



VIEWER VOICES

COMMENTS & ANSWERS TO FAREED'S QUESTION OF THE WEEK 04-11-2010

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Last week we asked “should the United States continue to back Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai?”

29% of our viewers agree with Fareed, that the United States should continue to back Karzai; however, 57% disagree.

JP writes that “Further support for "President" Karzai by the US would be a grave mistake and a failure to learn from past experiences. Karzai obviously committed election fraud, and his cronyism and corruption are reversing any progress made by the US to bring stability to Afghanistan. We invaded that nation to eliminate the Taliban and create a stable democracy in the region, none of these goals are achievable with the kind of national Afghani leadership the Obama administration is currently supporting. The US has a long history of supporting suspect leaders (Shah, Deim, Batista etc.) as long as they maintain the perception of US support

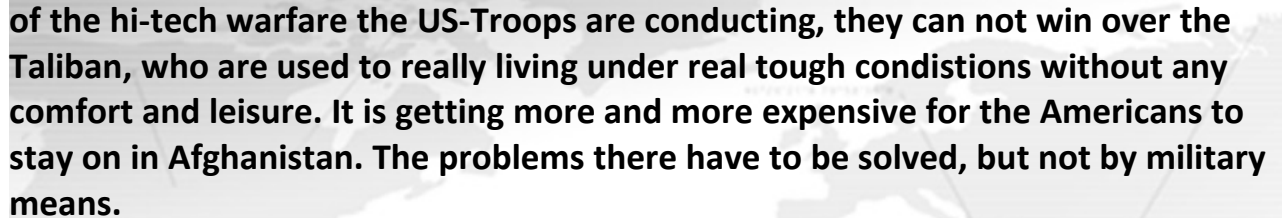
against the then communist and now Al-Qaeda/terrorists. US support for Pres. Karzai provides the perception to the Afgan people that the US does not care about the corruption and makes the US the ultimately responsible for Karzai's failures to the Afganis. Further backing of Karzai is counterproductive, we should seize this opportunity to gain the support of the Afgan people by eliminating Karzai and the intolerable corruption that he represents.”

Others, like [Gary Maxwell](#), point out that “Afghanistan is a sovereign nation so without President Karzai's permisson, we could be ordered out of Afghanistan or be there as an act of war which would undermine our war against terrorism.”

Still others offered novel solutions such as circumventing President Karzai, and dealing with village elders and tribal leaders instead.

MORE:

Others like America should get out of Afghanistan before it's getting too late. There's a risk, there Afghanistan could become America's second Vietnam. Despite



of the hi-tech warfare the US-Troops are conducting, they can not win over the Taliban, who are used to really living under real tough condistions without any comfort and leisure. It is getting more and more expensive for the Americans to stay on in Afghanistan. The problems there have to be solved, but not by military means.

Best regards

Jacqueline von Hettlingen, Switzerland

The US should alter its approach in Afghanistan by redirecting its involvement and support to the local leaders. The "nation" has never been truly united under a strong central government. It was through cooperation with local leaders that the Taliban were ousted from power; and these are now the people who can be of most assistance toward the defeat of this enemy, if indeed this is possible. And, perhaps when President Karzai sees the effectiveness of this new tactic, he will become far more cooperative.

Mac Langford

Lopez Island, WA

This week Ambassador Peter Galbraith suggested leaving Afghanistan. You asked him whether he was "giving up on Afghanistan?". To paraphrase his reply he said "no, but he was "giving up on failure" I.E. abandoning a strategy doomed by the dishonesty and misdeeds of Hamid Karzai and his government. You suggest we have no choice and have to support Karzai anyway. But to do that we would have to send American men and women to their deaths KNOWING that their lives will be lost in support of a corrupt government elected by fraudulent means and unsupported by the bulk of their own people. That is morally unacceptable and it will ultimately destroy the morale of our troops.

Then there's our wasted money. I understand we are going to defeat the Taliban by nation building . We are going to construct - among other things - 130 hospitals in Afghanistan. I am not without compassion. If that's what it takes I suggest that we immediately send them all our extra hospitals.

Matthew Hoh, the former Marine captain who resigned his job at the State Dept. gave us the real truth about Afghanistan - the people do not want a central government headed by Hamid Karzai or anyone else. Afghanistan is tribal/regional

AND THEY LIKE IT THAT WAY!! Hoh pointed out that the first thing the central government does when taking control of a region is impose new taxes and declare the resources of the region the property of the government. No wonder they despise central government and us by association.

Best,

**W. G. Zane
Sonoma, Calif.**

The US should NOT back Karzai in Afghanistan, but should do its nation-building from the grass roots UP rather from the corrupt national government DOWN. We have had numerous lessons and certainly should have learned by now that '... You can't build a democracy from the top down ...'.

Anonymous

“[T]he alternative we need, now and then, is not an alternative to Karzai, but an alternative to the whole imperialist and militarist foreign policy that we have pursued for many decades. I am continuing to have the "audacity of hope" that under the Obama administration a "change we can believe in" is really going to

take place. That means that my hope is that we will wind down our military involvement all over the world, to be replaced by diplomacy and international law. But first we will have to break the stranglehold of what Eisenhower called the military-industrial complex on U.S. foreign policy - the same stranglehold that got us into Vietnam. As long as we remain in its grip, wars will never end. That is where Obama needs our help. “

Tony Wicher
Ontario, California

I agree with your guest, Peter Galbraith (who came across as a very honest and plain-spoken diplomat). No point in backing someone who has stolen the election!

Renuka Pullat
Hillsborough, CA

So should we continue our relationship? Yes. Look, no doubt Karzai is corrupt, and he's going to continue protecting his brother (who is a criminal and if not a drug dealer himself, is supported by them). Unfortunately that's sometimes what you get in that part of the world. Afghanistan was never renowned for it's transparency and professionalism in business or politics (although I'm sure there are plenty of

