

# **Afghanistan: Wooing Taliban to rebrand occupation**

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**USA has not built 100 military basis in Afghanistan to hand them over to Mullah Muhammad Omar. Over thirty thousand more troops are not arriving Afghanistan to host tea parties for Taliban. Learning from Iraq, Washington is only rebranding the occupation as domestic opposition to war picks up.**

In their bid to analyse much-touted 'drawback' of US troops from Afghanistan, Afghan experts (who are often not Afghans and hardly if ever been to Afghanistan) have given a unanimous verdict. The USA is talking to Taliban, we are informed, in an attempt to chisel out a 'face-saving exit strategy'. Ironically, in the same breath, we are warned by the same analysts against possible US attack on Iran. The USA has not built 100 military basis in Afghanistan to hand them over to Mullah Muhammad Omar. Over thirty thousand more troops are not arriving Afghanistan to host tea parties for Taliban. Learning from Iraq, Washington is only rebranding the occupation as domestic opposition to war picks up. Afghanistan is of course not Iraq. Merely because Julian Assange has leaked classified papers (anything hardly revealing for Afghans) the way Daniel Ellsberg went public in 1971, does not mean WikiLeaks will deliver an end to US occupation of Afghanistan. Not merely this is not Vietnam War and Mullah Omar is no Ho Chi Minh, there is no anti-war movement either. Even importantly, there is no conscription in the USA these days as was the case in Vietnam days. During Vietnam Days, coffins landing the US airports carried American bodies (58000 of them). Those dying and fighting in Afghanistan are often naturalized Latinos, Asians, blacks, anything but white Americans.

Another pearl of wisdom we come across these days is Hamid Karzai's 'decision' to 'look east'! We are told that Hamid Karzai has given up hope in Washington. He is, for his own survival as well, looking towards Islamabad. In the same breath we are also told that Karzai does not control anything beyond his working table. He does not enjoy power what a mayor of Kabul would have enjoyed under standard circumstances.

Quislings are bumped off before they start looking east or west on their own. Whatever Karzai is doing, he is acting with US blessings.

The Afghan Quisling, however, deserves credit. The political and moral somersaults Hamid Karzai is capable of, would have earned him a Noble Prize if there were one for such a feat. Now he is telling, in a bid to defend his talks with Taliban (referred to as 'upset brothers'): 'What is more important, protecting the right of a girl to go to school or saving her life?' (Time Magazine. July 29)

Hamid Karzai, in turn, can be asked: 'Why did he side with Washington to overthrow Taliban if a girl's life is more precious than her schooling'. Her life (if she was not Hazara and Shia) was more safe under Taliban time than under the US occupation.

Also, why is the whole world very upset all of a sudden about US talking to Taliban. A number of

Taliban are already part of Karzai's regime. What is the difference between Mullah Omar, Gulbadin Hikmatyar, Rasul Sayyaf and hosts of others co-opted soon after US occupation? Mullah Omar is chopping noses off. Hikmatyar used to throw acid on the faces of girls 'immodestly' dressed. Taliban took Hazara girls as concubines in line with Sharia while commanders of Northern Alliance kidnapped and raped the women. Taliban were throwing people off the helicopters. Northern Alliance commanders enjoyed Raqs-e-Bismal ('dancing' body when head is severed). All of them are war criminals. Afghans want them in The Hague. We don't want them in Kabul.

Those worried about the fate of Afghan women better understand that a segment of the population can not be liberated when the entire country is occupied. The USA will have to leave eventually in spite of 100 military basis dotting the length and breadth of Afghanistan. That the withdraw means Taliban will return is not a likely scenario. The country will of course plunge into a new civil war. A tangible solution is to hand Afghanistan over to United Nations. The country should stay neutral. The peace troops should not come from countries neighbouring Afghanistan or countries that have a record of interfering in Afghanistan (India, Saudi Arabia, China, etc). Militias should be disarmed. War criminals be tried at The Hague. Free and fresh elections should be held. When guns will go silent, Afghan woman will negotiate her liberty.

**Sahar Saba**

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[http://www.viewpointonline.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=47:woeing-taliban-to-rebrand-occupation&catid=34:news](http://www.viewpointonline.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47:woeing-taliban-to-rebrand-occupation&catid=34:news)

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