

Paramilitary Monster: From CIA To CKA - “Central Killing Agency”

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On September 6, General David Petraeus will be officially inaugurated as the new CIA chief. What legacy is he getting?

By coincidence or not, on Thursday, September 1, The Washington Post published a long article outlining in detail the new profile of the Central Intelligence Agency. By analyzing numerous examples from all parts of the world, and especially from the Middle East with a special focus on Yemen, the paper concludes that instead of collecting intelligence data, now the CIA is mostly engaged in finding and killing suspects without trial.

The agency has even designed a special unit – an agency within an agency – the Counterterrorism Center entrusted with the task to track and eliminate terrorists around the globe.

The change, writes the paper, “has been gradual enough that its magnitude can be difficult to grasp.” But the dry facts speak for themselves.

At the time of creation, the CTC had about 300 employees, but now its total staff is around 2,000 (about 10 percent of the total number of CIA employees) and exceeds the total manpower of Al Qaeda.

The tactics used by the CTC at the early stages of its existence seemed unthinkable and futuristic, but now have become just a matter of routine. This primarily concerns the notorious drone strikes that have killed more than 2,000 militants and civilians and irreversibly spoiled U.S. relationships with its has-been allies like Pakistan.

In fact, formerly the CIA’s main purpose was to collect data and work out advice for policy-makers, but now it has turned into what can be called a “lawlessness enforcement” agency and a kind of paramilitary force with man-hunting as its primary occupation.

The transformation has already had its impact both internally and globally.

“Traditional” intelligence officers long for the times when the CIA’s job was purely analytical.

Human rights activists point at numerous violations of human rights and indiscriminate killings.

What makes too many in the U.S. and abroad worry is the fact that the CIA is acting in a manner of a “killing machine” without any transparent accounting to the supervising

authorities. The worst nightmares of 20th century science fiction are coming true! And the CTC's top officials seem to be proud of the fact. The Washington Post quotes the CTC chief as saying, "We are killing these sons of bitches faster than they can grow them now."

What is most serious in terms of global geopolitics is the fact that the latest CIA activities have shattered the U.S.'s standing as a world leader. The Agency has spoiled relations with Pakistan. Despite all the casualties, it has not achieved any strategic aims in Afghanistan. On the contrary – prior to the U.S. troop withdrawal from that country things are getting worse and August became the deadliest month in the whole 10-year-long war. The CIA has alienated wide factions in the Arab world, including Yemen which has been its primary focus, and where a revolution – not a democratic one, but rather a radical Islamist one – now seems inevitable.

It looks like the shift was possible partly due to the fact that former CIA chief Leon Panetta was an outsider to the system and not very experienced in intelligence matters. Therefore, the intelligence officers could feel that their hands were free to design a system that would be out of civilian control.

Now, there is going to be a new chief – a man with 37-year experience in the Army, but little or no experience whatsoever in intelligence. What could that mean for the gradually transforming paramilitary monster?

On the one hand, that could mean closer cooperation between the CIA and the Army. But that, in turn, could only lead to strengthening and widening the scope of such operations as drone strikes, special forces raids on foreign territories (like the one executed by Navy SEALs in Pakistan in May 2011), and whatever new techniques are invented in the coming years. But would that mean increasing civilian control? Can anyone answer?

And isn't it the time to rename the CIA as the CKA – Central Killing Agency?

Stop NATO e-mail list home page with archives and search engine:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/stopnato/messages>

Stop NATO website and articles:

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com>

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