

# Send More Troops, To Partition Afghanistan

by Ramtanu Maitra

Oct. 2—President Barack Obama met on Sept. 29 with his Afghanistan-Pakistan policymakers and heard views of 17 individuals that included Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, National Security Advisor Gen. Jim Jones (ret.), chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen, CENTCOM Chief David Petraeus, and Vice President Joe Biden. The meeting, the second of at least five President Obama has planned as he reviews his Afghanistan strategy, comes after he received a critical assessment of the war effort from Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the man he put in charge of the Afghan War earlier this year.

Reports of the meeting indicate that the Administration members are divided on the issue of induction of more troops in Afghanistan. McChrystal is reportedly looking for 30-40,000 additional soldiers, added to the present U.S. troop strength of 68,000 and 35,000 NATO troops. According to an unnamed senior Administration official, cited by the media, there was no discussion of specific troop levels at the meeting in the White House.

Besides from General McChrystal and General Petraeus, the White House is also under pressure from its NATO allies, particularly Britain, to put more troops into Afghanistan and slog it out for years. At this crucial juncture, when the strategy behind the war is being reviewed, if Washington toes the London line, inevitably the United States will plunge itself into a Vietnam-like situation. More people will be killed on a routine basis, but that itself will become the motivation (or pretext) to stick around and kill more. The situation has not reached that point yet, but certain quarters in the United States and the British establishment are pushing the President in that direction.

But beyond the fears of many, that mindless killings for years will do nothing better than to create a stalemate, there is yet another certainty which London understands clearly, but not many in Washington do. If

the war in Afghanistan is pursued, with or without more troops sent to Afghanistan now, or in the near future, such a war will be waged primarily against the majority Pushtun community, within which the dreaded Saudi- and British-created Taliban ideologues remain embedded.

### The British Pressure

Since the Pushtun community spans the Afghanistan-Pakistan borders, crossing the un-demarcated Durand Line, if an endless war is looming, the Pushtuns of Pakistan will get fully involved. They have so far participated in this eight-year war mostly by being “good hosts” to the fleeing fellow Pushtun warriors and their foreign Islamic militant friends; but if this war is continued with the objective not to end it, it is almost a certainty that the Pakistani Pushtuns will be a part of it. And the Pushtun community in Pakistan is much larger than that in Afghanistan. This means that the draining of the United States’ and Pakistan’s manpower and resources, not to mention Afghanistan’s, under such circumstances, would be much bigger than it ever was in Vietnam.

What London understands, and fully welcomes, and Washington does not, is that such an endless war has only one possible outcome, which is the break-up of Afghanistan along ethnic lines. Because of the ethnic solidarity between Afghan and Pakistani Pushtuns, Pakistan, already in a volatile state because of the war in Afghanistan, will have to face Pushtun wrath and the threats of a break-up. It also should be noted that in that part of the world, and particularly after years of bloodshed, such a partition will not come through peace negotiations. It will come out of the barrels of Kalashnikovs, rocket launchers, grenade launchers, and other weapons of selected destruction.

On Sept. 2, the City of London’s *Financial Times*, in its lead editorial, “Obama’s dilemma over Afghanistan,” wrote, “Barack Obama will almost certainly have to decide in the next few weeks whether to send more U.S. troops in order to defeat the Taliban. The decision is set to be one of the most difficult he has faced since becoming president.”

The British establishment mouthpiece went on to endorse McChrystal’s statement that “success is achievable,” adding: “Mr. Obama, for now, would be right to heed his demands.... In part, the president has no choice, since he only recently put the man in the job. But Gen. McChrystal is also forging a sensible strategy.



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*Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, previously the British Ambassador to Afghanistan, was appointed a special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan in February 2009. He has taken personal responsibility for pushing the Obama Administration to undertake a suicidal expansion there. Here, he is seen, as ambassador, in Helmand province, the center of Afghan opium production.*

He has framed the mission in the right terms, emphasizing the need to team up the Afghan National Army in bigger numbers. He has stressed the need for allied troops to get among the people, rather than just killing Taliban insurgents in large numbers.”

### Sir Sherard Cowper-Cowles: Britain’s Man on the Spot

Besides the *Financial Times* and other arms of the British media, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, the Foreign Office’s special envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan, has become an advocate for introducing more U.S. troops into the abyss known as Afghanistan. Cowper-Coles’ and his fellow Empire-servers’ selling point to the Americans is that, with the greater muscle and ruthlessness that America possesses, the war is winnable. While



London is lying to get Washington to go where it wants, very few in Washington have the gumption to ask: What does *winning* mean?

Cowper-Coles tries very hard to keep his British intelligence cover intact. One of the myths that circulates in Britain is that high-level intelligence officers do not become high-level diplomats, and for sure, Sherard Cowper-Coles gets around in the world of diplomacy at a very high level. But there are others who point out that there are exceptions, and Cowper-Coles is one. It is said that such exceptions are made when such an intelligence officer-cum-diplomat is posted in sensitive places.

Cowper-Coles has been Ambassador to Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan. In February 2009 it was announced that he would be taking up a new role as spe-

cial representative of the U.K. Foreign Secretary to Afghanistan and Pakistan. In other words, the old spook has earned his bread. The move was facilitated by Foreign Secretary David Miliband, another active servers of the British Empire.

Cowper-Coles had performed well on behalf of the empire-servers, including Tony Blair and Buckingham Palace. He was the political counselor in Paris during 1997-99. It was in August 1997 that Princess Diana died in Paris under “mysterious circumstances,” forcing Buckingham Palace to duck from one corner to another. According to one report, the alleged MI6 roster showed that only three Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) officers were posted to Paris in 1997: Sherard Louis Cowper-Coles, Colin Roberts, and Richard David Spearman. Cowper-Coles’ role—if any—in the morbid



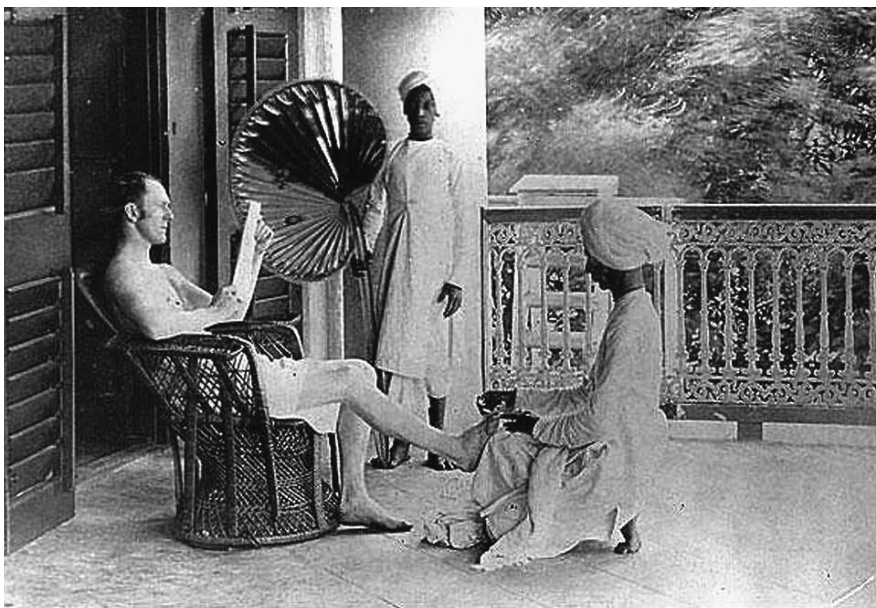
affair of Diana's death was never divulged.

Cowper-Coles earned kudos from Tony Blair when he was identified as "the man" who was instrumental in getting the Serious Fraud Office to abandon its investigation into the corrupt al-Yamamah arms-deal scandal involving Britain's BAE Systems, Saudi Princes Turki al-Faisal and Bandar bin-Sultan, Wafik Said, kickbacks, prostitutes, and global terror, including 9/11 (see *EIR*, June 22, 2007).

While he was in Afghanistan as British Ambassador, Cowper-Coles used his fellow agents in an attempt to split the Taliban, which the Saudis and the Brits created, in the 1990s, and each own a piece of (see last week's *EIR*). The project was exposed, when Afghan President Hamid Karzai expelled two MI6 agents on Dec. 27, 2007, on charges that they posed a threat to the country's national security. An unnamed Afghan government official told the London *Sunday Telegraph* that "this warning," that the men had been financing the Taliban for at least ten months, "came from the Americans. They were not happy with the support being provided to the Taliban. They gave the information to our intelligence services, who ordered the arrests." Afghan government officials said the decision to expel them was taken at the behest of the CIA, after the two agents were caught funding Taliban units. One of the agents, Mervyn Patterson, worked for the United Nations, while the other, Michael Semple, worked for the European Union.

According to *The Scotsman's* report, Afghan intelligence officials discovered the plan—which would have established a training camp for 1,800 fighters and 200 low-level commanders, in an attempt to convince them to switch sides—on a thumb-sized computer memory stick that they seized Dec. 23, 2007, in Helmand province. The memory stick revealed that about \$126,000 had been spent preparing the camp, and about \$201,000 more was earmarked to run it in 2008.

On Dec. 26, 2007, Britain's *Daily Telegraph* exposed the occurrence of several clandestine meetings between Britain's MI6 and the Taliban the previous



*The policy of decentralization which Cowper-Coles is pushing for Afghanistan is a direct copy of the Raj system the British Empire set up for India 200 years ago. Here, an image of the treatment the British came to expect under the Raj.*

Summer. Afghan and British officials, guarded by heavily armed British soldiers, partook in at least six high-level meetings with Taliban commanders who sought to defect to the government. The chain of events that led to these secret meetings spawned from Britain's previous attempts at negotiations, nearly a full year prior, in a dusty Afghan backwater called Musa Qala.

The London *Times* wrote that, when Patterson and Semple were arrested, they had \$150,000 with them, which was to be given to Taliban commanders in Musa Qala. "British officials have been careful to distance current MI6 talks with Taliban commanders in Helmand from the expulsions of Michael Semple, the Irish head of the EU mission and widely known as a close confidant of Britain's ambassador, Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, and Mervyn Patterson, a British advisor to the UN," the *Times* wrote. But what has not been told, is that these two MI6 agents were operating in Helmand, the center of Afghanistan's vast opium production.

### **Holbrooke's 'Mini-Me': Bring Back the Raj**

Cowper-Coles, in an exuberant speech where he identified himself as Holbrooke's "Mini-Me" (it is no coincidence that Holbrooke is pushing for more troops in Afghanistan!), at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London on Sep. 12, said "the simple pull-out option is not one that any responsible govern-

ment could follow, nor is it one that any country that values its relationship with the United States, above all with President Obama's America, could possibly contemplate in any responsible way. While Obama remains committed, we remain committed." Or, is it the other way around, Sir Sherard?

He went on, "We must not forget the original reason why we are there, to prevent those great tribal lands on both sides of the Durand Line from ever again posing a threat to our national security." He recommended as a prerequisite, "an enduring long-term commitment that involves financing training and monitoring the Afghans."

In addition, he proposed decentralization of Afghan power in Kabul; the provincial governors in Afghanistan

"need to be given the means through which to re-create local government in Afghanistan." "Power needs to be distributed away from Kabul to the people who actually govern the country. We need to create *shuras* [administrative groups led by tribal leaders] which will do dispute resolution, including civil and criminal cases, and which will do security."

Those in Washington who are aware of what Cowper-Coles is talking about, would know that he is setting up the system that the British Empire had used in the Indian subcontinent during its almost 200 years of colonial rule, from the mid-18th to the mid-20th centuries. In the British Raj, Britain maintained almost 550 princely states within India, with the feudal lords as administrators. The British would have a presence there for two basic reasons: to collect a part of the revenue earned by that feudal lord annually, and to train the feudal lord's soldiers, so as to use them whenever the British Raj had to fight a war, be that in Africa, the Middle East, Asia or Europe.

More importantly, the prescription laid down by Cowper-Coles is primarily to undermine the sovereignty of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and lay a



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*British Foreign Secretary David Miliband, shown here in a market in Afghanistan in 2008, brought in intelligence hand Sir Sherard Cowper-Cowles, as his special envoy to Afghanistan.*

solid foundation for partition. The same method, during the British Raj days, helped the colonials to break up India, and keep the Kashmir dispute as a flashpoint between the two newly born nations, India and Pakistan.

Another carrier of the British Empire's sceptre, Daniel Korski of *The Spectator*, made amply clear when he wrote on Sept. 4, the day British Prime Minister Gordon Brown spoke at the IISS, that "our tactics clearly need a review. Britain and its allies should not try to build a modern Weberian state in Kabul that has the monopoly on the use of violence and a self-financing, service-providing administrative apparatus. The task is to midwife a pre-Westphalian state that acts against existential threats like al-Qaeda, but has to negotiate

its power, access and ability to deliver (limited) services with local power-brokers" (emphasis added).

Finally, to expedite the break-up of Afghanistan, London is courting the so-called moderate Taliban. In this, Cowper-Coles, besides covertly training the Taliban in the drug-infested province of Helmand, works with his fellow empire-server, David Miliband. On July 28, *The Times Online* reported Miliband's assertion that it is time to talk to the Taliban. "Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles, the former British Ambassador to Kabul, advocated the policy soon after arriving in Afghanistan in 2004. British diplomats and commanders were carrying it out, albeit on a small scale, until the furious intervention of Hamid Karzai, the Afghan President," the article said

*The Times Online* concluded that "Mr Miliband is anxious to reassure the public that there is more to the Afghan campaign than the continued slaughter of young British troops." What the British news media did not clarify, is *what* that "more to the Afghan campaign" really is. But it is evident that "more to the Afghan campaign" means breaking up Afghanistan by weakening Kabul and controlling the provincial governors.

It is the same old-same old, British colonial policy.