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Taliban War in Afghanistan

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The Taliban and USA had no conventional match so it was logical that the Taliban disintegrated initially in face of the US bombing offensive and later ground attacks of Northern Alliance as well as the US forces. The Taliban's started re-grouping after mid 2002 having realized that the USA and its NATO allies had sparse ground forces.Initially they targeted NGOs and construction companies but by 2004 they started applying the tactics learnt in Iraq in Afghanistan. By 2005 they were generally organized as regional battle groups under a command and control system.An assessment of this is shown on the map.Each regional group comprised a hard core of 150 to 350 and a total mobilized armed strength of 1000 to 2000 fighters. According to a study done by this scribe for an international client IEDs were initially imported from Datta Khel and Pishin but later each regional group started manufacturing their own IEDs.Weapons and munitions were bought from Iranian Baloch and Kurd smugglers or from groups in Central Asian Republics.Most of the weapons were smuggled via Iran. Taliban control over Helmand and South Nimroz ensured that they controlled the main drug transit routes hence this enabled them to maintain a strong leverage with Pakistani and Iranian Baloch tribes. The USA and its NATO allies appear to have the following strategy :--- 1. Control the key airfields of Afghanistan with minimum strength. 2. Hold Kabul in strength. 3. Show piece patrolling in Southern Provinces giving the impression that the ISAF/NATO is active but in reality avoiding pitched battles or any heavy troop copmmitment. 4. Rebuild the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police.This may take many dccades.Actual fighting indicates that both the ANA and ANP have extremely limited value while operating independently.Thanks to US insistence the Afghan Army was destroyed effectively in the period 1989-92 and building a effective army may take many decades. 5. It appears that the long term strategic purpose of Afghanistan was to dominate the regional states as well the resources by occupying airbases which would enable the USA to attack targets of its choosing , may they be WMDs or other installations.Effective countermeasures by President Putin of Russia however severely limited US influence in the Central Asian Republics. 6. Pressurise/armtwist Pakistani into destroying the main Taliban bases in Waziristan and North Balochistan. The Taliban strategy is as following :--- 1. Harass Kabul Herat Road disturbing container movements. 2. Cause attrition on British-Canadian troops in Helmand and Kandahar the Pashtun heartland thus demonstrating to all Pashtuns in Afghanistan that the Talibans are a major player. 3. Dominate the major drug production areas in the south and the main drug export routes thus financially sustaining the ongoing war. 4. Carry out continuous suicide and IED/bombings in Kabul and surrounding area sapping morale Of anti Taliban forces and demoralising civilians. 5. Carry out selective IED/Suicide Attacks against US Forces and US Civilans 6. Targeting the Afghan National Police which was not completely disintegrated in 1988-92.The Taliban know that the hard core of the Afghan Government is the ANP trained by the indomitable Sayyid Gulabozai.The Afghan National Police has at least 25 % officers trained in ex USSR and is very professional as well as patriotic.Thus the attacks on Afghan National Police by the suicide bombers as well as IEDs. ANALYSIS The strategic challenges that the USA confronts are complex and challenging and the present US leadership lacks the strategic talent to find a solution.Just sitting in Afghanistan and Iraq is not the solution.If not a reverse it is certainly not a success for USA and its allies.And every day spent in Iraq and Afghanistan without striking at the real centre of gravity is a strategic failure of USA.

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