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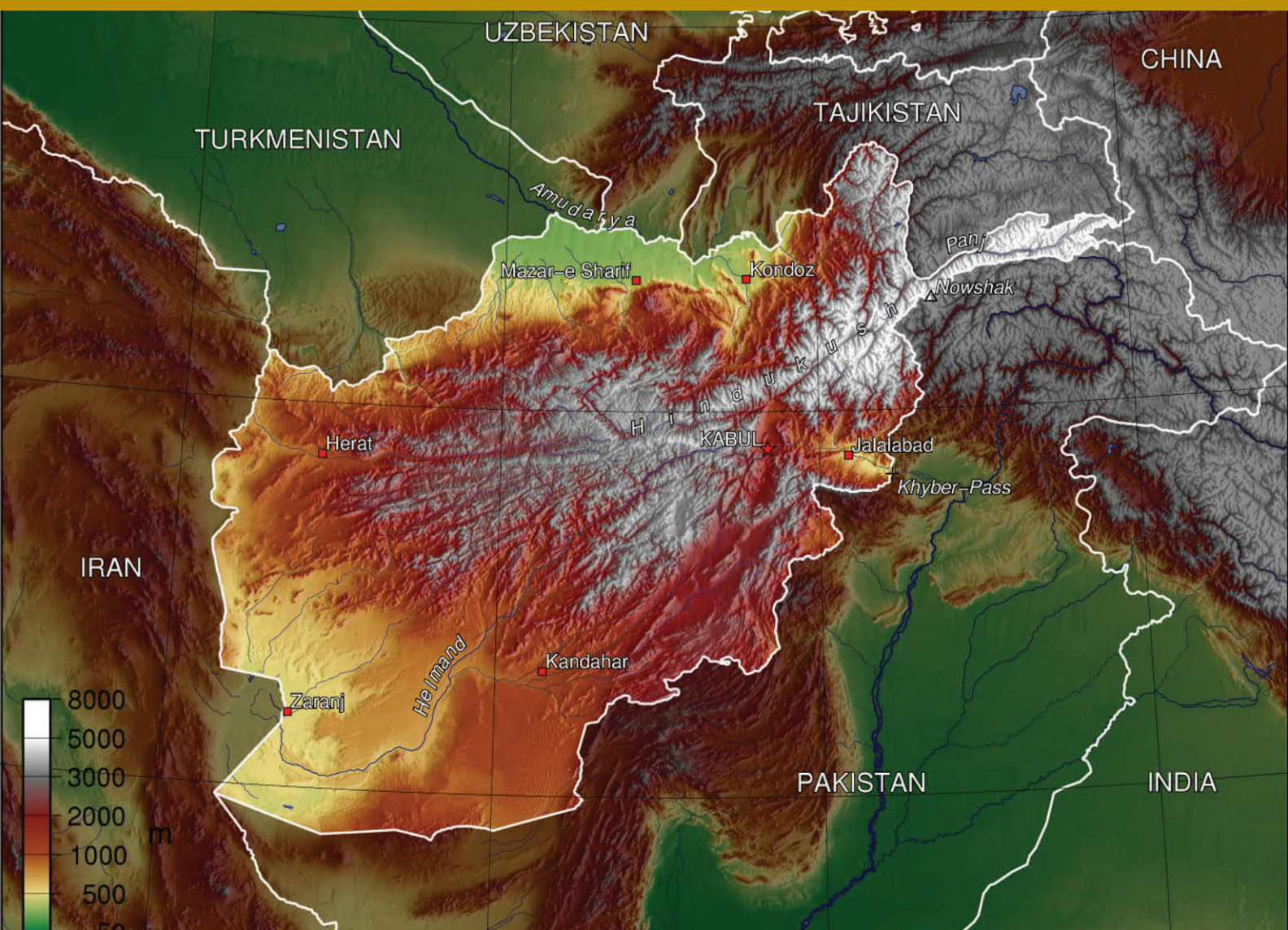
Will Afghanistan Trigger A Paradigm Change?



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Afghanistan at a Crossroads:

Graveyard for Empires or Start of a New Era?

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

July 10—After the hasty withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan—U.S. troops, except for a few security forces, were flown out in the dark of night without informing Afghan allies—this country has become, for the moment but likely not for long, the theater of world history. The news keeps pouring in: On the ground, the Taliban forces are making rapid territorial gains in the north and northeast of the country, which has already caused considerable tension and concern in Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, and they have captured the western border town Islam Qala, which handles significant trade flows with Iran. At the same time, intense diplomatic activity is ongoing among all those countries whose security interests are affected by the events in Afghanistan: Iran, Pakistan, India, Russia, China, to name only the most important.

Can an intra-Afghan solution be found? Can a civil war between the Afghan government and the Taliban be prevented? Can terrorist groups, such as ISIS, which is beginning to regain a hold in the north, and Al-Qaeda, be disbanded? Or will the war between Afghan factions continue, and with it the expansion of opium growing and export, and the global threat of Islamic terrorism? Will Afghanistan once again sink into violence and chaos, and become a threat not only to Russia and China, but even to the United States and Europe?

If these questions are to be answered in a positive sense, it is crucial that the United States and Europe first answer the question, with brutal honesty, of how the war in Afghanistan became such a catastrophic failure, a war waged for a total of 20 years by the United States, the strongest military power in the world, together with military forces from 50 other nations. More than 3,000 soldiers of NATO and allied forces, including 59 German soldiers, and a total of 180,000 people, including 43,000 civilians, lost their lives. This was at a financial cost for the U.S. of more than $2 trillion, and of €47 billion for Germany. Twenty years of horror in which, as is customary in war, all sides were involved in atrocities with destructive effects on their own lives, including the many soldiers who came home with post-traumatic stress disorders and have not been able to cope with life since. The Afghan civilian population, after ten years of war with the Soviets in the 1980s followed by a small break, then had to suffer another 20 years of war with an almost unimaginable series of torments.

It was clear from the start that this war could not be won. Implementation of NATO's mutual defense clause under Article 5 after the 9/11 terrorist attacks was based on the assumption that Osama bin Laden and the Taliban regime were behind those attacks, which would thus justify the war in Afghanistan.

But as U.S. Senator Bob Graham, the Chairman of the Congressional "Joint Inquiry into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001," repeatedly pointed out in 2014, the then-last two U.S. presidents, Bush and Obama, suppressed the truth about who had commissioned 9/11. And it was only because of that suppression that the threat to the world from ISIS then became possible. Graham said at a November 11, 2014 meeting in Florida:

> There continue to be some untold stories, some unanswered questions about 9/11. Maybe the most fundamental question is: Was 9/11 carried out by 19 individuals, operating in isolation, who, over a period of 20 months, were able to take the rough outlines of a plan that had been developed by Osama bin Laden, and convert it into a detailed working plan; to then practice that plan; and finally, to execute an extremely complex set of assignments? Let's think about those 19 people. Very few of them could speak English. Very few of them had even been in the United States before. The two chairs of the 9/11 Commission, Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton, have said

> that they think it is highly improbable that those 19 people could have done what they did, without some external support during the period that they were living in the United States. I strongly concur…. Where did they get their support?

This question has still not been answered in a satisfactory manner. The passing of the JASTA Act (Justice Against State Sponsors of Terrorism) in the U.S., the disclosure of the 28 previously classified pages of the Joint Congressional Inquiry report into 9/11 that were kept secret for so long, and the lawsuit that the families of the 9/11 victims filed against the Saudi government delivered sufficient evidence of the actual financial support for the attacks. But the investigation of all these leads was delayed with bureaucratic means.

The only reason the inconsistencies around 9/11 are mentioned here, is to point to the fact that the entire definition of the enemy in this war was, in fact, wrong from the start. In a white paper on Afghanistan published by the BüSo (Civil Rights Movement Solidarity in Germany) in 2010, we pointed out that a war in which the goal has not been correctly defined, can hardly be won, and we demanded, at the time, the immediate withdrawal of the German Army.

Once the *Washington Post* published the 2,000-page "Afghanistan Papers" in 2019 first under the title "At War with the Truth," at the latest, this war should have ended. They revealed that this war had been an absolute disaster from the start, and that all the statements made by the U.S. military about the alleged progress made were deliberate lies. The investigative journalist Craig Whitlock, who published the results of his three years of research, including the use of documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and statements from 400 insiders, demonstrated the absolute incompetence with which this war was waged.

Then, there were the stunning statements of Lt. Gen. Douglas Lute, the Afghanistan czar under the Bush and Obama administrations, who in an internal hearing before the "Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction" in 2014 had said:

> We were devoid of a fundamental understanding of Afghanistan—we didn't know what we were doing.… What are we trying to do here? We didn't have the foggiest notion of what we were undertaking…. If the American people knew the magnitude of this dysfunction … who would say that it was all in vain?

After these documents were published, nothing happened. The war continued. President Trump attempted to bring the troops home, but his attempt was essentially undermined by the U.S. military. It's only now, that the priority has shifted to the Indo-Pacific and to the containment of China and the encirclement of Russia that this absolutely pointless war was ended, at least as far as the participation of foreign forces is concerned.

September 11th brought the world not only the Afghanistan War but also the Patriot Act a few weeks later, and with it the pretext for the surveillance state that Edward Snowden has shed light on. The Patriot Act revoked a significant part of the civil rights that were among the most outstanding achievements of the American Revolution, and enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, and it undermined the nature of the United States as a republic.

At the same time, the five principles of peaceful coexistence, which are the essence of international law and of the UN Charter, were replaced by an increasing emphasis on the "rules-based order," which reflects the interests and the defense of the privileges of the trans-Atlantic establishment. Tony Blair had already set the tone for such a rejection of the principles of the Peace of Westphalia and international law two years earlier in his infamous speech in Chicago, which provided the theoretical justification for the "endless wars"—i.e., the interventionist wars carried out under the pretext of the "responsibility to protect" (R2P), a new kind of crusade, in which "Western values," "democracy" and "human rights" are supposed to be transferred—with swords or with drones and bombs—to cultures and nations that come from completely different civilizational traditions.

Therefore, the disastrous failure of the Afghanistan war—after the failure of the previous ones, the Vietnam war, the Iraq war, the Libya war, the Syria war, the Yemen war—must urgently become the turning point for a complete shift in direction from the past 20 years.

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic at the very latest, an outbreak that was absolutely foreseeable and that Lyndon LaRouche had forecast in principle as early as 1973, a fundamental debate should have been launched on the flawed axiomatics of the Western liberal model. The privatization of all aspects of healthcare systems has certainly brought lucrative profits to investors, but the economic damage inflicted, and the number of deaths and long-term health prob-

lems have brutally exposed the weak points of these systems.

The strategic turbulence caused by the withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan, offers an excellent opportunity for a reassessment of the situation, for a correction of political direction and a new solution-oriented policy. The long tradition of geopolitical manipulation of this region, in which Afghanistan represents in a certain sense the interface, from the 19th Century "Great Game" of the British Empire to the "arc of crisis" of Bernard Lewis and Zbigniew Brzezinski, must be buried once and for all, never to be revived. Instead, all the neighbors in the region—Russia, China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States and Turkey—must be integrated into an economic development strategy that represents a common interest among these countries, one that is defined by a higher order, and is more attractive than the continuation of the respective supposed national interests.

This higher level represents the development of a trans-national infrastructure, large-scale industrialization and modern agriculture for the whole of Southwest Asia, as it was presented in 1997 by *EIR* and the Schiller Institute in special reports and then in the study *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*. There is also a comprehensive Russian study from 2014, which Russia intended to present at a summit as a member of the G8, before it was excluded from that group.

In February of this year, the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Uzbekistan agreed on the construction of a railway line from Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, via Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul, Afghanistan, to Peshawar in Pakistan. An application for funding from the World Bank was submitted in April. At the same time, the construction of a highway, the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor, between Peshawar, Kabul and Dushanbe was agreed to by Pakistan and Afghanistan. It will serve as a continuation of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a showcase project of the Chinese BRI.

These transportation lines must be developed into effective development corridors and an east-west connection between China, Central Asia, Russia, and Europe as well as a north-south infrastructure network from Russia, Kazakhstan and China to Gwadar, Pakistan on the Arabian Sea—all need to be implemented.

All these projects pose considerable engineering challenges—just consider the totally rugged landscape of large parts of Afghanistan—but the shared vision of overcoming poverty and underdevelopment combined with the expertise and cooperation of the best engineers in China, Russia, the U.S.A., and Europe really can "move mountains" in a figurative sense. The combination of the World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) New Development Bank, New Silk Road Fund, and national lenders could provide the necessary lines of credit.

Such a development perspective, including for agriculture, would also provide an alternative to the massive drug production plaguing this region. At this point, over 80% of global opium production comes from Afghanistan, and about 10% of the local population is currently addicted, while Russia not so long ago defined its biggest national security problem as drug exports from Afghanistan, which as of 2014 was killing 40,000 people per year in Russia. The realization of an alternative to drug cultivation is in the fundamental interest of the entire world.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the risk of further pandemics have dramatically underscored the need to build modern health systems in every single country on Earth, if we are to prevent the most neglected countries from becoming breeding grounds for new mutations, which would defeat all the efforts made so far. The construction of modern hospitals, the training of doctors and nursing staff, and the necessary infrastructural prerequisites are therefore just as much in the interests of all political groups in Afghanistan and of all countries in the region, as of the so-called developed countries.

For all these reasons, the future development of Afghanistan represents a fork in the road for all mankind. At the same time, it is a perfect demonstration of the opportunity that lies in the application of the Cusan principle of the *Coincidentia Oppositorum,* the coincidence of opposites. Remaining on the level of the contradictions in the supposed interests of all the nations concerned—India-Pakistan, China-U.S.A., Iran-Saudi Arabia, Turkey-Russia—there are no solutions.

If, on the other hand, one considers the common interests of all—overcoming terrorism and the drug plague, lasting victory over the dangers of pandemics, ending the refugee crises—then the solution is obvious. The most important aspect, however, is the question of the path we as humanity choose—whether we want to plunge further into a dark age, and potentially even risk our existence as a species, or whether we want to shape a truly human century together. In Afghanistan, it holds true more than anywhere else in the world: The new name for peace is development!

Afghanistan: Terrorism, War and Drugs —Or Peace Through Development

by Mike Billington

July 17—The editorial in the July 16 issue of *EIR* by Helga Zepp-LaRouche posed the issue facing humanity in the wake of the failure and collapse of the 20-year NATO war in Afghanistan:

> The strategic turbulence caused by the withdrawal of NATO troops from Afghanistan, offers an excellent opportunity for a reassessment of the situation, for a correction of political direction and a new solution-oriented policy. The long tradition of geopolitical manipulation of this region—in which Afghanistan represents in a certain sense the interface from the 19th century "Great Game" of the British Empire to the "arc of crisis" of Bernard Lewis and Zbigniew Brzezinski—must be buried once and for all, never to be revived. Instead, all the neighbors in the region—Russia, China, India, Iran, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States and Turkey—must be integrated into an economic development strategy that represents a common interest among these countries, one that is defined by a higher order, and is more attractive than the continuation of the respective supposed national interests.

Were Afghanistan to be left in the hands of drug lords and their armies following the withdrawal of NATO forces, every man, woman and child in the world would feel the impact, given the fact that a destabilized Afghanistan would continue as the source of 80% of the world's opium and as a training ground for ISIS and al-Qaeda.

The only option which could prevent such a disaster is that referenced by Zepp-LaRouche, and proposed by her husband, the late Lyndon LaRouche, even before George W. Bush launched the war on Afghanistan 20 years ago—that is, to allow Afghanistan to end its history as the "graveyard of empires," and to become the hub for an expanded New Silk Road, with rail lines connecting the landlocked countries of Central Asia to the ocean via a north-south rail line through Kabul and Pakistan, as well as east-west connections following the ancient Silk Road.

Russian Railway Proposal for Afghanistan's Regional Development

The map shows part of the Russian Railway proposal. Existing rail is in black, proposed rail is in orange. These rail lines are part of a north-south development corridor from Omsk, Russia to Karachi, Pakistan, intersecting or paralleling planned Chinese Silk Road Economic Belt railroads in both Central Asia and Pakistan. The Russian proposal was published in the 2014 EIR *Special Report, "The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge."*

LaRouche's proposals began with the necessity that all the countries in the region meet and cooperate with

the Afghans to integrate development of the entire region, to the benefit of all. There are now, over this past week, developments which convey the very real potential that such cooperation and integration is possible. The U.S. military withdrawal after 20 years of useless, destructive, deadly warfare, has sparked actions by all of the regional nations, which came together in a series of meetings this week largely focused on the urgency of bringing real development to Afghanistan. These included:

The foreign ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which includes China, Russia, India, Pakistan and four of the Central Asian "stans," as well as ten other nations as Observers or Dialogue Partners, met in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on July 13-14. At the center of the discussions, including the sideline discussions, was the idea that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) could be extended, branching out from the rail line running from China through Pakistan to the Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea. From Islamabad, the branch would pass westward through Peshawar, the Khyber Pass, to Kabul, Afghanistan, then onward north to Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and eventually on to the Eurasian Land-Bridge lines connecting China to Europe.

This plan was launched in February in a meeting of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan, who called the plan the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor. A proposal has been submitted to the World Bank, although the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and other Asian credit institutions could also become involved. In that light, Pakistan this week proposed the creation of an SCO investment bank. Pakistan and Afghanistan have also agreed to the construction of a highway from Kabul to Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

Preceding the SCO forum, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited Turkmenistan, which is not a member of the SCO, but has a border with Afghanistan, to consolidate security and energy cooperation. Turkmenistan is China's largest supplier of natural gas, through a series of pipelines which run through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.

On July 15-16, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan travelled to Uzbekistan to meet with President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Their Joint Statement declared that "regional integration and connectivity" was the "cornerstone of economic development and progress," and reiterated their support for the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor project.

Also on July 15-16, the "International Conference on Central and South Asia Regional Connectivity, Challenges and Opportunities" was held in Tashkent, with representatives of 40 regional and international governments attending. Uzbekistan began organizing this event following the February launching of the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor. Dilshod Saidjanov, an Uzbek official, told India's ANI: "Economic development is the way to make Afghanistan stronger and probably more peaceful. Everyone wants better development in Afghanistan."

Development Must Proceed Politics

Diplomatic efforts to resolve the political crisis are also taking place, aimed at bringing the Taliban and the Afghan government, currently led by a shared leadership of Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah, to an agreement for a peaceful settlement of the war and to create some form of shared power. It is clear to all that without a development program which uplifts the entire population, such a political agreement would be stillborn. Meetings in Doha, Qatar sponsored by the United States, between the Taliban and the Afghan government, began in 2018, with the U.S. represented by former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Zalmay Khalilzad, an Afghan-American.

There has been little progress, if any. A new round of talks began on July 17 under the current, dramatically changed circumstance. Abdullah Abdullah called for serious efforts toward an agreement, saying, "We cannot pay the price for this in blood and we cannot escape responsibility for it." Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Taliban's deputy leader and negotiator, pledged that "the Taliban will make efforts for talks to have positive result."

Will the U.S. join the efforts for development? Lyndon LaRouche has famously argued that resolving intractable conflicts must put real development ahead of political agreements, addressing the common needs of both sides for economic well-being before a political agreement can be sustained. China's Belt and Road Initiative, which evolved from LaRouche's proposal following the collapse of the Soviet Union for a "New Silk Road" to unite the nations of Eurasia in shared development, is based on that principle.

But the British and the "war party" in the U.S., subsuming most of both political parties, are working in high gear to prevent any U.S. positive engagement with this regional development policy, instead escalating the anti-China hysteria, wildly accusing China of genocide and declaring the Belt and Road to be a devious plot to take over the world.

There is a sliver of hope, however, that the Biden Administration will take the sane approach of cooperation in development. A State Department release on July 16 was titled, "Announcing the U.S.-Afghanistan-Uzbekistan-Pakistan Quad Regional Support for Afghanistan-Peace Process and Post Settlement." These are indeed the nations through which the Khyber Pass Economic Corridor would pass. The announcement states that "the parties intend to cooperate to expand trade, build transit links, and strengthen business-to-business ties." The U.S. did send significant representatives to the July 15-16 Tashkent Conference referenced above—both Zalmay Khalilzad and the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security, Dr. Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall. However, it is not at all certain whether they are following the State Department policy of demonizing China and the Belt and Road, or if they are listening to the nations in the region calling for international cooperation to actually transform Afghanistan.

According to CGTN, Foreign Minister Wang Yi, in his presentations and private meetings at the SCO Foreign Minster meeting, pressed the group to weigh in on the United States to join in on the reconstruction of Afghanistan. He noted that the U.S. recently expressed its readiness to help Afghanistan maintain stability and conduct a peaceful reconstruction following the US and NATO withdrawal, so the SCO member states should urge the U.S. to honor such commitments.

Such a shift from the now-normal U.S. policies of sanctions, wars and regime change subversion should be strongly encouraged. President Joe Biden's engagement with Russia's President Vladimir Putin—despite equally vitriolic denunciations and sanctions from the Congress and from within his own administration against Russia as against China—could and should be repeated with China and President Xi Jinping. The Afghani Ambassador to China, Javid Ahmad Qaem, was quoted in *Global Times* July 17:

> The only place where the U.S., China, and India could really cooperate, or at least there could be a starting point to cooperate between these rivals, if I can call them that, is Afghanistan.

An international agreement to cooperate with Afghanistan and its neighbors to transform the region into a central hub for the global Belt and Road process would also serve as a model for other crisis spots, including the war-ruined nations of Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. This is the principle of the Schiller Institute's "Coincidence of Opposites"—bringing seemingly irreconcilable conflicts to an end by addressing the higher-order principle located in the common interests of all people, for peace through development. Such an optimistic approach may seem impossible, but the alternative is unthinkable. Humanity has risen up out of Dark Ages in the past, creating a renaissance when nothing less could work. This moment must find a people armed with no less than the creative will required to build such a new Renaissance.

LAROUCHE ON AFGHANISTAN IN 2009

‘No Alternative to Total Victory’—Over the British Empire

July 18— Only weeks after Barack Obama was sworn in as President of the United States, he announced a new U.S. policy for Afghanistan on March 27, 2009. With the American generals fighting the war in Afghanistan standing by, Obama said, “The situation is increasingly perilous.” He noted that it had been more than seven years, yet war was raging on, and attacks had risen steadily. Given that, “2008 was the deadliest year of the war for American forces,” people who have sacrificed, “have a simple question: What is our purpose in Afghanistan? After so many years, they ask, why do our men and women still fight and die there? And they deserve a straightforward answer.”

And what was that answer? Why, to fight terrorism, of course. Therefore, Obama said, we will continue to do exactly what we have been doing, which had failed utterly, only more so. He ordered 17,000 additional troops to be deployed to Afghanistan, promising that would solve the seven years of failure.

Lyndon LaRouche responded to the madness with the truth, which has been so totally ignored over the past 20 years of blood and destruction in Afghanistan, saying in the summer of 2009, “The British have lured us into this trap, and they want us to stay there until we have failed altogether.” He noted that, since the time of the Seven Years War (1757-1763), when the British Empire first emerged in its current form, the British have pursued a policy of inducing targeted nations to destroy themselves, by being trapped into wars they have no business fighting.

LaRouche elaborated:

> The British manipulate the United States from the outside—not through some little conspiratorial cabal. Look at the case of Vietnam: When President John F. Kennedy accepted the wise advice of top American retired generals, including Douglas MacArthur and Dwight Eisenhower, that the United States should never get caught in a land-war in Asia, and began plans to withdraw U.S. forces from Indochina, the British assassinated him. After that, as Lyndon Johnson candidly admitted in his final interview before his death, JFK’s successor plunged headlong into Vietnam—out of fear of the assassins’ bullets that took down Kennedy.
>
> Now, we are once again being lured into a land war in Asia. It is Vietnam all over again, and the British are pushing us in, deeper and deeper. The enemy is not, fundamentally, the Taliban and al-Qaeda. The real enemy, the real threat, comes from the British Empire. If you don’t have a top-down understanding of the role of the British, and the specific kinds of manipulations they run—like Tony Blair’s “sexed-up” Iraq disinformation dossiers in 2002—you will almost invariably fall into the trap.
>
> Every war, since the middle of the 18th Century, that has erupted, anywhere on the planet, has been manipulated by the British. That is how they operate. They exploit the ideological blinders, the petty hatreds, and induce nations to self-destruct. Often, they take actions that appear to jeopardize Britain itself, to win their objectives. This is what the Harold Wilson government did in 1967-68, when they wrecked the pound sterling. They did it to induce the United States to abandon the Bretton Woods System altogether—which is exactly what Richard Nixon, under the sway of George Shultz and Henry Kissinger, did in 1971.
>
> In 1992, again, the British had their little Nazi-collaborator puppet, George Soros, run a $2 billion attack on the pound sterling, which busted up the quasi-fixed-exchange European Rate Mechanism. The breakup of the ERM was the pivotal event, that opened up continental Europe for self-destruction, under the Maastricht Treaty.
>
> This is how the British Empire operates. And unless some people around the White House wise up soon, the United States is going to be dragged even deeper into a catastrophic failure in Afghanistan. There is no alternative to victory—victory over the British Empire.

Geopolitics Always Was, and Still Is, Anti-American

by Harley Schlanger

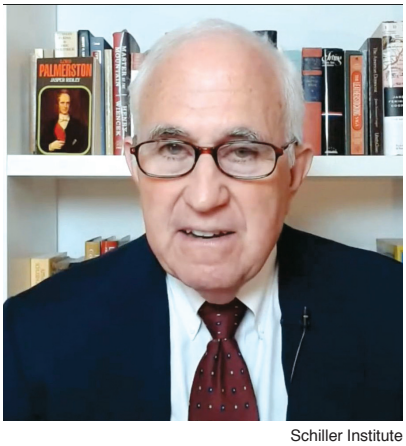
Mr. Schlanger produces the live daily TLO news and analysis report available here. He was a national spokesperson for the late Lyndon H. LaRouche. The following is an edited transcript of his presentation to The LaRouche Organization's July 10, 2021 webinar, "Will Afghanistan, the Graveyard of Empires Become the Cradle of Peace Through Development?" Subheads and hyperlinks have been added. The full meeting is available here.

If you've been following the coverage in the mainstream media, there's something quite odd. All of a sudden, the discussion is about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. We now face civil war, possible takeover by the Taliban, terrorist safe havens being set up, and drug trafficking coming out of Afghanistan. Story after story to promote fear, from the warhawks who have profited quite handsomely both in terms of increasing power and money, from the 20 years of war in Afghanistan.

My question for the reporters who are covering this is: "Where the hell have you been for the last 20 years, or even 30 years? When there *was* a civil war underway, when there was drug trafficking, when there was a terrorist haven that was there. Why the sudden discussion of this now, when it's clear that the 20-30 years of U.S. involvement in Afghanistan has been an abject failure? Or was it a failure?"

The civil war has been underway, and what the U.S. now is saying is, we'll remove our troops, NATO will leave. But we'll maintain an "over-the-horizon presence" in the Gulf states, so that the U.S. will still be able to play a role to prevent a total takeover by Taliban or some such formulation. And we'll bring in NATO member Turkey to provide a certain amount of stability.

Now, none of this changes the overall direction of what would best be called the Anglo-American policy, or the MICIMATT (Military-Industrial-Congressional-Intelligence-Media-Academia-Think Tank complex) as Ray McGovern, one of the founders of the VIPS (Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity) refers to it. The idea that we have to have a "rules-based order" based on the unilateral power of the Western military to impose the global financial control that has been the dominant force in the world, especially since the death of John F. Kennedy. So, there's no end to geopolitics; there may be a shift of emphasis or the arena in which the geopolitics is carried out. One of the arguments is that we're not leaving Afghanistan because we lost the war, but we need to free up American troops for the Pivot to Asia; the deployment into the Indo-China arena, as well as into NATO with Ukraine and the confrontation with Russia.



Schiller Institute

Harley Schlanger


Schiller Institute

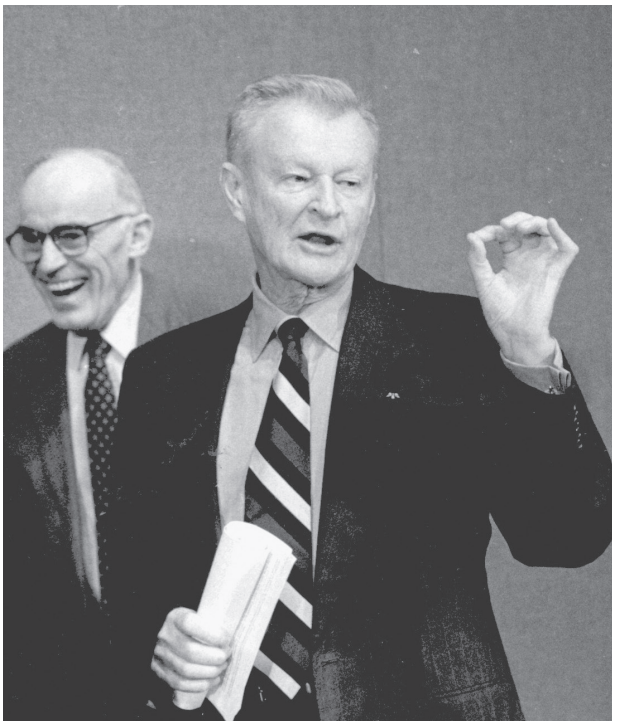
Ray McGovern

The Problem is Geopolitics

The important point that needs to be stressed here, which we'll be making today, is that, as Helga Zepp-LaRouche has emphasized, the problem is geopolitics.

It's the degree to which the United States has served as the dumb giant on a British leash. The speakers who speak after me will be talking about how we move away from this unilateralist approach to one of collaboration and cooperation among sovereign nation-states. They'll be developing that, especially around the role of the Belt and Road Initiative, which of course the unilateralists say is a threat to the rules-based order.

Now what I want to do is give you somewhat of an arc of history to locate this battle. Because the problem with most Americans is that the war that we're in is the war that we're fighting and has very little to do with anything except what the media says.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis, 1999

Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter.

But we've been lied to about every war we've been in since the end of World War II. The war on terror was a fraud from the beginning. The whole question of what actually happened on 9/11 has still not been answered: the role of the United States in supporting terrorists and arming them as in the case of Syria, and the use of these terrorists for regime-change operations. What we saw with the period of the war on terror, was a new phase of geopolitics in the era of globalization. This got its start with Zbigniew Brzezinski and the Carter administration, which was a Trilateral Commission administration. It was an administration run by the global banks in the United States—the Rockefellers and their allies in Europe, who were committed to a new world order: A globalized free trade system, with the United States military imposing the rules.

Brzezinski was the National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter. Last week, Dennis Speed gave you some interesting quotes from Brzezinski's interview in 1998 with *Le Nouvel Observateur,* where he openly bragged that the deployment of jihadists in Afghanistan against the Soviets was a design. That is, that he lured the Soviets into an invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 as a way of getting them caught up in a quagmire. He said this was a *good* policy; when he was asked if he regretted it, he said, no, absolutely not. Look at what we did. We brought down the Soviet Union. What he pointed out in that interview is that the U.S. aid to the jihadists, which became the Taliban, or the mujahideen as they were called at the time, began in July 1979, several months before the Soviets invaded.

The 'War on Terror' Is Modern Imperialism

Now, what was the issue then and the issue in the war on terror? It was, and is, geopolitics. It's the modern imperial strategy. It's how the great powers impose their will and manipulate not only weaker nations—manipulate nations into wars, into regime change, into submission to the rules-based order—but also how they can manipulate the population in the United States, in western Europe, to accept these policies, this geopolitics, as though there was some innate value in it, and some goodness for their own sovereign nation.

To understand geopolitics, you have to understand that it was a reaction to what? To the most important revolutionary event, probably, in world history, namely, the American Revolution. *This* became the starting point of a panic for the forces of the British Empire—at the time, the British East India Company, the nexus of bankers and philosophers which included people like Jeremy Bentham, who had to come up with a strategy to combat the United States. In the first part of the 19th century, it was war; the War of 1812, and later the operation to support the Confederacy in the Civil War. But that had to change.

Let me just give you a little bit of a sense of what

was going on in the 1850s when something was launched which we know today as the "Great Game," the contest between the British Empire and the Russian Empire in Afghanistan. Hussein Askary's presentation adds much important material on this matter.

What was going on by the 1850s? The British had a whole series of operations underway. The Crimean War in 1853 was Britain and France and Turkey against Russia. This is interesting because we're seeing Crimea again; the Black Sea is again an arena of so-called superpower confrontation. But the Crimean War was part of the Great Game. You had the second Opium War, where the British moved troops, and naval forces in particular, to defeat the Chinese and force them to accept British opium shipped from India. Then, you had the Civil War in the U.S.

Francis Cruikshank, 1855

British Prime Minister Lord Palmerston.

Twice UK Prime Minister in the mid-19th century, Lord Palmerston, who once famously said "We have no permanent friends, only permanent interests," was a key figure in shaping British policy. On January 1, 1861, Palmerston wrote a letter to Queen Victoria, in which he said, "There are decisive events for the future of the British Empire." He named three: The capture of Peking in China as part of the Opium War; secondly, the move toward unifying Italy under a monarch, which was part of the Young Europe operation launched by the British Empire; and third, and here's his quote: "The approaching and virtually accomplished dissolution in America of the great northern confederation," with the election of Lincoln.

This all fell apart with the victory of the North, and Lincoln's transcontinental rail project which created not just a continental power, but an economic force based on transportation, based on infrastructure, based on the idea that you can cover great distances by rail. This victory of the North and the industrialization that was a part of it, became a model for what happened in Europe in the second half of the 19th century, starting really with Bismarck in Germany. It included the Meiji Restoration in Japan; it included Sergei Witte in Russia with the Trans-Siberian Railroad; Hanotaux in France. What was beginning to occur was a shifting away from the power resting in the British Navy to the possibility of an alliance of sovereign nations engaging in trade using rail and development of ports and canals that threatened this British domination.

Who Controls the Heartland, Controls the World

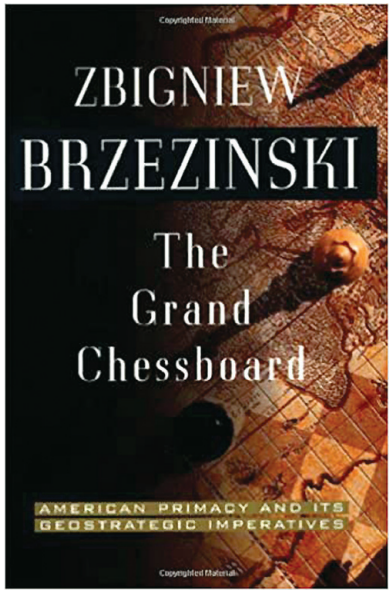
Geopolitics starts with this idea that there must never be an alliance between central and eastern Euro-

RIA Novosti/Yuri Somov

Soviet forces in Afghanistan, October 20, 1986.

pean nations and Eurasian nations, including Russia and China. This was the doctrine that paved the way for World War I and World War II. That's a longer story I won't go into now, but in the postwar period, the battle that FDR had with Churchill during the war—that is, that the United States was committed to ending colonialism after the war, whereas the British intended to continue a world of colonialism.

The battle continued with Eisenhower when he turned against the British plan to capture the Suez Canal in 1956. John F. Kennedy, when he began to consider, instead of going to war with Russia, or having a constant arms race, instead, what about détente? Kennedy was seen as such an existential threat to the British Empire that he was assassinated. After the Kennedy period, you have the emergence of two geopoliticians—Henry Kissinger, and Zbigniew Brzezinski.



Brzezinski's idea was that there's an "arc of crisis," which the West can exploit to bring down the Soviet Union. In his initial writings, he talked about it as the area of the Indian Ocean; he later refined that to the Transcaucasus and Central Asia. But the idea was, that you could use an Islamic uprising—that is, of the Islamic peoples in the Transcaucasus, in Afghanistan, in Iran—against the Soviet Union, because some of these populations lived within what at the time was the Soviet Union. In his memoirs, he writes that he began to press the "arc of crisis" thesis to reassert U.S. power in the region, something which he admitted would be a new version of the British imperial Great Game.

Now Brzezinski was taking a lot of this from the studies he'd done on the work of Bernard Lewis, who was one of the pioneers of this idea of the arc of crisis. In 1997, Brzezinski published a book called *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives.* In it, he admits his predecessor was Halford Mackinder, who is credited with creating the British school of geopolitics. He said, for him as for Mackinder, the prize is Eurasia. He explicitly refers in this book to the extension of the arc of crisis into Central Asia. He says, "This is a repeat of the Great Game."

In *The Grand Chessboard,* Brzezinski writes, "The specter of a potential conflict with the Islamic states along Russia's entire southern flank has to be a source of serious concern." He knew that riling it up in Afghanistan would bring in the Soviets. What the U.S. did in Afghanistan was, provide weapons, training, but especially weapons, to the mujahideen, which later became the Taliban and also al-Qaeda, the Osama bin Laden network.

What Kind of Lunatics?

When you understand this, you have to ask yourself, "What kind of lunatics were they, that they would make this alliance? And would treat the Muslim populations in this region as though they were all insane jihadists?" Because that's the underlying reality here, the argument that many Americans believe: that you can't have peace in the Middle East because the Muslims are crazy. Therefore, we have to have a military option.

This is the whole basis of the War on Terror. Ignoring the fact that the people who are most likely morally responsible for 9/11 were coordinating in one way or another with CIA and U.S. and British intelligence networks. The War on Terror also brought us the security state in the United States, the surveillance state. And the total destabilization of Southwest Asia with regime changes—in 2011 in Libya.

What was Libya's crime? They were breaking away from the idea of being part of a confrontation with the West; they were concentrating on using their oil wealth to build their nation. What's wrong with that? That goes against the British control. We had the civil war in Syria started in the same year. You had the regime change in Ukraine in 2014. In 2017, with the inauguration of Donald Trump, with his commitment, as he said at the time, to be friends with Russia and China, a regime change operation was launched in the United States *by the very same networks,* to bring down Donald Trump.

Where do we stand today with the retreat or the withdrawal from Afghanistan? The Republicans are

now saying that this is an example of Biden's weakness. Well, these are the same Republicans who say they want to bring back Trump. But Trump had said, and continues to say, we should be friends with Russia. The China issue is a little more complex, because he used that to try to cover for the problems in the United States with the COVID crisis. But again, the geopolitics of this is, are we going to have collaborative relations with Russia and China? Or are we going to have confrontation and provocations as we have going on today in the Black Sea and in the South China Sea?

USMC/Joseph R. Chenelly

U.S. Marines after seizing a Taliban forward operating base, November 25, 2001.

The Physical Economy Is Being Collapsed

What's behind the geopolitics? It's the collapse of the financial system; it's the effort by the Davos billionaires, by Wall Street and the City of London, to push through something called the Great Reset, which is to take away the sovereignty of every nation, and give those powers control over economic policy, control over monetary policy, hand that to international bankers and financial institutions and the shadow banking system so that they can run bail-outs for themselves, while imposing austerity on every nation on the planet without people in those nations having an ability to fight back. Because their elected representatives no longer have the power of the budget. The biggest problems for this Great Reset, and the Green New Deal which is a part of it, is what will Russia and China do? And that's why the regime-change forces are targetting Russia and China.

Now, I could tell you there are problems in Europe as well with the Great Reset and the Green New Deal. We're seeing a collapse in popularity for the Greens in Germany; we had the referendum in Switzerland against the European Union carbon policy, and so on. What it shows is, the potential to defeat this global central bankers' dictatorship—and with it, to end geopolitics—is a real possibility. But it depends on what the American people do. Will we reclaim our anti-colonial tradition? Will we reclaim our republican Constitutional tradition? Or will we be manipulated by narratives that tell us that our greatest threat is coming from Russian aggression and Chinese bullying and Islamic terrorism?

That's the whole point of the Schiller conferences we've had, and these weekly meetings on Saturdays. To give you access to the ideas of Lyndon LaRouche and Helga Zepp-LaRouche; to give you a sense of what the real fight for the American System is; as opposed to some form of jingoism or America First unilateralism—which, interestingly, the unilateralism of Mike Pompeo is the same unilateralism, so far, of the Biden administration. So, it's the geopolitical doctrine, the domination of the world of confrontation, of a struggle for survival of each against all. The Hobbesian worldview; the Darwinian worldview. That's what we're fighting, and that's why, when we reassert the Constitutional principles of the American System, that's the way out of this and into a new era and cooperation.

For further reading, we recommend "Zbigniew Brzezinski and 9/11," written by Lyndon LaRouche in December 2001, and the 1972 document, "The Hostile Fantasy World of Zbigniew Brzezinski," also by Lyndon LaRouche, published by Campaigner Publications in 1972.

SHAKEEL RAMAY

Economy Is the Taliban's Top Priority

Shakeel Ahmad Ramay is the Director of the China Center at the Pakistani Development Policy Institute, and a columnist for The Nation *and* The Express Tribune *newspapers in Pakistan. The following is a summary of his presentation following that of Harley Schlanger to The LaRouche Organization's July 10, 2021 webinar, "Will Afghanistan, the Graveyard of Empires Become the Cradle of Peace Through Development?"*

Mr. Ramay titled his presentation, "Corridor for Community with Shared Future," referring at the same time both to the potential linkage of a reconstructed Afghan transport grid with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC); and to the community of neighboring and nearby nations which is even now holding a series of "summit" meetings to discuss restoring security and bringing development to Afghanistan.

One idea central to his presentation was that the circumstances under which the Afghan Taliban once protected the al-Qaeda Islamic extremists, have dramatically changed with the actions of those and related terrorist groups in South Asia over 20 years. Ramay's judgment is that the Taliban now will have to be largely responsible for development and livelihoods of the Afghan people, and that now, consequently, "economy is their top priority." He noted and the leader of the Taliban had told the *South China Morning Post* that the group would welcome China as a friend in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

More, he said that the Taliban, having signed a peace treaty with the United States leading to the American troop withdrawal, now see themselves as the legitimate rulers of Afghanistan. In that position they will not again allow al-Qaeda—or ISIS—to find refuge in the country simply because they have nowhere else to go.

Turning to the most urgent development needs of Afghanistan, Ramay said it immediately needs international investment in healthcare and hospitals, and in education; healthcare and education. "These two sectors need immediate support from the world," he said, because Afghanistan now has neither a developed healthcare infrastructure, nor a well-developed education system. Ramay recommended that an Afghanistan Regional Economic Integration Fund be established with investment of major nations and international institutions.

The key purpose of the fund would be the establishment of the transport and development corridor which links Pakistan—with CPEC already the largest development project of China's Belt and Road Initiative—to Afghanistan's capital Kabul, transforming its transportation "connectivity." Ramay emphasized that Pakistan would also reap economic benefits from this development.

Courtesy of Shakeel Ramay

He assessed that "If we are able to take care of the economic issues, then that means we will be able to take care of most of the problems of Afghanistan." The objectives of the Corridor for Community with Shared Future, in his concept, are 1) sustainable peace, and 2) sustainable prosperity. And "that corridor can be created under the Belt and Road Initiative," of which it would be the seventh economic corridor.

Mr. Ramay's final point was that the potentials and needs of Afghanistan, which has a unique and fiercely independent history, cannot be viewed through the lens of any great power or combination of powers outside of it—it has always repelled their attempts to occupy or conquer it—but only through the eyes of the Afghans. Any development approach which they do not fully approve, will not succeed.

Shakeel Ramay's presentation can be viewed here.

The Belt and Road and The Future that Afghanis Want

by Hussein Askary

Hussein Askary is the Southwest Asia Coordinator for both the Schiller Institute and EIR. *He is also Co-Chair of the Belt and Road Institute of Sweden (BRIX), where he currently resides. He is co-author with Jason Ross of The Schiller Institute's 2107 study,* Extending the New Silk Road to West Asia and Africa: A Vision of an Economic Renaissance. *The following is an edited transcript of his presentation to The LaRouche Organization's July 10, 2021 webinar, "Will Afghanistan, the Graveyard of Empires Become the Cradle of Peace Through Development?" Subheads and hyperlinks have been added. Video of the full meeting is available here.*

BRIX

Hussein Askary

I thank the previous speaker, my friend Shakeel Ramay, for the great insights he's providing us, from his standpoint and viewpoint. Obliging my friend and colleague, Diane Sare, I always present an optimistic view of things. This is not an ivory tower perspective; it's a scientific principle I learned from Lyndon LaRouche which says, it's the future which determines the present, because our view of where we want to be in the future, determines what we do today.

That's also what my friend Shakeel says: We should look at the future of this region of Afghanistan through the eyes of an Afghan child. What kind of future does this child want to have? And then to fulfill that dream, we can start planning and discussing things; not from the standpoint of the past—all the horrible things that happened, although we need to learn from the past, because that's important. But we need to look at the future through the lens of an Afghan child or an African child or whatever. For me, it has become a scientific viewpoint; because when I joined the Schiller Institute and the LaRouche movement in 1995, and met with Lyndon LaRouche and Helga Zepp-LaRouche, we were already talking about the New Silk Road, the Eurasian Land-Bridge, and it looked like a remote dream. But we worked very hard to make sure that *this* is what's going to be the future of mankind; where all nations can work together, and once and for all, we get rid of geopolitics.

The Afghanistan crisis now, lo and behold, is carrying within it, as the Chinese say, an opportunity to change things—change the terrible things we inherited from the past, and build beautiful things into the future. That's what I want to share with you today, not much analysis. Of course, I disagree with all the horror reports that the Taliban are taking over the country, they are bringing down the Afghan flag, this and that. As Shakeel said, what we need now is to have cool heads intervening. Right now, there *are* cool heads intervening in the region. Probably we will see the end of geopolitics right in the place where geopolitics all started—the "Great Game."

In his presentation, Harley Schlanger mentioned the book by Peter Hopkirk, *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia,* a wonderful book I got as a gift from our mutual colleague Michael Billington. Everybody should read it; it's a very good historical record of how the British used Afghanistan as a buffer zone against the Russian Empire—as a game. The very person—Captain Arthur Connolly [of the East India Company]—who coined the term, "the Great Game," was beheaded in Bukhara by the emir there. So that's a very funny anecdotal aspect.

The 'Belt and Road to Peace'

Afghanistan is literally a piece of rock. (See **Figure 1**.) Later I will describe it as a place where humans are living, but Afghanistan is a piece of rock; it's an extension of the Hindu Kush Mountains and the Himalayas. It separates Central Asia from South Asia, which was the pur-

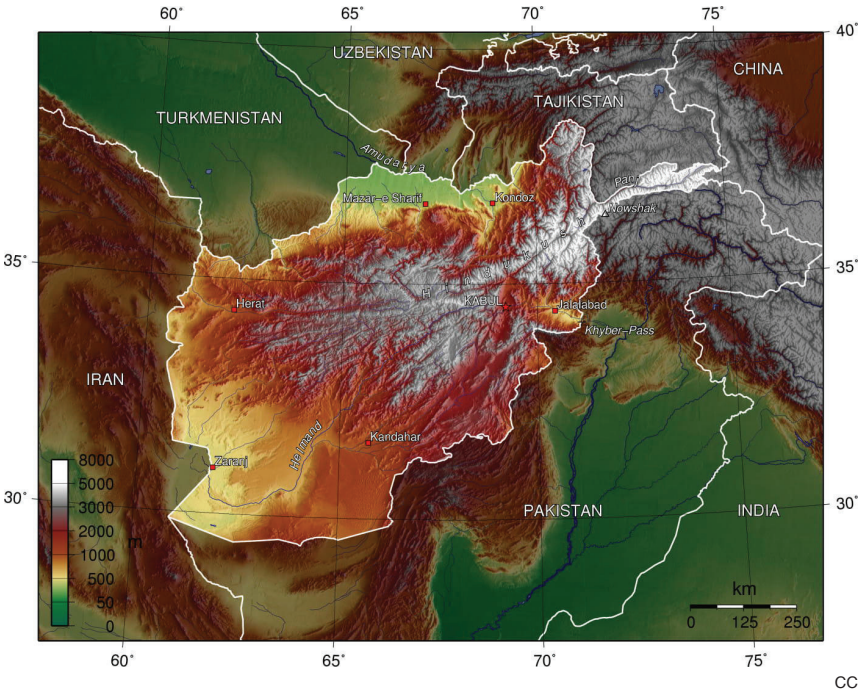
pose of the British Empire. You can see Badakhshan Province, with the Wakhan corridor forming the panhandle. This was created by the British through treaties with the local tribal leaders, but the Russians also accepted it. This is the breaking line between the Russian Empire and the British Empire. Look around Afghanistan. You will see all these nations, many of which are flat, but Afghanistan is a huge rock. It's a very rugged country; it's also very dry. The British lost three wars there; that's why it's called the Graveyard of Empires. The Soviets lost there, too, and finally the United States and NATO now have to withdraw.

The purpose of invading Afghanistan, then and now, has been to use Afghanistan to destabilize the surrounding countries and split Eurasia. That was the purpose; not to control Afghanistan, but to use Afghanistan as a buffer zone and as a hand grenade to attack other nations. We know that the situation in Afghanistan, in terms of terrorism, has affected every single country in the region. There are terrorist groups in Pakistan, in Iran, in Turkmenistan, in Uzbekistan, in Tajikistan, and in China, which were born out of the Brzezinski/Bernard Lewis British/Anglo-American "Great Game" in the Afghan War against the Soviets. We also have in Afghanistan the growth of opium production since 2011, which has been used as an "Opium War" against Iran, Pakistan, Central Asian nations, and first and foremost, Russia. In 2019, for example, 18,000 Russians died of overdoses of drugs.

Afghanistan can now suddenly become a cradle of peace for all of Eurasia. What is required is to go away from geopolitics and get Afghanistan on what I call the Belt and Road to Peace, and my friend Shakeel agrees with me. If you look at the countries around Afghanistan, you have Iran, Pakistan, nearby India. You have China, the world's second biggest economy and the driver of the Belt and Road Initiative. You have Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Then behind them further, you have Russia, and so on.

We need to embrace Afghanistan, to envelop Afghanistan not with military force, not by sending drones to bomb weddings and funerals as NATO and the United States have done in the past 20 years. But to send a message, "We want to help you rebuild your country." That should be the message.

FIGURE 1
A Topographical Map of Afghanistan



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There are many structures that can be used in achieving that goal. As Helga Zepp-LaRouche, the chairwoman of the Schiller Institute, has said, if we don't involve the major powers, especially the Permanent Five in the United Nations Security Council, we cannot have peace anywhere in the world. Therefore, if we have a mechanism which is enveloping Afghanistan, it does not include the United States. But if the United States wants to play a positive role, it can engage these nations in providing peace through economic development.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was created after the fall of the Soviet Union; it's a security organization. But if you look at the nations involved in the SCO (see **Figure 2**), it includes almost half of the world's population in a very sensitive area. China, Russia, and India—three of the four major powers. All of Central Asia, and Pakistan and India—supposedly enemies, are members of the same organization. In green, Afghanistan and Iran are observers in the SCO; and we have Mongolia.

Now, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Wang Yi, is visiting in person—breaking the rules for COVID—the member nations in Central Asia and all the Shanghai Cooperation Organization nations, to discuss what to do about Afghanistan.

FIGURE 2
The SCO Member Nations

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization comprises almost half of the world's population. Member nations are in dark green, Observer nations in light green, and Dialogue Partners in yellow.

Unlike the hysteria and geopolitical nonsense we hear in the media, actually former rivals are working together now to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. Iran, as I mentioned earlier, is hosting a meeting of both the Afghani government and the Taliban. For many years, the Taliban were the worst enemy of Iran, because when the Taliban took over Afghanistan, they went into the Iranian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif in 1998 and massacred all the diplomats. The Iranians have never forgotten that, but now, they say, they have put that behind, in order to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Iran and Pakistan have high-level arrangements to maintain stability. India is involved with both Russia and Iran to get a discussion going. All kinds of diplomatic moves are going on there to stabilize the situation and make sure that the Taliban are brought to the negotiating table. As my friend Shakeel said, the Taliban are not like ISIS or al-Qaeda; they have a certain idea of themselves as a nationalist grouping, but also, they have support in the population. What is important is that what goes on in Afghanistan does not destabilize the rest.

Russia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and so on have a collective military security treaty arrangement. But nobody is thinking about using military force. Not Russia; not China; not Iraq. Nobody is intending to use military force in Afghanistan. They have learned the lesson which the British, the Soviets, and now the Americans have learned the hard way. What I mean is, there are certain structures you can use to change the situation, and certain structures you cannot.

Corridors of Development, a Positive U.S. Role

Talking about solutions to things is where the future lies. Already in 1996, I was involved with other members of the LaRouche movement and the Schiller Institute in putting together the first-ever comprehensive New Silk Road/Eurasian Land-Bridge report. Mrs. Helga Zepp-LaRouche was in China, discussing this. The Chinese, already in 1996, accepted the New Silk Road as an economic strategy, but it was not mature then. But in 2013, China's President Xi Jinping announced the Belt and Road Initiative—from Kazakhstan, which is a Central Asian country; and also from Indonesia.

We put together the report in 2014, *The New Silk Road Becomes the World Land-Bridge*. Chapter 5 in this report contains a section titled, "Central Asia: Ending Geopolitics." There we have a thorough outline of all kinds of connectivity—power, water, agriculture, industrial projects in Afghanistan—because all the Central Asian countries were affected by the situation in Afghanistan. Also in that section of the report is an appendix from the Russian Institute for Demography, Migration, and Regional Development, a Moscow-based non-governmental organization connected to the Russian Academy of Sciences, providing its perspective on developments in Afghanistan and integrating it into the larger Central and South Asia by building corridors of development. That includes railways, power lines, gas and oil pipelines, water pipelines, and all kinds of things very thoroughly described there. That appendix goes through what the Russians already know; the Russians have very good geological surveys of many parts of Eurasia. It outlines where the minerals exist in Afghanistan and how they intersect the development corridors of Afghanistan.

We're talking about minerals, natural resources, and the role of the United States. I think the United States can play a role in achieving peace in Afghanistan and all Eurasia, not by military force, but by engaging its

scientific, technological, and industrial capabilities, which are part also of the military tradition of the United States. Instead of all these wars which benefit no one, we can have a win-win situation.

There is a study—this is the best thing the United States did in Afghanistan—conducted by geologists and engineers from the U.S. Geological Survey, published in 2011 under the title, "Summaries of Important Areas for Mineral Investment and Production Opportunities of Nonfuel Minerals in Afghanistan." I happen to know some people who worked on that project from the European side, because it was a huge project. It explored the whole territory of Afghanistan to figure out non-oil-and-gas minerals in Afghanistan that can be used for economic development.

They made a thorough, fantastic study. I read the study when it came out. It was developed further. Reporting on it, the media said, "Oh, in Afghanistan they have $2 trillion of minerals." That's what is wrong with geopolitics; they think only in terms of money, not in terms of how this mineral wealth would benefit the Afghan people and other people.

This study is available on the website of the United States Geological Survey, and it has been updated several times. It's a fantastic study; it's very useful. It shows that Afghanistan has not only some of the largest copper and iron ore reserves in Asia, but it also has the so-called rare earth minerals, and special minerals like lithium, chromium, tantalum that are crucial for modern industry, especially electronics, telecommunications, and so on.

The U.S. Geological Survey did a fantastic outline of where these exist, but they did not, of course, outline how these minerals could be used, because those who decide the policy in the United States are not engineers, they are not farmers, they are not teachers; they are geopoliticians like Zbigniew Brzezinski, who follows a British geopolitical scheme that the world is a fight of all against all. "If we don't take these, the Chinese or the Russians or the Indians will take them. We will make sure that nobody uses these minerals." Therefore, Afghanistan's mineral wealth was never exploited.

Integration into Eurasian Development

Now, the Chinese came in 2017 and the government of Afghanistan said, "We have all this mineral wealth, and we want to use it." So, they did an international bidding, and two Chinese companies won the bid, making the cheapest offer to invest in the largest copper mine in all of Central Asia, called Mes Aynak, for interesting historical reasons. Mes Aynak is located in Logar Province in the eastern part of Afghanistan. But there is also the iron ore mineral deposit in Hajigak, in Bamyan Province 130 km west of Kabul. which the U.S. Geological Survey also identified.

The project never got off the ground, because the Chinese company's personnel were attacked by terrorist groups when they were surveying that region. But there also were technical problems because, in order to extract the copper from the rock, a 400 MW power plant to melt the ore had to be built, and railways had to be built, to bring coal from the western part of the country to fire that coal plant and to ship out the extracted copper.

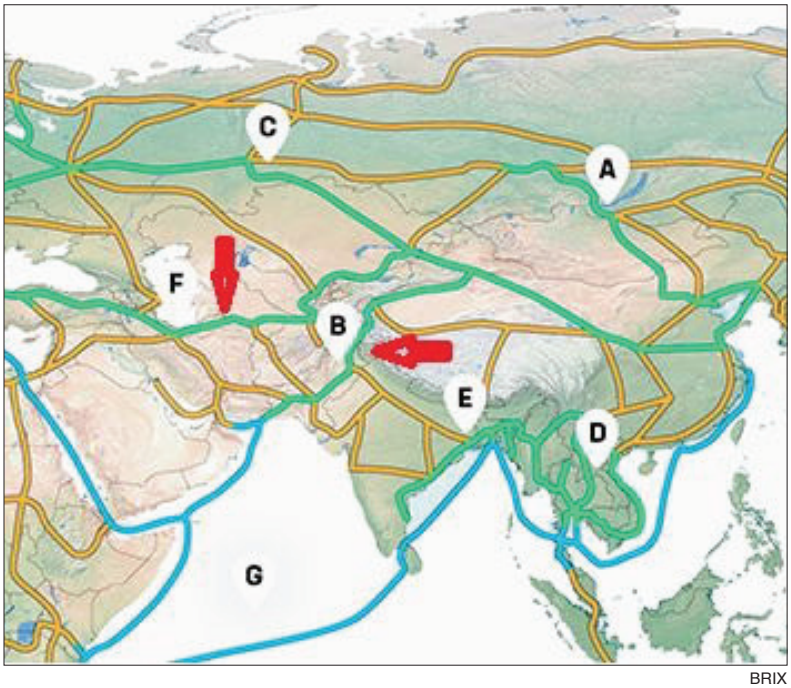
This area is interesting also because there are settlements there from the Bronze Age, prehistoric, but also Buddhist settlements. Some people used this area to mobilize against the Chinese companies. Therefore, a huge international, U.S.-EU-backed campaign was launched to save the historical artifacts in that area where the minerals are located. Of course, we have to preserve these historical things; but this was used as a way to attack the Chinese project and stop it. The Chinese themselves had technical problems, so the project never got off the ground.

Concerning the integrating of Afghanistan into the Belt and Road Initiative, the New Silk Road, Afghanistan is squeezed between two of the most important corridors of the New Silk Road or Belt and Road. (See **Figure 3**) One is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, shown as **B** on the map; and the China-Central Asia-West Asia route, the Silk Road, which goes from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in China into Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and also into Turkmenistan and Iran, and then ends in Turkey. That's outlined in **F**. Afghanistan is the missing link in this whole situation. It's not connected. As I said earlier, Afghanistan is a piece of rock; it's very rough to build things there. But it's not impossible, because the Chinese have already built a 435-km high-speed railway connecting Nyingchi in Tibet and Tibet's capital, Lhasa, in the Himalayan Mountains, through the most rugged areas in China. It's possible to overcome these difficulties.

Afghanistan's population is concentrated in the eastern part of the country, and also in the west. In the middle is very little population. Both the population and the mineral resources are concentrated in certain areas, making it necessary to bridge them with development corridors, infrastructure.

Interestingly, when I looked at the demographics of Afghanistan, it's fantastic. It's why I said earlier that the future determines what's going on in the present. Of

FIGURE 3
Integration of Afghanistan into the BRI



BRIX

Afghanistan is embraced by—and can be connected to—two of the most important corridors of the Belt and Road, indicated by red arrows: the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, labeled B, and the China-Central Asia-West Asia route, labeled F. Proposed routes, in yellow, that cross Afghanistan show how it could be done.

Afghanistan's 37 million people, 3 million are refugees outside of Afghanistan, but 34 million are in the country, and 46% of those 34 million are below the age of 15. Above the age of 65, is only 2.4% of the population. So, 97-98% of the population are below the age of 65, and most of these—80%—are below the age of 30. So the whole future is in front of them. What is needed is to provide those young people with the means to thrive, to use their creative potential, and build their economy and get into the future and integrate with the rest of the world economy along the lines of the New Silk Road or the Belt and Road Initiative.

As my friend Shakeel said, you cannot present ideas to the Afghanis, because they are very stubborn, nationalistic, anti-foreigner people, for obvious reasons. They have been attacked the whole time. You have to ask the Afghanis what they think about these ideas. What are their aspirations?

Therefore, I brought this document (see **Figure 4**) from the Afghani Foreign Ministry, which has a special think tank called the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA). They have outlined a number of projects, and integrated regional ideas into the reconstruction of Afghanistan, for example, by building the so-called Ring around Afghanistan railroad. There are railways built from all countries around Afghanistan up to its border, but inside Afghanistan, nothing. The reason is, we had NATO inside the country; NATO does not build railways. As Obama's National Security Advisor Susan Rice told the African ambassadors, "We don't do infrastructure." So therefore, Afghanistan, of all the countries in the region, has never built infrastructure in the past 20 years of U.S.-British occupation.

As outlined by the Afghani government, and now as our friend Shakeel says, the Taliban now accept integration of Afghanistan's infrastructure projects into the larger region, so that everybody benefits. Railways, the oil and gas projects from Turkmenistan into Afghanistan to Pakistan to India, the so-called PATI line, which the United States and Britain have been talking about for three decades, but it was never built, can now be connected. Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan can now be integrated; the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor from China can now be brought into Afghanistan.

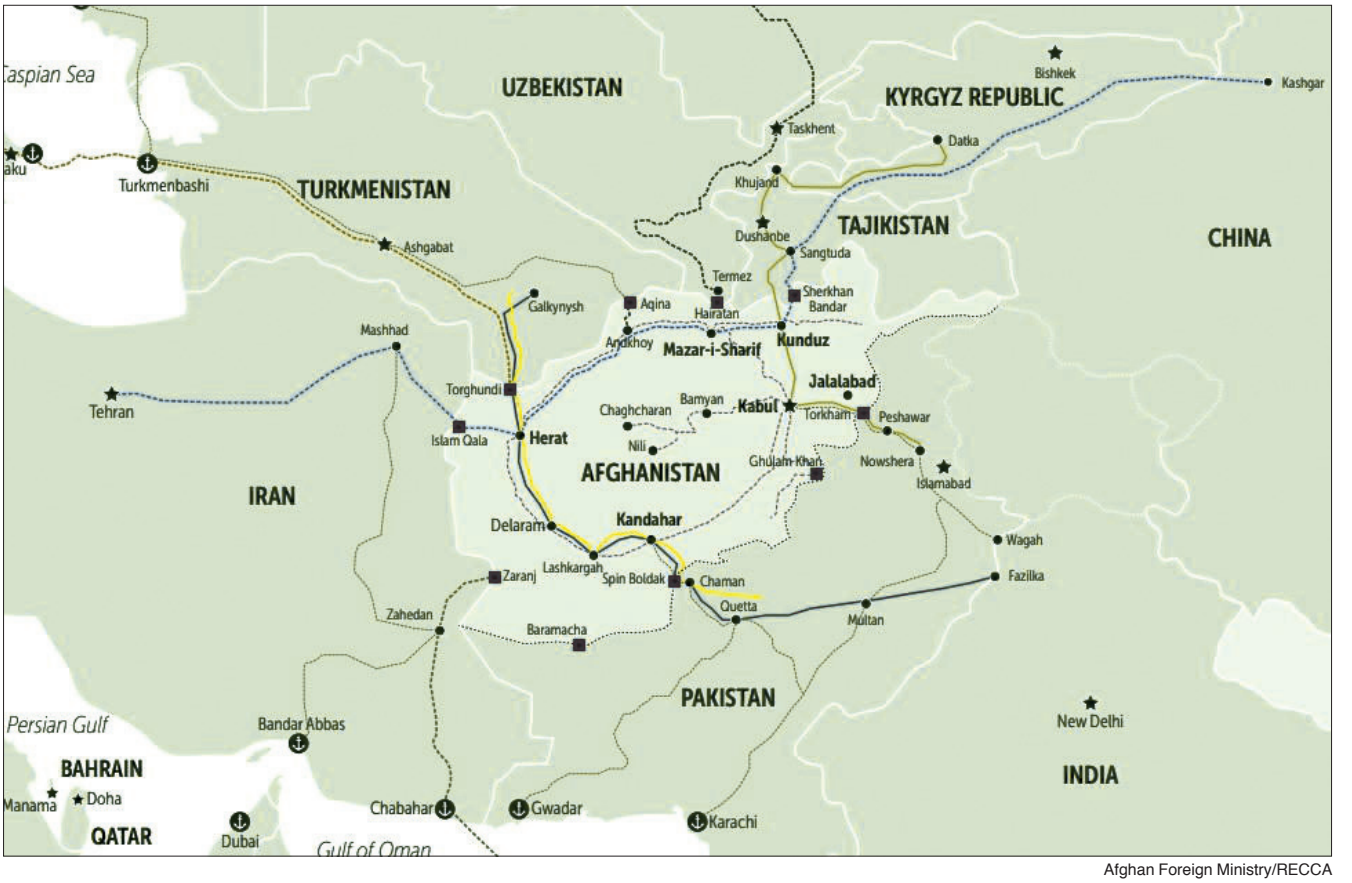
All these countries have said—I have documents, I don't have time to read them all—that there are meetings going on between China and Central Asian countries. They are talking about the Belt and Road Initiative and integrating Afghanistan. The foreign ministers of Iran, Pakistan, and China, who met just last month, agreed that cooperation on the Belt and Road should intensify, and that Afghanistan should be brought into the picture.

This, then, is the kind of thing you need to do to get the Afghan people and their leadership—whoever they are—to see the future through the eyes of their children, to see how their country will look if they accept this offer. But somebody has to make the offer. There are intensive moves underway now; as I said. The Chinese Foreign Minister is in Central Asia. He will visit all the countries around Afghanistan. Pakistan is in advanced discussions with the Afghanis, Iran, and China on the prospects for peace and stability in Afghanistan.

First Comes Economic Development

But, as LaRouche warned about the Israeli-Arab peace process: If you don't put on the table from the beginning the economic development you are thinking

FIGURE 4



Afghan Foreign Ministry/RECCA

The Ring around Afghanistan railroad, shown here as a dotted line, is one of the promising projects outlined by the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan (RECCA). At present, there is a Ring around Afghanistan highway, but not a ring railroad.

about creating, never discuss religious, political, and other "solutions"—or democracy, or state what kind of government you want. Start with the economic development. Show the Afghani people and their leaders how their country will look in the future. Show them your willingness to help them create that future. Then, they will say, "We take the deal." You may have some crazy people who say "No," but the majority will say, "That's the kind of future we dream about, that's the kind of future we want."

I think the United States and Europe can be part of this.

Just to warn you, there will be people who are against this. The World Bank; don't get the World Bank involved in this. Don't get the EU involved in this. Don't get the U.S. and Britain involved in this, unless they throw away all the economics books they have learned from, as LaRouche has told us.

I have just picked up this study for the World Bank, by a group of American so-called "economists"—certified idiots in the words of Lyndon LaRouche—about building railways in Afghanistan. They told the World Bank, "It is unlikely that most of them [the schemes for building railroads] should, or even could, be constructed. Many, even if constructible, may not be financially viable; instead, their construction would create a drain on the Afghan national economy."

So, the ideology here in the West is, if you don't have money, you cannot build railways, you cannot build hospitals, you cannot build schools, you cannot build roads, you cannot build dams, you cannot build power plants. This ideology should be thrown in the dustbin of history, together with geopolitics.

Economics should—once again as Lyndon LaRouche has identified—go back to its human cradle, its human origin, that all resources start from the minds of human beings who are creative and think about the future. When you look at this problem in Afghanistan, look always through the lens of the Afghani child who is thinking, "What is going to be my future?"

Bust the London-Riyadh Global Terror Axis

by an EIR Investigative Team

This article was the lead in a cover-story package in the August 16, 2013 issue of EIR*, exposing the role of the British and the Saudi monarchy in fostering and financing radical Islamic terrorist organizations. That included the recruiting and arming of the mujaheddin in Afghanistan during the Soviet-Afghan war during the 1980s, giving rise to al-Qaeda and its many offshoots internationally. That full issue of* EIR *is here. The package included: "Bush and Obama Joined at the Hip in Shameless Coverup of Anglo-Saudi 9/11"; "Al-Yamamah: Funding Terrorism"; and "Graham: Hijackers Needed the Saudi Support Network." Also in the issue is Lyndon LaRouche's essay, "Mankind's Existence Is Called into Question: Next?" which addresses the nature of the human mind, in the context of the decline of western civilization following the assassinations of John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert, and especially after 9/11.*

Aug. 13—If another major terrorist attack like the Sept. 11, 2001 hits on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, or the Sept. 11, 2012 armed assault on the Benghazi, Libya U.S. Mission occurs, you can blame it on George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and the British and Saudi monarchies. The wellspring of all significant international terrorism today is the Anglo-Saudi imperial alliance, expressed most vividly in the 1985 Al-Yamamah arrangements between London and Riyadh that persist to this day.

Al-Yamamah ("The Dove") was ostensibly an arms-for-oil barter deal, first brokered by then-Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar bin-Sultan, and then-British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Under the cover of the arms-for-crude-oil deal, over the succeeding 28 years, hundreds of billions of dollars in cash have been squirreled into offshore banks accounts in such notorious havens as the British and Dutch Caribbean Islands, Switzerland, and Dubai.

Those funds have bankrolled nearly 30 years of global terrorism and coups d'état, dating back to late-1970s British and American sponsorship of the Afghan "mujahideen" which spawned al-Qaeda and every other Muslim Brotherhood offshoot now imposing a reign of terror across the entire Islamic world, and into Africa, Europe, and the Americas.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, Al-Yamamah slush funds bankrolled the Afghan "resistance," separatist wars in Africa, and the 1990s conflicts in the Balkans following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. An honest and thorough investigation—yet to be accomplished—would all-but-certainly reveal that Al-Yamamah funds bankrolled the 9/11 terrorists.

The existence of an Anglo-Saudi top-down command over al-Qaeda and every other jihadist front group is well known within some circles at the highest levels of the U.S. government—dating back decades. But the successive Bush (41 and 43) and Obama administrations have presided over a brutal coverup of this Anglo-Saudi treachery, making them complicit before, during, and after the fact, in terrorist atrocities that have claimed tens of thousands of lives globally, and provided the pretext for every police-state tyranny that has been wrought on the United States over the past dozen years.

The single most glaring case of coverup of the Anglo-Saudi terror is the refusal of the George W. Bush and Obama administrations to release the 28-page chapter from the final report of the Joint Congressional Inquiry probing the 9/11 attacks, which catalogued the roles of the Saudi Ministry of Defense and Aviation, Saudi Arabia's General Intelligence Directorate (GID), and then-Saudi Ambassador to the United States, Prince Bandar bin-Sultan, in the financing and protection of the teams of 9/11 hijackers (see accompanying documentation).

Had Presidents George W. Bush or Barack Obama released those 28 pages, and allowed a thorough investigation into the role of British and Saudi intelligence in the September 2001 attacks, it is quite possible that Ambassador Christopher Stevens and the other American diplomats and security officers who were killed or injured in the 2012 attacks on the Benghazi Mission and CIA Annex, would still be alive today. Thousands of others, killed or injured in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen,

NASA/Paul E. Alers

Queen Elizabeth and her "deadly virus" consort Prince Philip run the Empire with one determined commitment—the reduction of the world's population to less than 1 billion—by terrorism, famine, disease, and/or war.

Libya, Syria, Mali, and other frontline battlegrounds, too, might have avoided their fate. And the enormous buildup of the Big Brother espionage state that has now finally been partially exposed by the Edward Snowden, IRS, and other recent revelations, could never have been allowed or justified.

In addition, as the result of the failure to expose and wipe out the Anglo-Saudi authorship, funding, and protection of the global jihadist- and narco-terrorist nexus, the so-called "Global War on Terrorism" has been turned into one of the biggest criminal hoaxes in modern history.

Virginia Republican Rep. Frank Wolf has gathered the signatures of more than 160 House Republicans demanding the creation of a Congressional Select Committee to probe the Sept. 11, 2012 attacks on the American facilities in Benghazi, Libya. The Obama White House is desperate to block any such investigation. In tandem with the release of the buried 28 pages from the earlier Congressional Joint Inquiry into the original 9/11 attacks, such a Benghazi inquiry could unearth the actual roots of the two greatest terror atrocities against the United States since the British sacking of Washington and the burning of the White House in the War of 1812.

An Open Secret

The suppression of those 28 pages has been repeatedly cited by former Sen. Bob Graham (D-Fla.), Lyndon LaRouche, authors Anthony Summers, Robbyn Swan, and others, as the crucial element in a far-broader coverup of the roots of modern irregular warfare and terrorism.

Much of the evidence of the deeper oligarchical roots of global irregular warfare is hidden in plain sight.

• In December 2000, the editors of *EIR* submitted a memorandum to then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, calling for a formal investigation to determine whether Great Britain should be put on the State Department's list of state sponsors of terrorism. The *EIR* document was based exclusively on formal complaints and evidence submitted by governments from every continent, all detailing the fact that Great Britain had provided safe haven and logistical support to terrorist organizations, including the Chechen separatists (Russia), the narco-terrorist FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), Sendero Luminoso (Peru), the Kurdish Workers Party (Turkey), Gamma al-Islamiya (Egypt), Ansar al-Sharia (Yemen), the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (Libya), and the Islamic Guerilla Army (Algeria).

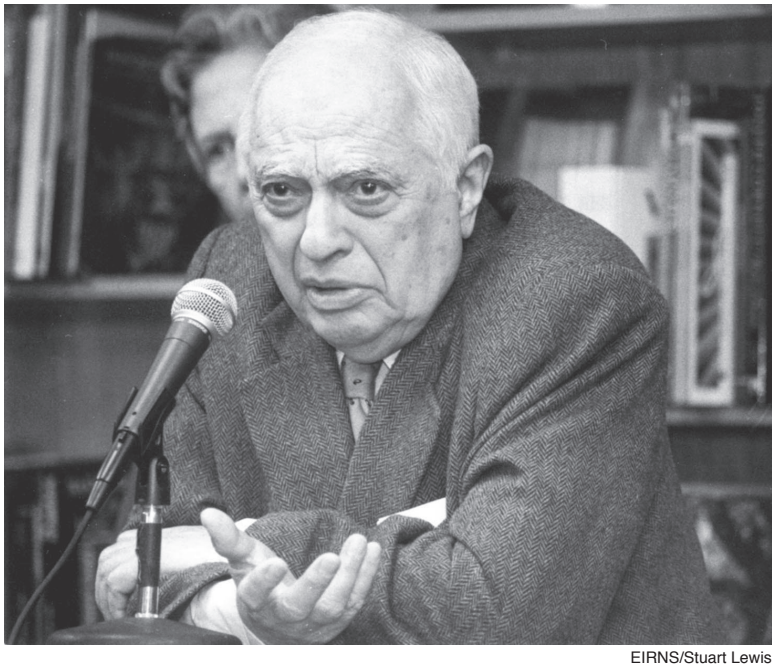
The *EIR* memorandum named Osama bin Laden, who, at the time, was maintaining a home in Wembley, England, and operated a propaganda office in London under the protection of the British Crown, as a subject for investigation.

• In 2007, *EIR* published exclusive evidence about the true nature of the Al-Yamamah-BAE Systems project and the offshore terror funds. Among the evidence presented by *EIR* was material drawn from a semi-official biography of Prince Bandar, which detailed the offshore sequestration of Al-Yamamah profits and their use to arm the Afghan mujahideen, African governments, and other agencies engaged in "the fight against communism." Prince Bandar boasted in that book that the Al-Yamamah deal was a product of the unique relation-

ship that existed between the British and Saudi monarchies, which allowed for the build-up of a massive "black fund" with no governmental oversight.

That *EIR* exposé included details, provided in public locations by Senator Graham and others, detailing some of the evidence of the Saudi official funding of 9/11.

When the investigations into the BAE-Saudi program threatened to blow up the Anglo-Saudi controlling hand over al-Qaeda and other jihadist terror, British Prime Minister Tony Blair ordered the Attorney General to shut down the probe on "national security grounds." To this day, Al-Yamamah barter deals between BAE and the Saudi Defense Ministry continue to feed the offshore terror slush funds.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

The strategy of building up al-Qaeda and modern Muslim terrorism as a weapon against nations can be largely traced to "academic" and British intelligence agent Dr. Bernard Lewis, shown here speaking in Washington, D.C., in 2003.

• In 2010, Ian Johnson wrote a book-length account of the British and American intelligence services' long-running sponsorship of the Muslim Brotherhood, *A Mosque in Munich*, which catalogued the 1960s emergence of the Muslim World League as the international recruitment arm of the Saudi-funded global jihadist terror. The Johnson account demonstrated that the Anglo-Saudi intelligence "special arrangements" predated Al-Yamamah by decades.

• Also in 2010, British researcher Mark Curtis wrote another book-length account, *Secret Affairs—Britain's Collusion With Radical Islam*, based largely on declassified British Foreign and Commonwealth Office and MI6 documents, showing that the British Crown intelligence service has been the sponsor and controlling force behind the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood and all of its even more violent offshoots, dating back to the organization's founding in the British-occupied Suez Canal Zone in Egypt in the 1920s.

• The History Commons, a little-known but important online archive (www.historycommons.org), has assembled over 20,000 news entries—all from public sources—detailing the Anglo-Saudi links to the 9/11 hijackers and other brutal acts of mass terror. It is an open secret, frequently publicized in the British media, that "Londonistan" is the capital of global jihadist terrorism. Despite the *EIR* effort in late 2000 to shut down the British Crown's transparent alliance with Saudi Arabia in sponsoring worldwide terrorism and separatist insurgency (Chechnya, Kurdistan, Kashmir, etc.), London remains the protector and recruitment hub for terrorism on every continent to this day.

The issue before us is not the availability of evidence. The issue is that leading government circles in Washington, London, and Riyadh are committed to covering up the Anglo-Saudi responsibility for 9/11, Benghazi, and other atrocities. Until and unless that coverup is broken, no one is immune from attack. The fact that two successive American Presidents—George W. Bush and Barack Obama—have put their personal imprimatur on the coverup of the British and Saudi monarchies' role in funding and orchestrating terrorism is grounds for prosecution and impeachment.

Anglo-Saudi 'Thirty Years War'

The British alliance with Saudi Arabia to promote global terrorism and genocide has been a dominant policy for more than 30 years. Back in the mid-1970s, Dr. Bernard Lewis, a leading British intelligence "Orientalist," called for an "Arc of Crisis" extending across the southern tier of the Soviet Union, from the Caucasus to Central Asia and into Western China's Xinjiang

Province. Lewis called for Western intelligence sponsorship of an Islamic fundamentalist jihad against the "Godless communist monolith."

The "Bernard Lewis Plan," as it came to be known, gridded precisely with the official policy of the British monarchy to reduce the world population to below 1 billion people, through war, disease, and famine. Lewis was dispatched to the United States in the mid-1970s, where he sold the British new Thirty Years War scheme to such prominent American national security figures as Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, Dick Cheney, Michael Ledeen, Richard Perle, and the entire coterie of neoconservatives who would come to populate two Bush administrations.

In effect, the "Bernard Lewis Plan," promoted by the British Crown and adopted by the Carter, Reagan, and Bush administrations, fostered a Thirty Years War that rages to this day. Starting in Afghanistan, London and Riyadh, with the complicity of dupes and traitors in Washington, it created a global "dark age" legion of fanatical suicide fighters, who have gone from Afghanistan to Iraq, Syria, Libya, and beyond.

The sponsorship of this "new dark age" project is a top-down affair. The policy of the British monarchy is vast population reduction. They have a witting ally in Saudi Arabia, despite the fact that some of the very jihadist forces unleashed with London sponsorship and Saudi funding will ultimately bring down the Saudi monarchy itself.

Senior U.S. intelligence sources have confirmed that the "new" British policy for the entire Islamic world is the promotion of a permanent sectarian conflict between Sunni and Shi'a, exploiting a 1,000-year-old split within Islam, with the goal of mass genocide.

One of the most important British assets in this global genocide scheme is Prince Bandar. Trained in Britain, Bandar was not only the Saudi interlocutor with the British Crown and BAE in forging the original Al Yamamah deal. As Saudi Ambassador in Washington (and as practically an adopted son of George H.W. Bush), Bandar presided over the Saudi intelligence officers who shepherded the 9/11 hijackers for a year, leading up to the September 2001 attacks. His wife, Princess Haifa, provided cover for Bandar's direct financing of at least one team of the hijackers.

Today, Bandar is in an even more prominent position, as national security advisor to King Abdullah, and as head of the Saudi GID intelligence service. It is Bandar who is behind the deployment of thousands of "dark age" suicide fighters into Syria and Lebanon, to guarantee that the Sunni versus Shi'ite conflict reaches a critical mass of killing and hatred to last a century.

Bandar, however, is a foolish pawn in a much bigger game, a game controlled from London, not Riyadh. That oligarchical game is one of divide-and-conquer. Ultimately, it is a game of mass population reduction on a scale never before seen in history.

It is that British policy that must be stopped. The suppressed 28 pages from the Congressional Joint Inquiry are the crucial entry point for exposing the true nature of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks and all that followed. Open that door and the entire Anglo-Saudi war against civilization can be exposed. From Bandar to BAE to the British Crown, the true masterminds of the heinous crime of 9/11 can be revealed. Those in the United States who have been complicit in the coverup of that crime can and must, as well, be brought to justice—including those currently occupying the highest office in the land.

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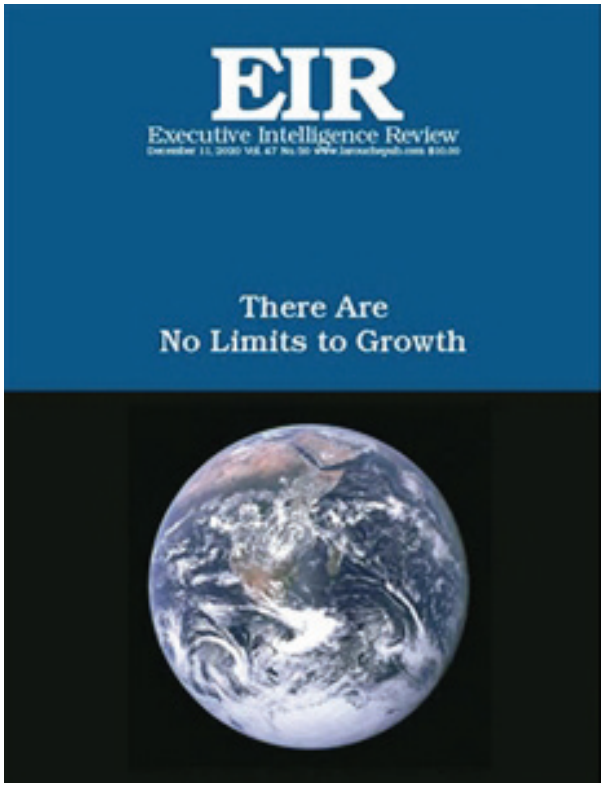


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