



Of Strength and Cowardice

The US drone strike is a lesson for the Pakistani masses about strength and courage

Strength and cowardice are often misunderstood. They are sometimes wrongly attributed to dominance. The strong are the ones who are dominant. The weak who wield little influence. While these are indeed long-term results of strength and cowardice, they often mislead in the short term especially when judging individuals.

Raheel Sharif, the so-called strong man of Pakistan, is one such example. Using the power of the military, he bullied his own people to accept the American War on Terror as their own. No one would say no to the “no-nonsense” General, and those who did either ended up being missing persons or landed in jail. Under the National Action Plan, thousands were picked up; a significant number not even connected to militancy but considered “extremists”. Under the General’s watch, no one will dare support the Afghan insurgency against American occupation of Afghanistan. No one will dare call for Jihad in Kashmir, Afghanistan or Palestine. For such an act would be glorifying “terrorism”. And Yes! No one can call for establishing Islam in political authority or call for reestablishing the Khilafah state. The state will be secular and the stick of Raheel will protect it from its political opponents.

The man of action, the savior of Pakistan, the no-nonsense General, King Raheel or as he described himself “the soldier statesman”. He was the strongman Pakistan needed. We ought to thank him for his service.

And all it took was one drone strike to reveal how strong he was. Obama arrogantly declared that he will continue this policy of unilateral strikes inside Pakistan if required in the future as well. Pakistan’s sovereignty did not matter, protecting the lives of American citizens did. Obama cares not for the sensitivities of Pakistani masses, he will have his way no matter what. So here was a challenge for a strongman indeed, an international bully threatening you publicly. And how does our strongman respond? No not by expelling the American ambassador. No not by announcing an end of Pakistan’s alliance with the US. No not by announcing to rid the greater region from America’s military, intelligence and political presence. No not even threatening the international bully back by mere words. Rather by announcing to continue cooperation with America in it’s so called war on terrorism.

If you abuse your power to threaten, dominate and subjugate the weak, you are no strongman. You are a tyrant and a bully. Real strength lies in challenging those who are stronger than you and appear to be more powerful than you. But you challenge them still for the sake of ideals and principles you believe in and care not for the consequences of proclaiming the truth.

Indeed, the US drone strike is a lesson for the Pakistani masses about strength and courage. And the strongest and most valiant act of defiance is to challenge the tyrant ruler when he is in service, not when he is retired. Let us all pressurize our military and political leaders to stop their slavish obedience to US, fulfill their responsibility of protecting the country from aggressors, and let us demand from them what we love, to be ruled by the laws of Allah and to reject secular democracy.

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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