

Divide and Rule: Separatist Nations Are Victims of Global War Theorists

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Partitioning of nations is now a rather familiar word that draws people into new waves of discussions. It is possible that many separatist movements could retreat or strike a reconciliatory deal with opposing governments, unless there is no interventionism or nudge from abroad. A nation's call for independence is often formed out of mutual dependency of native separatists and outsiders seeking an interest into the region. A helpless pro-independence nation may resort to external aids regardless of what these strangers demand in return. Similarly, when there is no potent national motive for independence, no foreign power would think of it.

The world is overwhelmingly in dispute. China has territorial or water disputes with India, Philippines, Japan as well as North Korea; Pakistan is at odds with India over Kashmir and with Afghanistan over de-facto border. On the other side, the lucrative arms sale business will not allow a regional violence to fade out and theorize new roots of unrest to create drastic demands for purchase of multimillion dollar worth of arms.

Media reports of ISIS's activities have gradually subsided, not only largely in the Middle East, but partly in Afghanistan. The time gap between the ISIS's downfall and emergence of a brand new terrorist group may not be very wide, the rays of which can be seen in outburst of Kurdish nation into demanding of independence from Iraq. Reports claim that Israel is the engineer of the plot seeking a free territory in a strategic region surrounded by Iran, Turkey and Syria.

The disputed Kurdistan is claimed by Arabs, Turkmens as well as Shiite Muslims. Turkey has been involved in the direct conflict with separatist Kurds and has opposed the scheme. Turkish **President Recep Tayyip Erdogan** blasted at Israel and blamed it for Kurdish Independence drive. Iran is concerned about Israel's footing in independent Kurdistan. Israeli **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu** likened present-day Kurds to Jews before Israel's formation whose fate was uncertain and said that the time has come for Kurds to form an own independent country. His enticement - no doubt supported by aids of any sort - is manifestation of *Divide and Rule* policy.

By dividing the territory into a free country and ruling a prospective Kurdish Government in between Turkey, Iran and Syria, Israel would empower its standing and influence military decisions of these countries. Although Syria chooses to remain neutral to this development, it may team up with hard-times partner Iran because it threatens the country's interests in the region.

Pakistan's Baluchistan is another such example that is living in a precarious situation.

This state of Pakistan is rich in natural gas, gold, copper, aluminum and above all uranium. The natives of Baluchistan protest that Pakistan's predominantly Punjabi Government extract the minerals and siphon off almost entire earnings into own pocket. This motive coupled with external provocations is setting the stage for branching off of Baluchistan from Pakistan.



New Middle East Ralph Peters map

The US has placed Baluchistan's option on the table for Pakistan. It would resort to Baluchistan's issue if Pakistan overstepped in its dealings with the US which is nearness to China and Russia. Baluchistan's separatist movement is like powder-keg waiting to explode as the US deems it necessary. There are multiple factors contributing to possible independence of this state. First and foremost, Baluchistan hosts a vital port of Gwadar which China eyes as a new trade route into Arabian Sea and China's CPEC project extends through the same state, something the US want to sabotage. With China's ample investments on Baluchistan's notably Gwadar port, the US's influence in Pakistan faces threats.

The second contributory force is that Baluchistan is a bridge between landlocked Afghanistan and Arabian Sea. The cheapest transit route for NATO's military and non-military supplies is Pakistan which repeatedly blocked it over some reasons in the past. Once obtained independence under the mediation of the US, Baluchistan would serve as a smooth and silky corridor for the superpower's imports as well as exports.

For the first time on February 8, 2012, the US House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs convened a Congressional hearing on Baluchistan. Republican **Congressman Dana Rohrabacher** who spearheaded the move co-authored an article with **Congressman Louie Gohmert** expressing support for an independent Baluchistan. In July

2015, the US Congress chaired a meeting to discuss the evidence of repression faced by Baluch community. International and Baluch leaders shed light on the injustice and oppression perpetrated by the Pakistani Government. It seems the US is interested in Baluchistan but is unwilling to set theories into motion by now.

In the Congressional hearing, Baluch leaders including **Brahumdagh Bugti** proclaimed that Baluchs are allies of Washington. According to reports, these leaders assured Congressmen that they would not only offer Gwadar port for the US, but also prevent gas pipeline project between Iran and Pakistan that moves along the same state. These US-based events evoked instant backlash from Pakistani officials and political parties and publicly revealed that they are alert and reactive about Baluchistan's issue.

India would be first to recognize Baluchistan as an independent state. Thanks to Pakistan's intervention in Kashmir, India entitles itself to stretch hand of interference in Baluchistan against Pakistan. However, known allies of Pakistan like China, Russia and Iran would stand against any US-driven campaign of splitting Baluchistan from Pakistan. It might not be for the sake of Pakistan's integrity, but rather for a new-born government at the service of the US.

Iran was first to recognize Pakistan in 1947. A separated Baluchistan would spark a similar sedition within Iran's own Baluchistan and that's why Iran is wholeheartedly siding with Pakistan to stand up to such a transition. At the same time, homegrown terrorism in Pakistan spilled over into China's Sin Kiang, but Beijing still sought a unified and integrated Pakistan, possibly against the US.

Baluchistan shares long border with Iran. Pakistan and Iran held a meeting on January 16-17, 2012 to ink a deal on export of natural gas from southern Iran to Pakistan. It surprised experts how Pakistan dared to conclude a deal with a country which was living under heavy sanctions of the US at the time. On this account, part of Baluchistan's separatism is prompted due to Pakistan's proximity with Iran.

Furthermore, Iran and Pakistan exchanged sporadic mortar shells in recent years. First Iran claimed it was hit by missiles fired from Pakistan and launched retaliatory rockets on Pakistan. Pakistan, indeed, doesn't want frayed ties with Iran and these rocket attacks underscore that certain circles attempt to hold back any rapprochement between two countries.

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