

# CONSPIRACY STORIES SURROUNDING NILS HORNER MURDER HARD TO DISMISS DUE TO US BEHAVIOR

Today's New York Times has a fascinating update on the investigation into the killing of Swedish reporter Nils Horner on March 11. Although there have been systematic attacks on journalists in the region for years, it appears that in the case of Horner, suggestions of the involvement of Western intelligence agencies are getting significant attention:

Now, some are saying Mr. Horner may have been killed as part of some shadowy intelligence war in Afghanistan waged by foreigners.

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The allegation first surfaced in a widely disputed claim of responsibility issued by a group calling itself Feday-e-Mahaz, and thought to be an offshoot of the Taliban.

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"This was certainly not the work of the Taliban," Mr. Faizi said in an interview, adding that he did not believe there were any breakaway factions. "They are fictions."

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Afghan officials linked Mr. Horner's death to the attack on Taverna du Liban, a Lebanese restaurant popular with foreigners that suicide attackers struck in January, killing 21 people, most of them foreigners.

Though the Taliban took credit for that attack, Mr. Karzai has suggested that it may be linked to foreigners and not Afghan insurgents. Mr. Horner was shot as he tried to find and interview a chef who had escaped from that Lebanese restaurant, officials said.

“Perhaps there are some of those with fears about what he would find out,” one Afghan official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of the continuing investigation.

The official emphasized that he was speaking of the possibility that Westerners were responsible in both the restaurant attack and Mr. Horner’s shooting, and not Pakistanis, whom Afghan officials often blame after attacks because of what the official called Pakistan’s clandestine support of the Taliban.

But how on earth could such a ludicrous story get started? I mean, it’s not like the US meddles and tries to prevent the outbreak of peace talks or anything like that. Oh, wait.

Okay, but surely this meddling is recent. The history of our motives in the region must be pure. Just ask someone who has observed our actions over the years, like, say, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, (pdf):

But it was too late because some of the organizations had become a part of the Afghan people. As for Afghanistan itself, the West did not support the Afghan organizations in order to bring about peace, prosperity, and security in Afghanistan. The U.S. proxies in the ISI under American control foiled every attempt to reconcile or integrate the various

Afghan organizations. Every time they saw a strong leader or an organization, they supported him in order to split his organization off from the others. They split the group Hezb Al-Islami Hekmatyar into two parties- one by the same name and one by the name Hezb Al-Islami Younis Khalis and so on.

Well, yes, as Marcy notes, KSM is trolling, but there are bits that can't be denied.

Oh, and don't forget the use of a doctor in a vaccination ruse to obtain intelligence on the compound where Osama bin Laden was living prior to the attack that killed him. So why wouldn't the West use a journalist? And look at Horner's history:

Horner, 51, was an experienced Hong Kong-based reporter who had previously been in Afghanistan to witness the fall of the Taliban in 2001 and in Iraq during the war in 2003.

And just to make things juicier, even though Horner worked for Swedish radio, he held British citizenship. The Wall Street Journal article [linked here](#) notes that Horner covered Asia generally since 2001 and "had visited Kabul many times in the past".

I'm not ready to embrace these conspiracies, but it sure is easy to see how the concept can take hold when we consider how the US has behaved in the region for decades.