

Trump: Afghanistan First

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For those who know from whence real power flows in America's political establishment, the uninterrupted continuation of America's 16 year war in Afghanistan came as no surprise.

For those voters who believed US President Donald Trump represented the public's desire to withdraw from multiple foreign wars and entanglements and place "America first," President Trump's announcement that not only would that not happen, but that these wars would be expanded, must have come as a surprise.

However, perhaps it is the first in a long series of hard lessons for the American public to learn – that no matter who they vote for in Washington, it is clear agendas are decided upon and pressed from elsewhere.

The Hill, in its article, "[5 takeaways from Trump's Afghan speech](#)," touched upon several points regarding President Trump's recent speech regarding Afghanistan, where the US currently has 8,400 troops deployed, and is poised to deploy thousands more.

The Hill reported:

Trump is expected to send nearly 4,000 more troops, but he neither divulged a number nor said how long additional U.S. forces would spend in the country.

"We will not talk about numbers of troops or our plans for future military activities," Trump said. "Conditions on the ground, not arbitrary timetables, will guide our strategy from now on. America's enemies must never know our plans. . . I will not say when we will attack, but attack we will."

This is in stark contrast to his campaign promises, which The Hill noted:

"Why are we continuing to train these Afghanis who then shoot our soldiers in the back? Afghanistan is a complete waste. Time to come home!" he wrote on Twitter in 2012.

The Hill also claims:

The United States has about 8,400 troops in Afghanistan now. The forces are on a dual mission of training, advising and assisting Afghan forces in their fight against the Taliban and conducting counterterrorism missions against groups such as al Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

And indeed, that is precisely what policymakers, politicians, and military leaders have stated regarding the Afghan conflict for well over a decade and a half – spanning the presidencies of George Bush, Barack Obama, and now Trump.

President Trump would claim that the goal was no longer withdrawal within a certain time frame, but would be dictated by conditions on the ground:

“A core pillar of our new strategy is a shift from a time-based approach to one based on conditions. I’ve said it many times how counterproductive it is for the United States to announce in advance the dates we intend to begin, or end, military options.”

The “conditions” apparently require the US-backed client regime in Kabul “to take ownership of their future,” despite claims that the US is not engaged in “nation building” countries in America’s “own image.” They are conditions that are – even at face value – contradictory and repetitive of promises made and broken by President Trump’s predecessor, former President Obama.

Flirting With Further War in Pakistan

President Trump – like Bush and Obama before him – also threatened neighboring Pakistan, accusing the nation of undermining its military presence in Afghanistan. President Trump would ultimately warn:

“We have been paying Pakistan billions and billions of dollars at the same time they are housing the terrorists that we are fighting. But that will have to change, and that will change immediately,” Trump vowed.

“It is time for Pakistan to demonstrate its commitment to civilization, order and to peace.”

In reality, the US never invaded Afghanistan nor remains there today to fight terrorism. The organizations that it is allegedly fighting are not funded or directed by Afghanistan, they are funded and directed by the United States’ closest and oldest allies in the Middle East – including Saudi Arabia and Qatar.



Instead, the US is occupying Afghanistan for the same reason the British Empire invaded and occupied it multiple times – in a bid to expand hegemony over Central and South Asia.

Afghanistan conveniently borders Iran, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and even China. A permanent US military presence in Afghanistan and control over the regime in Kabul, gives the US a springboard for direct and indirect geopolitical influence – including military operations – in all directions. Evidence indicates that exploiting this strategic foothold in this manner has already long-ago begun.

The US has sought to pressure Iran and Pakistan for decades, with long-drawn plans regarding both nations.

Regarding Pakistan, before the 2001 invasion of Afghanistan, the US had very few options in terms of coercing Islamabad. With the US military now on Pakistan's border and with special operations and unmanned drones regularly conducting missions within Pakistan's borders, Washington's ability to coerce and influence Islamabad has drastically increased.

Should President Trump announce direct military action against Pakistan for whatever reason, the US already conveniently has multiple military bases on its border to launch it from – bases that have developed their infrastructure over the course of 16 years and counting. Should the US decide to expand covert support for separatist movements the US is sponsoring within Pakistan currently, it can also do so conveniently from Afghanistan.

Target China

While it may not seem obvious at first – Washington's ability to project influence into Pakistan from Afghanistan poses a direct threat to China and its regional interests as well.

China's emerging One Belt One Road initiative includes extensive infrastructure in neighboring Pakistan involving ports, rail and roadways, pipelines, power production, and more.

The Gwadar Port in Pakistan's western Baluchistan province is located right at the center [of efforts by US-backed terrorists and opposition groups](#) to carve the entire region off from

Pakistan's control and establish an independent state.



Movements in Baluchistan – both political and militant – [have enjoyed immense US backing](#), including US National Endowment for Democracy programs promoting independence movements, political organizing, protests, and anti-government media.

Within the pages of US policy papers, policymakers have openly conspired to organized and array armed resistance against Islamabad in Baluchistan, noting how strategically compromising to both Pakistan and China's rise the move would be.

In a 2012 paper published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace titled, "[Pakistan: The Resurgence of Baluch Nationalism](#)" (PDF), it would be stated unequivocally that (emphasis added):

If Baluchistan were to become independent, would Pakistan be able to withstand another dismemberment—thirty-four years have passed since the secession of Bangladesh—and what effect would that have on regional stability? Pakistan would lose a major part of its natural resources and would become more dependent on the Middle East for its energy supplies. Although Baluchistan's resources are currently underexploited and benefit only the non-Baluch provinces, especially Punjab, these resources could undoubtedly contribute to the development of an independent Baluchistan.

Baluchistan's independence would also dash Islamabad's hopes for the Gwadar port and other related projects. Any chance that Pakistan would become more attractive to the rest of the world would be lost.

Not only would it be Pakistan's loss regarding the Gwadar Port, it would be China's loss as well, enhancing America's attempts to reassert regional primacy over Eurasia.

However, should US troops withdraw from Afghanistan – these plans would be seriously compromised, if not entirely foiled. Thus, yet another American president who promised to withdraw from the endless war in Afghanistan has predictably backtracked – and instead of fighting Al Qaeda and the so-called "Islamic State" (ISIS) at its source – in Saudi Arabia,

Qatar, or even Washington itself – President Trump has proposed to Americans to spend additional blood and treasure to fight them in Afghanistan.

And while President Trump has promised no “nation building,” it is clear that the conditions that must be met in order for the US to withdraw is the existence of a regime in Kabul created in America’s own image and beholden to US interests, including continuing efforts to undermine political stability in neighboring Iran, Pakistan’s Baluchistan region, and ultimately against China’s growing regional influence.

President Trump and his supporters find themselves standing next to a geopolitical chessboard where US special interests are engaged in a game for influence and domination in a region on the other side of the planet – a game in which they are not participants, but spectators.

The Hill would also quote President Trump as saying:

“My original instinct was to pull out, and historically I like following my instincts, but all of my life I’ve heard that decisions are much different when you sit behind the desk in the Oval Office.”

Indeed – when one sits behind the desk in the Oval Office, presidents realize they are spokespeople not for voters, but for unelected corporate-financier interests on Wall Street. Withdrawing from wars that are about long-term efforts to establish and expand global hegemony are not decisions Wall Street would be expected to make – because Wall Street is the benefactor of the trillions being spent on such an endeavor.

For voters, they should realize that the only “vote” they have that actually counts is when they open their wallets after receiving their monthly paycheck, and decide to pay it either to local businesses to strengthen their communities, or to large multi-billion dollar multinational corporations who have hijacked their nation, their resources, and their destiny.

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