

# **Know the American “Reform” in Afghan Army and Power Structure**

**by Saifullah Mustanir\***

Recently the Afghan President approved the retirement of 164 army generals which will be followed by the retirement of 2000 other senior army officers in the coming two years that is the 70% of the senior officers of the security sector. As a result, thousands of officers will be affected administratively and militarily.

During the Soviet invasion, the Afghan security forces were transformed into a batch of inexperienced communist students along with an exception of a few British and American influenced remnants. However, after the fall of the Soviet Union and the establishment of the Mujahedeen regime many Muslim and Jihadi elements joined the higher ranks of these forces. It is worth mentioning that for some obligations of the rulers of that era, some of the communist elements were brought back to this sector during the civil war and the Taliban rule.

After the US-NATO invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, many of the high-ranking officers in this sector were made up of those Jihadi and communist elements, who were fighting against Taliban as a ground troops for Americans. Even though, the Americans dismantled the former Afghan Army in the beginning, sent home tens of thousands of those who fought against the Soviet invasion, and placed the foundations of the new Afghan Army in the country, this Army still have a lot of Islamic elements enlisted, but also was under a lot of influence from US, Britain, Pakistan, Iran and some of the communist elements, which are considered as a Russian influence.

Despite the fact that the Americans could use this new Afghan army against its own Muslim people for the last 17 years, however, they were still not fully satisfied with its makeup in terms of its incomplete secularization and were concerned about its Islamic elements. It was seen as a major reason for the bloody and fatal attacks against its forces from within the Afghan army in the past. This in itself was one of the main reasons for not modernizing and equipping these forces with the proper and required weaponry up until recently. Therefore, they were only offered with the light weaponry and out of date artillery; and were used as their infantry forces on the ground against resistance.

However, after the signing of the Bilateral Strategic and Security Agreements between Washington and Kabul and the approval of the permanent status of the US forces in Afghanistan to pursue their long term regional and strategic goals; Washington decided to provide the Afghan Army with the billions of dollars annually and modern equipment as well. Therefore, the United States feels the urgent need of removal – under the guise of these reforms – of any elements that hold Islamic sentiments or any action that is not approved by the United States. Building an army that is completely void of emotional and spiritual relationship with its people; highly consuming and relying on the United States is the only security force that they are looking for. This is how, they will distance this army from the Ummah – who looks into

their army as their power base – and any political influence of the Islamic revivalist parties, a goal that is already achieved in Turkey, Egypt and Pakistan.

The other objective behind this “reform” in security sector is to remove any influence of the tribal and ethnic leaders as well as of the political influentials. Historically such influences have always resulted in making the power structure of the land so complex and uncontrollable and played a major role in the defeat of every invader. As a matter of fact, such influence of the tribal, ethnic and political leaders who always hold Islamic sentiments is challenging the US plans for the region – that aims to stay in Afghanistan at least for the next 50 years. Therefore, the Americans are trying to reduce the power of these individuals gradually, within a long term process; and to transfer this power base into an army that is intellectually secular and physically subservient to the United States, in order to control this land more easily and dismantle any probable challenges towards the American interests in the region.

Consequently, the Muslims, influential individuals, former Mujahedeen of Afghanistan must realize that all of the services that some of them provided to the Americans in last 17 years – within the Afghan Army – could not attain any trust for them. Now, after the Americans abuse their power for the past 17 years are trying to remove these elements under the guise of a reform in the Army and replace them with those young individuals that are trained under the western and secular worldview. This way the Americans will – once again – abuse the Afghan young blood but in a different style and in a different scheme, in order to attain their long-term regional and strategic goals. Therefore, the American deception of the past 17 years, named as a “war on terror”, that in reality is a war on Islam and Muslims, must be exposed to them by now. This war in itself is to remove any political, economic and other powerbases of the Muslim lands in order to prevent their real menace; the re-establishment of the Islamic Khilafah-Rashidah, (righteous Caliphate).

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