

[From the Associated Press, Oct. 5, 2011]

POLL: 1 IN 3 VETS SEES IRAQ, AFGHAN WARS AS WASTES

WASHINGTON.—A new opinion survey says one in three U.S. veterans of the post-9/11 military believes the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are not worth fighting. Most of the vets polled by the Pew Research Center also think that after 10 years of combat America should be focusing less on foreign affairs and more on its own problems.

#### SYSTEMATIC TORTURE IN AFGHAN PRISONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. "One interrogator kept banging my head against the wall. "After 2 days, he tied my hands behind my back and started beating me with an electric wire. The interrogation and beating lasted for 3 to 4 hours into the night.

"For the next 2 days, I was tied up from both wrists to the bars of an iron door. From morning until lunchtime they put a hood on my head and hung me by my wrists."

Mr. Speaker, these are the direct quotes from detainees apprehended in Afghanistan and subjected to torture at the hands of Afghan intelligence officials and police forces. It's all documented in a report issued by the United Nations this week. What they found was systematic abuse that followed a pattern—not random or isolated incidents—a pattern at several different facilities, involving at least 300 prisoners.

There's more. Kicks to the head; beatings with electric cables, rubber hoses, and wooden sticks; electric shocks to the thumbs; threats of sexual abuse, some of them against children. And there are some even more graphic, gruesome details that I know we've read about that I'll spare my colleagues for now.

No Americans have been directly implicated in this. But as long as we're continuing a military occupation of Afghanistan and as long as we've taken on the task of training Afghan security forces, I don't see how we avoid the responsibility for these shameful acts of abuse and ritual humiliation. At the very, very least, Mr. Speaker, we're guilty of shoddy oversight and failure to instruct Afghan officials in humane interrogation techniques.

Of course, this kind of brutality is a gross violation of international human rights standards. But it's also well-documented that torture doesn't work. Torture, at the very most for a normal human being, will force that human being to confess to anything under such duress, and it's a complete failure as an intelligence-gathering strategy.

The war in Afghanistan has been going on for 10 years now. It's costing American taxpayers \$10 billion a month. How can we justify spending all this money, money that we need to invest in job creation right here at home,

on a policy and a mission that is leading to such barbaric acts. How can we continue to sacrifice blood and treasure on this war, a war that is being waged in such gross violation of our very American values?

I have never been more convinced it's time to bring our troops home.

□ 0940

#### IRANIAN CONNECTION WITH ZETAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in the last 2 days, we have been learning some disturbing information about the Nation of Iran and its dictator, Ahmadinejad. It seems as though, with the consultation with Iran and the drug cartels in Mexico, it was the idea that the Iranian Government, through one of its operatives, would commit a crime against the United States. We're learning more and more about this, but it's my opinion that the Iranian Government was in the middle of this attempted assault on American soil.

The idea that the Embassy down the street that belongs to the Saudi Arabians would be attacked, that the Saudi Arabian Ambassador would be murdered somewhere in a restaurant in Washington, DC, with a possible attack on the Israeli Ambassador, with a possible attack on the Israeli Ambassador and the Saudi Arabian Ambassador in Argentina, was being plotted by the Iranian Government against us is something that we should be aware of and conscious of and be very concerned about.

Thanks to good law enforcement, this terror plot was thwarted. But what if it had occurred? What if the will of this terrorist would-be to go to Mexico and meet with what he thought was a Zeta cartel member to smuggle explosives into the United States from Mexico that would be used in an attack in Washington, DC, what if that had actually occurred? Certainly, if the Iranian Government was involved in it, we would consider that an act of aggression against the United States.

And it's interesting to me that the Iranian Government was so bold that they thought they could do something like this and get away with it. Did they believe that the United States would not do anything about it? Did they perceive us to be so weak that we would not have shown them consequences for this action against this Nation? We don't know. But the truth is we should show the Iranian Government that there are consequences for an attempted attack such as this by the Iranian Government.

There are a couple of things that I think are important for us to realize. One, we should hold the Iranian Government accountable for this attempted attack on American soil, to show them that you must leave us alone no matter what your political

philosophy is. But just as equally disturbing is the fact that this operative—that I believe was dispatched by the Iranian Government—had the wherewithal to go to Mexico, our neighbors, and try to work with the drug cartels down there, and working in unison to come into the United States to commit a crime. Now, granted, the person that he was working with was not a Zeta cartel member. It was one of our own law enforcement officers. But the person thought he was working with the drug cartels. And the reason he was working with the drug cartels is because they, too, are at war with the United States, and they have easy access into the United States.

On a daily basis, the Zeta drug cartel—which I think is the worst of the worst in Mexico—comes into the United States and brings drugs and people, traffics humans, anything for money. And on a daily basis, they go back to Mexico and they take that money and they take weapons because they have access to our porous borders. If you want to get into the United States, hook up with one of the drug cartels and they'll get you in the U.S. And that's obvious what this Iranian operative was trying to do was to hook up with them. The drug cartels, for little money, will do anything, including commit murder in the United States.

So that should tell us that the border is still porous, Mr. Speaker. We hear that it's not, it's safe. It is porous, Mr. Speaker. There are portions that are safe, but the portions that are not safe are where the drug cartels go back and forth.

So, two lessons we should be learning are that the Iranian Government has it in for the United States—at least some people do in their government; two, that the border is porous, and we need to protect the national security of the United States' southern border.

So what are we going to do about it? We've heard that, well, we're going to impose some more sanctions to try to isolate Iran. Historically, sanctions have never worked any time countries have tried to use them. It is true that we could actually have some sanctions that would do some good, such as keeping Iran from having refined gasoline going back into the country, and maybe keeping crude oil from going out of Iran, but that doesn't solve the problem long term.

The long-term solution in Iran is a regime change. And let me make it clear, that regime change should be by the people of Iran who live in Iran and people who support the freedom fighters in Iran.

It's time that the regime of Iran be removed by the good folks who live in Iran. And the United States' policy publicly should be that we support those dissidents to get rid of the rogue regime of Ahmadinejad.

And that's just the way it is.