



New Lanark, South Lanarkshire, Scotland



## A F P A K

July 9, 2010

Graham

The Rev. David R.

As sometimes happens, **Dan Riehl inspired** the following:

I concur with Dan's analysis and prognosis.

The debate is precisely one of policy, not whether what started out as OEF should be supported since it became this administration's project. I suggest the policy in question is military policy, which, as always, is diplomatic policy extended to national security intentions.

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What's the national security threat in AFPAK? AQ is re-established in the Horn of Africa -- and, some would say, this administration. Taliban (Arabic for "students")?

Absent willingness to annihilate the entire population of a large topography -- no easy task in itself -- the only way to conduct a successful military campaign off home soil is to be doing something the population there fundamentally is grateful you are doing. Usually this means, getting some hag (tyrant) off their back and not replacing it with a different one.

In order for a population to feel some gratitude for what the outsider is doing, the population has to feel some unity within itself. It has to self-identify in some substantial way as a single reality, a "people," and finally, a "nation."



Successful military (counter-insurgency)

operations, especially COIN operations, premise on a substantial spirit of nationalism by the people amongst whom the operations occur.

Iraq could succeed because the people self-identify as Iraqis. They have a substantial spirit of nationalism which transcends party and denomination, and long have had.

Afghanistan and adjacent "areas," nominally of Pakistan, have no substantial spirit of nationalism, never have had. There it is all warlords -- Karzai one of

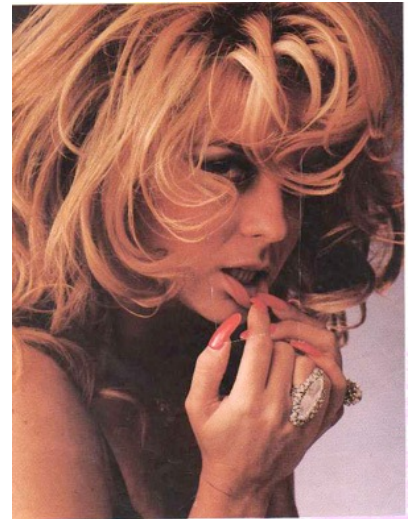


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them -- and families. Among the Pashtuns, one family in particular has controlled the smuggling and other activities of their area for centuries. The Taliban are this family and its tributaries.

There is no basis for COIN operations (nation-building) in Afghanistan, unlike Iraq. No nationalist spirit. COIN, which is the ostensible policy of this administration in AFPAK, cannot succeed in that topography. The Soviet demonstrated the difficulty of annihilation operations.

What's left? CT (counter-terrorism) operations, which is about the only kinetic activity going on in AFPAK now. This fact gives rise to Yon's description of AFPAK as a hunting lodge shooting for bad guys. That's fun, of course, but not producing a long-term security asset, which is the sole legitimate reason for committing armed forces to combat.



CT is not able to secure foreign or even domestic soil (if the domestic soil has enough people on it). This lesson was learned the hard way in Iraq until the switch to COIN and a good area commander (Petraeus) reshaped (the "surge") the operation to foster Iraqis' substantial, pre-existing nationalism (itself a legacy of deep history, the British Army and Saddam Hussein).

AFPAK has no nationalist base. COIN is an impossibility there. So CT can be done (the quick success of OEF proved that) but it cannot bring forth a stable, friendly or friendly-enough situation. There is no situation to be friendly from. It's all tribes/families and warlords, no cohesion.

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Well, almost. There is one sliver of possibility CT and COIN together could bring about a friendly-enough situation -- friendly-enough to the USA, Europe and beyond.

That possibility arises from the fact that a nation rises up around an Army it considers its own. No Army, no nation. Have an Army a people love, have a nation.



(The totalitarians in WH and Congress either haven't figured that out yet, or, more likely, they want US Armed Forces as personal Praetorian Guard to stand between them and the opprobrium they know the array of their wants arouses amongst their subjects -- a risky want, that.)

There are efforts underway to stand up the Afghan Army, which like the Iraqi Army, still shows British Army influence, a plus. The Afghan Army is far, far less than the Iraqi Army was and is -- for two reasons: lack of widespread nationalist spirit and sodomy, at which Afghans (I use the term ethnically, not politically) may be deemed the world champions.

Efforts by US Army personnel to train up the Afghan Army have been underway for years. If that effort succeeds and if Afghans rally to the Afghan Army by self-identifying with it as theirs, AFPAC could be a friendly or friendly-enough topography. Big "ifs".

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GEN Petraeus can be relied upon to intensify effort to move those "ifs" to "ises". Will he encounter the reality that that is not really what the occupier of the WH wants him to do, even though he is told it is? Hasn't he taken that into account by agreeing to accept demotion? Don't you love rhetorical questions?

The effort to stand up the Afghan Army constitutes the largest nation-building operation in memory, starting as it has from near zero. The time-line for it must be long, say, "Decades." Its chances of success slim.

Then there are the questions whether all of of success, ours to do and finally, there is the political administration really NATO forces in AFPAK.



diplomatic policy that is desirable, possible worth the cost. And question of what does this intend by having US and

Let's assume for the stated intentions *in re* intentions in every other area of its activities: namely, lies.

moment at least that its AFPAK are like its stated

What if its motive is to expose US Armed Forces and their families to harm, to include physical, morale, reputation and legal harm? What if its intent is to embarrass Officers, conflict Enlisted and show its favored "Muslim world" that US Armed Forces can be defeated, and should be?

What if this administration's desire is to use US Armed Forces, while they are succumbing to the aforementioned intentions, to kill its competitors for world

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domination? E.G.: it's OK to make sweet with Muslims but not if they want to supplant me and my administration. Then, we kill 'em.

In other words, what if this administration's policy is personal and not American? What if the security it wants is its own, not this nation's?

It is something to consider. It seems that every time someone believes what this administration says it intends or says it does they get bit where it hurts. Maybe that hurt, and others like it, are what this administration and its legislature sincerely want.

If so, and even if not so, questioning and even demurring the need or wisdom of extended US Armed Forces operations in AFPAK as well as questioning and even suspecting the motives of this administration's activities with respect to AFPAK are eminently desirable, and Chairman Steele has every reason to do that. He's doing his job.



Dan rightly concludes that it's the "Left" (I prefer "totalitarians") who will try to halt extended operations in AFPAK by US Armed Forces. They got more than they bargained for with this one they put in the WH.

US Armed Forces themselves are not happy being in AFPAK because they know the score there, the lack of nationalism, and what that portends. They were happy in Iraq because they knew nationalism was there to build on and they

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knew that their C-in-C loved them, did not want to hurt them.

Finally, while I'm likely more than one decade older than Dan, I too side with the young ones, the let it all happen/don't get flustered by anything folks. I like what they are doing. I like that they can appreciate genuinely educated people, such as Hansen, Krauthammer and Bertonneau. I do not like, and never have, what the tony, elitist, entitlement, stuck-up, old-before-their-time, grunge-in-

khaki-and-blazer-with-tassle-loafers Republican/ Conservative establishment pols and acolytes have done all my life, and from long before.



So, you go kids!

*Comments*



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*Ann-Margret*

