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ROAD TO GUANTANAMO__7/10

Documentary that brings tears of shame

Directed by Michael Winterbottom

Riz Ahmed	Shafiq
Farhad Harun	Ruhel
Waqar Siddiqui	Monir
Afran Usman	Asif Iqbal
Shahid Iqbal	Zahid
Sher Khan	Sher Khan
Jason Salkey	Military Interrogator Sheberghan

Road is the story of three British citizens of Pakistani descent who through a series of accidents and bad coincidences wind up in Taliban-held Afghanistan during the British-American bombing and occupation in the post-911 months of 2001.

Ruhel Ahmed, Asif Iqbal and Shafiq Rasul are 20-year-old devout Moslem men living in England who travel with their friend Monir to Pakistan to attend Asif's wedding. After spending a few days of shopping and sightseeing, the friends attend a mosque with Asif's Pakistani cousin, Zahid.

The Imam inspires them to volunteer to travel to Afghanistan and provide humanitarian aid presumably to the refugees being created in the civil strife with the Taliban on the eve of the invasion. The friends decide to go to Kabul "to help." The story finds them set loose in the chaos of the invasion after the bus driver hits and kills a man, then leaves them.

They try to arrange for a ride back to Pakistan, instead the ride takes them north to a Taliban stronghold. The stronghold falls and they are taken prisoner; they lose track of Monir, and he is not heard from again. They herd the three onto trucks, and the nightmare truly begins: Asif and Shafiq are sent to Guantanamo, Zahid is imprisoned in Pakistan.

It's a hard movie to watch with the reenactments of the cruel treatment born by the "boys." What's always puzzled me is how did we know these detainees were Al Qaeda enablers, instrumental in the attacks of 911, sworn enemies of every good and decent American thing? The movie provides a news clip of King George saying, "The only thing I know for certain is that these are some bad people."

Well we've seen the certainty of The Decider before, e.g. weapons of mass destruction and Saddam's relationship with Al Qaeda. According to MSNBC sources, as reported in Wikipedia:

As of November 2006, out of 775 detainees brought to Guantanamo, approximately 340 have been released, leaving 435 detainees. Of those 435, 110 are labeled as ready for release. Of the other 325, only "more than 70" will face trial, the Pentagon says. That leaves about 250 who may be held indefinitely.

Read between the lines here and roughly 9 out of 10 men rounded up and sent to Gitmo are innocent of everything. Even the guilty ones, however, don't deserve to be treated as these men were and are; every American schoolchild and politician needs to watch this movie.

We simply have to bring the perpetrators of Afghanistan and Iraq to justice. Please refer to one of my sister sites, The Four Reasons, for a litany of criminal charges brought against our administration by various governing bodies and citizens' groups around the world.

Asif and Shafiq were released in 2004.

"Whoopsies!"