

Seventh Column
(from I. Barbar)

glected: the unending, necessary
.....are based on real people;
“them.” Part of that distaste,
by an earlier decision to place the
survivor of the expedition, out of
clearly in the enemies of the believed to be hunkered down in his

war against subversion
Babu celebrates the life of
said grows out of bad experiences
distribution of all U.S. materiel in
tens of thousands of troopers and
remains subliminal throughout Afghan lair

In that light, it would be interesting
Sarat Chandra Das, the most
with various Kim-like escapades in
the hands of the intelligence
camp followers, staggered out of the
narrative, appearing only as “Will Afghanistan hand him over?”

to consider how Colonel
Mous of the pundit agents. Often
the early days of the Cold War. One
branch of the Pakistani army,
Jadalak Pass to safety. After routing
anonymous assassins are the United States and its allies

Creighton, Kim’s enigmatic spy
disguised as holy men and *mhendee*
such operation involving training
which used the opportunity to bol¹
the British army in Kabul, Afghans
strain climax in which Kim simply being lured to the same

master, might have reacted last
cants, trudging over the high passes
and arming the Khampa people of
the hard-line Islamic factions
armed with long range *jezal*
the Babu foil two comically and simply being lured into the same

¹ **Bol, Bolace**, obs. ff. BOLE, BULL, BULLACE.

week to the extraordinary broad
with sophisticated survey equip
eastern Tibet to fight the Chinese. It
within Afghanistan at the expense
had annihilated the remnant
adroit European intruders—one trap that has claimed the British, the

cast by Robert Mueller, director of
ment³ hidden within their prayers
was, according to an official history
of moderate elements. As far as
during its long retreat through the
Russian, one French—in the High Russians and so many other mighty

the Federal Bureau of Investigation,
wheels, they were among the more
of the CIA, “one of the most ro”⁴
is concerned, Afghanistan’s
passes.
Himalayas. This showed a mellow invader who have gone before?

as he pleaded for help from Arabic
daring explorers of their day. Das
mantic programs covert action
emergence as a training ground for
no failure so totally overwhelm
ing of Kipling, who once celebrated and what about the rest of the

Farsi-speaking Americans? The
an especially brazen and inventive
ever undertaken by the agency.”
international terror was caused
as this is recorded in the pages
the imperial swagger of Lord Rob neighbourhood—what part will the

multilingual, ethnologically en
spy, earned a medal from the Royal
It was also unmitigated disaster.
large part by U.S. detachment in
of history Sir William Kaye wrote
of Kandahar—“Our Bobs,” in surrounding nations play in the next

³ **Ment:** see MEAN v. ¹, MENG v., and MINT.

⁴ †**Ro**, *sb.* *Obs.*....Rest, repose, peace. †**Ro**, *v.* *Obs. rare*...1. *refl.*. To recreate (oneself). 2. *intr. Sc.* To have or take repose.

lightened magus of the Northwest
Geographic Society for his pioneer[.]
The Chinese methodically tracked
advertence and carelessness about
in his *History of the War in Afghani*
his affectionate verse, and “the round of the Great Game? What pres⁶

frontier would surely have been as
Inga exploration of Tibet in the
down and killed three in every four
consequences
published soon after this
most bloodthirsty little beast I sure are they under? Do they belong

tonished⁷ to learn *that* one of the
1880s, although Lhasa authorities
of the Colorado-trained Khampas
somewhere in the transform
astrous retreat: “No lesson so grand
know,” according to the general’s to the Sunni branch of Islam (which

great champions of the modern
subsequently drowned or dismem
bered guerrillas. In the end
of the Great Game into the
impressive is to be found in all
own chiefs of staff believes the Prophet

game, a leading U.S. intelligence
several Tibetans who had
the CIA succeeded only in creating
Cold War, the wisdom of Kim’s
annals of the world.”
The Great Game went on, blundering Mohammed designates no successor

agency had lost such basic skills.
Aided him
false hope for a lost cause, and
Creighton seems to have been lost.
Nonetheless, the British violated
daring to an inconclusive end. In the Shia which believes he

⁶ †**Pres, Prese.** *Obs. rare....* ?praise. **Pres**, obs. collateral form of PRESS.

⁷ **Tonish, tonnish,** *a. Now rare.* Having ‘ton’; fashionable, modish, stylish.

I don't think this is a mistake
modern readers may question
alienating its Tibetan allies
the Colonel makes his own
that very impressive lesson—never
1906, the dashing Francis Young picked his son-in-law, Ali) and

the British would have made said
real nature of the solidarity un
process. “There was a lot of hesi
losophy of engaged espionage clear
invade Afghanistan—less than 30
husband rushed to Lhasa on an the end, whose side are they on?

an Afghanistan expert
derlying indigenous cooperation
tancy after that. The people in the
when he introduces Kim to the
years later, once again marching to
other slim pretext. He used two Here are some briefing notes on

the author with Shareen Blair
in the Great Game, and Kipling, to
agency understandably had really
prospect of life as a “chain-man”
Kabul with little reason other than
Maxim machine guns nicknamed the major players and what they may

Bryson of *Tournament of Shadows*:
his credit, leaves the matter open:
conflicted consciences about
the Indian Survey—a spy, in
their disapproval of growing
Bubble and Squeak to slaughter when push comes to shove

The Great Game and the race for
the novel ends with Kim at
Tibetan operations. Also, by temper,
other words. Never, he advises Kim
Asian influence in the latest emir's
about 1,000 Tibetans, armed with

empire in Central Asia, the latest
facing an acute crisis of identity.
Americans are not good at
fluent Urdu, “condemn the black
court. The result was less disastrous
matchlock muskets, who stood in

and most thorough volume in the
Whichever fact be chooses, how
guages not good at recruiting non
man. I have known boys newly
for the British, but no less bloody
his way. In the 1920s, the Red Army

rich trove of scholarship that
ever, the author makes it clear that
Western peoples to their side
entered into the service of the Gov
for all concerned. Kipling, its bard,
brought the Russian chapter to

immense the struggle.
his hero will remain—as Joseph
History repeated itself barely two
who feigned not to
glared unblinking at the war’s hor¹⁵
close by chasing the last, decadent

as tournament of shadows dem¹⁶
Conrad wrote of Lord Jim, and
decades later, when the united
understand the talk or the customs
roar in the young British soldier.
emir of Bokhara out of his desert

on straits the Great Game of
outcast hero of the imperial era,
states poured arms into the Afghani
of black men. Their pay was cut for

•
citadel, the potentate dropping off

¹⁵ **Hor**, var. *HER poss. pron. Obs.*, their; *ME. var. of HAIR*; obs. f. *HOUR*; var. *HORE Obs.*, filth.

¹⁶ **Dem**, v.¹ *Obs. exc. dial...trans. or absol.* To dam, obstruct the course of water, etc. v.²; formerly **demn**. Minced form of **DAMN**; ...†1. To damn, condemn. *Obs....2.* In profane use.

day was a more intimate
navigating the same shifting moral
stan¹⁷ to support the mujahadeen in
ignorance. There is no sin so great
when you're wounded and left
his favourite slave boys at regular

struggle, involving dozens of
frontiers—"one of us"
their struggle against the Soviet in
ignorance "[r]emember this"
on Afghanistan's plains
intervals throughout the flight in

Mi Norite peoples in key roles along
"The original players of the Great
vaders.¹⁸ "During the Cold War, we,
He repeated the lesson several
And the women come out
the confident expectation that his

side and between the imperial
Game, both the Russians and the
were perfectly willing to use Afghan
times over the course of a long train
to cut up what remains,
pursuers would be detained as they

combatants—from the brilliant In
British, had a very acute sense of
lives as pawns against the Rus
ride. "We all, be one on lead-rope
jest roll to your rifle
succumbed to the sexual pleasures

¹⁷ **Stan**, obs. and dial. form of **STAND** *sb.* and *v.*; obs. var. **STONE** *sb.* and *v.* and **STEND** *sb.* (dial.).

¹⁸ †**Vade**, *sb.* *Obs*⁻¹ ...A shallow place in a river. *v.*¹ *Obs.* **1.** *intr.* Of colour: = **FADE** *v.*¹ **4.** **2.** Of flowers, etc.: = **FADE** *v.*¹ **1.** **3.** To pass away, disappear, vanish; to decay or perish; = **FADE** *v.*¹ **6.** ...*v.*² *Obs.* ...**1.** To go away, depart. *rare.* **2.** To proceed, advance. ...*Obs.* Sc. form of **WADE** *v.*

dian¹³ pundits the British secret serve
the promise of using native speak
Asians who wrote edi¹⁴
then, said Kim at last, the Colonel,
And blow out your brains,
Thus offered.

ice recruited to be its eyes and ears
and indigenous peoples as their
Afghanistan for The New
Mahbub Ali and I—when I be-
'n' go to your Gawd
Little of this intrudes into

Central Asia to the mysterious
espionage allies, and recruiting
York Times throughout the war,
come a chain-man.”
Like a soldier.
Glorious, burnished world of Kim,

Mongolian Buryats who served the
them onto their side,”
“but the moment the Russians
Kipling’s vision of an inclusive,

•
which in the end is more striking

czar in the name of Tibetan Bud
plained. “Unfortunately, for various
pulled out, we dropped the Afghans
ecumenical imperialism—all on
The backlash in the home coun¹¹
for its appreciation of Tibetan Bud

¹³ †**Dian**. *Obs*....A trumpet call or drum roll at early morn.

¹⁴ **Edi**, var. of EADI *a. Obs*.

¹¹ **Coun** obs. f. **Con** v.²

dhism.

Reasons, the CIA has not been a ffec¹² completely.”

one lead-rope—slowly died under led by William Gladstone, dissed philosophy than its geopoliti-

Kipling’s winning orphan hero in doing that.”

Once again, the United States left the growing weight of British op who roared that “the sanctity of life attitudes. That is what makes

epitomizes this strangely hybrid The failure of a reluctant emir behind a widespread sense of re pression, including such horrors as in the hill villages of Afghanistan, the spy story that expands glori

ized species of idealistic spy. Kim is can imperium engage the sym sentiment among people who, have the Massacre of Amritsar in 1919 among the winter snows, is as invi ously⁸ into a universal prayer for to⁹

a guttersnipe from Lahore, born pathies of both its allies and its ing beating the Soviets, remained to By the time Britain divided India olable in the eyes of Almighty God erance¹⁰ and peace so modern. For

¹² †**Fec.** *Obs....*; the continental sense is completely ‘compartmentalized’ , ‘bound’. The normal mod. English would be *fak.*]

A definite interval in space or time; a limited distance, fixed period.

⁸ †**I’nvious**, *a. obs....* Having no roads or ways; pathless, trackless.

⁹ **Tol**, *obs.* Form of TOLL, TOOL.

¹⁰ [**Eranc**, an error or misprint for *cranmoc*. CRANNOCK

white but living entirely as enemies in Asia is notorious. Even suffer years of desperate poverty and fled in 1947, it was desperate to as can be your own.” Repelled by Westerners besieged in a world that

dian, unaware of its origins. He today, with their lack of reliable and civil strife in the aftermath escape the close ties that had devel⁵ the experience of the Afghan and seems implacably, dumbfound

embarks on a colourful, Huck Finn human intelligence in Central Asia. “All the Americans who were oped over the previous centuries. Zulu wars, the British elected gladly hostile, for any reader

ish career of remarkable adventure so glaringly exposed, U.S. leaders loudest in clamouring for aid to the Today, it removes, the greatest and stone’s liberal party enthusiastic searching for an affirming account

that ultimately leads him to a pain refer to the task with distaste. It’s Afghan mujahadeen during the war resolutely least nostalgic, of the for in the 1880s, replacing the of 21st century values in the face of

fully irresolvable choice between “dirty business” according to fell remarkably silent in the hour of mere imperial powers. adventuring government of Benja, world crisis, Kim is it:

⁵ **Devel.** v., to strike or knock down with a stunning blow;

two lives: one of religious quietude
George Bush Sr., a CIA Director be
need this feeling of
But the Great Game the British
min Disraeli.

•

in the service of a Tibetan lama he
fore he was a president, full of
betrayal has given Taliban much of
and Russians once played with
Entering its climax as
My brother kneels (so saith Kabir)

adores; another as a secret agent
“people that are willing to betray
its appeal. I don’t think the British,
such conviction still offers lessons
tine struggle, the Great Game of
T[w]o stone and brass in heathen

for the raj, foiling Russian plots
when friends, people that want
who had a greater insight into the
—as much spectacular
British Raj became less casually
wise,

with the aid of grizzled Afghan
money or other things.”
importance of winning over the
ders² both sides committed as any
brutal, seeking as much for a moral
But in my brother’s voice I hear

horse dealer Mahbul Ali and the
Unlike the great powers of
hearts and minds of a people of other
successes they had. The most spec
purpose as for new territory. It was
My own unanswered agonies.

² **Der**, obs. form of DARE

unforgettable Hurree Chunder
earlier era, the United States ob
cultures, would have made that
tacular—and most pertinent today
left to the Soviets, a century after
His God is as his Fates assign—

Mookerjee, alias R17, “the Babu.”
serves a very strict division between
mistake.”

—of those blunders were the first
the British extracted themselves
His prayer is all the world’s—

Virtually all the main characters
the sanctified “us” and demonized
That mistake was compounded
the second Afghan wars.
from their second incursion, once
and my ne-

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