

AFGHANISTAN: NEW GREEN ON BLUE, GREEN ON GREEN AND A POLITICIZED MEMORIAL SERVICE

With so much attention focused on Syria, it is important that we don't lose sight of just how badly the situation in Afghanistan is limping toward a final resolution. There is a report ToloNews website this morning on a memorial service that was held yesterday in Kabul. It's not clear why the service was held yesterday (the anniversary of the US invasion isn't until early October), but the service was described as honoring both foreign and Afghan soldiers who have fallen in the war. While the words attributed to Dunford were simple enough in deploring terrorism, the quotes attributed to Afghan figures were appalling in their attempts to use a solemn occasion to shill for what their US military handlers want in the coming months:

Highlighting on the importance of support from the international community post-2014, the Ministry of Defense (MoD) requested the international community to continue assisting the Afghan forces by providing equipment and proper training post-2014.

The battle of Afghanistan against terrorism has seen some big sacrifices in terms of military and civilian casualties. Over the past 12 years, since the beginning of the Afghan war, over 3,000 foreign soldiers and over 10,000 Afghan soldiers have lost their lives.

The foreign forces' combat mission is scheduled to end in the next few months, but a greater question looms large with

regard to how effective has the fight against terrorism been over the past 12 years?

In light of this, Bismillah Mohammadi, the Minister of Defence expressed concerns over the training and equipping of the Afghan Security Forces post-2014. Mr. Mohammadi urged the international community to continue assisting the Afghan forces beyond 2014.

“We urge the international community to equip and train the Afghan Security Forces post- 2014,” said Mr. Mohammadi.

And how well is all that “training” going?

Pretty much as we saw before. Despite massive efforts by the US to re-screen Afghan personnel in the military and to decrease the number of interaction points between Afghan recruits and their trainers, there was another green on blue killing on Saturday. From ToloNews:

“Three International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) service members died when an individual wearing an Afghan National Security Forces uniform shot them in eastern Afghanistan today,” a statement from the coalition said.

A US defence official confirmed to AFP that the three victims were from the United States.

An Afghan official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP that the attack happened during a training session in the insurgency-hit province of Paktia.

The Afghan soldier opened fire on US soldiers, killing two on the spot, he said. A third later died of his wounds.

The attacker was killed when Americans and Afghan soldiers returned fire.

The article, which originally comes from AFP, lists the various programs the US has put into place in response to green on blue killings. By listing these programs in such proximity, we can see how they are self-contradictory:

There have been seven “insider attacks” this year against coalition forces, compared with 48 in 2012. ISAF officials say the decline has been due to better vetting, counter-intelligence and cultural awareness.

Foreign soldiers working with Afghan forces are regularly watched over by so-called “guardian angel” troops to provide protection from their supposed allies.

The military really wants us to believe that they have finally learned cultural awareness and that they have put into place appropriate screening and counterintelligence processes that will eliminate threats. And those programs are working so well that the military now assigns soldiers to act as armed guards during training sessions.

Hidden in a Khaama Press article today about a Taliban attack that killed eleven Afghan border police, we learn that there was an insider killing in an Afghan Local Police unit:

In a separate incident in Zherai district, at least Afghan local police officers were killed after a member of the ALP opened fire on his comrades.

A local security official speaking on the condition of anonymity said the assailant militant who had recently joined ALP forces, managed to flee the area after carrying out the attack.

Although there is clearly an editing error in the article, leaving out the death toll in the attack, we can infer that five ALP personnel

were killed in the attack since the article's headline mentions that 16 Afghan police were killed and the first incident described killed eleven.

Recall that the Afghan Local Police are the death squads trained by CIA and JSOC. These squads normally start from already existing local militias. It would appear from this incident that at least one such group did not have very good internal cohesion and that the internal dissent was not detected during training by US personnel.