

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



January 23, 2017

A State Should Perform its Functions

While living in a state, the people expect and expect rightly that they should be provided their basic requirements of life by the state and the government. In the modern concept of state, protecting the basic rights of the people and providing them the requirements to live a better life are considered as the basic functions of a state. As a matter of fact, the functions of a state, to a large extent, depend on the end it pursues. There was a time when the state performed very limited functions and was primarily concerned with the maintenance of law and order and protection of the country from external aggression.

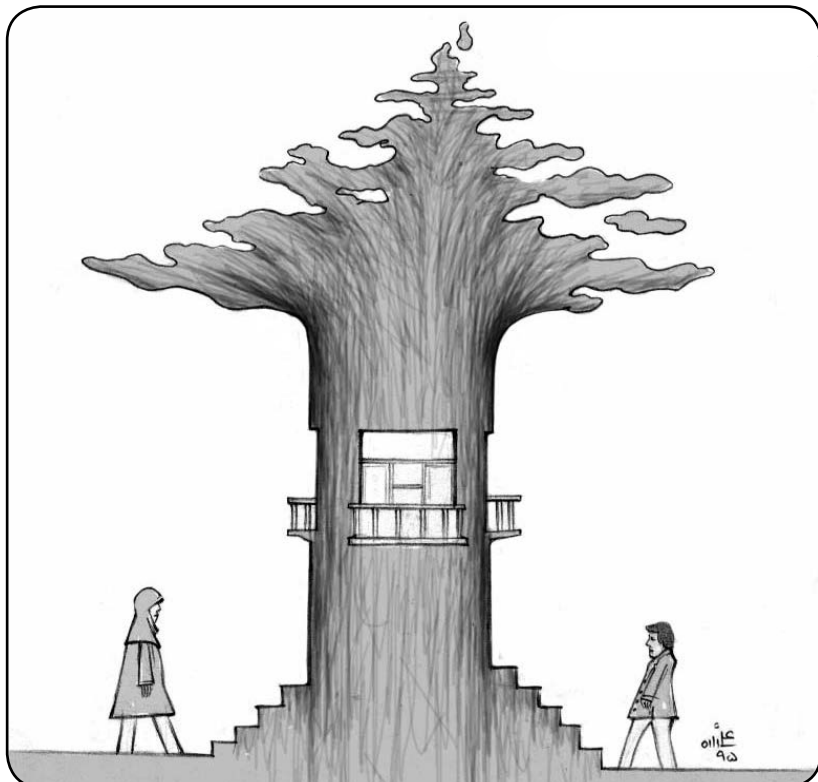
However, in the modern times the nature of the state has undergone complete transformation. The functions of the state have enormously expanded and it has been transformed into a welfare state, which tries to perform maximum of functions, depending on its resources.

The growing popularity of the socialistic ideas and increased interdependence of the states of the world have also contributed to the increase in the functions of the state. However, the functions actually performed by various states differ from each other depending on their ideology and the resources at their disposal.

There are two very important categories of the functions that the states of world require to perform - the Compulsory Functions and the Optional Functions. The Compulsory Functions of a state include: (1) Maintenance of law and order within the country. For this purpose each state maintains a police force and keeps a watch on the disruptive elements. It protects the life and property of the citizens. (2) Formulation of laws and maintenance of law courts to settle disputes amongst individuals and individuals and state. Those who are guilty of violating the law must be brought to book. (3) Protection of the country from outside aggression. For this purpose each state maintains an army. It also tries to maintain friendly relations with other countries through exchange of diplomatic envoys. Some of the basic Optional Functions include: (1) Regulation of trade and industry including control of coinage and currency; fixation of weights and measures, issuing of trade license, regulations of imports and exports and other matters. (2) Provision of education and establishment and improvement of educational institutions. (3) Maintenance of hospitals and dispensaries and remedial measures to prevent the spread of diseases so that citizens should have healthy lives. (4) Maintenance of works of public utility like the posts, railways, roads, public libraries etc. (5) Promotion of agricultural and irrigation facilities. (6) Provision of social securities; like old age pension, unemployment allowance etc. (7) Raising the moral and social standard of citizens through necessary social reforms. (8) Recreation of the citizens through managing cinemas, radios, parks etc.

Looking at the list mentioned above we can say that Afghanistan needs to do much regarding both the compulsory and optional functions. As a result of decades of instability and socio-economic and political problems, the Afghan people have been suffering from myriads of problems. Though there have been certain important improvements made in the last decade or so, some very concerning issues still exist that threaten the lives of the common people of Afghanistan. There are claims that changes have been brought within Afghan society; however, it should be noted that if the effectiveness of the changes have to be felt or observed, they should be observed by the changes in the lives of the common people. If there is any change in the condition of living of the common people as the outcome of the change; the change should be guarded for and even backed and supported vehemently. If not, either the claim must be discarded as wrong or the efforts should be improved to make the changes effective. And that is what Afghanistan needs to do - it has to improve its efforts to bring about necessary changes in the lives of the common people that have been jeopardized both by insecurity and lack of rudimentary requirements of life.

Insecurity alone is not the only trouble for the common people of Afghanistan. There are many other problems as well that haunt their lives and make them miserable. Some of the problems are directly linked to insecurity like, people are not able to have access to health and other facilities of life. Moreover, development works to improve the standard of living of the common people are not carried out because of the security threats, thus the desired objectives are not attained in this regard. People, in some parts of the country, are not able to have access to education as well. Schools are shut by force and the school going children are irritated. There have been many cases of poisoning the schoolgirls that have discouraged the people to send their girls to school. So the insecurity is affecting the common people in two ways - it is taking their lives directly, and indirectly, it is keeping them away from the rudimentary requirements of life. The government is the institution that, on behalf of the state, makes sure that the functions of the state are achieved. The government of Afghanistan, therefore, needs to make sure that the common people of Afghanistan are provided their basic requirements like food, cloth, shelter and security and other important requirements of life like education, health facilities, job opportunities and other facilities.



Afghanistan: At the Crossroads of Its Destiny

By Muhammad Zahir Akbari

Nowadays, everybody has a question on the tip of his tongue what would be the plan of President Donald Trump for Afghanistan? Many of Political commentators and experts in Afghanistan are pessimist about any significant changes in U.S. policy toward Afghanistan, citing the institutional nature of U.S. policy formulation. Thus, Trump's campaign was largely focused on domestic issues such as immigration and the economy, which also hints that Afghanistan may not be at the top of his list of priorities. Some in Kabul are even worried that the new Washington administration would reduce its involvement in Afghanistan, referencing Trump's general distaste for U.S. involvement in the affairs of other countries.

However, there is also a level of optimism in Afghanistan. Firstly, Trump promised during his campaign that he would eliminate Daesh (the So-called Islamic State). It is not probable that he withdraw American forces from Afghanistan while Daesh is an active threat for Afghanistan and the region. So, some people are hopeful and waiting to see what Trump has for Afghanistan. Secondly, the Afghan-war is not merely an Afghan war; it is a regional war and American war, too. So public expects the new administration will change its policy toward Afghanistan by forcing Taliban backing countries to deal with terrorist sanctuaries and pressure the Taliban to come to the negotiation table or face the consequences. This argument is backed by a Trump adviser's comments in an interview that appeared in Reuters. Overall, not only Afghans but the world expects Trump to end the legacy in this war-torn country.

Recently, Afghanistan's National Unity Government (NUG) asked the incoming U.S. government to increase pressure on Pakistan in order to get them to stop backing insurgent groups that continue to wage war against Afghans. The spokesmen for President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Abdullah Abdullah warned Pakistan that their current policy would have serious repercussions for Pakistan and Afghanistan, suggesting Islamabad should review its stance on terrorism. "The new administration must manage its cooperation with Afghanistan by completely understanding the military situation in Afghanistan," said Mujiburrahman Rahimi, spokesman to CEO Abdullah Abdullah. "Over the past two years, relations between Afghanistan and America have been strategic relations and like two good partners, these partnerships would further develop under the incoming U.S. administration and would move on the right direction," said presidential spokesman Haroon Chakhansuri. I

n addition, the CEO's spokesman reiterated calls for the implementation of election reforms in Afghanistan. "The issue of electoral reforms in the political agreement has been an important priority of the chief executive officer which also includes the establishment of a constitution amendment commission, rollout of electronic national identity cards, holding the parliamentary and district council elections and moving toward the constitutional amendment Loya Jirga," Rahimi added.

Meanwhile, former Afghan president Hamid Karzai has also asked the US government under president Donald Trump to take steps to root out terrorist hideouts and safe havens out of Afghanistan. Karzai called on Trump to review the current U.S. anti-terrorism policy and avoid making the same mistakes made by the Barack Obama administration in dealing with terrorism. Karzai also suggested the Trump government increase cooperation with regional powers such India, China and Russia in order to combat terrorism effectively. "My message to president-elect Donald Trump is to thoroughly review the war policy against terrorism and militancy and target terrorists roots and the safe havens where terrorists are trained and armed," said Karzai.

Karzai criticized the international community for not focusing on the real terror hideouts which have been operating there for decades. "When I talk about roots of terrorism, I want to point towards the area where they are trained and they have safe havens and training camps. I do not talk only about Daesh or some other groups, I want to say that these groups have been ignored by the international community for decades," Karzai added.

Overall, the issue of Afghanistan has become very complicated. Trump's "America First" doctrine has left many wondering if he will be willing to continue spending billions of dollars funding Afghanistan, particularly given his declaration that: "We're getting out of the nation-building business". So far, he has shown little interest in Afghanistan, although his most recent comments suggested he favored keeping troop numbers at around 5,500, the level they were intended to reach by the end of the year before Obama shelved the plan and set the number at 8,400. But in other comments, he has described America's involvement in Afghanistan as "a terrible mistake" and appeared to set conditions on the U.S. commitment to NATO, which leads the Resolute Support advise-and-assist mission in Afghanistan. Security officials in Kabul say the threat that Islamic State militants could build their presence in Afghanistan should act as an incentive to keep U.S. force in place, although they admit they remain in the dark about Trump's intentions.

For Trump, the foremost challenge in Afghanistan would be to bring peace by dealing with the Taliban, which has so far not responded seriously to U.S. and Afghan calls for peace talks. By the same token, the United States has found it difficult to defeat the group militarily and also put an end to its mission in Afghanistan successfully. More importantly, Trump needs to increase the engagement of China, Pakistan, India, Iran, Russia, and other Central Asian countries to play constructive roles in bringing peace to Afghanistan.

It is worth mentioning that Russia and Iran have also started cooperating with the Afghan Taliban in a bid to block gains by the Islamic State (ISIS) in Afghanistan. This will also have adverse implications for the Afghan government, which is the primary player fighting ISIS in the country.

Mohammad Zahir Akbari is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at mohammadzahirakbari@gmail.com

Long and Rocky Route Ahead

By Hujjatullah Zia

I will fight for you with every breath in my body, and I will never, ever let you down," Donald John Trump, the 45th president of the United States, told hundreds of thousands of rain-soaked admirers and onlookers in a forceful 16-minute Inaugural Address from the West Front of the Capitol, on Friday. "America will start winning again, winning like never before. We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth. And we will bring back our dreams." He added, "This American carnage stops right here and stops right now." He did pledge to "eradicate from the face of the Earth" Islamic terrorism. Responding to charges that he demonized Mexicans and Muslims, Mr. Trump said, "There is no room for prejudice."

Mr. Trump assumed the presidency of a country still unsettled after a polarizing election and entered office with less support in polls than any other president in recent history. It was clear from the day that there would be no grace period either for or by the new president. Throughout the day, there were mostly peaceful protests against the new president. Sporadic violence broke out as demonstrators smashed shop windows and burned a limousine, while police officers in riot helmets responded with tear gas. More than 200 people were arrested. Liberal groups prepared for a women's march on Saturday that they said could draw hundreds of thousands.

Never has the oath been administered to a president who had never served either in public office or as a general in the military. At age 70, Mr. Trump became the oldest president sworn in for the first time and the first born in New York since Franklin D. Roosevelt. He was also one of the wealthiest presidents ever to enter the White House, with far-reaching business connections that have already raised questions about where his interests end and the country's begin. During the run-up to the November 8 election, he promised to ban Muslims from entering the US. He also promised to build a wall along the Mexican border to deter Mexicans from traveling to America. To view the performance of some US presidents shortly, Bill Clinton took the office in 1993 and clashes between US forces and armed groups continued in Somalia. In 1995, US forces targeted Bosnian Serbs who had been attacking UN safe zones. American peacekeepers were deployed later in the year to Bosnia to uphold the Dayton Peace agreement. Clinton (1993-2001) ordered missile strikes on al-Qaeda targets in Afghanistan and Sudan in 1998 during Operation Infinite Reach in reprisal for attacks on US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania.

Clinton authorized the use of US forces in a NATO bombing raid on Yugoslavia after human rights violations were committed against Albanians in Kosovo. At the end of 1998, Clinton launched a four-day bombing campaign in Iraq. Between 1999 and 2000, the US - along with Britain - attacked Iraqi air defenses more than 200 times. George W. Bush (2001 - 2009) launched the so-called "war on terror" after the 9-11 attacks on the World Trade Center. The US led the NATO intervention in Afghanistan. During his second term, in 2003, Bush declared war on Iraq, claiming the country was producing weapons of mass destruction and collapsed the regime of Saddam Hussein - who was arrested and hanged.

Under Barack Obama (2009 - 2017), the US formally ended its combat mission in Iraq in August 2010. In 2009, 30,000 more military personnel were deployed to Afghanistan in an attempt to bolster the US presence in the country.

In a special operation, US Navy SEALs infiltrated a compound in Pakistan, killing Osama bin Laden. During his second term, Obama ordered air strikes on the Libyan government's air defense facilities in 2011, enforcing a no-fly-zone. In 2014, Obama authorized airstrikes against the self-styled Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), also known as ISIS, inside Syria and launched a program to train and arm rebels fighting the group and Syrian government. He also authorized the death of Omer's successor, Mullah Akhtar Mansour in May 2016.

Trump is believed to have strong challenges ahead as war and terrorism continue unabated and target people indiscriminately on the grounds of their race, color and creed - the US is not immune to its harm either.

The last year's deadly attack on a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, bespoke of intensified militancy and ISIL's foothold in the US, as the murderer claimed allegiance to ISIL's group. Following the incident, Trump said that the attack was the work of a "radical Islamic terrorist" and spoke in a harsh tone, whereas, Obama was very moderate and careful in his speech regarding such episodes.

A deadly incident, be it in the US or Afghanistan, will outrage the conscience of the public and Muslims are the greatest victim of terrorism, but harsh rhetoric against a religious group will aggravate the tension rather than alleviating it. The US is involved in serious issues in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, and now it is Trump to deal with them.

The question remains is that how he will deal with. A strong, cautious strategy is needed to prove what Trump has claimed in his inaugural ceremony.

Hujjatullah Zia is the permanent writer of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan. He can be reached at zia_hujjat@yahoo.com



Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Hussain Yasa

Vice-Chairman: Kazim Ali Gulzari

Email: outlookafghanistan@gmail.com

Phone: 0093 (799) 005019/777-005019

www.outlookafghanistan.net



The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not reflect the views or opinions of the Daily Outlook Afghanistan.