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## Washington's sinister Balochistan strategy

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Of late, the US ambassadors in Islamabad, one after the other, have shown some suspicious concerns over the developments in Balochistan. In his last Thursday visit to Quetta, the present incumbent Cameron Munter tried to pressurize the provincial government to facilitate the opening of US consulate office in the province. His predecessor in Islamabad Anne Patterson had also visited on a similar mission to show how important Balochistan was to the United States. These persistent moves to establish a strong foothold in Balochistan are fraught with immense danger, not because Washington has any love lost for the local populace, but a move forward for the creation of a “Greater Balochistan” that has long been a dream of US strategists. This sinister move has so far been resisted and opposed by Pakistani foreign office and intelligence agencies. How long the frail rulers in Islamabad could hold the ground against the US pressure? Well, that’s a “billion dollar” question. Can Islamabad contain Washington’s role inside Balochistan within the circumscription of Pakistan’s constitution and its sovereignty and confining it to guarantees under the International Law? The CIA has long been preparing a sordid plan to recognise Balochistan as an independent state by assigning a separate checklist to Balochistan against the “Country of Citizenship” column of “Immigration Form” for non-US nationals. This was one step forward in several measures taken by the US administration to turn into reality the designs for the so-called free Balochistan. This plan had been highlighted in the article “blood borders” written by a US military officer a couple of years back. Pakistani journalist Saleem Shezad had exposed the suspicious underground activities of the CIA all over the country for which he had to pay a very heavy price. He was kidnapped and murdered by CIA sponsored mercenaries in Pakistan without leaving any trail. Washington has all along been in

favour of creating a “Greater Balochistan” that would integrate the Baloch areas of Pakistan with those of Iran and possibly the southern tip of Afghanistan that would ultimately lead to process of political fracturing in both Iran and Pakistan. Although, rulers in Pakistan are posing no threat to US hegemonic transgressions in the region, Iran is the bete noire that poses a big threat to the US and Israel. Tehran is singled out because it defies Washington. The past decade has been witness to unending and unremitting clash between Iran and the West over Tehran’s nuclear programme. The West has constantly accused Iran of trying to build up its nuclear arsenal, which Tehran has constantly been denying on solid grounds. In the June 2006 issue of the Armed Forces Journal, Lt. Colonel Ralph Peters suggested in no uncertain terms that Pakistan should be broken up, leading to the formation of Greater Balochistan or Free Balochistan that would incorporate the Pakistani and Iranian Baloch provinces into a single political entity. Col. Peters went a step forward and suggested the incorporation of Pakistan’s North West Frontier Province (NWFP), presently Khyber Pakhtunkhawa, should be incorporated into Afghanistan, because of its linguistic and ethnic affinity. This proposed fragmentation that broadly reflects US foreign policy, would reduce Pakistan to approximately 50% of its present size, and would also lose a large part of its coastline on the Arabian Sea. Lt. Colonel Peters was last posted, before his retirement, to the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for intelligence, within the US Defence Department and had been one of Pentagon’s foremost authors with numerous essays on strategy for military journals and American foreign policy. There are plausible indications that the Baloch insurgency is being supported and abetted by Britain and the US. In the current geopolitical context, the separatist movement is in the process of being hijacked by foreign powers. In June 2006, Pakistan’s Senate Committee on Defence accused British Intelligence network over abetting the insurgency in Balochistan, and to accomplish the mission they have the candid support of the CIA and Israel’s Mossad. Behind all these nefarious moves the US mission is to topple Tehran’s sovereign government to facilitate Tel Aviv’s supremacy in the Muslim world. The hoax of Iranian nuclear programme has deliberately been made so controversial although it has nothing to do with nuclear non-proliferation, anymore than the invasion of Iraq over the possession of WMDs and links with al-Qaeda. Isn’t it a fact that Washington used to support Tehran’s nuclear programme when the country was being ruled by the Shah? It’s a strange anomaly that while Tehran is signatory to the Non-proliferation Treaty, there are as many as four countries that are not signatories to the NPT (including Israel), but nobody in the international community pressurise them to halt their nuclear programme and never the IAEA or Washington have investigated their nuclear arsenals. The threats against Iran persist despite the fact that America’s own intelligence agencies assessed in a 2007 that Tehran had no active nuclear weapons programme. In an updated 2011 report published in the New Yorker, the NIE has reiterated that judgement. Despite facts to the contrary, Iran has been singled out because it defies Washington. Israel is the only country in the region that actually possesses nuclear weapons. Unlike Iran, it is not a signatory to the NPT. The jaundiced western media constantly trumpets that Tehran’s nuclear weapons pursuit is a threat to the region as it would spark nuclear arms race in the Middle East. But, Tel Aviv’s big nuclear arsenal, for some inexplicable reason, does not spark a nuclear arms race. The UN Charter explicitly forbids member nations, which includes both the US and Israel, from not only the use of force, but threatening the use of force in international relations. There are only circumstances under which a resort to the use of force is considered legitimate under international law. The first is the use of armed force in self-defence against an armed attack. The second is if there is explicit authorisation for the use of force under an unequivocal mandate from the UN Security Council (UNSC). So, every time the US or the

Israeli government threatens Iran with a military attack against its nuclear programme, it would be the violation of the UN Charter. Opening a US Consulate office in Quetta would amount to providing safe haven to the CIA and its mercenary groups to extend their sabotage activities to Iran from the Pakistani soil. It is a serious threat not to be taken lightly by Islamabad. It might just be posturing by the US with Israel being at the back of this serious deception. Both nations have repeatedly shown a willingness to reject diplomacy and use military force to pursue their respective policies. Keeping aside the question of illegality and morality, there are plenty of reasons for the US and Israel not to launch Iraq and Afghanistan like invasions on Iran, but to use Balochistan as a bastion to bring instability in Iran through their secret commandos. And there is no shortage of such mercenaries in the CIA. Right now, US secret commandos are carrying out raids in 70 countries. By the end of the year, the number would probably be close to 120.