

“WHAT ABOUT PAKISTAN?” ASK FORMER WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN ROBERT WEINER AND POLICY ANALYST BEN LASKY IN *THE MIAMI HERALD*

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Robert Weiner



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WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, June 24, 2021 /[EINPresswire.com](#)/ -- Former White House spokesman Robert Weiner and senior policy analyst Ben Lasky just wrote an op-ed in the Miami Herald (named H2 by OpEdNews as the #2 op-ed in the country) in which they argue that as the US plans to leave Afghanistan in September, there is no plan on how to deal with Pakistan.

Pakistan is the country that harbored bin Laden, is a major narcotics trafficker and is in a decades old rivalry with India. Until Pakistan proves it is an actual ally of the US, it should not receive funding.

Weiner and Lasky begin, "According to the Defense Department's Office of Inspector General, the Taliban has increased its violence against Afghan citizens since the beginning of the year. Peace talks with the Afghan government have led to a US vow to pull troops from the country by Sept. 11. While Afghanistan gets most of the attention in the region, we are at least proposing a 'plan' to neutralize anti-West terror development there. We'll support intelligence, counter narcotics aid, and freezing funds and assets going to terrorism. It may be idealistic but at least it's an attempt to get us out while stabilizing the region."

They write, "The administration has no such plan for Afghanistan's neighbor, Pakistan. Even though it hosted bin Laden, a WorldPublicOpinion.org poll conducted 10 years after 9/11 found that 72% of Pakistani citizens said they didn't know who was responsible for the attacks."

They explain, "Like Afghanistan, Pakistan is a world-leading narcotics supplier where terrorists get most of their money as drug cartels. The tribal areas of Pakistan are where Al Qaeda has set up headquarters after US forces came in 2001. In an appearance on 'Morning Joe' on May 6, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates argued that the US has ignored Pakistan while overemphasizing Afghanistan."

They continue, "'By January 2002, you had an Afghan government that was recognized internationally. You had all the parties in Afghanistan participating, except for the Taliban, who were hiding in Pakistan,' Gates said. Former Pakistan president Asif Ali Zardari admitted that Pakistan had trained terrorists in order to further its foreign policy goals. 'Let us be truthful to ourselves and make a candid admission of the realities. The terrorists of today were the heroes of yesteryears until 9/11 occurred and they began to haunt us as well. They were deliberately created and nurtured as a policy to achieve some short-term tactical objectives,' Ali Zardari said."

They contend, "SEAL Team Six finally killed Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan in 2011. Abbottabad is not some small Pakistani village hidden in the mountains just across the Afghan border. Its population is over 200,000. Its military academy-- its West Point—is less than two miles from bin Laden's headquarters and hiding place. Is anyone really supposed to believe the Pakistani government didn't know he was there, it alone allowing his protection?"

They go on, "As we approach the 20 year anniversary of 9/11, there hasn't been a major Al Qaeda terrorist attack in the US since then. While Al Qaeda leadership has changed, their goal hasn't. The main source of funding for terror groups is drug money. According to the State Department's 2021 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (INCSR), Afghanistan is the main opium supplier in the world. But Pakistan also produces one-third as much and is used as a transshipment point for chemicals and the opium used in making heroin."

They point out, "The US Embassy and Consulates in Pakistan website now states that, 'Since 2009, the U.S. government has committed over \$5 billion in civilian assistance to Pakistan and over \$1 billion in emergency humanitarian response...This commitment reflects our belief that if Pakistan is secure and peaceful and prosperous, that's not only good for Pakistan, it's good for the region and it's good for the world.'"

They write, “Not exactly. India and Pakistan, both nuclear powers, have hated each other for decades with jealousy over the territory of Kashmir and a desire for world recognition at the expense of the other.”

They continue, “While most of Donald Trump’s presidency was a disaster, his administration was right to cut off \$1.3 billion in security assistance funding to Pakistan in 2018. However, like many events that took place under Trump, the aid was restored after his improved personal relationship with Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan.”

They explain, “The Biden administration certainly hasn’t been chummy with Pakistan so far. Biden held a climate change summit with leaders in the region in April. Indian and Bengali leaders were invited. Pakistani leaders were snubbed. This doesn’t seem to be an accident either, as Climate Czar John Kerry also recently visited countries in the region. Pakistan wasn’t one of them.”

Weiner and Lasky conclude, “While the cold shoulder is warranted, there should be no more free lunch. Funding should be contingent on an end to safe harbor for terrorists and an end to a worldwide drug distribution to fund those terrorists. While Pakistan claims to be a friend to the US, they are an ally in name only.”

Link to published article: <https://www.miamiherald.com/opinion/op-ed/article252188768.html>

Link to OpEdNews version: https://www.opednews.com/articles/As-Biden-pulls-out-of-Afgh-by-Robert-Weiner-Afghanistan-War_Biden-Harris_Funding_Funding-210619-77.html

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