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CIA in Afghanistan: Operation Phoenix Redux?

By Matthew Hoh
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These CIA teams in Afghanistan are not just reminiscent of the Operation Phoenix program in Vietnam, the death squads of Central America and the Shia torture and murder militias of Baghdad, they are the direct descendants of them. The CIA is continuing a long tradition of utilizing savage violence by indigenous government forces, in this case along sectarian/ethnic lines, in an attempt to demoralize and ultimately defeat local populations.

The results will assuredly be the same: war crimes, mass murder, torture and the terrorization of entire communities of men, women and children in their own homes. This will lead to more

support for the Taliban and a deepening of the war in Afghanistan. The CIA should ask itself, where has this worked before?

This escalation by the CIA in Afghanistan fits into the broader war campaign of the United States in the Muslim world as the United States, despite its protestations of wanting negotiations and ultimately peace, turns areas not under the control of its proxy government into large swathes of free fire zones as it punishes and attempts to subjugate populations not under its control.

Iraq's campaign in the Euphrates and Tigris River valleys, the Kurdish campaign in western Syria and the Saudi and UAE campaign against the Houtis in Yemen have been devastating and vicious assaults on populations, critical infrastructure and housing, that coupled with nighttime commando raids that terrorize entire villages and neighborhoods, look not to bring a political settlement, reconciliation or peace, but rather subjugate, along ethnic and sectarian lines, entire population groups to achieve American political desires in the Muslim world.

This CIA program of using Afghan militias to conduct commando raids, the vast majority of which will be used against civilians despite what the CIA states, falls in line with American plans to escalate the use of air and artillery strikes against the Afghan people in Taliban-held areas, almost all of whom are Pashtuns.

Again, the purpose of this campaign is not to achieve a political settlement or reconciliation, but to brutally subjugate and punish the people, mostly rural Pashtuns, who support the Taliban and will not give in to the corrupt American run government in Kabul.