

Remembering 9-11: What is the True US Strategy in Afghanistan?

[\(New Era World News\)](#)

AFGHANISTAN FELL UNDER Soviet control from 1978 until 1989 when the Communists withdrew. From 1978 onward the Soviet Union backed a secular Socialist government known as the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA). In 1979 the DRA requested the Soviet Union to send forces into the country to assist them against indigenous forces headed by warlords known as the mujahideen. For ten years thereafter the Soviets engaged in war against these Islamic jihadists. During this time, radical Sunni Islamists from other countries, including Al Qaeda and its leader, leader Osama Ben Laden (Saudi Arabia), came to the assistance of the Mujahideen in which effort they were aided by the United States.

Following the importation of Osama Ben Laden, economic and military assistance as well as radical Islamic forces from around the globe began to funnel into Afghanistan with significant support coming from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Although the Soviets continued to support the DRA after their withdrawal in 1989, much of Afghanistan fell to the US backed Mujahideen who overthrew the DRA's last president, Mohammad Najibullah in 1992. **Thereafter, the Mujahideen fought among themselves and eventually morphed into what is now known as the Taliban**, the force that sheltered Al Qaeda and the radical Sunni Muslims that planned terrorist attacks from their safe abode inside Afghanistan, including what many believe to be the planned attack against the United States known as 9-11.

Triggered by the 9-11 attacks of 2001, the United States has been militarily involved in Afghanistan against the Taliban for seventeen years, the longest war in American History. Yet

according to Senator John McCain, not only is victory elusive, the US is losing the war:

"We have no strategy. And we are losing. When you're not winning, you're losing. And the ANA, the Afghan National Army, is taking unacceptable losses" ([CBS News July 2017](#)).

At its peak (2010-2011) the United States deployed approximately 100,000 troops in Afghanistan. Then President Obama made the decision to begin withdraw. Although the Afghan mission was formally halted in December of 2014, eight thousand plus US troops remain stationed there to assist a NATO coalition (approximately five thousand troops) to train indigenous security personnel collectively referred to as the *"Afghan National Defense and Security Forces"*, which are currently engaged in joint-offensive military operations to combat terrorism throughout the country.

For decades multiple terrorist organizations, headed by the Taliban (see Note below), have disrupted political, social, and economic activity in the region. As noted above, prior to US involvement post 9-11, Soviet Communist troops dealt unsuccessfully with the Afghan mujahideen who, backed by the United States, forced the Soviets to retire (1989) from the exhausting confrontation ironically leaving the battle to the Americans who likewise later withdrew (2014), thereby handing the conflict to NATO and the American backed secular Afghan government and its *"Afghan National Defense and Security Forces"*. This government has also proved unable to handle the proliferating problem, a problem that now includes additional Islamic State (ISIL-Daesh) terrorists, who, together with the Taliban, control roughly a third of Afghanistan, at least as much as they previously controlled prior to the military engagement of the United States and its allies in November of 2001.

President Trump Addresses the Taliban

During a recent August, 2017 presidential address to the nation, President Trump reminded viewers that a previous early

withdraw from Iraq cost America the war in that country. The lack of US troops permitted the uncontested, or poorly contested, ascendancy of the Islamic State, which has increased its zone of terror from western Iraq to Syria and to the east as well. Consequently, the president announced his firm resolve to beef up America's involvement to end the conflict in Afghanistan by means of devastating force to be inflicted by American troops:

"We will fight to win. From now on, victory will have a clear definition: Attacking our enemies, obliterating ISIS, crushing al Qaeda, preventing the Taliban from taking over Afghanistan, and stopping mass terror attacks against America before they emerge" ([CNN](#)).

Although the Pentagon had previously (June, 2017) announced a deployment of up to 3,900 new troops to Afghanistan, that announcement cannot be taken as authoritative since the president announced in his August address that the numbers would remain unspecified to maintain the element of surprise necessary to conduct a successful campaign:

"America's enemies must never know our plans or believe they can wait us out" ([PBS News](#)).

Will the President be Able to Institute a New Foreign Policy?

During his National Address (as well as during his presidential campaign), President Trump insisted that under his leadership the United States is embarking on a *new* foreign policy path: The US, he said, will no longer be involved in wars for the sake of nation building, but rather for peace and stability. Echoing the president, Secretary of State Tillerson specified that the United States would advance "peace talks" with the Taliban and allied terrorists without "preconditions." In other words, negotiations, so it seems, should be open to input from all concerned parties without any

foreign agenda to be imposed.

Unfortunately, the president's policy involves overt threats to neighboring Pakistan, a nation that has harbored Taliban insurgents seeking asylum by crossing the mountainous Afghan border into its equally mountainous regions, which have historically served as an incubator for terrorists threatening Afghanistan. Rather than leaving this adroit diplomatic maneuver to the Chinese (deeply desirous for peace in the region) who have recently courted economic-political favor with the Pakistani government *via* the New Silk Road Initiative (an economic boon for Pakistan), the president's American bravado got the best of him thereby forcing him into a foreign policy *faux pas*, which will need correcting. If not corrected, relationships with Pakistan will continue to deteriorate driving them into further Chinese and Russian alliance.

Mr. Trump would do well to adhere to his campaign plan to cooperate with Russia and China to end terrorism rather than trying to do it solo or with NATO but without Russia and China or by flying in the face of Sino-Russo objections. Unfortunately, it behooves Neocon warhawks and their liberal allies in the United States to continue painting Russia as the bad guy when, in fact, a cooperative venture would do much to stabilize the war-torn region and advance global peace.

The world is groping for peace and the United States (*apparently* contrary to the wishes of its elected president) continues to make maneuvers that promise more and greater conflict. Recently (July 13, 2017), Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the President of Germany, visited German troops stationed in Afghanistan to whom he communicated Germany's continued resolve to maintain its military presence in Afghanistan alongside the United States and other NATO allies; Steinmeier however, is looking for peace. Like President Trump as well as Russian and Chinese diplomats (and political leaders throughout Eastern Europe and elsewhere), Steinmeier seems to

think that future peace entails the respect of national sovereignty and the curtailment of globalism, nation building or any form of neo-colonialism.”

In Steinmeier’s words to the troops, “I came to” Afghanistan to “speak with President Ghani about the steps that are needed and can be taken toward a serious and credible peace process in Afghanistan. My message to him today was”:

“The future of this country is not primarily in the hands of Germany, NATO or international donors. It is first and foremost in the hands of the Government of Afghanistan, and it hinges on the government’s efforts to unite this divided country. None of this will be possible without the acceptance of a central government in Kabul, without a political settlement with the various ethnic and religious groups, including the Taliban. That is part of the reality which we, but above all political leaders in Afghanistan, have to recognise. Your presence here cannot take the place of a political settlement. Your presence can only create both time and space for a political settlement, one that Afghans themselves must both desire and work out. Nothing more – but also nothing less” ([Der Bundespräsident](#))

The German approach is inclusive, yet it leaves future decision making to the AFGHANS THEMSELVES, NOT TO SOME FOREIGN GLOBAL POWER OR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION. This is the preferred position of President Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin as well as that of Xi Jinping, President of China. Unfortunately, Neocon Warhawks such as John McCain *et al* on the extreme right along with their army of liberal counterparts on the extreme left are committed to preserving an antedated *status quo* which views the United States as the world’s policeman and as God’s viceroy on earth entrusted with a “Manifest Destiny” to spread outdated eighteenth century liberal economic, political and anti-Christian cultural ideas around the globe.

They hope thereby to make the world safe for liberal democracy

via the global deployment of increasingly confused American troops who are beginning to wonder who the “good guy” really is and what exactly they are fighting for. CNN, President Trump’s favorite “[Fake News](#)” outlet, has gone as far as asserting that Russia is supplying weapons to the Taliban, its sworn enemy in Afghanistan. The Russian response: “prove it” – “there is no evidence”. According to [Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#):

“We paid attention to the lampoon of the American CNN television channel about alleged supplies of weapons to the Afghan Taliban by Russia.”

“It is hardly possible to seriously perceive video materials in which old small arms are demonstrated, the origin of which is impossible to establish. The weapons are not stamped by the manufacturer and serial numbers are defaced. In addition, the weapons shown are typical. As is known, such samples were produced not only in Russia, but also in other countries, including Eastern Europe, from where in the early 2000s, Americans massively imported them to [Afghanistan](#).”

“Recently, the Taliban attacked the base of the Afghan National Security Forces in Helmand province, using American armored vehicles “Humvee”. What conclusion can be drawn based on this information using the logic of CNN?”

“As we have repeatedly stated, the accusations of a number of Western and some echoing Afghan mass media regarding alleged support from the Russian Federation by the militants of the Taliban movement are unfounded. To date, neither the Afghan authorities nor the command of the [US](#) and [NATO](#) contingents in the IRA have provided evidence that would confirm these speculations.

Thus, regardless of how liberal media outlets are portraying Russian resistance to US troop deployment in Afghanistan, **the truth is that Russia is delighted by America's presence in Afghanistan**, which has long been a training ground for terrorists such as Daesh, ISIL *et al* that threaten Russia and are therefore considered terrorists groups by the Russian government. In short, the United States, if it is doing what it is reported to be doing, is fighting against Russia's enemies in Afghanistan and thereby assisting Putin to secure his own borders.

However, since the debacle in Syria, Russian diplomats have little trust for American initiatives. While in Syria, war-hawks like Senator McCain portrayed the conflict as a war against terrorists when in fact it became public knowledge that the Americans were stealthily aiding and abetting the terrorists in service of the liberal ideological and economic interests of ruling profiteers contrary to the Russians who were engaged in a real battle with the real terrorists.

Because Russia supports America's war on terrorism *close to its borders* in Afghanistan, it is a natural ally in the fight.

The Russians however, due to their growing mistrust of America's intentions, are proceeding cautiously, interpreting American intervention with a grain of salt. Therefore, Alexander Grushko, the Russian envoy to NATO recently stated that his country fears that Afghanistan is becoming a hornet's nest for terrorists of all sorts, implying that he is unsure of America's intentions: Will American involvement curtail or exacerbate the challenge of terrorism to global peace and Russian security? Grushko indicated to reporters gathered in Brussels that Moscow hopes NATO will provide full information as to just "how the Alliance is planning to conduct future operations in Afghanistan."

"There is a serious threat of Afghanistan turning into a safe haven for terrorists as, unfortunately, the hold of the Islamic State [referring to Daesh, a terrorist group banned in Russia] is not weakening."

Grushko's concern is confirmed by reports that America's efforts against terrorists in Afghanistan are starting to sound a bit like reports that previously came out of Syria.

According to the [New York Times](#) and the [BBC](#), a US airstrike on a compound in Helmand province, Afghanistan, resulted in deaths to *friendly Afghan forces (forces opposed to and fighting against terrorists throughout Afghanistan)*:

“During a US-supported (Afghan security) operation, aerial fires resulted in the deaths of the friendly Afghan forces who were gathered in a compound.”

This widely reported fact engenders several provocative questions to be followed in upcoming weeks: Will future reports change under President Trump? Will the US assist Russian brokered efforts to bring world peace and thus be a peace-maker itself? or will President Trump succumb to tiresome Neocon voices in favor of ongoing conflict in the name of liberal ideology, personal interests, and veiled chicanery leading to ever more conflict and profitable war?

NOTE:

Both the Taliban and Al Qaeda are radical Sunni Muslims committed to Jihad and theocratic government; both are opposed to the influence of Western culture and the secular governments put in place by Western leaders.

From 1996 to 2001, the Taliban enforced strict Sharia law over most of Afghanistan prior to the US invasion in 2001. The United States assisted the Taliban with Stinger missiles and an array of military supplies in the 1980s, when these terrorists were combatting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

During their 1996 to 2001 rule, the Taliban Mujahideen interfered with UN humanitarian shipments to famished men, women, and children, massacred Afghan civilians, scorched fertile land and destroyed thousands of homes. The Taliban was opposed by the Northern Alliance spearheaded by Russia, Iran, Turkey and India and then later used by the United States to defeat the Taliban and install its own compliant government, a puppet state amenable to secular liberal interests.

The Taliban consists of militants drawn primarily from Afghanistan itself. It is an indigenous nationalistic movement in favor of an Islamic government and opposed to the Western backed secular state in Afghanistan.

The Taliban is therefore a legitimate stake-holder having a legitimate claim to some share in a future Afghani government.

Al-Qaeda, on the other hand, consists primarily of educated Arabs, a few Afghans and a healthy contingent of Egyptians. Al-Qaeda was formed by an Arab, Osama Bin Laden, to spread global Jihad against liberal forces supported by the United States in favor of its ally, Israel. The Taliban invited Ben Laden to Afghanistan where they sheltered him as he planned terrorist attacks.