

The Fatal Attraction of Pipeline

Source: "New Backing for Gas Line Through Asia" by Andrew E. Kramer, The New York Times, December 12, 2010



A year-end White House review of U.S. strategy in Afghanistan will report some progress despite the bloodiest year in nine years of war and signal no major change in President Obama's plans.

But quietly the military-industrial complex has made significant progress in **pushing the American-backed pipeline** through the Afghan war zone a step closer to becoming a reality.

The pipeline (called TAPI), which would be about 1,080 miles long, would carry gas from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan and Pakistan and into India.

Oil companies proposed the pipeline in 1995, but it dropped off their agenda after the Taliban took control of Afghanistan the following year. **The plan was officially revived after the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001.**

On December 11 of this year, a preliminary agreement on the pipeline was signed by the four nations in Turkmenistan's capital, Ashgabat, to proceed with plans for the American-backed pipeline. This pipeline will pass through Helmand and Kandahar Provinces in Afghanistan, which have been Taliban strongholds.

So why is our government draining our blood and taxes for this long war? Is it for getting rid of the 50-100 Al Qaeda, according to the C.I.A., or for helping oil companies to realize their dream pipeline bonanza?

Almost half a century ago, **President Dwight D. Eisenhower, in his farewell address, warned** the American people about unwarranted influence by the "military-industrial complex." Eisenhower would be shocked at the mounting long-term costs of the wars for serving the interests of oil companies. The war expenses were paid for by borrowing, and **Americans will shoulder those costs, plus interest, for many years to come.**



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