed American aid to fuel the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan. The report contends that the corruption ultimately resulted in widespread disenchantment amongst the Afghani people and increased support for the insurgents' cause, thereby undermining the very goals the United States hoped to achieve when it first launched the invasion in 2001.



According to the [report](#), billions of dollars in American aid were utilized in contracts and partnerships with "malign powerbrokers." Among those unsavory individuals were corrupt warlords, who demanded protection payments from U.S. defense contractors if they wanted access to public roads. Those extortion payments amounted to a significant source of income for the Taliban, the report explains.

The report indicates that in some cases, U.S. aid went directly into the hands of those fighting the American-backed government.

With the help of American dollars, corruption became so deeply entrenched in Afghanistan in all the critical sectors, such as the army and courts, that the people of Afghanistan began to turn against the very government the United States was supporting.

"Stemming from a growing body of evidence that corrupt networks were channeling support to the Taliban, a consensus began to emerge among DOD (Department of Defense), State, and USAID that corruption was undermining core U.S. goals by materially fueling the insurgency and turning the population against the Afghan government," said the report. "In short, corruption posed a strategic threat to the mission."

The report lists a number of damning conclusions, including that the U.S. government was "slow to recognize the magnitude of the problem, the role of corrupt patronage networks, the ways in which corruption threatened core U.S. goals, and that certain U.S. policies and practices exacerbated the problem."

Even when the government acknowledged that corruption was taking place, it was slow to address the problem because "security and political goals consistently trumped strong anticorruption actions."

Whether the report will have any impact on the current reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan remains to be seen, but it's worth noting that this is not the first time that investigators have discovered taxpayer money being funneled to questionable individuals and groups under the umbrella of U.S. foreign policy.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the Central Intelligence Agency was [involved](#) in the training of numerous fundamentalist Islamic groups in Afghanistan, many of which became the Taliban. It has become common knowledge that the U.S. government provided millions of dollars in aid, training, and weaponry



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to those groups, which have since become enemies to the United States.

And yet nothing has changed.

In 2011, a U.S. military [report](#) revealed that the United States had been funding its enemies to the tune of approximately \$360 million. After a careful examination of combat support and reconstruction contracts, researchers determined that U.S. tax dollars had ended up with the Taliban and other enemies of the United States.

The investigation into the contracts revealed many connections between the Afghan companies and their subcontractors to groups that the military would classify as “malign actors.”

According to Associated Press, money wound up in the hands of America’s enemies through a process of “reverse money laundering,” in which the United States makes payments to companies — hired by the military for construction, fuel, and other services — that have ties to criminal networks and insurgents. One of the investigative documents reported, “Funds begin as clean monies, [but] either through direct payments or through the flow of funds in the subcontractor network, the monies become tainted.”

Similarly, in 2014, the special inspector general for Afghanistan reconstruction sent a letter to then-Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel indicating that the United States was doing business with the Zurmat Group, an Afghan company that had been blacklisted by one part of the military for providing bomb-making materials to insurgents.

Despite receiving a request to “debar” the Zurmat Group and its subsidiaries from the United States Central Command, which oversees the war in Afghanistan, Pentagon officials refused to issue the bans, claiming that they could not present evidence against the companies and individuals since much of it qualifies as “classified intelligence.” Without being able to show the accused the necessary documents, debarment allegedly violated their right to due process.

Also in 2014, it was revealed that under the Obama administration, federal aid to displaced Syrians and hungry civilians was in fact being funneled to ISIS. According to the online Daily Beast, American warplanes were striking militants belonging to the Islamic State in both Syria and Iraq while “truckloads of U.S. and Western aid ... [were] flowing into territory controlled by the jihadists.”

Much like the highway warlords in Afghanistan detailed in the SIGAR report, ISIS leaders with strongholds in the regions were forcing aid convoys to pay fees to gain access. “The convoys have to be approved by ISIS and you have to pay them: The bribes are disguised and itemized as transportation costs,” an aid coordinator told the Daily Beast on the condition of anonymity. He explained that the money is paid by foreign or local nongovernmental organizations that distribute the aid, or by the Turkish or Syrian transportation companies contracted to deliver it.

As for the aid itself, air coordinators expressed concern that the food and clothing were being sold on the black market and not making it to their intended targets.

It seems that working with corrupt and questionable groups in order to deliver aid to civilians in need is par for the course under America’s foreign policy. In December of 2013, the Overseas Development Institute reported that during the 2011 famine in Somalia, aid agencies there had been paying members of the al-Shabaab militant group in order to gain access to areas under their control. Members of al-Shabaab demanded “registration fees,” and often insisted on distributing the aid. Many times, they kept the aid for themselves.

Sadly, America’s foreign policy has not only benefited its enemies financially, but by providing skillful



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leaders. The U.S. State Department has just confirmed that one of the top military leaders for the Islamic State (ISIS) was trained by the U.S. government as recently as 2014 and on American soil.

The New American's Alex Newman [reported](#) this week,

The terror leader in question, Colonel Gulmurod Khalimov ..., who is originally of Tajikistan, is the new "minister of war" for ISIS, according to Iraq News and other sources. He took over ISIS forces after the previous U.S. government-trained ISIS military chief, Tarkhan Batirashvili (a.k.a. Abu Omar al Shishani), was reportedly killed.

According to U.S. authorities, Khalimov had been vetted prior to receiving training, proving once more that the Obama administration's vetting capabilities are indeed lacking.

What's more is Khalimov was in fact being trained to replace Abu Omar al Shishani, another ISIS military chief who had been trained by the U.S. government in Georgia before joining ISIS.

Clearly, officials in Washington need to reconsider this nation's foreign policy. In just the last year, it has become painfully clear that the world is no safer from acts of terror than it was in 2001. Whether the decision makers are simply unintelligent or the bad moves have been deliberate in order to achieve a more nefarious agenda, the American people are facing enormous security and financial risks under the leadership in Washington.



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