

Afghanistan: The Longest Lost War

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Introduction:

Despite almost a decade of warfare, including an invasion and occupation, the US military and its allies and client state armed forces are losing the war in Afghanistan. Outside of the central districts of a few cities and the military fortresses, the Afghan national resistance forces, in all of their complex local, regional and national alliances, are in control, of territory, people and administration.

The prolonged unending war has become a major drain on the morale of the US armed forces and undermined civilian support in the US, limiting the capacity of the White House to launch new imperial wars. The annual multi-billion dollar military expenditures, are exacerbating the out-of-control budget deficit and forcing harsh unpopular cuts on social programs, at all levels of government. There is no end in sight, as the Obama regime keeps increasing the number of troops by the tens of thousands and military expenditures by the dozens of billions but the resistance advances, both military and politically.

Faced with rising popular discontent and demands for fiscal restraint by a wide spectrum of banking and citizen groups, Obama and the general command have sought “partial exit” via the recruitment and training of a large scale long term Afghan mercenary army and police force under the direction of US and NATO officers.

The US Strategy: The Making of an Afghan Neocolony:

Between 2001-2010 the US military expenditures total \$428 billion dollars; the colonial occupation has led to over 7,228 dead and wounded as of June 1, 2010. As the US military situation deteriorates, the White House escalates the number of troops resulting in a greater number of killed and wounded. During the past 18 months of the Obama regime more soldiers were killed or wounded than in the previous eight years.

The White House and Pentagon strategy is premised on massive flows of money, arms and an increase in the number of surrogates, mainly subsidized warlords and puppet western educated ex-pats. The White House “development aid” involves, literally, purchasing the transient loyalties of clan leaders. The White House attempts to give a veneer of legitimacy by running elections, which enhance the corrupt image of the incumbent puppet regime in Kabul and its regional associates.

On the military front, the Pentagon launches one “offensive” after another, announcing one success after another, followed by a retreat and return of the Resistance fighters. The US

campaigns disrupt trade, agricultural harvests and markets, while the air assaults targeting “Taliban” and militants, more frequently than not end up killing more civilians celebrating weddings, religious holidays and shoppers at markets than combatants. The reason for the high percentage of civilian killings is clear to everyone except the US Generals: there are no distinctions between “militants” and millions of Afghan civilians since the former are an integral part of their communities.

The key and ultimately decisive problem facing the US occupation is that it is a colonial enclave in the midst of a colonized people. The US, its local puppets and its NATO allies are a foreign colonial army and its Afghan military and police recruits are seen as mere instruments perpetuating illegitimate rule. Every action, whether violent or benign, is perceived and interpreted as transgressing the norms and historical legacies of a proud and independent people. In everyday life, every move by the occupation is disruptive; nothing moves except by command of the foreign directed military and police. Under threat of force, people fake co-operation and then provide assistance to their fathers, brothers and sons in the Resistance. The recruits take the money and turn their arms over to the Resistance. The paid village informants are double agents or identified by their neighbors and targeted by insurgents.

The Afghan collaborators, Washington’s closest allies, are seen as corrupt traitors; transient rulers who have their bags packed and US passports in hand, ready to flee when the US is forced to exit. All the programs, “reconstruction” funds, training missions and “civic programs” have failed to win the allegiance of the Afghan people, now as in the past as well as in the future, because they are seen as part of the US military occupation ultimately based on violence.

Ten Reasons Why the Afghan Resistance Will Win:

The Resistance has deep roots in the population – family community, linguistic and cultural ties which the US does not possess nor can “invent”; nor can these ties be bought, traded or replicated by their Afghan ‘collaborators’ or imposed by propaganda.

The Resistance has fluid borders and broad international support especially with Pakistan but also with other anti-imperialist, Islamic groups who provide arms and volunteers and who engage in actively attacking the logistical transport supply lines of US-NATO military in Pakistan. They also pressure overseas US client regimes like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Somalia opening multiple fronts.

Widespread infiltration, voluntary, active and passive support of the Resistance among the US recruited and trained Afghan military and police results in crucial intelligence on troop movements. Desertions and absenteeism undermines “military competence”.

The scope and breadth of Resistance activity over extends the imperial armies at its current strength and causes it to rely on unreliable Afghan security, who have no stomach for killing their brethren, especially when directed against communities with relatives or ethnic kin.

Resistance allies are more loyal, less corrupt and reliable because of deeply shared beliefs. US allies are loyal only because of ephemeral monetary gratification and the temporary presence of US military force.

The Resistance appeals to the people in the name of a return to law and order in everyday

life, which preceded the disruptive invasion. The US promise of positive outcomes following a successful war, have no popular resonance after a decade long destructive occupation.

The US has no belief system that can compete with the religious-nationalist-traditionalist appeal of the Resistance to the vast majority of village, small town and displaced rural population.

The Resistance's support of Iraqi, Palestinian and other anti-imperialist forces has a positive appeal among the Afghan people who have seen the destructive results of US wars in Iraq and proxy wars in Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen. The US backed Israeli assault of Lebanon and the humanitarian ship destined for Palestine and the highly visible presence of Zionist militants in the US government, repels the more politically aware opinion leaders in Afghanistan.

Afghans have, by force of circumstances, longer staying power in resisting the US military occupation, than the US people who have other, far more pressing needs and the US military with growing commitments in the Gulf.

The Afghan Resistance does not normally kill civilians in combat missions since the US troops and NATO are clearly identified. Whereas, the opposite is not true. The Afghans who are part of the villages in occupied communities are subject to assassinations by "Special Forces" and drone bombings. In these circumstances ordinary people suffer the same military assaults as Resistance fighters.

A Failed Mission: The Incapacity to Build a Reliable, Effective Afghan Mercenary Army

A US government audit published in late June of this year demolished the Obama regime's claims that it is succeeding in building an effective Afghan mercenary army and police capable of buttressing the current client regime in Kabul. The Report, based on a detailed analysis and field observations argues that the Obama Pentagon relies on "standards [which are] woefully inadequate, inflating the abilities of Afghan units that Mr. Obama called "core to our mission" (Financial Times, June 7, 2010, p1). In other words, Obama continues to play the con game, which he inaugurated during his electoral campaign with his phony promises of 'change' and "ending the wars", and continued with his bail out of Wall Street in the name of 'saving the economy'. He followed up by escalating the war in Afghanistan by sending 30,000 more troops and increasing military and police expenditures to \$325.5 billion, approximately 132% higher than the last year of the Bush Administration (Congressional Research Service, FY 2010 Supplemental for Wars ... June 2010).

The Obama regime's phony claims of progress were based on self-serving bureaucratic and technical criteria, rather than the actual fighting performance and behavior of the Afghan mercenary army. The military command's reports and progress reports were based on how many courses were taught, the length and breadth of training and the amount and quality of arms and equipment supplied to the Afghan troops. As the number of Afghan units passing the "training missions" increased from zero to 22, between 2008 - 2009, the Pentagon claimed extraordinary progress. To correct the errors, the Pentagon has turned to "field assessments by commanders" - which is also failing, since the officials have a vested interest in inflating the performance of the Afghans mercenaries under their command in order to secure promotions and merit badges. The Obama regime plans to increase the Afghan military from 97,000 in November 2009 to 134,000 in October 2010, to 171,000 in October 2011 a 75% increase in two years (Congressional Research Service 2010, p 13).

The same increase occurs with the police: from 93,800 in November 2009 to 134,000 in October 2011 a 43% increase.

Obama's claim that the war is gradually being handed over to the US "trained" Afghan army is fully belied by two other basic facts. The White House has requested \$1.9 billion – double the 2009 level under Bush – for military construction of new bases and installations for a "long term presence" (which the con-man Obama claims does not mean a "permanent presence"). Secondly, using the familiar double-talk of the Obama regime, Secretary of Defense Gates and Admiral Mullen, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff now argue that Obama's campaign promise of beginning the retirement of troops in July 2010 really means "a day we start transitioning ... not a date we're leaving", which would be based on "conditions on the ground ... a several year process" (Gates Testimony before Senate Armed Services Committee, December 2, 2009). In plain English "transitioning" is not "leaving". It means staying, fighting and occupying Afghanistan for decades. It means adding more troops, building more bases. It means spending another \$400 billion over the next 5 years. And it means doubling the number of American soldiers killed and wounded over the next 3 years, from over seven thousand to fourteen thousand.

The criteria of 'success' in Afghanizing the war is belied by the growing Americanizing of the bases, combat troops and expenditures. The reason is that the Afghan army figures are as phony as Obama's promises. The number of US personnel is growing because the Afghan political puppets are so corrupt, ineffective and despised by their people that Washington has to surround them with "monitors", "advisers" and "operatives" who in turn are totally incapable of relating to the needs and practices of the communities. Increased US "aid" has led to greater corruption, more unfulfilled promises and greater animosity from the would be popular recipients.

The fundamental problem is that this is an American war and that is why Afghan units suffer a 50% reduction of strength due to at a minimum, a 20% desertion rate, admitted by US military officials (Congressional Research, op cit, p.14). In other words, the Afghan recruits, take the money and their arms and return to their villages, neighborhoods, families, and perhaps not a few, use their military training, joining with the National Resistance. With such high levels of disaffection among Afghan recruits and even officials it is not surprising that the Resistance has such high quality intelligence on US troop movements. Given the degree of disaffection it is not surprising that some of the US intelligence collaborators are double agents or vulnerable to exposure and execution. Faced with a billion dollar recruitment program with high rates of desertion and the "turning of guns on their mentors," the White House, Pentagon and Congress refuse to recognize the reality that the imperial occupations is the source of the resistance of almost the whole people. Instead they call for more trainees, more funds for "training programs", more "transparent" mercenary contractors.

The reality is that with a bigger American occupation, with escalating military expenditures, the Resistance is growing, surrounding the major cities, targeting meetings in the center of Kabul and rocketing the biggest US military bases around the country. It is clear that the US has lost the war politically and is in the process of losing it militarily.

Despite the most advanced military technology, the drones, the Special Forces, the increase in the number of trainees, advisers, NGOers and the building of more military bases, the Resistance is winning. The White House by adding to the millions of displaced and murdered and maimed Afghans is increasing the hostility of the vast majority of the

Afghans. Civilian killings are turning more and more of their military recruits into deserters and “unreliable” soldiers. Some of whom are ‘turned’ into committed combatants for the ‘other side’. As in Indo-China, Algeria and elsewhere, a popular, highly motivated guerrilla resistance army, deeply embedded in the national-religious culture of an oppressed population is proving more resistant, enduring and victorious over an alien high tech imperial army. Obama’s ‘rule or ruin’ Afghan War, sooner rather than later, will ruin America and end his shameful presidency.

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