

## Scenario 227

### WHO DECEITED WHOM IN AFGHAN WAR 2001-21

**DURING 2007:** AMERICA STARTED ACCUSING PAKISTAN when it issued and perhaps published a report in which Pakistan was alleged of using US-aid money for strengthening its ***defence against India***. It was baseless because Pakistan had no immediate threat over Pak-Indian border then; how could a poor country like Pakistan open another war-front when it was already pulling on at 2500+ km long western Pak-Afghan border. Even otherwise, what was the aid being given to Pakistan for being a **Major Non-NATO Ally** [MNNA] – just peanuts – and that too as payment of expense-bills of military operations done in Afghanistan by the Pak-Army on the explicit directions of the American commanders there.

During the same year, a resurgence of violence broke over across Afghanistan, including a rise of suicide attacks and remotely detonated bombings; the historians said it was perhaps amongst the various warlords on issues of ***'haves & haves NOT of the US funding'***.

In Afghanistan, patronage has traditionally been at the core of how government and society function. For example, **Gul Agha Sherzai**, a warlord who reportedly amassed a fortune by skimming taxes and contracts while serving as a provincial governor, had been, and was being continuously admired by the American high-ups.

During a 2006 visit to the eastern city of *Jalalabad*, Mr **Boucher**, the then Assistant Secretary of state, asked Sherzai whether he needed help with any construction projects; the reply was:

*"I need five schools, five colleges, five dams, and five highways [Boucher asked - but why five? He said] I got this tribe, this tribe, this tribe, this tribe, and one for everybody else.' I thought that was one of the funniest things I ever heard and now I think it is one of the smartest things I ever heard."*

**Boucher** swiftly [and correctly] added:

*"....it was better to funnel contracts to Afghans who would probably take 20 percent for personal use or for their extended families and friends than **giving money to a bunch of expensive American experts who would waste 80 to E0 percent of the funds on overhead and profit.***

*I want it to disappear in Afghanistan, rather than in the Beltway. Probably in the end it is going to make sure that more of the money gets to some villager, maybe through five layers of corrupt officials, but still gets to some villager."*

**Sherzai**, nicknamed as '**the Bulldozer**', remained active in Afghan politics. He repeatedly denied allegations of wrongdoing when he ran, unsuccessfully, for presidential seat in 2014. He asserted while speaking to the NBC News: *'There is no evidence against me. If I was involved in corruption, I would have high-rise buildings in Dubai and would have millions of dollars in foreign banks!'*

- **Again; there was likelihood that the 'extra money' had gone in the pockets of the US Financial Managers / Contractors / Advisors on the Pentagon or DOD lists.**

A Former National Security Council staffer confided in his interview with SIGAR on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2015:

*"In the beginning, the military kept saying that corruption was an unfortunate short-term side effect then toward the end the feeling was - Oh, my God, this could derail the whole thing.*

*Yet warlords were hardly the only ones the United States targeted with bribes."*

### **OBAMA OPTED TO PAY MORE PRICE:**

**During 2008**; the trust, on both sides [the US and Pakistan], was seen increasingly missing since the war on terror had taken start - the US on several occasions accused Pak-Army for taking interest in pro-Taliban activities - which was, till then, the allegation without facts or evidence.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> June 2008**; on the Afghan-Pak border, in an American air-strike through drone attack, 11 members of the Pakistani paramilitary Frontier Corps were killed. The Pak-Army condemned that strike as **an act of**

**aggression**, souring the relations between the two countries. The strike 1 and deaths instigated a fierce reaction from Pakistani command calling 2 the act to have shaken the foundations of mutual trust and cooperation. 3

After the 11-soldiers killing episode, when Pak-Army raised its high 4 agitation, President Bush repeated again that **'Pakistan is our strong ally.** 5 But at the same time, the other US officials were also instigated to raise 6 the issue that nearly 70% [roughly \$3.4 billion] of the aid given to the 7 Pakistani military had been misspent during 2002–07. Also that the ISI 8 was tipping off *jihadists* so that they could escape in advance of 9 American attacks against them – the world media termed it 'eye-wash'. 10

However US-Pak relationship turned as transactional based and **US 13 military aids and sales to Pakistan were stayed without any cogent 14 reason.** Gary Ackerman, member of the US House of Representatives 15 told: 16

*"...a significant proportion of US economic aid for Pakistan ended up back in the US as funds were channelled through large US contractors. Also said a large sum of US economic aid had not left the US as it spent on consulting fees and overhead costs etc"; Reuters dated 14<sup>th</sup> April 2010 on media pages is referred.* 17 18 19 20 21 22

In the November 2008 **Mumbai Attacks**, the US, while taking sides with 24 India, unnecessarily pressed Pakistan that it expected full cooperation in 25 the hunt for the plotters of the attacks. As mentioned before, the US kept 26 on repeating that the billions of dollars of aid that Pakistan received for 27 being a partner in war against terror were diverted and channeled in 28 order to build better defense mechanism against India. 29

**On 17th February 2009:** President Obama, promising to turn around 31 what his advisers saw as **'the good war' in Afghanistan** [as opposed to 32 **'the bad war' in Iraq** - a lost cause], opted to send 21,000 troops more 33 in March and then, more reluctantly, another 30,000 in December, 34 putting the total number of US troops in Afghanistan nearly 100,000. 35 Wary of over-investing, he limited the goals of this surge recalling ending 36 bad months of the US war in Iraq. 37

Gone was Bush's intent to defeat the Taliban no matter what, even 39 though the Taliban group could not be stopped for their attacks using 40 their own country as a refuge. The US plan was to begin a drawdown of 41 the surge forces in mid-2011 and eventually hand off full responsibility 42 for the country's security to the Afghan government – but every plan 43

fizzled out. Pentagon had persuaded the President to expand the war and to adopt a counter-insurgency strategy.

The US objective was to choke off popular support for the Taliban by protecting civilians and building trust in the Afghan government. But many saw the Afghan government as incompetent and malicious. Judges, police and most office-holders routinely subjected Afghan people to extortion. In contrast, the general populace often viewed the Taliban as brutal but efficient and devout. Belatedly, the US military commanders started a campaign to root out corruption and clean up the Afghan government. This awakening frustrated many US civilian officials who felt the uniformed brass had downplayed the problem. A White House staffer told the SIGAR later:

*"It was like they just discovered something new about the pernicious effects of corruption. For years, the people in the field would be moaning and groaning over the compromises made by the military on working with corrupt actors but they were shut down."*

**In March 2009;** President Obama declared: *'I want to be clear: We cannot turn a blind eye to the corruption that causes Afghans to lose faith in their own leaders.'*

A few days later, the US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said: *"Corruption is a cancer as dangerous to long-term success as the Taliban or al-Qaeda."*

**In August 2009;** Gen Stanley McChrystal, the top US commander in Afghanistan at that time, warned about: *'Malign actions of power brokers, widespread corruption and abuse of power... have given Afghans little reason to support their government.'*

To reinforce the message, Washington mobilized a small army of anti-corruption lawyers, advisers, investigators and accountants to go to Kabul and assist the Afghan government. However, despite all that, the rot went worse.

*Barnett Rubin*, senior adviser to Richard Holbrooke, the US special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan during 2009-10, in his interview with SIGAR said on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015: 'Holbrooke hated Hamid Karzai. He thought he was corrupt as hell.'

**On 20<sup>th</sup> August 2009;** Afghans went to the polls to choose their president. It was a critical moment. Presidential elections were held

peacefully and resulted in victory for incumbent Hamid Karzai, who 1  
won 49.67% of the vote, while his main rival Abdullah Abdullah 2 finished  
second with 30.59% of the vote. Karzai won this re-election 3 after cronies  
stuffed thousands of ballot boxes. He later admitted that 4 **CIA had  
delivered bags of cash to his office, calling it ‘nothing unusual.’** 5

Obama was contemplating whether to send additional US troops to the 6  
war zone. He needed a reliable and credible ally in Kabul. Right away, 7  
reports surfaced of electoral fraud on an epic scale — ghost voting, 8  
official miscounting, ballot-box stuffing, plus violence and intimidation 9  
at the polls. Initial results showed Karzai had won. But his opponents, 10  
and many independent observers, accused his side of trying to steal the 11  
election. A UN-backed panel investigated and determined Karzai had 12  
received about 1 million illegal votes, a quarter of all those cast. The 13  
outcome had pushed the White House in quagmire. 14  
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In public also, President Obama had escalated the war and Congress 16  
approved billions of additional dollars in support of Afghanistan. 17  
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In SIGAR interviews, key figures in the war said Washington tolerated 19  
the worst offenders — warlords, drug traffickers, defence contractors 20  
— because they were allies of the US. However, American government 21  
failed to confront a more distressing reality — that it was responsible for 22  
fuelling the corruption, by doling out vast sums of money with limited 23  
foresight. An unnamed State Department official told later that: 24  
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***“The US officials were ....desperate to feed them [the warlords &  
contractors] the alcoholics at the table; we kept pouring drinks, not  
considering we were killing them.”*** 26  
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There was so much excess, financed by American taxpayers, that 31  
opportunities for bribery and fraud became almost limitless. While buying 32  
loyalty and information, the CIA gave cash to warlords, governors, 33  
parliamentarians, even religious leaders, according to the interviews. The 34  
US military and other agencies also abetted corruption by doling out 35  
payments or contracts to unsavoury Afghan power brokers in a misguided 36  
quest for stability. The US civil and military officials had partnerships with 37  
all the wrong players; the media was calling their shots openly – their 38  
palms were not being greased perhaps. 39  
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**Gert Berthold**, a forensic accountant during 2010-12, said he helped 41  
analyze 3000 Defence Department contracts worth \$106 billion to see 42  
who was benefiting. The conclusion was that about 40% of the money 43

ended up in the pockets of insurgents, criminal syndicates or corrupt Afghan officials; while Americans remained either silent partners in contracts or they were not conscious enough. The evidences were so damning but the US officials kept their eyes shut. Berthold concluded that:

*“No one wanted accountability. If you’re going to do anti-corruption, someone has got to own it. From what I’ve seen, no one is willing to own it.”*

The White House officers urged that corruption was intolerable but also resolved to respect Afghan sovereignty and not interfere with the election. Moreover, they did not want to completely alienate Karzai. Finally the White House brokered a deal in which Karzai was declared the winner after he agreed to share some power with his main rival. The said deal had in fact ruined the US trustworthiness and integrity. Sarah Chayes, the then civilian adviser to the US military said:

*“That was profoundly destructive to a rule-of-law principle. It was devastating that we were willing to patch up the elections.....While we had the opportunity to say that corruption is important – [contrarily] explicit instructions were given that it is not.”*

Peter Galbraith, a deputy UN envoy to Afghanistan in 2009, was removed from his post after he complained that the UN was helping cover up the election fraud. He told government interviewers of SIGAR that:

*“The US government also stood by when Karzai appointed cronies to election boards and anti-corruption posts. There was a broader impact, because of the culture of dishonesty. You cannot separate administrative fraud from the corruption of the system.”*

### **KERRY-LUGAR BILL;** **AN UTTER HUMILIATION FOR PAKISTAN:**

**On 30th September 2009;** the US Congress approved a non-military aid to Pakistan. The legislation authorised \$1.5 billion a year for the next five years as part of a bid to build a new relationship with Pakistan. The bill also stipulated that US military aid would cease if Pakistan would not help fight ‘terrorists’ including Taliban and Al Qaeda. The bill’s sponsor, Howard Berman said that:

*“.....Nor can we permit the Pakistani state – and its nuclear arsenal – to be taken over by the Taliban. To keep military aid flowing, Pakistan*

*must also cooperate to dismantle nuclear supplier networks by offering relevant information from or direct access to Pakistani nationals associated with such networks”.*

The bill had originally been under discussion in the Congress since 2008. That bill [no: S3263], also known as **‘Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act 2008’** had in fact recognized the role of Pakistan as US ally and the frontline state in combating terrorism. However, the bill died before it could be tabled before the Senate for debate following the upcoming presidential elections in December 2008.

The said bill was reintroduced in the 111th Congress session in 2009 as the Kerry-Lugar Bill. It was told to the Congress that [till that moment] Pakistan had lost more than \$35 billion in economic activity in US-Afghan War since 9/11 of 2001 and more Pakistani soldiers and security personnel had laid down their lives than the combined losses of the US and Afghanistan together.

**PAK-ARMY GOT ANGRY:** It is on record that the then US envoy to Pakistan, Anne Patterson, heard a hot criticism [over the Kerry-Lugar bill] from Gen Kayani and DG ISI Gen Pasha in a two-hour meeting on 6 th October 2009. Gen Kayani had made clear to the Ambassador and accompanying Gen McCrystal, during an urgent meeting at GHQ, about his concerns. Gen Crystal understood the viewpoint of Pak-Army and was not at all happy when he left the GHQ. Gen Kayani told them that there were elements in the bill that would set back the bilateral relationship. The reported remarks of the American envoy were that rejection of the bill would be taken as an insult and smack of arrogant attitude of Pak-Army.

The ‘TIME’ magazine of 8th October 2009 told that:

*“Unlike previous no-strings aid packages, Kerry-Lugar makes support conditional on Pakistan’s military being subordinated to its elected government, and taking action against militants sheltering on its soil.*

*[In Pakistan] the opposition parties unite against its humiliating conditions, with even the junior partners in Zardari’s ruling coalition expressing misgivings. Public opinion ranges from suspicion to hostility.*

*Following a meeting of its corps commanders, the army expressed serious concern over the national security implications of the aid package. It’s a kind of political move on the part of the military.”*

Ayaz Amir, an opposition legislator, labelled the ‘conditional ties’ as grossly demeaning. In daily ‘**the News**’ feature published in the first week of October 2009, under ‘**Kerry-Lugar: bill or document of surrender**’, he opined that:

*“A convicted rapist out on parole would be required to give fewer assurances of good conduct.*

*Turning Pakistan into a client state: ..... reduced to insignificant status with the acceptance of the aid bill, and the humiliation of Pakistan as it emerges as an American satellite...puppet...neo-colony”.*

The Obama Administration was really caught in dilemma; the Pak-Army had categorically declined to accept the US dictations – and the US-AID was rejected; for more details see:

**JUDGES & GENERALS IN PAKISTAN: VOL-III** by  
Inam R Sehri [2013]; Scenario 67; pps 942-959,  
GHP Surry [UK]

### **OBAMA INCREASED TROOPS 3-FOLD:**

**On 1st December 2009:** President Obama announced another surge of US troops to Afghanistan, tripling the number to nearly 100,000. In the meantime, another scandal blew up in Kabul when the dissident voices raised from the election started subsiding; details are given else where on these pages.

After 2006, the sands of Afghan War had started slipping out of American hands; the Taliban influence was seen visibly expanding and resistance to US and NATO troops had increased. The US air-strikes and night raids heightened a sense of oppression among Afghan villagers and triggered an obligation to resist. After the Taliban offensive that year, it was hard to see how any strategy could bring victory for the US and the puppet Afghan government; the surge was one of them.

In retrospect, the US would have been better off had it never surged at all; Obama still had option to deploy fewer troops than he did—but Gen Stanley McChrystal, the top US commander in Afghanistan, and Gen Petraeus, the commander of US Central Command, had not advised the president with such kind of option. All their proposals involved further increases in the number of US military personnel deployments. Both Generals believed that escalation was warranted owing to the threat posed by the Taliban’s strong moves and becoming the country a safe

haven for terrorists. Both generals had witnessed that how the US counter-insurgency strategy had miserably failed in Iraq.

Had Obama done less, the US casualties and expenses would have been far lower. But Obama did err when it came to placing restrictions on the US forces. Prior to 2014, the US air-strikes were used when necessary to strike enemy targets, and commanders took steps to avoid civilian casualties. The idea was to disentangle US forces from combat and, to a lesser extent, to reduce civilian casualties. As a result, there was a pronounced reduction in the number of US strikes.

In 2016, the US forces carried out an average of 80 air-strikes per month, less than a quarter of the monthly average for 2012. Meanwhile, over 500 air-strikes per month were being conducted in Iraq and Syria against a comparable adversary. One frontline Afghan Commander in Helmand, Omar Jan, pleaded in 2016:

*"If America just helps with air-strikes and . . . supplies, we can win. My weapons are worn from shooting. My ammunition stocks are low. I do not need advisors. I just need someone to call when things are really bad."*

The decision to use air-strikes only in extreme warfare virtually ensured defeat. When the unexpected happened, Obama was unprepared. Facing far greater constraints, Obama had to play the cards he was given. The Afghan government was formed and violence had returned, and a spirit of resistance had arisen in the rural Afghan people. Obama's error was mostly based on oversights and miscalculations.

**On 30<sup>th</sup> December 2009;** a suicide attack occurred at Forward Operating Base Chapman, a major CIA base in the province of Khost, Afghanistan. **Seven CIA officers, including the chief of the base, were killed and six others seriously wounded** in the attack. The attack was the second deadliest carried out against CIA, after the 1983 US Embassy bombing in Beirut, and was a major setback for the intelligence agency's operations.

**On 27<sup>th</sup> January 2011;** Raymond Davis, a former US Army soldier, a private security firm [PMC]'s employee, and contractor with the CIA, shot and killed two passer-by in Lahore, Pakistan - claiming that they came to rob him. Immediately after the shooting, a car coming to aid Davis killed a third Pakistani person, in a hit and run while speeding on wrong side of the road. In the aftermath of the incident, the US

government contended that Davis was protected by diplomatic immunity, which was factually NOT. Thus, he was jailed and criminally charged by Pakistani courts on two counts of murder and the illegal possession of a firearm.

**On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011;** Raymond Davis was released after the families of the two killed men were paid US\$2.4 million in *diyya* [a form of blood money compensation in Islamic law]. Judges then acquitted him on all charges, Davis immediately left Pakistan but leaving behind a bitter taste in the Pak-US relationship. For more details see:

**JUDGES & GENERALS IN PAKISTAN: VOL-IV**  
by *Inam R Sehri* [2013]; Scenario 84; pps 1308-23,  
*GHP Surrey* UK

**On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2011;** The White House announced that Osama Bin Laden was killed by the US SEALs in Abbot Abad [Pakistan]; there it was 2<sup>nd</sup> of May morning. President Obama claimed that the information pertaining to the operation conducted in Abbott Abad was not shared with Pakistan Army. However, ISI claimed that the operation was conducted jointly, a claim which was blatantly denied by Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari.

However, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stated that '**cooperation with Pakistan helped lead us to bin Laden and the compound in which he was hiding**'. Since the war on terror started in 2001, Pakistan received an estimated amount of \$20 billion from the US under '**Joint Operations**' head; however, in the wake of OBL's raid, the US withheld \$800 million of their due bills on this account and had refused the payment to Pakistan.

**On 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011;** the NATO launched an air-attack in Pakistan [called the **Salala incident**]. This criminal activity occurred when the US-led NATO forces engaged Pakistani security forces at two Pakistani military check-posts along the Afghan-Pakistan border. With two NATO Apache helicopters, an AC-130 gunship and two F-15E Eagle fighter jets, killed 28 Pakistani soldiers and wounding 12. This attack resulted in a deterioration of relations between Pakistan and the US. The Pakistani public reacted with protests all over the country and the government had to take measures adversely affecting the American exit strategy from Afghanistan, including the **evacuation of Shamsi Airfield and closure of the NATO supply line** through Pakistan – much later re-opened.

However, the re-opening of the NATO-supply routs through Pakistan 1  
 was a rogue decision by the then Pakistani President Zardari alone 2 through  
 PM Gilani – but against their personal monetary bargains that 3 was why  
 Pakistan was not invited to the crucial 25th NATO summit 4 held in May  
 2012 in Chicago. 5

**[PRESIDENT ZARDARI DISGRACED:** *In a sudden shift in events,*  
*NATO, on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012, said that it would invite President Zardari*  
*to the alliance's summit in Chicago, after Pakistan proposed reopening*  
*its Afghan border to NATO military supplies. President Zardari*  
*accepted the invitation and decided to attend the summit.* 6

*On 18<sup>th</sup> May, the US lawmakers in the House of Representatives*  
*debating the National Defense Authorization Act voted 412-1 for an*  
*amendment **that blocked \$550 million proposed payments to** Pakistan*  
*unless Islamabad lets coalition forces resume shipment of war supplies*  
*across its territory.* 7

*President Zardari arrived in Washington on 19<sup>th</sup> May to attend the NATO*  
*summit in Chicago – but was denied access to attend the conference.]* 8

### **PAKISTAN IGNORED ON CHICAGO SUMMIT:** 9

During **NATO's Chicago Summit [20-21 May 2012]**; NATO endorsed a  
 plan to end the Afghanistan war and to remove the NATO-led ISAF  
 Forces by the end of December 2014. ISAF was disestablished in the  
 given time frame and was replaced by **Resolute Support Mission**, a  
 follow-on training [cover-up] program. 10

The summit principally focussed on three main themes: 11

- The Alliance's commitment to Afghanistan through transition and beyond; 12
- Ensuring the Alliance had the capabilities it needed to defend its population and territory and to deal with challenges of the 21st century; 13
- Strengthening NATO's network of partners across the globe. 14

In order to maintain its capacity to safeguard the security and values of  
 its members, NATO needed to continue developing the means to do so  
 and building partnerships beyond the North Atlantic region. 15

During NATO's Lisbon summit held on 19-20<sup>th</sup> November 2010, it was resolved to publish a new Strategic Concept – '**Active Engagement, Modern Defence**' – emphasizing on gradual transition process to full Afghan security responsibility to start in 2011, backed by Allied agreement on a long-term partnership with Afghanistan.

NATO was committed to support Afghanistan beyond 2014. The gradual transition of security responsibility from ISAF troops to Afghan National Security Forces [ANSF] was to be fully implemented with high spirits as the ISAF mission's closure was on cards. In 2013, when the last tranche of transition was expected to be announced, the ANSF was expected to claim victory over insurgency. ISAF was increasingly shifting to training and advisory role, but continued to support combat operations alongside Afghan forces, as necessary. At Chicago, the leaders drafted out how NATO would complete the transition process by ending 2014.

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012;** after Chicago's NATO Summit, a Senate panel approved a foreign aid budget for next year that **slashed US assistance to Islamabad** by more than half and threatened further reductions if Pakistan failed to open supply routes to NATO forces in Afghanistan. The said money for **Pakistan was cut by 58%** in the backdrop of Islamabad's commitment to fight against terrorism.

**On 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012;** the Senate Appropriations Committee voted to cut aid to Pakistan by a symbolic \$33 million – \$1 million for each year of jail time handed to Shakil Afridi, a Pakistani doctor who allegedly assisted the CIA in finding Osama bin Laden. However, the US had agreed to reimburse \$1.18 billion or almost 75% of the claims Pakistan had submitted for the expenses incurred in the fight against militants along the Afghan border.

**On 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012;** Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta said that the US was running out of patience with Pakistan over safe havens of insurgents who used to attack US troops across the Pak-Afghan borders. Panetta had spoken after talks with Afghan Defense Minister Rahim Wardak on the latest leg of an Asian tour that took him **to India, but not Islamabad** in a sign of how tense US-Pakistan relations were – but actually it was a display of hate-sentiments.

**On 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012,** US Assistant Defense Secretary Peter Lavoy arrived in Islamabad, in a fresh attempt to bring an end to a six-month blockade on NATO supplies crossing into Afghanistan – but was met with cold

reception and fruitless negotiations because of his Secretary Panetta's <sup>1</sup> given importance to India as against his WOT ally Pakistan, as explained <sup>2</sup> in above paragraph; thus the US had to withdraw negotiators from <sup>3</sup> Pakistan on **14<sup>th</sup> June** instant.

Another reason was that Secretary Panetta had ruled out an apology over SALALA air strike a year earlier that had killed 28 Pakistani soldiers - saying it was '*time to move on*'. Two days later, Gen John Allen, the top commander of American and NATO forces in Afghanistan, visited Pakistan amidst heightened tensions between the two countries. The agenda of the talks remained to restore NATO supply routes and cross-border attacks launched on Pakistani soil from Afghanistan.

**On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012;** Pakistan agreed to reopen key supply routes into Afghanistan ending a bitter stand-off **after US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton apologized over the SALALA Air-Attack disaster**. Next day, Washington released about \$1.1 billion to the Pak-Army from a US '*coalition support fund*' designed to reimburse Pakistan for the cost of counter-insurgency operations. It was the first installment since December 2010 in connection with US-Afghan War.

**On 5<sup>th</sup> August 2012;** discussions held in a series of meetings between the US and Pakistan military commanders over multiple issues of cross-border attacks by the *Haqqani* network on Afghanistan and by the TTP on Pakistani soils - but ended without any cogent results.

**On 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2012;** an American diplomat held a meeting with Pakistani officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad as Pakistan had lodged **its first formal protest** with the US over continued drone strikes in the Pakistani areas near Pak-Afghan border.

**By 2013,** more than 350,000 Afghan soldiers and police had been trained, armed, and deployed. Their performance was mixed, marred by corruption and by '*insider attacks*' carried out on American and allied advisers. Many units depended on US advisers and air support to defeat [?] the Taliban in their offensive attacks.

**On 27<sup>th</sup> MAY 2014:** President Obama announced a timetable for withdrawing most US forces from Afghanistan by the end of 2016; he said:

*"We have to recognize that Afghanistan will not be a perfect place, and it is not America's responsibility to make it one."*

Under his plan, leaving behind 9,800 US troops the rest were to be withdrawn from Afghanistan within almost 3 years. By the end of 2015, that number was to be reduced by roughly half. By the end of 2016, the US presence was cut to a normal embassy presence with a security assistance office in Kabul, as was done in Iraq. The 9,800 troops were meant to take an advisory role backing up Afghan forces. They were to train Afghan troops and help guide missions to rout out remaining al Qaeda targets.

**In November 2014;** the two countries, the US and Pakistan, re-started to cooperate more closely – particularly following the US’s use of drone missiles to strike at Pakistan’s most-wanted militants. The US later used drone missiles to kill several of Pakistan’s most wanted militants who were hiding in a remote region close to the Afghan border.

### **OPERATION ZARB E AZB IN PAKITAN:**

Pakistani Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif’s **Zarb-e-Azb Operation** against militants in North Waziristan also ‘fractured’ the Haqqani Network—long accused by the US of having a safe harbour in Pakistan. The US then captured and transferred a senior Taliban commander, Latif Mehsud, to Pakistan, which had been seeking his arrest. Following an unprecedented two-week-long visit by Pakistan’s Army Chief Gen Raheel Sharif, the **US-Pakistani relations were on the upswing again** following several tense years of dysfunction. In the meantime, Pakistan had killed senior Al-Qaeda leader *Adnan el Shukrijumah*—long wanted by the US, leaving a positive note for better mutual relations among the two countries.

**On 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015;** Pakistan made full payment from its national budget towards the purchase of 18 new F-16C/D Fighting Falcon Block 52 combat aircraft worth US\$1.43 billion. Pakistan also paid for the F-16 armaments including 500 AMRAAM air-to-air missiles; 1,450 pieces of 2,000-pound bombs; 500 JDAM Tail Kits for gravity bombs and 1,600 Enhanced Pave-way laser-guided kits. All this had additionally cost Pakistan US\$629 million. Pakistan also paid US\$298 million for 100 harpoon anti-ship missiles, US\$95 million for 500 sidewinder air-to-air missiles; and US\$80 million paid for seven Phalanx Close-in Weapons System naval guns.

**By ending 2015,** just 9,800 US troops were left in Afghanistan. As the withdrawal continued, they focused on counter-terrorism and on advising and training the Afghans. Near the ending 2015, the Taliban mounted a series of well-planned offensives that became one of the most

decisive events of the war. In the province of Kunduz, 500 Taliban fighters killed some 3000 Afghan soldiers & police and captured a provincial capital for the first time. In Helmand Province, around 1,800 Taliban fighters defeated some 4,500 Afghan soldiers & police and recaptured almost all the ground lost in the surge – but couldn't take over the provincial capital because of last-minute reinforcements from the US.

In battle after battle, numerically superior and well-supplied soldiers in defensive positions made a collective decision to throw in the towel rather than go another round against the Taliban. Those who did stay to fight often paid dearly for their courage.

**Some 14000 Afghan soldiers were killed during 2015-16 alone.**

The Afghan government, then headed by Ashraf Ghani, was weaker than ever before. The Taliban held more ground than at any time since 2001. In July of that year, Obama suspended the drawdown of the US troops.

**On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016;** the US government proposed US\$860 million in aid for Pakistan during the 2016–17 fiscal year, including \$265 million for military hardware in counter-insurgency funding – but till then the relationship between the two countries had again gone tense on various counts.

**On 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017;** The US dropped the most powerful non-nuclear weapon, dubbed the '*Mother of all Bombs*' [MOAB] on suspected ISIS -Khorasan militants at a cave complex in Achin District, Nangarhar Province in eastern Afghanistan. The bomb — called the GBU-43/B Massive Ordnance Air Blast — could obliterate everything within a 1,000-yard radius. Unleashing that weapon was so massive that it had to be dropped from the rear of a cargo plane.

In President Trump's initial months in office, the military had argued that the use of that heavy bomb would help it defeat the Islamic State more speedily. Mr Trump said after a meeting with emergency workers at the White House that '*it was another very, very successful mission.*' The Pentagon had given no casualty totals for the said bombing.

**On 21<sup>st</sup> August 2017;** US President Trump increased the number of troops in Afghanistan to 14000 from 8500. But on the same day the President announced his new strategy for Afghan War **and accused Pakistan** of providing safe havens to terrorists. Trump said:

1           *"The Pakistani people had suffered greatly from terrorism and*  
2           *extremism. We recognize those contributions and those sacrifices, but*  
3           *Pakistan has also sheltered the same organizations that try every single*  
4           *day to kill our people."*

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6       Moreover, Trump also urged India for its role in the war. Trump's speech  
7       led to rise of anti-American sentiments in Pakistan and protests against  
8       Trump were held across the country. Two months later, Trump ONCE  
9       AGAIN tweeted with an urge to develop better relations with Pakistan.

10  
11      **On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018;** President Trump again criticized Pakistan, saying  
12      *'they have given us nothing but lies and deceit'*. Mr Trump also  
13      announced cancelling a \$300 million disbursement to Pakistan, citing the  
14      country's failure to take strong actions against Afghan Taliban militants  
15      and their safe havens in Pakistan. However, the relations between  
16      the two countries improved after Pakistani PM Imran Khan visited the  
17      US. Many experts viewed Khan's visit to US as *'reset in the bilateral*  
18      *relationship between the two countries'*.

19  
20      President Trump called for dramatically strengthening trade ties between  
21      Pakistan and the US as it was a top export destination for Pakistan.  
22      Trump had also offered to mediate between India and Pakistan on  
23      Kashmir but the proposal was immediately rejected by Indian foreign  
24      office.

25  
26      **On 4<sup>th</sup> September 2018;** US diplomat Zalmay Khalilzad appointed as US  
27      special adviser tasked with assisting an Afghan peace process. However,  
28      the American activities in Afghanistan touched the lowest margins of  
29      humanity and war-courtesies. **As of 2018**, the CIA was engaged in a  
30      program to kill or capture militant leaders, **code-named ANSOF**,  
31      previously **Omega**. CIA manpower was supplemented with personnel  
32      assigned from US Army Special Operations Command.

33  
34      **In mid-2019**, the Human Rights Watch stated that: *'CIA-backed Afghan*  
35      *strike forces have committed serious abuses, some amounting to war*  
36      *crimes since late 2017'*.

37  
38      **7<sup>th</sup> September 2019:** President Trump announced via Twitter that he  
39      cancelled plans for Taliban leaders and Afghan president to travel to  
40      Camp David to finalize a peace agreement. The peace-negotiations at  
41      Doha Qatar were also called off because of an attack that killed a US  
42      soldier and 11 others. During the same month, amidst a joint rally at  
43      Houston, Trump refused to endorse India's repeated allegations against

Pakistan. After the joint rally, Trump called himself a **'friend of Pakistan'** and termed Imran Khan as **'great leader'**.

**In January 2020;** President Trump once again held a meeting with Prime minister Khan in Davos, on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum. President Trump hailed the growing relationship between the US and Pakistan. He said that:

*"United States has never been closer with Pakistan than it is currently under his [PM IMRAN KHAN]'s administration."*

This was the third meeting between the two countries and Trump once again offered to mediate on Kashmir issue. His remarks were welcomed by PM Khan but again refuted by India.

**On 29<sup>th</sup> February 2020;** The US and the Taliban signed a deal in Doha [Qatar], setting a timetable for the withdrawal of 13,000 US troops in Afghanistan and the Taliban committed to halt attacks on Americans.

During **SEPTEMBER 2020 - FEBRUARY 2021;** Afghan government-Taliban negotiations in Qatar were attempted several times but stalled with no progress. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani refused unity government proposals, while the Taliban also hesitated to agree a cease-fire.

## **2021 - YEAR OF AMERICAN SURRENDER:**

**ON 14<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021:** US President Joe Biden said the remaining US troops in Afghanistan, roughly 3500 then, would be withdrawn by 11<sup>th</sup> September that year to end America's 'forever war'. On the same day, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced that the alliance agreed to start **withdrawing its troops from Afghanistan within 15 days** by all means. Soon after the withdrawal of NATO troops started, the Taliban launched offensives against the Afghan government all over, quickly advancing in front of collapsing Afghan Armed Forces.

During **MAY 2021 - 31<sup>ST</sup> AUGUST 2021:** REGULAR WITHDRAWAL PROCESS STARTED AND CONTINUED. Taliban expanded their territorial control; their fighters made rapid territorial advances across Afghanistan, taking control about half of Afghanistan - more than 400 districts.

**In May 2021;** former President Karzai spoke with German newspaper *Der Spiegel*, where he expressed his sympathy with the Taliban, criticized

the role of the US in Afghanistan - at the same time, saying that the future of Afghanistan relies heavily on neighbouring Pakistan. He also considered the Taliban '*victims of foreign forces*' and said that Afghans were being used to be each against the other.

**On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021:** US handed over **Bagram Airfield** to Afghan military control after the last troops in the base left. US military's withdrawal was nearly 90% complete, with the entire process to be completed by **31<sup>st</sup> August 2021**. The Taliban said they would present a written peace proposal to the Afghan government very soon.

**ON 6<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021;** First provincial capital fell in the Taliban's feet. *Zaranj*, in south of the country became the first provincial capital to fall to the Taliban in years. Many more were to follow in the ensuing days, including the prized city of *Kunduz* in the north.

**ON 13<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021:** Four more provincial capitals fell down in a day, including *Kandahar*, the country's second-largest city and the spiritual home of the Taliban.

**ON 14<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021:** The Taliban took over the major northern city of *Mazar-e-Sharif*. The US sent more troops to help evacuate its civilians from Kabul as the Afghan President Ghani said he was consulting with local and international partners on next steps.

**ON 15<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021:** The Taliban took control of the key eastern city of Jalalabad without a fight. Also the Taliban entered Kabul; the US evacuated diplomats from its embassy by helicopter in that day's early hours.

That day the Taliban controlled nearly the whole of Afghanistan and encircled the capital city of Kabul. Some politicians in NATO member states described this chaotic withdrawal of Western troops from Afghan soils and the collapse of the Afghan government as ***the greatest debacle that NATO ever suffered since its founding.***

**On 17<sup>th</sup> August 2021:** The Taliban consolidated their control over the whole country; they vowed to respect women's rights 'within Islamic law'.

Through the above lines; can any sane person interpret that the Americans had taken care of Pakistan as an ally or associate – even the slave nations are not treated like that.