

FOR JOHN KERRY'S STATE DEPARTMENT, CONSTITUTIONS MATTER ONLY ON ONE SIDE OF DURAND LINE

John Kerry has made not one, but two trips to Afghanistan to pursue his extra-constitutional “power sharing” agreement between Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah that creates the completely new position of chief executive within the Afghan government. As was easily predicted, that plan now teeters near total failure. Clearly, Afghanistan’s constitution means nothing to John Kerry in his pursuit of US goals in that country.

In the daily press briefing yesterday at Kerry’s State Department headquarters, spokesperson Marie Harf had this remarkable exchange with a reporter, where we suddenly see that next door, in Pakistan, the constitution is of prime importance*:

QUESTION: One more quickly. What Imran Khan is saying and others in the country, including hundreds of thousands or millions of people in Pakistan, they are not happy with the current government, and Imran Khan is saying that those elections by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif were fraud and fake and they were not legitimate or he’s calling that he should step down. That’s what I’m asking. I’m saying –

MS. HARF: He’s the prime minister, period.

QUESTION: Thank you.

QUESTION: So you’re not calling for Prime Minister Sharif to step down?

MS. HARF: I in no way am calling on

that.

QUESTION: Does the United States support regime change in Pakistan?

MS. HARF: We support the constitutional and electoral process in Pakistan, which produced the Prime Minister of Nawaz Sharif. That was a process they followed, an election they had, and we are focused on working with Pakistan. And we do not support any extra-constitutional changes to that democratic system or people attempting to impose them.

How about that? In Pakistan, the State Department does “not support any extra-constitutional changes to that democratic system or people attempting to impose them”, while just across the border in Afghanistan, the Cabinet member in charge of the State Department is putting a huge amount of his own energy into an extra-constitutional change to the democratic system there.

Just three days ago, Kerry included this snippet in his letter of congratulations to Afghanistan on their independence day:

With millions of Afghans across your great nation braving violence and intimidation to cast their ballots, it is critical that all parties honor those voters’ aspiration for a democratic, peaceful transfer of power that unifies the country. We will continue to strongly support the democratic process and the agreement reached between the two candidates concerning the formation of a national unity government.

So Kerry claims he supports the democratic process and yet he wants it to produce a “national unity government” that is described nowhere in the constitution that enabled the voting. His real aim appears near the end of the

letter:

With a timely resolution of the election and the signing of a Bilateral Security Agreement, I am confident that the next year will open an important new era in U.S.-Afghan relations.

For John Kerry, as well as the rest of the US government, it always has been and always will be about keeping those troops going (and those military contracts running).

Postscript: Did you notice the *asterisk above? I felt compelled to add it when I said that for the US, the constitution in Pakistan is of prime importance. There is a huge exception to that statement. The democratically elected government of Pakistan, whose constitutionality Harf is praising in her briefing, means absolutely nothing to the US when the US wishes to carry out a drone strike inside Pakistan's borders, even when that same democratically elected government has made it clear that such actions are a violation of sovereignty.