



TARIQ MUSHTAQ

# WELCOME TO FANTASYLAND

**From 1958 to 1970, politics was the name of development, growth, expansion, industrialization and improvements.**

**From 1971 to 1977, politics turned into a game of power, after 1977, it transformed into dirty game of monetary gains.**

**Nawaz, Shahbaz, Asif Ali Zardari and other political anacondas are a part of post 77 game, their limitless lust of money has put them in trouble, now they and their stooges think they will escape the accountability process. How? They don't know. *It's a fantasy.***

President Harry S. Truman once predicted that his successor, Dwight Eisenhower, would have a rough time in the White House. He'll order and nothing will happen. It won't be a bit like the Army. He'll find it very frustrating. But, Eisenhower proved otherwise. So is the position with Imran Khan, he is facing the same situation. Nawaz, Zardari including all the pranksters, who themselves could not deliver during past forty years, are using the same language, though there's no comparison between Truman and these jokers. I hope, Imran Khan will also prove otherwise.

What Truman was getting at is that all presidents bring to the Oval Office an outlook shaped by their unique personal and professional experiences, and that the experiences can become something of a liability if a president assumes that what worked in one context will automatically translate into another. Eisenhower was an exception in American political system, an Ex-General into the politics, but he proved to be one of the best presidents of United States.

**In Pakistani political system, Imran Khan is also an exception, a new strange player, neither a businessman nor a politician nor a feudal, nor had any experience to run the government. BUT, he is honest and has proved to be honest to his duties. Nation has many high hopes with him, and expects, he will succeed and deliver. Nation links his success with their own success. Nation doesn't challenge his honesty, administrative and leading skills. They have faith he can magnificently lead any team, players or politicians or technocrats or diplomats.**

Nawaz Shareef or Asif Ali Zardari were no exception. Both were brought by the generals, one with an anticipation to develop the country and other by default, to bailout the general himself. Both were power hungry as well had monetary lust. Both belonged to the mediocre families with a desire to become extra rich overnight, to attain their goals both opted the political way, Nawaz through Gen Gilani and Zardari through Benazir Bhutto.

Nawaz was the first to the throne with basics in business, which attracted General Zia anticipating a successful development country, he could not realize that the potential behind him was "Aba gee" and his advises. Problem for Nawaz is that as a businessman, with field such as steel mill, has the knowledge how to snip electricity and how to save the government taxes. Ishaq Dar was his main aide-de-camp since 70s. Nawaz had the experience how to buy and sell the government officials of various departments. A businessman thinks in terms of transactions. By contrast, a head of the state has to work with highly professional technocrats, bureaucrats, diplomats and foreign leaders repeatedly over the course of years. Governing is about relationships much more than it is about transactions.

Nawaz had run the government as if running a steel mill or a sugar mill, with calculated profits for the family. Zardari was only interested in money, in the first tenure of Benazir Bhutto, he was well-known as Mr. ten percent. In the second tenure, he was as nasty as possible and tried to play dirty taking over industrial giants, but got arrested due to his callous behavior by the then president Farooq Leghari. He was no body, had Benazir not been killed. He was able to return only because of NRO issued by Gen Musharaf enabling Benazir to come back from self-exile and bailout Musharaf, he had put himself with his bad decisions. History will never pardon him for this subversive act. If Benazir would have survived, Zardari was nothing but Benazir's husband. Even after her death, he is holding the present position because of her. Yet people are confused who killed Benazir. Those were the darkest moments of Pakistan's history when he got elected as the president of this ill-fated country.

Now, with Imran in seat, they are all frenzied, nervous and worried of accountability. This is the main cause of their concern, so babble against Imran Khan. All of which suggests that Imran may want to reform some of his ways for the recovery of defrauded money, but courts will be more effective, if they speedup their legal process, even more it is a good way to develop trust. The process has encouraged him and the public, it has sapped his opponent's confidence and raised questions about whether could be taken at its word.

**But, on the other side, a head of the state should sometimes resist the temptation to drive for the best deal possible. One should aim very high, and then just keep pushing and pushing and pushing to get what he is after. It is important to leave enough on the table so the person on the other side can sell the deal back home. Everyone in politics has politics. The alternative is likely to be no deal or one that unravels.**

**It is essential, too, to understand who has more at stake before laying down a challenge. Imran blundered early, when he threatened to abandon IMF. It is also wise to leave something on the table for another reason: It may be necessary to deal with that same person or government or organization down the road on a different issue. Indeed, the future is likely to be one in which people, countries or organizations are competitive and cooperative. Pushing too hard in one situation may preclude working together when it is important to do so. Imran should keep this in mind with respect to his damaged relationship with the bureaucracy or politicians or countries or organizations.**

**Imran shouldn't blithely move on to other matters until he deals with the monetary burden inflicted upon by the previous governments. The economic magician Asad Omar had always objected with every single raise in any of the institutions, by the previous government, nation is going to sue him over how fake his claims were, if he is unable to deliver. People want to believe that his claims were thoughtful and realistic, something workable with hopes which are biggest, greatest and the most spectacular. It is important not to threat or bluff unless you mean it.**

The biggest error of Nawaz arguably occurred after he warned the judiciary and garrison threatening them with dire consequences. Maryam repeatedly crossed the red line, she paid no direct price, her father had to. If we had a responsible parliament, its leaders would accept their duty to demand that a Prime Minister who shakes the country's sensitive institutions with such outlandish allegations either apologize or resign. Unfortunately, we have no such parliament. Instead, people like Fazal think it is time for business, which in their case means figuring out how to earn money from the situation.

Nawaz could never judge that in business, a little hyperbole, describes as "truthful hyperbole" never hurts. It will, however, hurt in the office of the Prime Minister. While in the office, he acted rudely, except kitchen cabinet, nobody could ever freely see him. MNAs also have the same complain. Nawaz could never judge that the day will ever come when he may need others to take him at his word in justifying a particular response to a threat that cannot be proven beyond all doubt. The bottom line is clear: There is little or no place for exaggeration in the PM Office, much less for alternative facts. Like it or not, politics and geopolitics alike are all about the art of relationships. But exaggeration is not innocent when it means if there is one beautiful thing about the working proposal.

Now, Nawaz, Shahbaz and their stooges are in trouble, in a city of avoidance, denial and deception. Whether they talk about policy or political adversaries, they are simply not

believable. And their friends are proving themselves no more trustworthy. Zardari and company will soon be following them. NAB has verified evidence of their corruption, even then if they all think of escape from the accountability; we can only say; ***Welcome to the Fantasyland.***

TARIQ MUSHTAQ  
[taritaq@hotmail.com](mailto:taritaq@hotmail.com)

October 29, 2018