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## America's Fake "War for Democracy" in Afghanistan

by Danny Schechter  
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Oh, Hamid, Oh Hillary: How your worlds converge and diverge.

The Secretary of State was shuttling between Washington where peace in the Middle East remains elusive to New York to where the poobahs and her protégés at the Council on Foreign Relations welcomed her as the second coming.

She has now has enunciated her own “doctrine” in the footsteps of those in our ‘inDOCTRINE-ated’ history of intervention over the centuries. (Remember James’s Monroe’s earlier imperial doctrine claiming Latin America as ours?)

Imagine the trumpets blowing as the Daily Beast sounded a triumphalist note: “The secretary of State delivered the best speech of the Obama administration this morning,” hyped Tunku Varadarajan writing on her “new American moment”—and why she’s better than her boss.”

“Behold the Hillary Doctrine. And heap abundant gratitude—and rose petals if you have them on hand—on the firm, unfussy, deeply reassuring woman who has just offered it up to the world.”

In her charge to the foreign policy elite, she spoke of the need for “a new global architecture, “built to last and withstand stress.” And in a muscular departure from the way in which this administration—for fear of seeming Bush-like—has been shrinking

from the unembarrassed propagation of American values, she uttered these plainspoken, unadorned words: “Democracy needs defending.”

Off in Iraq and Afghanistan where trillions have been spent/wasted? to promote US style “democracy”, time is running out for that “New Dawn” that President Obama spoke wistfully of, and Hillary backed with generous appropriations when this “reassuring woman” stalked the halls of the Senate.

Now, her State Department is taking over the occupation of Iraq and no doubt, soon, Afghanistan. Hill gushes that we are on the verge of, “a new American moment—a moment when our global leadership is essential.” The report again: “There was no bowing from her to potentates in robes; there was, instead, a promise that “we will do everything we can to exercise the traditions of American leadership at home and abroad.”

Oh, those “traditions!”

In this period, our man Hamid Karzai, usually seen wearing a Karakul hat, something that has been worn by Afghan kings in the past, is quaking in his boots as a bank run erupted after a \$300 billion loss was detected threatening the instability of his already unstable role, more as the Mayor of Kabul than as president of the country.

(Mullah Omar boasted Thursday that the Taliban is on the verge of winning but focused on the economic consequences, saying, “They have wasted hundreds of billion(s) of dollars of your tax money in the shape of financial expenditures and your manpower in Afghanistan and have still been wasting them. You shall be witness to another economic melt-down.”)

Karzai’s ties with the United States have been deep. He has six brothers, reports Wikipedia, including Mahmood Karzai and Quayum Karzai, who are both Afghan-American restaurant owners in the Baltimore–Washington Metropolitan Area of the United States, The family owns and operates several successful Afghan restaurants in the East Coast of the United States as well as in Chicago.”

What qualifications for leadership!

He is on the record anyway, as just a man of the people. “According to a declaration of his assets by an anti-graft body, Karzai earns \$525 monthly and has less than \$20,000 in bank accounts. Karzai does not own any land or property.”

Hmmm.

Hillary seems to be doing much better. She has also had her share of financial scandals. Remember her days in Arkansas when she ordered 10 cattle futures contracts with only \$1K [normally a \$12K investment], and reaped \$100,000 in 10 months of trading. Her bid for the Senate in 2000 resulted in high FEC election fines.

She and Bill just bought a new mansion in Westchester after shelling out a couple of mill for daughter Chelsea's glitzy nuptials.

These people don't stand by traditions. They all know the benefits of conversions. Bill converted to Republican-lite programs to get re-elected. Hillary seems to have converted from liberalism. Chelsea converted to Judaism while Hamid abandoned Islam for Christianity.

Karzai is a cat with many lives. Again from his bio: "In October 2001, Hamid Karzai and his group of fighters survived a US friendly fire missile attack in southern Afghanistan. The group suffered injuries and was treated in the United States; Karzai received injuries to his facial nerves as can sometimes be noticed during his speeches. On 4 November 2001, American forces flew Karzai out of Afghanistan for protection," protecting him for his next assignment, of course. Soon he became the front man for American aspirations and was first selected and then elected President., In 2004 he was backed by President Bush who also was reelected.

By that time, the war was pumping in billions alongside a very profitable dope business. With the Taliban on the run and Al Qaeda in hiding, he became the beneficiary of earlier American architects who were turning Kabul into a mirror image of the USA.

Reported Jason Burke for the Observer wrote at the time that it was a time of "new prosperity" for the "elite" and the gangsters and sometimes the two were indistinguishable.

"This is the new Kabul...There is a downside, of course. The new prosperity has brought crime. Theft, according to senior officers from the ISAF peacekeeping force, is endemic. Without the European military patrolling in their box-like armoured cars, 'anything not nailed down would go', they say. Murders and assaults are more common than under the Taliban"

When there are tons of money oozing around, you always need a bank to manage it all, don't you? Banks are the cornerstones of our modern financial engineering and architecture. So, in that same year of his elevation, in 2004. the Kabul Bank was born with another Karzai brother playing a key role.

Today it has collapsed, thanks to massive fraud. Sound familiar? It brings back memories of BCCI, the Pakistan bank that was unmasked as a criminal enterprise.

None of the foreign "architects" who looked on approvingly when it started thought about how to contain this swamp of sleaze. Where were its auditors? It's hard to believe that the Wall Street bigs didn't have a finger in the pie.

Reports the NY Times:

“Now, Kabul Bank sits at the center of a financial crisis that has exposed the shadowy workings of the country’s business and political elite, and how such connections shielded the bank from scrutiny. The panic surrounding Kabul Bank is threatening to pull down the Afghan banking system and has drawn in the United States.”

Is this or should this be a surprise to anyone?

The Washington Post reported months earlier, on February 25, 2010, “Officials puzzle over millions of dollars leaving Afghanistan by plane for Dubai) that it represented only a portion of the looting of donor nations.

The total volume of departing cash is almost certainly much higher than the declared amount. A Chinese man, for instance, was arrested recently at the Kabul airport carrying 800,000 undeclared euros (about \$1.1 million).

Cash also can be moved easily through a VIP section at the airport, from which Afghan officials generally leave without being searched. American officials said that they have repeatedly raised the issue of special treatment for VIPs at the Kabul airport with the Afghan government but that they have made no headway.”

Why no headway? Could it be because “the headmen” were all deeply involved? At the same time, the US cheerleaders who work with the very same Council on Foreign Relations that kow-towned to Hillary don’t want to know about the sleaze, or do anything about it, as Fraud specialist and former Bank regulator Bill Black points out:

“U.S. officials and defense analysts say that challenging local power brokers and criminal syndicates, many of which depend on U.S. reconstruction contracts and ties to the Afghan government for support, would likely add to the unrest in southern Afghanistan and produce a higher U.S. casualty rate.

“Putting an end to these patronage networks would not come cheaply,” said Stephen Biddle, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations who has advised U.S. commanders in Afghanistan. (Biddle was a professor at the Army College.)

“By contrast, allowing some graft among Afghan power brokers on the condition that they agree to limit their take and moderate predatory activities, such as their use of illegal police checkpoints, could promote near-term improvements,

So these “architects” of empire rationalize the massive corruption—which also, incidentally, helps fund the Taliban with whom Karzai has been secretly negotiating with according to Wikileaks.

Says Black: “He is wrong about corruption, fraud, and predation. Biddle finds it necessary to create this euphemism for corruption (“patronage networks”). He believes that he can calibrate graft and dial his desired level of corruption as if he were using a rheostat to change the intensity of a light.

“He thinks he can get them to “limit their take” and “moderate” “their “predatory behavior.” He thinks he can get Karzai to “defund” his political cronies. His appeasement strategy has never worked. It will fail and the failure will “not come cheaply.” It will kill and maim Afghans, NATO troops, and foreign aid and construction workers.”

There was not a whiff of this debate at the Council on Foreign Relations about this scandal where Hillary was greeted in language that harkened back to the praises the Red Army conferred on Chairman Mao.

He was, at least, “a Great Helmsman.” Hillary is on her way of being anointed the “great architect” in the battle for fraudulent democracy.

How far we have come!