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Great Game Continues:

Khalilzad's Peace Agreement with Taliban Disastrous for Afghanistan

The people of Afghanistan for more than forty years have been the victims of the longest, complicated, and proxy war that began with the coup d'état of 1978. However, the climax of this war starts from the formation of Pakistan, intensified between the two neighbouring countries many times before 1978. In nearly two decades of war, which started when the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in October 2001, and toppled the Taliban for sheltering al-Qaeda and their leader, Osama bin Laden. The same year, the United Nations-sponsored Bonn conference established a process for democratic institutions in Afghanistan.

Was the al-Qaeda leader, bin Laden hiding after the US invasion in Afghanistan or in Pakistan? "Have we been told the truth about bin Laden's death?" Jane Corbin writes. "Mr Hersh claims that Pakistani intelligence - the ISI - were holding bin Laden prisoner for nearly six years in the garrison town of Abbott Abad, in the adjacent of ISI headquarter, and just handed him over to the Americans in a staged raid. According to Mr Hersh the official US account is therefore "fairy-tale." The conflict is also known as the US war in Afghanistan. Its public aims were to dismantle al-Qaeda and deny it a safe base of operations in Afghanistan by removing the Taliban from power. The US invasion of Afghanistan became the first phase of the War in Afghanistan.

What is the outcome of 19 years' war and US occupation for the people of Afghanistan?

That is the main question that needs to be addressed logically. Most people believe that virtually nothing, except a chaotic situation which throbs every one's heart in Afghanistan.

- More than 80 percent of population live under poverty line. Establishment of a corrupt regime, the so-called democratic institution. Political corruption is a major impediment towards alleviating poverty in Afghanistan. Over the years, there have been several incidents in which money allocated for development was misused or wasted. The most notorious example was the 2010 Kabul Bank scandal, in which one billion dollars disappeared from the largest private bank in the country in an orchestrated scheme that was carried out by a group of influential politicians and businessmen.

- **The alarming prevalence of drug use among adult men and women, adolescents, and children is facilitated through the cheap availability of opium and heroin in a country that produces 94% of the world's opiates. So how can the corrupt Government in Afghanistan claim that our people had some accomplishments in the last 19 years? There is not any hope to treat the ever-increasing population of drug addicts. If the current drug treatment system is only capable of accommodating a small fraction of the population, with a capacity of 10,216 users per year? While there are more than three million addicts in the country.**
- **Billions of dollars aid ended up in the pocket of a corrupt political elite. According to the recent UN assistance mission report on Afghanistan.**
- **Travel to all areas of Afghanistan is unsafe because of critical levels of kidnappings, hostage taking, suicide bombings, widespread military combat operations, landmines, and terrorist and insurgent attacks, including attacks using vehicle-borne, magnetic, or other improvised explosive devices (IEDs), suicide vests.**
- **After 18 years of fighting, the Afghan war is at a deadly stalemate. Afghanistan is divided among government forces backed by international troops, the Taliban and its militant allies, the Islamic State (IS) extremist group, and a collection of smaller foreign terrorist groups.**
- **Another incident occurred in 2015 when the Ministry of Education was found falsifying data and statistics to steal international funding. These incidents erode confidence in the international community, but more importantly, they take resources away from people in the country who desperately need it.**
- **Reliance on the war economy is one of the other significant causes of poverty in Afghanistan. There are temporary benefits for some, but this system discourages development and sustainable services for everyone in the country.**
- **How the Taliban insurgents in certain provinces of Afghanistan continued operating despite being defeated and taking refuge in Pakistan? In 2016, 76 percent of U.S. aid to Afghanistan went to peacekeeping, counterterrorism, and security sector reform. Though the military and police force have provided training and employment for local Afghans, military presence in Afghanistan has created what some call a "war economy" in which military is relied on to provide economic support for a local population.**
- **As of 2014, 39 percent of Afghans lived below the poverty line. Afghans in poverty are substantially less likely to have access to electricity, safe drinking water and sanitation. Though Afghanistan is one of the top recipients of international aid, poverty is getting worse. In 2014, 1.3 million more Afghans were poor than in 2012. Money is flowing into the country, but broken institutions and violence hinder the development process.**
- **Between 2009 and June 2016 civilian casualties reached 63934. Another report shows that half of Afghanistan's territory experiences war and violence daily. In 18 years, US occupation, over 150,000 people were Killed, of which 75 thousand during Ashraf Ghan's tenure, thousands were maimed and incapacitated. There is often large uncertainty about the number of deaths, almost certainly an underestimate.**
- **These death toll estimates vary due to lack of consensus as to the demographic size of the native population, which some say might never be accurately determined.**

Modern scholars tend to side with the higher estimates, but there is still variance based on calculation methods used.

- Hundreds of prostitution houses were set up around the country and in Kabul due to poverty and intentional spread of meretricious culture.

Continuation of Great Game:

The great game continues at this stage in the name of peace agreement with the Taliban in Doha before it was under the name of fighting terrorism. Pakistan has always been harbouring a haven for Taliban terrorists who were toppled in a rhetoric by US and Government of Afghanistan.

According to reliable sources the Taliban split deeply into two parts. The negotiating team in Doha and those who disagree with the peace agreement signed with the United States such as field commanders in various provinces in the east, north and south, have made the split virtually undeniable. The main reason is that the Taliban, who are in Pakistan and Afghanistan, especially on the battlefields, are sceptical of the possibility of a Doha agreement signed between Khalilzad and the Taliban leaders. Political analysts believe that these divisions among the Taliban have made it difficult for the group to reach a peaceful understanding with Kabul government, especially the delegation sent to Qatar. It is a delicate situation. The reason is being a proxy peace in which US and Pakistan has been involved behind the scenes and not Taliban and the people of Afghanistan.

US special envoy Khalilzad, who has continually misled the people of Afghanistan and the US administration since the Bonn conference due to his ethnic affiliation, favouring a Pashtun to be at the top of government structure. Khalilzad has been involved for years in this unending scenario as a major manipulator deceiving the people of Afghanistan and the United States. The outcome of the current chaotic situation is mainly because of his continuous interference in every decision-making process for Afghanistan. That is why he is not considered a trustworthy person, keeping his previous work in perspective. Even common people, independent politicians and impartial analysts look at him as a failed envoy in the issues of Afghanistan. Since the Bonn conference he has been giving wrong and misleading advice to the US administration about how to handle the current and newly emerged problems in Afghanistan.

The Taliban leadership in Doha, Pakistani intelligence, and Mr. Khalilzad, are trying to keep the split secret and manageable, but it is not working. Gen Miller's mission this week in western Farah province, like his recent stop at the Afghan military base in the walled Qala-i-Jangi fortress in northern Balkh province, was part of increased efforts to provide continued U.S. support for the beleaguered Afghans signalling forces - even when the clock is ticking and there is a cascade of contradicting statements from Washington about when to withdraw. Tens of thousands have fled their homes after fighting broke out in Helmand province this month.

If many Taliban fighters fighting inside do not trust the Qatari Taliban and consider them American mercenaries, traitors to the values of Jihad and Islam. Then the intensity of violence will drastically and spectacularly will expand around the country. Taliban attack has intensified even inside Kabul city, at least 24 people were killed, and dozens

wounded on Saturday's suicide bomb attack outside an education centre in Dashte-Barchi area, west of Kabul.

The splinter group says why the full text of the agreement with Khalilzad is not disclosed. The splitters have sparked intense fighting and the Taliban's commitment to US officials to sever ties with ISIS and al-Qaeda has not been fulfilled. At present, Taliban fighters inside the country, instead of opposing al-Qaeda and ISIS, have strengthened, and increased their relations with these two terrorist organizations.

Some even believe that complex suicide attacks are jointly planned and carried out in collaboration with the Haqqani Group and ISIS, and that the attacks carried out by the Haqqani group alone are the responsibility of ISIS because there is a common understanding between the two groups. Haqqani group was previously praised as heroes of Pakistan, by General Musharraf.

Due to this split, the fighting has intensified, and unfortunately, about 9,000 to 10,000 foreign terrorist groups operating with the Taliban have also declared their support for the splinter group, which opposed the Taliban's agreement with the United States. If supposedly an agreement is reached between the Afghan government and the Taliban, foreign fighters and the Taliban splinter group will continue to fight in Afghanistan. Therefore, any expectation for peace seems unrealistic.

The Taliban are optimistic and hopeful that Mr. Trump will return to the White House. The Taliban owe a debt of gratitude to Trump in the Afghan peace talks. The United States gave the Taliban the right to sign a peace agreement with the Taliban without Washington consulting and interfering with the Kabul government. Although the United States had signed a security agreement with the Afghan government, it gave them special privileges by signing a peace agreement with the Taliban. Taking this advantage, the Taliban feel superior, and their representatives officially declare that we are negotiating peace and the future of Afghanistan with various groups in Afghanistan, not with the Kabul government. The Taliban see Trump's re-election victory as a good time to seize power and persuade various groups to join them in Afghanistan. They call the current situation in their favour and in the interest of the United States. The signing of the peace agreement has provoked a desire for power in the Taliban's mind. They are more tolerant of US troops and more ruthless of their compatriots.

The Taliban do not know that signing the agreement two weeks after the US election will be to their detriment. The United States has signed a peace agreement with the Taliban, regardless of the role of the regional and international organizations, realising that Taliban do not have a popular base. People are sensitive to the Taliban's anti-civilization and backwardness, according to some analysts. But now it some wheeling and dealing of the Kabul government is presumably not very mysterious. Double dealing cannot be excluded in this new Scenario of proxy peace which be revealed soon.

Signing an agreement with the Taliban, a banned organization at the United Nations, was a one-time use for Trump election propaganda. The American people and the dignified departure of "brave" soldiers have been used. The United States also recognizes that the Taliban are dispersed and that several Taliban have joined ISIS/ISIL under the name of Taliban and continue their destructive activities.

Announcing the withdrawal of US troops is a new strategy in the US military, political and economic program. The United States has a long-term strategic interest in Afghanistan. The United States wants to control the situation in the region through Afghanistan. US interests require Afghanistan to strike at rivals such as China, Russia, and Iran. Central Asian countries are Russia's security, strategic and economic arteries.

Mr. Trump promised his people four years ago that he would end the American longest war in Afghanistan at a cost of 1,200 billion US dollars and its Western allies and the loss of 3,500 troops, which is spent only in the military and security spheres. This should be considered a futile and failed war for unbridled American liberalism. As can be seen from the Doha negotiation process, both sides have proposals in their trade that are in conflict based on human values. It is impossible for them to obey each other's wishes. In that case, if the peace meeting fails, victory will be for the Taliban, Pakistan, and other Pakistani Deobandi Religious Madrassas. Both the people and the West will oppose this principle. To this end, the United States will propose a plan to form a transitional government, including Mujaheddins, the Taliban, Western and domestic democrats, or a division of power to resolve the conflict! On the other hand, the United States does not want to leave the region alone free of charge to its opponents in Russia, China and Iran, in any case, it will pursue its ultimate goal of a puppet state, according to some analysts. It is possible that the Americans will even change their policy towards their troops 180 degrees, even in the re-election of Trump and his opponent Joe Biden president.

The reason why the intelligence networks are silently watching the Doha talks is because they may be attached to this mysterious nut. The Qatar talks are a clear example of proxy peace. We saw that the negotiators failed to hold a meeting for more than a month; but when Khalilzad met with the Taliban representative in Doha, he realized the challenge and went to Pakistan, where the first general meeting was held after his visit to Pakistan. The Taliban did not comply with the Afghan government's request, but after meeting with Mullah Baradar, Khalilzad said that he and Scott Miller, commander of the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, had agreed with the Taliban on new issues on which he expected the violence in Afghanistan to end. This is apart from the extent to which the Arab countries' intelligence networks have been influential in the Doha summit, and Pakistan, Iran, Russia, and other countries have somewhat overshadowed it.

All this indicates the proxy war in Afghanistan, which has been imposed on the Afghan people in the name of fighting terrorism and the war against the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and ISIS. This, in fact, reveals the nature of Afghanistan's proxy peace and shows that Afghanistan's war and peace are both proxies. To end this war and to achieve peace, proxy approaches must be used to confront the symbolic two. The delegation does not in principle have the authority to end the war.

The war in Afghanistan ends when the external actors of the war agree on their strategic goals. It is evident from the concern expressed by Gen Scott Miller, who is the Resolute Support Mission commanded by NATO, "We are trying to prevent negative outcomes and keep bringing the situation to a place where Afghanistan is not facing civil war or even less stability than it is now,".However,not a single American soldier has been killed in Taliban attacks since February. However, the agreement's reference

to reducing violence against Afghans is vague and is now at the centre of conflicting interpretations and arguments.

Likewise, Afghan National Security Advisor Hamdullah Mohib stressed in an interview with Lyse Doucet.” We are doing everything we can to give peace with the Taliban a chance. The danger of civil war was "very likely", he stressed that the entire government was now "doing everything in its power to mitigate it.".

There is now a deep sense of uncertainty in Afghanistan about the future, including the outcome of the upcoming US election. Regardless of whether a Trump or Biden presidency emerges that brings different approaches to this crucial decline, it seems certain that the days of this mission are numbered.

But the descent into the chaotic civil war between armed factions after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 is also the top priority in Afghan minds, referring to the earlier campaign of Western-backed mujahideen against the Soviet-backed army in the 1980s. After 19 years, Afghanistan is returning to the era of mujahidin factional fighting after the collapse of the government of President Najibullah. That danger is looming over to experience a civil war worse than in 1990 because of the current proxy peace again in Afghanistan.

However, it can be concluded that without providing an opportunity for all people of Afghanistan to unitedly play their role in the peace process and formation of an inclusive government composed of all ethnic groups, peace will not be achieved and that will not be for the interest of any country including the United States.