بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ

It is the US who is dependent on the Muslim Rulers

In a recent congressional hearing, in front of the US foreign relations committee, Daniel Markey from the John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) made a number of telling remarks. In his hearing titled 'Pakistan: Challenges for U.S. Interests', he outlined the vulnerability and reliance of the US military on Pakistan. He highlighted, *"Pakistan permits and at times has enabled the US to wage a counterterror drone campaign over parts of its territory and, even at times of deep bilateral discord, to continue flying personnel and arms across Pakistani airspace into Afghanistan. Neither side has been eager to publicise these areas of cooperation, but even American skeptics must admit their utility."* But his most interesting excerpt was: *"Air corridors are readily closed and drones are easy to shoot down, so if Pakistan had really wanted to end what in 2009, then-CIA Director Leon Panetta called the "only game in town in terms of confronting and trying to disrupt the al-Qaida leadership," or to further complicate the US war effort in Afghanistan, it could have done so without breaking much of a sweat. It still could."*

Not for the first time has an expert highlighted the critical dependency the US has on the leaders in the Muslim world to execute its colonial agenda. This dependency can be seen upon closer scrutiny of the weapons systems used.

The US Air Force operates over 5,484 aircrafts and its air force usually gains considerable attention due to its size, variety of aircraft and capabilities. But fighter jets, however capable, have numerous limitations. Fighter jets require jet fuel and the more fuel it carries, the heavier the jet and the more energy needed to make it move. Because the military's planes burn fuel at such intense rates, it becomes impractical to talk about consumption in "miles per gallon." Military fuel use is, instead, tabulated in "gallons-per-mile," "gallons-per-minute," and "barrels-per-hour." While aircraft performance and capabilities are undeniably important in modern warfare, their ultimate impact is largely shaped and affected by a much larger and more mundane set of capabilities. The number, availability, and hardening of Air Force bases, as well as repair capabilities associated with them, are critical in determining outcomes. Fighter jets have a huge repair and maintenance requirement just to be in the air and any disruption to this would render an air war impossible. Despite US capabilities, it cannot fly sorties from the US continent around to conflict zones, it must use bases in close proximity to where it needs to wage war. **Without these bases provided by the Muslim rulers and the uncontested airspace to wage war, the US would struggle to project power**.

America's war in Afghanistan and Pakistan has seen the widespread use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV), commonly known as drones. Whilst much debate continues on the moral aspect of their use, this military platform is now a critical component of America's global military footprint.

UAV operations are all about data. Everything its sensors detect must be received by the controller, and every command the controller gives must get to the drone. Getting this data across space requires infrastructure. In its simplest form, this can be an advanced remote control, but this means you have a very limited operational range. In more advanced versions, portable ground stations can be set up with powerful transmitters and antennas that extend this reach. In the most advanced versions, complex data systems and space-based satellites can be networked and used to project data over vast distances. For all of this to take place these drones require logistical networks and access to airfields just like all aircraft. For all practical purposes any nation wanting to deploy drones will need forward bases and plenty of infrastructure to operate them. This is a big vulnerability as such facilities would need to be in close proximity to the battlefield making them susceptible to a strike, which would end their use.

Most UAVs are slow, easy to see and virtually defenceless. Lacking the agility of fighter jets, drones cannot operate well in hostile airspace. Gen. Mike Hostage, Chief of the US air service's Air Combat Command, confirmed: *"The drones that have proved so useful at hunting al Qaeda are useless in nearly every other battlefield scenario. Predators and Reapers are use-*

less in a contested environment today. I couldn't put [a Predator or Reaper] into the Strait of Hormuz without having to put airplanes there to protect it."[1] Despite their widespread use in Afghanistan and Pakistan, US drones have not faced any challenge in the airspace above both countries as their leaders have been in complete cahoots with the US and as a result US drones faced no opposition. In contested airspace, drones as a weapon system are near useless. Gen. Mike Hostage confirmed: *"MQ-1s and MQ-9s have limited capability against even basic air defences. We're not talking deep over mainland China; we're talking any contested airspace. Pick the smallest, weakest country with the most minimal air force — [it] can deal with a Predator."*[2]

The US has been reducing its troops for the last few years in Iraq and Afghanistan after years of suffering losses amongst its personnel due to insurgencies in these countries. The US despite its firepower was humbled in Afghanistan by the Taliban; and currently the US has little stomach for US troops to be deployed into Syria.

In any military campaign, an appreciation of geography is key and getting your troops to where they should be and supplying them with various goods is critical. In James Dunnigan's guide to comprehensive warfare in the 21st century, the importance of logistics (or supply lines) was outlined: *"If the troops have no ammunition, they can't do much damage to their opponents. Without food and medical supplies, your soldiers will melt away without ever fighting the battle. Without spare parts and fuel for their vehicles and equipment, this gear quickly becomes inoperable. The task of supplying ammunition, food, fuel, spares and other items to the troops is called "logistics." It's not a very glamorous task and is often neglected, such lack of dedication normally leads to disasters. It's an ancient military maxim that 'amateurs study strategy and tactics, professional study logistics.'"*[3]

The US never learnt the lesson of previous empires who all attempted to conquer Afghanistan. Like their predecessors they struggled to maintain supply lines to cover the country's mountainous terrain. Whilst the US attempted to win a conventional victory which relied on a large support network of engineers, doctors, servicemen and crews the Taliban targeted such supply lines at various nodes causing the war effort to completely stall. So simple were the Taliban attacks that at various points in the war over the last decade more US troops were defending other troops rather than fighting the Taliban. This was why in 2012, at a NATO summit in Chicago, America and her allies accepted defeat. The summit statement read: *"After ten years of war and with the global economy reeling, the nations of the West no longer want to pay, either in treasure or in lives, the costs of their efforts in a place that for centuries has resisted foreign attempts to tame it."*[4]

All weapons systems have vulnerabilities, it is the nature of objects. But for these systems to succeed they need many things to fall into place, without which they would be ineffective. Their ineffectiveness and vulnerability has been concealed by the Muslim rulers who give their nations airspace, seaways, ground bases as well as energy and food in order for them to succeed. Daniel Markey from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) is absolutely right when he highlighted: '*if Pakistan had really wanted to end what in 2009, then-CIA Director Leon Panetta called the "only game in town in terms of confronting and trying to disrupt the al-Qaida leadership," or to further complicate the US war effort in Afghanistan, it could have done so without breaking much of a sweat. It still could."*

Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by

Adnan Khan

[1] "Predator drones useless in most wars top air force general says", Foreign Policy, September 2013, http://complex.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/09/19/predator_drones_useless_in_most_wars_top_air_force_general_says
[2] Ibid
[3] James Dunnigman, "How to make war," Fourth edition 2003, Harper, pg 499.
[4] "We are now unified to end Afghan war, Obama says", Star Tribune, May 21, 2012, http://www.startribune.com/officials-obama-to-keep-troops-in-afghanistan-beyond-2016/333008221/

Hizb ut Tahrir Official Website | The Central Media Office Website | Ar-Rayah Newspaper Website | HTMEDIA Website | Khilafah Website

www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org   www.hizb-ut-tahrir.info   www.alraiah.net   www.htmedia.info   www.khilafah.com