

Karzai's Stand To Keep The Taliban Out of Kabul

by Ramtanu Maitra

March 23—Afghan President Hamid Karzai took a swipe at the U.S. and NATO on March 9, accusing the Taliban and the United States of working together to convince the Afghans that violence will worsen if most foreign troops leave by the end of 2014. He cited two suicide bombings, one in front of the Afghan Defense Ministry, which occurred on the same day that U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel was visiting Afghanistan for the first time in his new capacity. “America says the Taliban is not my enemy and we do not have war with the Taliban, but in the name of the Taliban they are abusing people in Afghanistan on a daily basis,” Karzai said.

This straight talk from Karzai indicates his strong opposition to the British-Saudi-Obama Administration endgame in Afghanistan, which would bring the Taliban back to power in Kabul. It is a certainty that this grouping will be aided again by the Pakistani military from across the border, and that the Taliban and other militant jihadi-terrorist groups who would assemble in Afghanistan, will again be threatening Central Asia and even China and Russia. Moreover, the fact that the prospect of the Taliban in power is unacceptable to other major Afghan ethnic groups, could unleash yet another civil war.

The Obama Administration continues to support the Saudi-backed fundamentalist Wahhabis in Bahrain and the Saudi/Qatari-funded terrorists in Syria, as it earlier used the same weapon to turn Libya into a virtual terrorist state dominated by jihadis, funded and armed from Qatar and Saudi Arabia. It seems that the Obama Administration is once again moving in that direction in Afghanistan, to satisfy its British-Saudi allies' long-crafted plan.

Immediate Fallout

Those March 9 statements by Karzai led to some immediate reactions. Hagel's scheduled visit to the Afghan Defense Ministry was postponed; a joint press

conference by Karzai and Hagel, and the scheduled handing-over of prisoners held in the Bagram prison, run by the Americans, to the Afghan authorities, were called off—all on the pretext of security threats. (The transfer of the prisoners took place a few days later, after Hagel was back in Washington.)

On March 19, Afghanistan's presidential spokesman Aimal Faizi described the NATO-led military operation as “aimless and unwise.” Karzai's office issued this statement a day after NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen, at a press conference in Brussels, had said that instead of alleging collusion with the Taliban, Afghanistan should acknowledge NATO efforts to bring progress to the country: “We respect Afghan sovereignty but we want acknowledgement that we have invested blood and treasure in helping President Karzai's country to move forward.”

In Washington, Karzai's statement led to a new height of ranting and raving against the Afghan President. “If Karzai isn't an ally 100% of the time, in my book he's not an ally,” thundered Rep. Bill Young of Florida, the top Republican on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. “And I don't think he is, and I think our troops are being put at risk to defend a person who in my opinion should not be defended by the United States.”

Karzai “should spend more time addressing the widespread corruption in his regime rather than making false claims against Americans who are fighting for the freedom of his people,” said Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.). “President Karzai's despicable comments confirm it is time to bring our troops home and rebuild America, not Afghanistan.”

At the White House briefing on March 11, press secretary Jay Carney said: “Any suggestion that the U.S. is colluding with the Taliban is categorically false. Secretary Hagel addressed the question with President Karzai in their meeting. The U.S. has spent enormous blood and treasure for the past 12 years supporting the Afghan

people in an effort to ensure stability and security in that country. The last thing we would do is support any kind of violence, particularly involving innocent civilians.”

On March 25, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry flew into Afghanistan from Jordan on an unannounced visit to see Karzai. Before leaving Amman for Kabul, Kerry met with the head Pakistan’s Chief of the Armed Services (COAS), Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, who has now reunited with the British-Saudi-U.S. troika in opposing Karzai, after a brief period of refusal.

Kerry had another reason to go to Kabul suddenly: On March 24, Afghan Foreign Ministry spokesman Janan Mosazai said at a press conference that President Karzai will soon visit the Emirate of Qatar. The trip “is the result of an invitation from the Qatari Emir and will involve discussions about mutual cooperation and the [Taliban] peace process.”

Karzai’s move indicates that he is planning to initiate “Afghan-to-Afghan” talks, keeping the foreigners out, to end the Taliban insurgency. Karzai’s point is that the Taliban is part of Afghanistan and they are Afghans, and therefore they have to deal with Kabul and no one else. The Taliban remain under Kabul’s jurisdiction, and he is ready to talk to them.

Is Karzai a Friend, or an Enemy?

Listening to what the White House and many U.S. lawmakers are saying, one may wonder who they consider America’s real enemy. Is what Karzai is saying entirely false?

Recent events show a complex picture. In 2001, the United States went into Afghanistan identifying the Taliban as the main enemy, because of its links with al-Qaeda, ousted it from power, and sought to obliterate it through military force. In 2013, what we see is an altogether different picture. We find the Obama Administration, under the influence of London, trying desperately to negotiate with the Taliban.

The talks are not taking place in Afghanistan, but in the British-controlled Emirate of Qatar, and behind the back of the duly elected Afghan government. The plain objective of the Obama Administration is to bring the Taliban back into Kabul in some form, knowing full well that Karzai opposes that. As a result, Washington’s



U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Spec. 2nd Class John R. Fischer

President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai has a question: Why is the U.S. negotiating with the Taliban behind my back?

entire public relations paraphernalia is now busy identifying Karzai as the real enemy. One should not be surprised if, in the coming days, the White House would come out in the open saying that the Taliban is more helpful than Karzai is, in Washington’s efforts to resolve the Afghan dilemma, once a majority of foreign troops leave that country.

Why has the Obama Administration begun to veer in that direction?

In order to answer that question, one must accept the fact that the U.S./NATO troop presence in Afghanistan is not opposed by the Taliban alone. It is opposed by most, if not all Afghans. Furthermore, the U.S./NATO combine does not have the capability to defeat all the Afghans, and the withdrawal proposed by Washington and Brussels is not a concession to the Afghans, but a realization of an absolute defeat.

What the Obama Administration is desperately seeking is an organized withdrawal from Afghanistan at any cost. For years, London, which has control over a section of the Taliban, was pressing Washington to work out a deal with the Taliban, to bring them to power, and abandon Karzai. Nobody knows this better than Karzai.

British Takeover of Afghan Policy

As *EIR* has reported, as far back as 2009, the British imperial plan has always been to bring the Taliban back into power. In fact, one of Britain’s major complaints about Karzai is that he opposes this plan, going so far as



State Department photo

Secretary of State John Kerry during his visit to President Karzai in Kabul, March 25, 2013. He had some fast talking to do.

to expel two MI6 agents on Dec. 27, 2007, on charges that they posed a threat to the country's national security. An unnamed Afghan government official told the London *Sunday Telegraph* that "this warning," that the men had been financing the Taliban for at least ten months, "came from the Americans." One of the MI6 agents, Mervyn Patterson, worked for the United Nations, while the other, Michael Semple, worked for the European Union.

The London *Times* wrote that, when Patterson and Semple were arrested, they were carrying \$150,000, which was to be given to Taliban commanders in Musa Qala. "British officials have been careful to distance current MI6 talks with Taliban commanders in Helmand from the expulsions of Michael Semple, the Irish head of the EU mission and widely known as a close confidant of Britain's ambassador, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, and Mervyn Patterson, a British advisor to the UN," the *Times* wrote.

In the uncorrected version of the British House of Commons Minutes of Evidence (Nov. 9, 2010), taken before the Foreign Affairs Committee on the U.K.'s foreign policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan, Cowper-Coles was quoted, answering a question from MP

John Baron:

"The key question—this was Mr Baron's question—is how you accompany a military draw-down with a serious political process. The analogy that I have used—I thought of it a few weeks ago—is of a double-decker bus. You need an American chassis, an American engine, an American driver and an American sat-nav system.

"The passengers on the lower deck of the bus will be the internal parties. This is about far more than just talking to the Taliban; the Tajiks are increasingly alienated.

"On the top deck of the bus, you have all the external parties. The largest passenger will be Pakistan, but India, China, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the emirates and the lower tier of the -stans will all be there. The bus will be painted in Afghan colours and have a UN conductor on each floor and, *with luck, a British back-seat driver*" (emphasis added).

He went on to say: "We are major. We are very much premier league and everyone else is sort of champions league." (Cowper-Coles' reference point is the English Football League, where the top teams play in the premier league, while the lesser ones in the champions league.) It is evident that President Obama has accepted the Cowper-Coles plan, but President Karzai has not.

More than a month before Karzai accused the Obama Administration of working with the Taliban, news reports, including file photos, showed the United States in contact with the Taliban in Qatar. The talks were aimed at pushing the Taliban to work out a negotiated agreement with Kabul; but Kabul was kept altogether in the dark about the talks, as Washington tries to prepare the ground for the withdrawal of its troops, the Afghan website Weesa cited political analyst Vahid Mojdeh as saying. The U.S.-Taliban talks formally started in January 2012, but the militants left the negotiating table in March of that year, citing Washington's



DoD photo/Erin A. Kirk-Cuomo

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel awards a Purple Heart to a soldier in Afghanistan on March 9. After 12 years of war, the U.S. now wants to give Afghanistan back to the Taliban, which it had toppled in 2001.

failure to fulfill the conditions for peace negotiations to proceed.

Pakistan's news daily *The Dawn* reported on Feb. 10, 2013 the arrival of Pakistan's Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman in Qatar to hold talks with the Taliban. Maulana Fazlur, known as one of the founding fathers of the Taliban and a British asset who works with London to keep the Kashmir pot boiling, apparently provides the British input in those talks.

It should be noted that Karzai recognizes the Taliban, and is not opposed to a dialogue with them in order to ensure future peace. But, when the foreigners carry out such a dialogue with ethno-religious terrorists, keeping the vast majority of the Afghans in the dark, Karzai considers that to be criminal. Karzai has decided to go to Qatar himself to start peace talks with the Taliban, his spokesperson Aimal Faizi said, adding, "President Karzai will hold talks on two main issues, including the Taliban liaison office establishment in Qatar and improvement of bilateral ties." No confirmation was forthcoming, though, over whether Karzai would meet Taliban representatives.

Why is the Obama Administration lying about its talks with the Taliban in Qatar? Most likely because it is unsure how the American people would react to these

covert negotiations with the Taliban, who had earlier been demonized.

But Karzai knows it. In a speech on March 9, he said that senior leaders of the Taliban and the Americans were engaged in talks in the Gulf state on a daily basis. Now, who is lying?

Why Karzai Opposes the U.S. Move

In early March, President Karzai had ordered the U.S. troops to move out of the Wardak and Logar provinces, located adjacent to Kabul. The order reportedly came after complaints from Wardak tribal elders of "torture and murder of Afghan citizens" by Afghan forces

subordinate to the U.S. military. Karzai gave the U.S. two weeks to pack up.

Why did Karzai do it?

Beside the complaints of the tribal elders, control of Wardak and Logar is crucial for Kabul's security. These provinces sit on Highway 1, which connects southern Afghanistan, where the Taliban are strong, to Kabul, and had long been the entry point to Kabul for Taliban terrorists. Some call it the "Gateway to Kabul." Taliban leader Mullah Omar has good reason to target the road, Col. David B. Haight, then-commander of U.S. forces in Wardak and Logar, told the *Army Times* in 2009. In 2008, the Taliban did unleash intense strikes against the highway's southern approach to Kabul.¹

Despite the presence of a large contingent of foreign troops, the security situation in Wardak has not improved. The Taliban have been able to establish a foothold there, with disparate affiliated bands operating freely at night in many of the province's districts.² Now that the Obama Administration is coaxing the Taliban to

1. Denis D. Gray, "Troops work to secure high-profile Afghan road," AP article in *Army Times*, Dec. 31, 2009.

2. Brian M. Downing, "U.S. special forces leave key Afghan province as all war-weary sides look for clues," *WorldTribune.com*, Feb. 26, 2013.

come to Kabul, Karzai seems fearful that the Taliban will be allowed to enter Kabul, through these provinces under the watch of the foreigners.

On the other hand, U.S. academics and the media are keen to spread a distorted notion, which implies that since the Pushtuns are in the majority in Afghanistan, Kabul should be ruled by them, and that the Taliban, composed entirely of Pushtuns, should therefore be in power in Kabul. A logical deduction, right? No, it is false. The Taliban represents only a small percentage of Pushtuns. Otherwise, in 2001, the U.S. Special Forces could not have dislodged them from power within a span of three weeks.

Moreover, while the Pushtuns are in the majority, it is not an overwhelming majority. The other ethnic groups are powerful and have strong bases in parts of the country. In other words, no lasting peace can be reached in Afghanistan unless a national government includes all major ethnic groups.

Anyone who is not an outright fraud, should understand what Karzai is alluding to. Karzai is himself a Pushtun. He enjoys considerable support within the Pushtun community, not only as an individual, but because of his base and the tribe he represents. The Pushtuns who support Karzai and his associates are much more numerous than the Taliban, and are also anti-Taliban.

In addition, Karzai's survival depends on support from the powerful Tajiks and the very well-armed Afghan-Tajik ethnic group, who dominate northeastern Afghanistan bordering Tajikistan. They have fought the Taliban before and would do so again.

Former Indian Ambassador M.K. Bhadrakumar, in an article, "Karzai gives Hagel a tour d'horizon" (Asia Times Online, March 11), pointed out that in political terms, the Taliban have finally chosen to take on the Tajiks, who spearheaded the anti-Taliban resistance in the 1990s. "Now, the catch is that it is these very same Tajik forces who also happen to provide the military underpinning for Karzai's power structure (although he also has a substantial following among the Pushtuns). Any outside chance of the Afghan government warding off the Taliban challenge in the coming crucial 12-18 months would largely depend on Karzai's success in holding together the coalition that supports him," Bhadrakumar noted. In other words, Karzai is battling the British-Saudi-American plan to set loose the "fox in the chicken coop," as Bhadrakumar described it.

In addition, a Pakistan analyst, Farhat Taj, based in Oslo, in a series of articles, "Taliban are Pak Army proxies, not Pushtun nationalists," published in Pakistan's *Friday Times*, made the argument that "Taliban, both in Pakistan and Afghanistan, are mere proxies of the Pakistani state to wipe out forces of ethno-nationalism among the Pushtun, as well as tamper with Pushtun cultural identity on both sides of the Durand line, in the stated pursuit of the foreign and domestic policy objectives set and controlled by the military establishment of Pakistan." She adds that Pakistan has been actively pursuing a foreign policy rooted in religious discourse vis-à-vis Afghanistan. This is also because Kabul was pursuing a foreign policy rooted in secular Pushtun ethno-nationalism, including its claims over the Pushtun territory of Pakistan. Secondly, the Pakistani Army, deeply concerned about its military imbalance with India, does not want a pro-India government in Afghanistan.

This is precisely why Karzai, a Pushtun, opposes both the Taliban and Pakistan, and the Saudi-British plans, endorsed by President Obama, and hatched in the British-controlled Emirate of Qatar.



The Al-Qaeda Executive

Financed and deployed by the British-Saudi Empire, al-Qaeda has been protected by the Obama Administration to accomplish the Empire's global war. In this feature [video](#), LaRouchePAC documents President Obama's use of the al-Qaeda networks to overthrow Qaddafi in Libya, and to carry out bloody regime-change against Assad in Syria, by the same forces who attacked the U.S. consulate in Benghazi.

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