

Special Report

Sibel Edmonds' spring 2005 offensive

FBI shields Pakistan/Turkey nuclear weapons development, drug trade, Cheney, Rumsfeld

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March 9, 2005—With Sibel Edmonds once again in the news, and with media interest in her case increasing, it's worth speculating, again*, about her knowledge by attempting to connect some of the many dots found in a public record that stretches back into the Ford Administration and that culminates, in part, with Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998. The story has so many dots and cross currents that it's easy to miss the more salient items.

But it's not too much of a stretch to say that the FBI's interest in asserting a "State Secrets" privilege begins way back in 1972 at which time Pakistan decided to begin development of a nuclear weapons program that would culminate in the detonation of a nuclear weapon in 1998 (Turkey can't be far behind in 2005), and successful US weapons sales of helicopters, fighter aircraft, missile guidance software, combat vehicles and parts to both Turkey and Pakistan over the same 1972 to 1998 timeframe, despite US arms strictures on sales of US weapons technology. In the seven years since 1998, matters have gotten worse.

It really is the same old story we've all read about for so many decades and features these recurring themes: the black market for nuclear weapons technology, drug trade and money laundering, lobbyists housed in powerful organization, espionage and bribes, and big political and business names. These murky matters are always classified by governments and business groups as Top Secret or Proprietary and always involve criminal activity on behalf of national security. Unfortunately, criminal, classified and business/national security interests have always managed to find their way into the same bed whether here in the USA or abroad.

It would be nice to say that the black market for nuclear weapons had its zenith in 1998. But that's not the case. It is larger and more daring with more economic clout and political cover than ever. Not a bad development for a network created on the back of a drug trafficking network established long before there was a Cold War. And with the current US administration implementing a "new" counterintelligence directorate, seemingly to trump the bad stuff that Sibel Edmonds' litigation might produce, it all seems to make some sense that in 2005 the US government and industry would be in preemptive/recreate threat mode.

Exorcise Me!

Religious types like to say that "God/Allah works in mysterious ways." Interestingly, thanks to September 11, 2001, it appears that such a God/Allah may have been at work to expose some of the demons in American government and business, and their counterparts at work around the world. Who would have thought that Sibel Edmonds would encounter a lot of archived and/or then current documentation flowing through the intelligence pipeline that exposed criminal activity across the board by an array of conniving characters. American, Turkish and Pakistani operations (and history), planned and unplanned, were, perhaps, uncovered by her in the brief but heady days of worldwide cross-intelligence agency sharing following 9-11. Imagine the treasure trove of finds!

The actors in this drama include cultural and semi-legitimate groups like the American Friends of Turkey/American Turkish Council (and affiliates and chapters); the Atlantic Council; American (CIA), Turkish (MIT) and Pakistan (ISI) intelligence agencies; Pentagon intelligence operatives like USAF Major Douglas Dickerson and Jan Malek Can Dickerson; former Turkish ministers like Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz under investigation for corruption; Turkish-run companies like Giza Technologies of New Jersey, implicated and then cleared of WMD proliferation charges**; and US officials Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

As an aside, US defense contractors—like Textron, Lockheed Martin and Halliburton—figure in this story too as they, with US government approval, have regularly exhibited at defense weapons expos in Turkey, Pakistan, and elsewhere for decades. Why China and Iran are vilified as of late for being legitimate participants in these Expos there and here in the USA remains an intriguing question. It's interesting to note that MSNBC reported that Cheney's big visit to China in 2004 included marketing Westinghouse's nuclear reactors to China. No surprise there as US nuclear technology has been marketed to the world over the years by Cheney and Rumsfeld (the latter in North Korea).

But go figure. Buying some conventional weapons capability and basic nuclear generation technology from dullard US defense contractors is one thing. The real question is this: How did Pakistan and Turkey escaped US scrutiny while developing nuclear weapons and Turkey helped pay for them with drug money and technology?

Dick and Don's Fabulous Adventure

The names Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld recur as reference points throughout American, Turkish, Pakistani relationships beginning as early as 1975 when President Gerald Ford, taking the advice of then staff members Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld, vetoed the arms embargo on Pakistan. Earlier in 1974, the same two would save Turkey from a dreaded arms embargo. In 1999, with the Halliburton CEO hat on and before a crowd at the CATO Institute, a Cheney gem would surface telling the audience what the American people would never hear or understand. Cheney reminisced about Turkey and indicated, quite appropriately, that national security policy in the USA depends on lobbyists and the omnipotent organizations that house them.

“When I went to work for President Ford back in the summer of 1974, our first foreign policy crisis had to do with a dust up between the Greeks and the Turks, who had gone to war over the fate of Cyprus. The response of the Congress at that point was to impose an arms embargo on Turkey . . . we placed sanctions on Turkey and not on Greece. Why? It was not because it made sense from the standpoint of what was going on in Cyprus, or made sense from the standpoint of overall U.S. foreign policy. We sanctioned Turkey because the Greek-American lobby was significantly bigger and more effective than the Turkish-American lobby here at home. That's the sum total of why we did it. Ultimately, we were able to get it reversed. But it took numerous votes in Congress before we were able to turn it around.”

Yes, indeed, and it wasn't long after 1974 that that the American Friends of Turkey/American Turkish Council (and affiliates) and the Atlantic Council would be up and running in Washington, DC, with the former featuring chapters and affiliations in Illinois, New Jersey, Texas and just about every state in the Union, plus overseas affiliations. The American Turkish groups are likely the “semi-legitimate” non-profit business and cultural groups housing the powerful lobbyists that Edmonds is referring to and that Cheney turns to for policy guidance.

But who can say?

The US has changed since Cheney and Rumsfeld appeared on the scene and it's tough to tell whether under their guidance the US government is a branch of Wall Street or some other madness. Most likely both, but that's another long story. Suffice it to say that Cheney has always believed that US business interests trump the whiney and ineffective elected US government representatives and civil servants.

In the same speech at the CATO Institute in 1999, he said, "I think it is a false dichotomy to be told that we have to choose between "commercial" interests and other interests that the United States might have in a particular country or region around the world. Oftentimes the absolute best way to advance human rights and the cause of freedom or the development of democratic institutions is through the active involvement of American businesses. Investment and trade can oftentimes do more to open up a society and to create opportunity for a society's citizens than reams of diplomatic cables from our State Department."

The Brotherhood: Pakistanis, Turks and Americans

Against the backdrop of the USA versus USSR Cold War, and the Iran versus Iraq war—US officials like Cheney and Rumsfeld—and those operating in and out of government, (and their counterparts in Pakistan and Turkey) took a Pontius Pilate approach to Pakistan's black market acquisition of nuclear weapons components, as well as Turkey's complicity in helping that cause through drug trade profits, to include the illicit manufacture of parts essential to a nuclear weapon. According to Anwar Iqbal of UPI (October 2004), Turkish workshops "made the centrifuge motor and frequency converters used to drive the motor and spin the rotor to high speeds. These workshops imported subcomponents from Europe and elsewhere, and they assembled these centrifuge items in Turkey. Under false end-user certificates, the components were then shipped to Dubai . . ."

It's 2005 and the US State Department has reported that Turkey remains one of the premier players in the world's drug trade. "Turkey remains a major route, and storage, production and staging area, for the flow of heroin to Europe. Turkish-based traffickers and brokers operate in conjunction with narcotics smugglers, laboratory operators, and money launderers in and outside Turkey . . . Turkish-based traffickers control much of the heroin marketed to Western Europe." Such a well established and efficient network has always been ideal for moving nuclear weapons components around the world and that effort continues unabated to this day.*** The high-altitude breathers in US government and industry could care less and they joke while diligent field agents around the globe follow dead ends confined in safely classified compartments.

Writing in 1997, Ertugrul Kurkcu commented that "few recall the era of military juntas in the early 1980s when Turkey's military rulers adopted a green belt strategy after the revolution in Iran and the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan. The idea, promoted in Washington circles was to construct a bulwark alliance of US-backed Muslim countries [Pakistan and Turkey] in order to confine Soviet southward expansion and to combat Radical Islamist power in Iran and elsewhere in the region."

Even with the USSR gone, US policy makers figured in the 1990s that Russia could never be trusted and "bad" Islamic regimes like Iran needed to be cut off from the rest of the world. After all, if for no reason other than spite, those nasty Iranians took a US Embassy hostage in 1978 and now in 2005 they have the audacity to try and build a nuclear weapon. One can only imagine that if the Shah of Iran had stayed in power the USA would be gloating over its wonderfully nuclear capable allies Iran and Turkey and their role in the War on Terror.

Be that as it may, through the years, the USA found alternatives to the Shah, most notably in Pakistan's current, and Western educated, President Musharaff, leader of the 1999 coup that made him president of Pakistan, and a host of other USA sponsored characters ostensibly in charge of Pakistan and Turkey since WWII. It was a perfect match made better by the fact that Musharaff—like most US supported rulers in the two countries—stated that "Pakistan and Turkey share a commonality of vision and a commonality of thought. Turks to me are brothers. Even to Pakistani children, Turks are brothers."

Add Americans and their children to all that brotherly love.

Deal of the Century

Pakistan's nuclear weapons technology acquisition program apparently piggybacked on Turkey's heroin trafficking expertise—an expertise established long before 1972. Pakistan could afford the price tag since

it was being paid for by Turkish-laundered drug money with the technology invariably stolen by Pakistani and Turkish operatives working through “semi-legitimate” groups in the USA and elsewhere.

No operation of this scope or magnitude could go unnoticed by the US government, particularly since in Turkey’s case, the CIA had been conducting post WWII “stay-behind” operations for at least 50 years.

If such activity was exposed, albeit indirectly through a nuclear test or a translator like Sibel Edmonds, it sure would be easy enough to blame a failure to detect it (just like 9-11) on a lack of human intelligence or the “peace dividend” that the end of the Cold War brought, or claim “State Secret” if someone like Sibel Edmonds were to see the goods and ask questions. Then again, there is the “compromising ongoing intelligence/military operations” rationale, but that moniker has been used and abused so many times that its usage is comedic.

In the end, no matter how the story is spun, it threatens to implicate the high and mighty in government and business in the USA, Turkey and Pakistan, and who knows how many assorted intelligence groups around the globe.

But that comes as no surprise to those in the governments that condone the criminal enterprises that run the show in the name of national security interests. But once and awhile, the upstarts and whistleblowers speak through intrepid journalists like Seymour Hersh of the New Yorker. Quoting former US and Pakistani diplomats in both *The Deal* (March 2004) and *The Coming Wars* (January 2005) published in the New Yorker, it’s very obvious to any inquisitive person what’s been going on for 33 years.

“Much of this has been known for decades to the American intelligence community. Sometimes you know things and don’t want to do anything about it. Americans need to know that your government is not only downplaying this but covering it up. You go to bed with our ISI. They know how to suck up to you. You let us get away with everything. Why can’t you be more honest? There’s no harm in telling us the truth— ‘Look, you’re an ally but a very disturbing ally.’ You have to nip some of these things in the bud . . . The former senior American intelligence official was equally blunt. He told me, ‘Khan [Father of the Pakistani bomb] was willing to sell blueprints, centrifuges, and the latest in weaponry. He was the worst nuclear-arms proliferator in the world and he’s pardoned—with not a squeak from the White House.’”

To that, though, we must add the White Houses occupied by Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush I, and Clinton.

Preempting Sibel Edmonds’ Legal Challenges

On March 5, the Associated Press reported that the Bush administration was rolling out an unclassified version of the first national U.S. counterintelligence strategy and a new organization to implement the plan. Approved by Bush II on March 1, and described as preemptive in nature, “it aims to combat intelligence services from countries hungry for U.S. military and nuclear secrets, such as China and Iran (whoops! forgot Pakistan and Turkey), both at home and abroad, US counterintelligence officials said.” A couple of weeks earlier on February 16, current FBI Director, Robert Mueller, indicated his eye was on the counterintelligence ball, particularly those pesky intelligence services and semi-legitimate business groups referred to by Sibel Edmonds.

How much horrible comedy can one take? Two weeks before Edmonds went before the US Congress (March 2, 2005), Mueller and the Bush Administration stated the following.

“Of growing concern is the asymmetrical threat posed by certain intelligence services that supplement their collection capabilities in the US by using non-traditional collectors. These collectors include students, delegations, business visitors, émigrés, and retired intelligence officers [typically those who populate legal and ethical organization conferences and exhibitions sanctioned by the US government and organized by Americans] who are collecting against targets of opportunity or responding to ad hoc requests from the intelligence services. US Government representatives participating in international conferences and exchanges, or whose duties include routine liaison with foreign intelligence representatives, frequently

report that their contacts engage in elicitation, sometimes to a surprisingly aggressive level [example: Major Doug and Jan Dickerson's attempt to recruit Edmonds at her home].

"Such non-traditional collectors pose a potential threat across the US, requiring a coordinated response by all FBI field offices. Several countries appear to be exploiting their military liaison officers, who are in the US on overt, legitimate intelligence-sharing missions, to target and collect sensitive defense information that is outside the scope of their official access. Most difficult to identify and assess is the intelligence collection activity being directed and/or conducted by non-intelligence organizations, such as other foreign government agencies and/or foreign companies. The FBI sees this type of activity most frequently in the targeting and collection of Chemical, Biological Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosives information and technology."

As Sibel Edmonds stated in an interview with Chris Deliso at Anitwar.com, the matter is not about 9-11 or being a savior. It's all about recovering the shattered remnants of accountability in the USA, which are as tough to find as an honest statement from Republicans and Democrats running the US government. Americans should thank the mysterious Sibel Edmonds for saying, "They're [the US government/business] afraid of information, of the truth coming out, and accountability—the whole accountability issue that will arise. But it's not as complicated as it might seem. If they were to allow the whole picture to emerge, it would just boil down to a whole lot of money and illegal activities."

Reference

* Related pieces: A Fantastic Tale: Turkey, Drugs, Faustian Alliances & Sibel Edmonds and The American Turkish Council: US Association Helps Create New EuroAsia/New World Order by John Stanton. Find them through Google. Many fine sites have posted them and I don't want to pick one over the other.

** For a good piece on the mechanics of the trade seek out Josh Myer writing in the LA Times, Case Reveals Nuts and Bolts of Nuclear Trade, May 2004. Anyone nutty enough to weather conspiracy theory accusations may want to pick up on his Nazi—1975 reference and link it to CIA stay-behind operations in Turkey.

*** United States Department of State, 2005 INCSR International Narcotics Control Strategy Report.

John Stanton is a Virginia based writer specializing in political and national security matters. This article, as promised, is a follow-up to The American Turkish Council: US Association Helps Create New EuroAsia/New World Order, one of now three speculative pieces on Sibel Edmonds and the US government. John is the author of America 2004: A Power But Not Super. Reach him at cioran123@yahoo.com.