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SPECIAL REPORT: TERRORIST BULLETS VS. "DAILY ACTS OF MERCY"

It was at Sunday morning's service when the clergy at WOODLAWN CHRISTIAN CHURCH in Knoxville, Tennessee, shared the news with the congregation. Cheryl Beckett, daughter of the church's senior pastor, the Rev. Charles Beckett, was among a group of ten humanitarian aid workers shot and killed last Thursday in cold blood by the AFGHAN TALIBAN¹ in a remote, mountainous region in northern Afghanistan.



"Takbir!² More Fuel for the Hell Fire! 6 Americans on Medical Team Killed in Afghanistan." That's the message on a *jihadi* site that introduced the posting on the TALIBAN assassination of the Kabul-based medical team. (*Family photo of Cheryl Beckett.*)

Excerpts from the Beckett Family statement, issued Sunday, 8 August 2010:

Cheryl loved and respected the Afghan people. She denied herself many freedoms [a reference to our freedom of religion] in order to abide by Afghan law and custom....

The wickedness of terrorism is being conquered through daily acts of mercy.... Those who committed this act of terror should feel the utter shame and disgust that humanity feels for them....

¹ AFGHAN TALIBAN is a non-technical, catch-all phrase that refers to one or more of the three core insurgencies in the country: the HAQQANI NETWORK (HQN), HEZB-E ISLAMI GULBUDDIN (HIG) and the QUETTA SHURA TALIBAN (QST) also known as the ISLAMIC EMIRATE OF AFGHANISTAN or KHORISAN. **The leaders of all these insurgencies have ties to AL QAEDA that are deep, historic and personal.** From: "4 Facts to Guide Af-Pak Strategy." **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 09-193 19 October 2009. There are, of course, other factions – groups the U.N. ASSISTANCE MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN terms "Anti-Government Elements" or AGEs.) When **INSIDER** knows with some confidence which insurgency is involved in a particular incident, we identify them. There are indications that the assassins were HIG fighters, but we await more confirmation.

² *Takbir* is the Arabic *name* of the phrase *Alahu Akbar* ("Allah is Greatest").

While she has spent the last 6 years in-country, Cheryl was a relative newcomer to the NURISTAN EYE CAMP, a mobile team specializing in ophthalmic rehabilitation and affiliated with the INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION (IAM), a Christian charity. They had trekked more than 100 miles on a 3-week mission to provide eye, dental and other medical care to impoverished, remote villages in Nuristan Province, Afghanistan, and were returning to their Kabul home base via relatively peaceful Badakhshan Province.

It was there that gunmen descended on the 12-person team, lined them up, then shot and killed them one after the other. Two Afghans were released when one reportedly recited the *Shabada* (“There is no God but Allah...”). The murder victims included two other Afghans (every bit as Muslim as those spared), a Briton, a German and 6 Americans. Among them was Brian Carderelli, 25, a videographer and 2009 graduate of the firm’s neighbor, JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY, and Glen Lapp, 40, an intensive-care nurse schooled by another neighbor, EASTERN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY in Harrisonburg.

TALIBAN spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said his fighters found a Bible in the Dari language among the team’s possessions. That proved they were in Afghanistan to proselytize. He also said they possessed maps showing TALIBAN positions (which simply amounted to maps of Afghanistan, period):

One of our patrols confronted a group of foreigners. They were Christian missionaries, and we killed them all.

The charge of proselytizing was quickly dismissed as out of the question by colleagues, relatives and NGOs. It is indeed a ridiculous charge: slain team leader Dr. Tom Little had served in Afghanistan since 1976, so it’s reasonable to assume that if he were prone to proselytizing, it would have popped up publicly at least once in his 35 years of service to the people there. It did not.



Dr. Karen Woo of the U.K., shown with a chum from her garden, was a general practitioner. Her blog shows her as professional and playful, utterly devoted and inspired, but not the least bit religious. At her blog, [EXPLORER KITTEN IN AFGHANISTAN](#), she invites the reader to sit next to her on the plane from London to Kabul, 20 June 2010: “I’m going back to Afghanistan, but maybe I should stay in England, get a regular doctor’s job ... [and make] some sensible money. Instead, I am dealing with the unusual sensation – reliant on others as never before – of even more elevated risk. I might come home with my tail between my legs, but I might just come home in glory ... achieving what I [had] set out to do versus never knowing if I could ... The trek scares the living daylights out of me right now. What if I’m not good enough?” Karen Woo was far more than good enough. This past weekend, Mark “Paddy” Smith flew to Kabul to identify her remains. **“I just wanted to say goodbye,”** he said. They were due to marry on 20 August. (Un-marked photo from Dr. Woo’s blog.)

Faith may be a motivator, but proselytizing is forbidden, said IAM director Dirk Frans who believes that “Dari Bible” accusation was a complete lie. It’s also a central tenet of the AFGHANISTAN NGO SAFETY OFFICE (ANSO) to focus locally and win local acceptance to achieve some measure of safety. The minimum entering argument for “local acceptance” is zero preaching. In January, ANSO published a report that said:

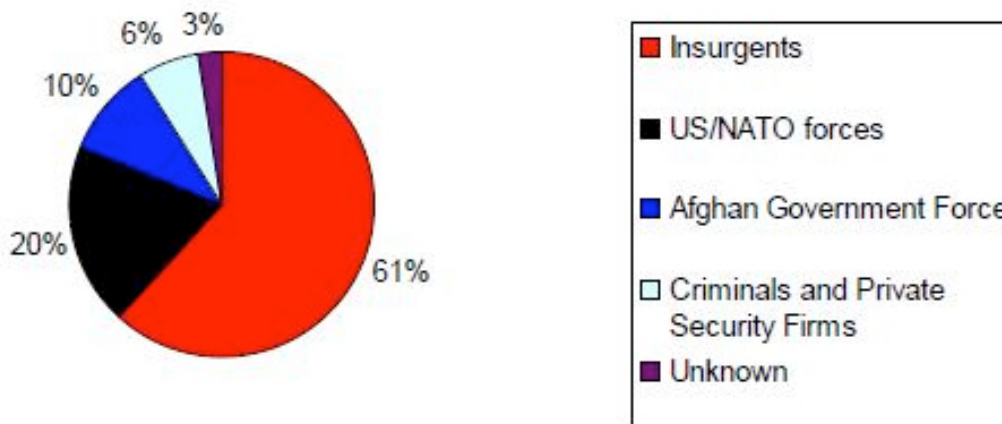
Neutrality and local acceptance, not [counterterror efforts by] the military or the [military’s] counter-insurgency [campaign], have become the dominant factors of security for NGOs in vast areas of the country.

At the time of that report, those “dominant factors” may have been at play, as Badakhshan Province was ranked 5th safest in the nation. Badakhshan, however, is home to a major opium smuggling route – and transnational criminals and terrorists walk the same path.³

• CIVILIAN SECURITY SLIPPING – AND, YES, IT’S A TREND

The fact is, security is in a skid for civilians in Afghanistan. In the past, the TALIBAN more or less granted safe passage to humanitarian aid workers. Increasingly, that is no longer the case.

**Parties blamed for civilian deaths
Jan-Jun 2010**



More “Bad Behavior.” Notice that deaths attributable to “private security firms” are lumped in with “criminals.” This past weekend, Afghan President Hamid Karzai called for a ban on private security companies whose employees and contractors protect Western installations, diplomats, aid groups and infrastructure targets. “The people who are working in private security companies are against Afghan national interests, and their salaries are illegal money. They are thieves during the day and terrorists by night.” **And many of them are Karzai cronies. While many of the 52 PSCs registered to operate in Afghanistan are foreign owned, the biggest are Afghan owned with ties to the Karzai family. Chiefly, his PSC bashing was a reaction to additional pressure on Karzai from SECSTATE Hillary Clinton to clean up his “bad behavior” (e.g., graft). LOOK FURTHER.** (Chart courtesy of the AFGHANISTAN NGO SAFETY OFFICE.)

Some humanitarians are insisting (and some just hoping) that the assassination of the NURISTAN EYE CAMP team does not represent a new trend, because it may have unduly exposed itself to danger,⁴ but the numbers do not lie. Consider this comparatively rosy assessment made just 3 months ago by the AFGHANISTAN NGO SAFETY OFFICE (*emphasis added*):

³ “HEZBOLLAH Using Drug Smugglers’ Routes.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-079 27 March 2009. HEZBOLLAH roots in the TBA (a.k.a. “New Lebanon”) go back years, as do its ties to AL QAEDA. Brazilian intelligence officials believe AL QAEDA has been active in the TBA since the mid-1990s. One source indicated that Brazilian intelligence has a 28-minute video of Osama Bin Laden attending meetings in the TBA. After the TALIBAN was toppled in the 2001 invasion, a CNN reporter found a TBA tourist poster in an AL QAEDA safe house in Kabul. (From “HEZBOLLAH in Latin America.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 08-013 5 November 2008.) There is also a strong Venezuelan-West African smuggling ring that connects HEZBOLLAH, AL QAEDA IN THE LAND OF ISLAMIC MAGHREB and FARC (*FUERZAS ARMADAS REVOLUCIONARIAS DE COLOMBIA*), or with the Latin American global guerilla kingpins who rule the drug trade. See *Quick-&-Dirty*: AQLIM & The Rogue South Atlantic Aviation Pipeline.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-027 20 February 2010.

⁴ There’s even an unfortunate and rather tawdry threads running that Dr. Little ignored warnings that his team had too many members from too many different countries. Perhaps his team did stand out, but (a) he wanted to treat more people, (b) the assessment was the TALIBAN wasn’t in the vicinity and (c) it’s hardly time to play blame-the-victim. In fact, according to FREE RANGE INTERNATIONAL, a PSC, the team took the longer route through Badakhshan, because that area is “relatively free” of the armed thugs who operate essentially as armed criminals when “not being paid to fight by ... Pakistan [that] fund[s] TALIBAN operations [in Afghanistan].”

Humanitarian agencies are seeing promising signs of regaining space and acceptance from TALIBAN insurgents while attacks against NGO workers have reduced significantly over the past six months. Up to 1,200 security incidents were recorded in June - more than in any month since the fall of the TALIBAN - but attacks on NGOs by armed opposition groups ... were 35 percent lower than in [the comparable period in] 2008-2009.⁵

The percentages have now flipped. Today, the U.N. ASSISTANCE MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN (UNAMA) released a report documenting a 31 percent rise in civilian casualties the first 6 months of 2010 as compared to the first half of 2009 (both killings and woundings). (Even subtracting the 10 murders from the current totals leaves 1,261 killings for the first half of 2010.) Other highlights of the 2010 MID-YEAR REPORT ON PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT:

- 55% more children and 6% more women were killed or injured during the period.



There are unfortunate and rather tawdry threads running that team leader Tom Little and colleague Dan Terry (right, pictured with a physician-volunteer in 2006) ignored warnings that the team had too many members from too many different countries. **It's hardly time to play blame-the-victims. Perhaps the team did stand out, but (a) Little and Terry wanted to treat more people and (b) the assessment was the TALIBAN was not in the vicinity.** In fact, according to blogger/operator Tim Lynch, former Marine and founder of FREE RANGE INTERNATIONAL, a PSC, **the team took the longer route through Badakhshan, because that area was considered "relatively free" of the thugs who operate essentially as armed criminals when "not being paid to fight [with the TALIBAN] by ... Pakistan [that] fund[s] TALIBAN operations [in Afghanistan]."** Tim knows this, because he considers slain team member Dan Terry "the Godfather" of his PSC: "the man who pioneered the techniques, tactics and procedures we use to travel in remote districts." A veteran of decades of service in Afghanistan, Dan Terry specialized in relating to local communities and harnessing aid groups and government agencies to improve service to remote regions. "Clearly Dan thought he had a solid plan to get in and out of Nuristan. This time the plan failed and the manner in which his team was murdered portends poorly. **This is yet another indicator of how fast the security situation is changing in Afghanistan. If there is any indication that things will turn around soon, I'm not seeing it.**" **LOOK FURTHER.**

(Un-marked photo courtesy of Tim Lynch at FREE RANGE INTERNATIONAL.)

- Casualties attributed to U.S., NATO and Afghan forces dropped 30% propelled by a 64% decline in deaths and injuries caused by aerial attacks. (That stems from the highly restrictive ROE put in place by GEN Stanley McChrystal and under review by GEN David Petraeus. There is a substantial downside to the ROEs, as the Marines in Helmand Province can attest.⁶)

⁵ AFGHANISTAN NGO SAFETY OFFICE QUARTERLY DATA REPORT (First Quarter, 2010), April 2010.

⁶ War Diary: "Because of the restrictive ROE to minimize civilian casualties, the [Echo] company commander passed on air strikes at a time when his men were taking fire from three directions. The **Harriers** were running low on fuel and had only 10 minutes on-station time left." From: "WIKILEAKS & Grains of Salt." **FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER** 10-115 29 July 2010.

- “IEDs and suicide attacks killed 557 Afghans and injured 1,137 in the first six months of 2010. IEDs alone accounted for 29 per cent of all civilian deaths in the period, including 74 children, a 155 per cent increase in IED-related deaths of children in the same span in 2009.
- “Overall, conflict-related civilian deaths in the south increased by 43 per cent. Civilians assassinated and executed included teachers, nurses, doctors, tribal elders, community leaders, provincial and district officials, other civilians including children, and civilians working for international military forces and international organizations.”



One reason the TALIBAN targets children is photographic proof that some of them are tipping off pro-government forces. The TALIBAN fighter in the permanent prone position was observed by the young boy loitering numerous times in the village of Khushi Khona, Herat Province, in June. U.S., Italian and Afghan National Army soldiers moved in to capture him, but he fought back and was taken out. He possessed detonators and other IED-making materials.
(Un-marked photo at a jihadi site under this heading: “The Crusader Forces are using children to kill TALIBAN fighters!”)

- **POSTSCRIPT: THE TALIBAN REALLY OUGHT TO BEHAVE BETTER**

Throughout 2010, the TALIBAN hiked the use of suicide attacks and IEDs and increased attacks on tribal elders, community leaders and aid workers -- essentially anyone it perceived to be supportive of the Afghan government or the U.S. and NATO. Its campaign piqued when AL-FAATH (“THE VICTORY” or “THE CONQUEST”) was announced on 10 May.⁷ This campaign or operation targeted virtually everyone, with “contractors” and “companies” singled out for special attention:

...Americans, the NATO military personnel, foreign advisors, spies who pose as foreign diplomats, members of the Karzai ,,, administration
 ... contractors of foreign and domestic private security companies, contractors [with] military logistics and military constructions [sic]
 companies and all supporters of foreign invaders who are working for the strengthening of foreign domination.

Chief among the latest recommendations by the UNAMA for civilian safety is better behavior by the TALIBAN:

The TALIBAN should withdraw all orders and statements calling for the killing of civilians; and, the TALIBAN and other AGEs should end the use of IEDs and suicide attacks, comply with international humanitarian law, cease acts of intimidation and killing including assassination, execution and abduction, fully respect citizens’ freedom of movement and stop using civilians as human shields.

For the complete UNAMA report, **LOOK FURTHER.**

⁷ “Emerging Bloggers from PSCs Take Over From Military in Afghanistan.” *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 10-080 13 May 2010.



According to the UNAMA report, the number of Afghan children killed and maimed soared more than 50% the first-half of this year as compared to the first 6 months of 2009, with some 176 killed. Many of the youth casualties occurred as children tried to get to schools built through U.S. and NATO government service initiatives. Above: last week during a patrol with 1ST BATTALION, 2ND MARINES in Musa Qa'leh, Afghanistan, Navy Corpsman 2nd Class Claire E. Ballante with the Marine's FEMALE ENGAGEMENT TEAM (FET) holds an Afghan child. Members of the FET are trained to interact with the Afghan female population – a task culturally unacceptable for males to perform⁸ – providing an invaluable contribution to the overall counterinsurgency (COIN) effort in Afghanistan.

(Public domain photo by CPL Lindsay Sayres, U.S.M.C.)

Assessment: To the Global *Mujahideen*, humanitarian aid workers are targets and, in the *jihadi* mind only, for sound reason. The work to which Tom Little and Dan Terry were called stabilizes and tends to liberate the very population the insurgent seeks to de-stabilize and enslave. The calling God placed on Cheryl Beckett's heart – the same calling Dr. Karen Woo found there with no return address – is, to the *jihadi* and the corrupt government official, subversive in nature.

Afghanistan in 2010 bears a similarity to Somalia of the late 1980s and early 90s. There, thugs were roughing-up the Somali workers of a U.N. development project, suspecting them of spying for project leader Chris Cassidy. An American, Mr. Cassidy was evidently not getting their message, so they hiked the viciousness by abducting his toddler, Bernie, crushing his skull and throwing his remains in a pit. Writing of the tragedy in *THE ROAD TO HELL*, author Michael Maren put it this way⁹ (*emphasis added*):

Chris [Cassidy] and hundreds of others realized that **charity and development work are political** ... Any real commitment to development requires political action, speaking out against the powers that keep populations from developing themselves. **In the Somali context, doing real development work was truly a subversive activity.**

The work of humanitarians takes hold when the sick are healed, the well are put to work and the graft-minded are forced to slink away. When that happens, it is the insurgents' worst nightmare, as stability and sustainable development seem a little closer at hand. That happy

⁸ "The Afghan Avalanche is Poised." *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-188 1 October 2009.

⁹ "Somalia: Humanitarian Aid as 'Subversive Activity.'" *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-029, 14 July 2009. See also "Pham on Succeeding in Somalia," *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 09-179 21 September 2009, and "The Church & Mogadishu," *FORWARD-LEANING INSIDER* 08-051 26 December 2008

conclusion enflames Islamists even more when it is achieved, even in the smallest measure, by *Mushrikeen*.¹⁰ “Polytheists.” Otherwise known as Christians from whom no good must come.



Late last month, sailors aboard USS NEW ORLEANS (LPD 18) console one another after a memorial service for an old shipmate, Culinary Specialist 2nd Class Jarod Newlove. CS2 Newlove, 25, was captured and later assassinated by the AFGHAN TALIBAN in Charkh District, Logar Province, Afghanistan. An Individual Augmentee or IA (called “Sand Sailor” in the fleet), he was an instructor at a training school for Afghan security forces. Before taking the IA assignment, he was a plank owner in NEW ORLEANS (that is, a member of the pre-commissioning crew), so his ties aboard that ship were strong and fresh. IAs serve with Army and Marine Corps combat units in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and the Horn of Africa. Prior to deployment, they undergo the 3-week U.S. NAVY INDIVIDUAL AUGMENTEE COMBAT TRAINING COURSE administered by the ARMY TRAINING CENTER FORT JACKSON, South Carolina. (Public domain photo by MC1 Brien Aho, U.S.N.)

PROPRIETARY CLASSIFICATION: BUSINESS –IN- CONFIDENCE
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¹⁰ From the Arab word *Shirk* and the Arab root S-R-K which generally means “to share.” In the context of the QURAN, *Shirk* means “attributing a partner to Allah.” *Shirk* is the most heinous and, therefore, completely unforgivable sin or crime against Allah. Ergo, the *Mushrik* (singular) and *Mushrikeen* (plural) are considered to be engaged in a plot against Islam, merely by believing in anything or anyone other than Allah. Those the Quara’n condemns as *Ahl al-Kitab* (the “People of the Book”) are *Mushrikeen*. Attributing some happy occurrence to luck, by the way, is *Shirk*. **So is voting.** Through the ages, Sunni Muslims shrank from condemning other Muslims as *Mushrikeen*, as it might be preempting a task reserved for Allah. That is not the case for today’s Islamists who readily condemn and kill *Mushrikeen* they dismiss as Muslim imposters.