

Just another imperialist?

Please forgive my speculation, but in the absence of proper news, I am left with no choice.

For almost a decade the Afghans struggled to drive the Soviets out of their country, and it has taken close to another decade for the Taliban to put their country back together under one rule after the Soviets left. Is it now the goal of the United States government to undue 20 years of bitter struggle and force the Afghan people to go through another 10 years of civil strife?

Osama bin Laden fought along side the Taliban and helped to drive the Soviets from their country, and now the United States is demanding that the Taliban betray their friend or suffer the consequences. In the Taliban mind complying with US ultimatums must be akin to submitting to the whims of a new imperialist! Can anyone seriously believe that the Taliban will be moved by US threats?

In order for a country to develop it must be founded on a solid government. With 90% of the Afghan territory in control of the Taliban government the Afghanistan people have pretty much achieved this first important step. By all appearances the Taliban do not appear to be raving capitalists, but what has the United States offered by way of economic incentives for them to become interested? Although it is likely that the Taliban could close an eye, while the United States goes after Osama bin Laden, is it reasonable to ask the Taliban to engage actively in their friend's capture? Rather than threatening the Taliban with invasion and behaving like Soviet imperialists, the United States government should try to demonstrate that the United States can do more for Afghanistan than Osama bin Laden. I have heard no allusion to such activity in the press! Has it occurred?

With the exception of many tens of Tomahawk cruise missiles fired on terrorists camps in Afghani countryside, the United States and the Afghanistan people have never been at war. In fact, the United States helped the Taliban to drive the Soviets out. So why does the US American government want to create a new enemy? Have we not enough enemies in the Muslim world already?

The current leader of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, whose help the United States is soliciting to invade Afghanistan, is by most accounts a military dictator and political opportunist. Mullah Mohammed Omar, the leader of the Taliban, is a one-eyed freedom fighter, who has struggled many long years beside his people to free it from Soviet rule and restore order within his country. However terrible randomly occurring terrorist acts of great devastation in the United States might be, who in the world will take longstanding US principles seriously, if the United States government favors

still another opportunistic dictator over a man deeply committed to his own people and religious beliefs?

Indeed, the Taliban have already agreed to hand over Osama bin Laden, if the Organization of the Islamic Conference endorses his capture and extradition. The likelihood of this endorsement may be small, but it does show that Mullah Mohammed Omar and the Taliban are far more reasonable than the USAmerican press and the United States government have been portraying them to be.

I have heard no offer coming from Osama bin Laden to turn himself in, if the Organization of the Islamic Conference were to condemn his actions. He has devoted his life and vast fortune to helping his friends in their struggle against world imperialists, however. Need I say more?

R.A. Stegemann
September 21, 2001
(594 words)