

(Copy of a letter from the Hague) March 28th 56

No one has been able to comprehend the secrecy and organization of the rising against us in Affghanistan so contrary to what was known of the character and habits of the Affghans.

Sir Alexander Burnes's penetration has been supposed at fault in describing the affghans as so simple minded and open a race of people, who could harbour no thought, no design, unrevealed - an impression to which he has been said to have fallen a victim as well as the whole British force at Cabool, so entirely were they led into a false confidence of security.

But the enigma is solved if a foreign hand accomplished that organization, and that such has been the fact I can give you evidence which if not at once conclusive to every mind may be, and ought to be made so, one way or another to the whole British People. Its confirmation or refutation is easy, and vitally concerns Great Britain.

Before Lord Palmerston quitted the Foreign Office he received a communication from an American recently from affghanistan, one who knew the Affghans well, had resided long among them and had moreover enjoyed some share of the confidence of Dost Mahommed. This individual returned to Europe, came to England, laid before Lord Palmerston the insecurity and danger of our position, showed his remarkable acquaintance with the Country and influence with the People, and offered to the British Government the benefit of his knowledge and his services. These were not only rejected, but rejected in such a manner as to exasperate, and he who had come to offer his services to England to avert the Russian projects which he saw maturing, and to whom he could have gone and offered his services direct had he been favorably

disposed to her, was now prepared to offer those services to Russia announcing to Lord Palmerston beforehand his intention to do so, and telling him that six months would suffice for the utter ruin of the English in Central Asia (a fact for which no doubt Lord Palmerston was ^{already} fully prepared) (x). He accordingly proceeded to St Petersburg, and in less than six months the scenes in Affghanistan have taken place.

So far my evidence goes and I have it from a source on which the most perfect reliance is to be placed. No more has been heard of the American in Europe. What has been his reception in St Petersburg? Are we to connect the frightful scenes in Central Asia to the friendly intervention of Prussia or not? We know the American went to St Petersburg. We see his promise fulfilled. If any doubt his services having been engaged there it is very easy for the British Government to follow up a series of enquiries which would put an end to every doubt on the matter, and such in my mind is its bounden duty. This leads me to mention how this important information was mentioned to me.

Sir R. Peel's declaration in the House of the "friendly intervention" of Prussia to restore British relations in Persia, and his rejection of every idea of Prussia having intrigued there - an opinion which I know from private sources to be strongly his, and to have been recently that also of other Members of the Government - this blindness of the British Government - was wrapped in conversation with me by a distinguished person led him to mention to me the above facts, observing that if they refused the evidence the past afforded he did not see how they could shut their eyes to this. I replied that I did not think Sir R. Peel or any Member of the present Administration could be aware of

(x) see note

This circumstance but that nevertheless the declaration
Sir R. Peel had made in the House was the greatest
triumph Russia could have achieved in its effects in
the East, while the fact that Russia could bring back
England back to Persia and make her doing so a source
of strength had been actually announced by you in your
"Exposition of transactions in Central Asia" nearly two
years ago - a work which prognosticated what has place
as inevitable a work which contains the entire elucidation
of the question, and which while it traces from official
sources the origin of the loss of British influence in Persia
and the complications in Afghanistan fixes the respon-
sibility and the guilt where every man may trace it.
Hence would I suggest your sending a copy of it to
Sir R. Peel or some other of the Chief Members of the
Government who however remain in opposition, must
now feel the necessity of being right.

By my letters and the English papers I
find that there is now a general spirit of enquiry
in England elicited by disaster, as to the cause and
merits of the aggression on the Affghans - an enquiry
as to who was its instigator.

If it be indeed true that there were
ties which rendered the late Foreign Minister of
England the subservient instrument of a hostile Power,
and that as a result of these he did not only leave
the field open to that Power in Central Asia, but laboured
to forward her views even in the very means taken
under the pretence of counteracting her - that this
expedition to dethrone a Prince friendly to Great Britain
(but compelled by her conduct to seek protecting alliances
independent of her) as well as this rejection of the services
of one singularly qualified to detect danger and to render
service - If the one and the other of these acts were
in obedience to such ties - then indeed was the blood
of thousands of British subjects as of unoffending
people who they were sent to subdue lie at his
door, and cry aloud for Justice on the offender.

An enquiry is then as much the due of the Affghans as it is of the British People and in it may be found the means of future concord and well being to each.

(The writer here enters into the position of Doot Mahomed and Shah Sujah showing on every hand the difficulties of England)

In a word there is but one means of a permanent settlement of the difficulties, Justice as well as statesmanship direct to the source of the evil, and vice alone may be found the remedy.

I of Lord Palmerston be, as you have proved it to my satisfaction in your several works, and at my own four years study of diplomate documents passing of the sources and watching the progress of events to say nothing of the testimony of living witnesses, has farther convinced me, if he be guilty of Treason to his Sovereign and his Country - in his I impeachment and punishment we terminate the Nations difficulties and arrest the danger. Thus alone can England discover the fact it was not her act, she was unconscious in the hands of a Traitor or agent of Russia in her Councils traced the line and struck the blow.

Justice of which such a signal example may be given to Asia, will redound to the honor as to the strength of Great Britain in Europe and America, will it will be the means to the equally satisfactory and permanent conclusion of those other international questions, which on every side threaten us, and threaten us through acts of our own, unconscious and unjust

Note by Mr Weykhardt

(x) This leads one to remark that the designs of Russia in Central Asia independent of all ~~the~~ asiatic results for Russia, is Central Asia independent of the prospective results of the conquest of India ~~the~~ by Persia through England renders her great assistance in re-uniting to herself the Polish People. All her agents in Central Asia are Poles. Those not understanding Russia would ^{either} suppose that she had no Russians to employ or that she very negligently carried on the service since she confided it to the care of men upon whom she could place such very small reliance. Now it is a fact that Polish Emigrants who will

not return to Poland are willing to serve her in Central Asia.
They reconcile escape from their hardships and the obtaining of
honorable station with the service of that Power in Asia, whom
they look upon as their Country's foe in Europe, and even one or two
thus employed is of great service as influencing the opinions of the
remainder. And what is most remarkable is this - that the Poles
employed by Russia in these regions correspond with each other in
Polish, using the style and modes of mutual intelligence connected
with their insurrection. In the intercepted correspondence which has
been brought to England (which by the bye there was only one man under
the Foreign Department that could be found to interpret, which man
was immediately afterwards sent away Count to the Stores) two
of the Poles writing to each other of one of these emigrants, call
him the "bought Count". These Poles further think that in advancing
Russian designs in Central Asia they are contributing towards their
own emancipation, and this by a singular process of reasoning -
singular at least as all things must be to a nation that is
observed by others but which is itself unconscious of what it does.
These Poles conceive that when England does come to perceive the
designs of Russia and her own danger that England will then arouse
itself, and that Russia having in the meantime made so much progress
she will be able to resist. A war will ensue in which there may
be chances open for the resumption of their independence, and these
informed men do not see that they are placed to reason thus
and that if their reasoning was not advantageous to Russia
they would not be where they are.

(Circular)

In the month of 1841 in a letter which I addressed to you, I asserted my conviction of the deliberate betrayal of the Country to a Foreign Power, on the part of its then Foreign Minister Viscount Palmerston.

I at the same time transmitted to you a work proving that betrayal in one of its most important branches, in Persia and Afghanistan.

To that work it should have been enough to ensure attention, that it was the work of Mr. Urquhart, a man above all others entitled to be heard, by every claim belonging to opportunities of knowledge, to Capacity and Rectitude.

Beyond the evidence contained in the work itself it has now received the seal and confirmation of events which have attested the correctness of its judgments and its reasonings, by the fulfilment to the minutest point and to the very letter of its positive and inferential predictions.

You were warned when you believed ~~you~~ yourself secure, the intention to betray England was asserted to you when you thought she was triumphant.

Had you not disregarded the knowledge then placed in your hands, and had you acted upon that knowledge, you might have prevented a year's farther continuation in crime, and the commencement of its retribution.

You might have averted the destruction of a British Army and the commencement of that struggle for existence in which your Country is now involved.

These events therefore not only bear witness to the truth of the charge that I asserted to you, but they also testify against you.

But I pray God that they may now at last serve to correct that presumption of imagined knowledge, which in the midst of ignorance darkens your eyes, and in the midst of your Country's distress and danger hardens your heart.

I now renew my warning and denunciation; charging henceforth a redoubled responsibility upon you for the existence and the progress of those events of which you have disregarded that warning, and the fact and continuance of that guilt of which you have rejected the evidence.

I have the honor to be

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