

WHAT THE NEWS MEDIA DON'T TELL YOU ABOUT AFGHANISTAN

Media in the United States have greatly exaggerated any victories for women's rights, and downplayed the conditions of warlordism, oppression and poverty that still flourish. In a recent trip to Afghanistan, the **Afghan Women's Mission** found that the situation of women and girls was extremely dire and that little had changed since the fall of the Taliban.

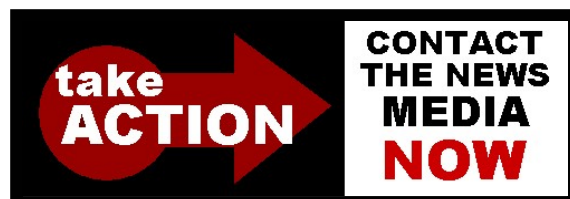
Newsworthy Issues that the US media won't cover:

- US-backed warlords still dominate Afghanistan, politically and militarily
- Outside Kabul, women are still fearful of being in public spaces
- Refugees returning from Pakistan find homelessness and misery in Afghanistan
- Women's unemployment is rampant – only 2-3% of women are working since Taliban
- State of rural women's health is dismal – UN reports highest Maternal Mortality Rate in the world
- Girls' education in Afghanistan is considered "worst in the world" by the UN
- Women have no political freedom – those who speak out are threatened
- Independent media have no freedom – those who report the truth are threatened

VISIT www.afghanwomensmission.org
for more information



Anor Gul is a 30 year old mother of 5 who returned from Pakistan a few years ago. Pakistan was home to over a million Afghans, many thousands of whom returned to their homeland after the fall of the Taliban. The Bush administration and US media cited the return of these refugees as a sure sign that Afghanistan was now free and that returnees were "voting with their feet for the future of their country" (Colin Powell, 03/31/04). What the US media has failed to cover is that most refugees returned to find their homes destroyed or occupied by warlords, and little to no affordable housing or job-training. She told us "I think that no one has a life as bad as I have here."



Despite the fact that little has changed since 2001, most media outlets do not have full time reporters covering Afghanistan. The more the media ignore Afghanistan, the less financial support humanitarian projects receive because donors assume that the problems have been solved.

On our website, www.afghanwomensmission.org, you can send a message to the editors and ombudspersons of major news outlets like the New York Times and others, urging them to *increase and improve their coverage of Afghanistan.*

It only takes a few minutes!