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Afghanistan

A special interview with Adil

- IV Online magazine - 2001 - IV335 - November 2001 -

Publication date: Friday 16 November 2001

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Adil is leader of a small left wing organization based in Afghanistan. He is himself in exile. He was in Jilalabad for three days from 16-19th September to see the mood and to instruct his party comrades on future strategy. It was an illegal entry to Afghanistan. Here is a special report on the present situation in Afghanistan based on his interview with Farooq Tariq of the Labour Party Pakistan taken at Lahore on 24th September.

"I travelled to Afghanistan on 16th September and reached Jilalabad. The town was in absolute shock conditions. Everyone from there was talking of leaving Afghanistan as soon as possible. People are sick and tired of the Taliban regime.

There are around 20,000 military men at the disposal of the Taliban. They have lost their best friend Pakistan, so their military assistance is in trouble. On the contrary, there are over 25,000 military men with Osama. They belong to China, Algeria, Nigeria and many other Arab countries apart from Pakistan. When the Taliban say they will not hand over Osama to the Americans, it has nothing to do with their courage or their service to Islam, they are unable to hand him over as Osama has more Islamic militants than the Taliban.

They are the most unpopular regime in Afghanistan's history. If America comes here they will lose power not so much of the attack but more because they have no social basis. They are doomed to lose power. The Taliban are the most vicious and brutal government of all time. We opposed them from the beginning. But America and Pakistan have supported them from the beginning. They say today that the Taliban government is no good, we are saying it from day one.

There are three trends within the hierarchy of the Taliban regime. One is the most fundamentalist, who are totally opposed to handing Osama over to America. One big group is in favour of handing Osama to America. The third one is balancing the two groups. It is the third group which has prevailed recently in its decision that Osama should leave voluntarily.

There is a mix of people in the Northern Alliance. Abdul Rashid Dostum who heads Junbush Milli Islamia (Islamic National Movement) was a close ally of Babrak Karmal and Dr. Najibullah, the former rulers of Afghanistan with the support of Russians. He is not a fundamentalist and represents the Uzbek and Turkmenistan people of Afghanistan. Another component party of the Northern Alliance is the party of Professor Siaf, Itihad Islami Afghanistan (Afghanistan Islamic Unity). This is the most fundamentalist party of the Alliance. Then there is Ahmed Shah's party Shoora Nizaar (Islamic Association). The same people who did the September 11th event killed him on September 9th.

Ahmed Shah Massod was killed because Osama's people knew that he was the only capable person who could lead a resistance after September 11th. He was supported by many Western powers already. He was a religious fanatic but recently had changed his position to right wing ideas. Hizb Wahdat Islami is another party, which is part of the Northern Alliance.

The former King Zahir Shah seems to have the support of all the parties in Afghanistan apart from the Taliban. The flags of Zahir Shah's party are seen everywhere in Peshawar at least. Our party at this time supports him for a transitional period. The American plan is to hand him power after the fall of the Taliban and then he call elections in one year's time.

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But it is clear that he will not be able to solve the problems of the people. There is a Persian saying that if the "bad" is in power and some good comes out of it, it is not that bad. So we have no other choice apart from supporting him for a transitional period.

We are totally opposed to American military intervention. But we are in favour of an immediate ending of the Taliban government. The situation is like America was bringing up a dog who has now gone mad. It is the responsibility of American to control or kill the mad dog. We will do our part to hunt down this mad dog which is dangerous for the Afghan people."