

1999 Dossiers of rebel field commanders

Citation:

"Dossiers of rebel field commanders," 1999, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, A. A. Lyakhovskiy's "Plamy Afgana" ("Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran"), Iskon, Moscow, 1999; Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.
<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111606>

Summary:

A Soviet analysis of counterrevolutionary commanders in Afghanistan.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

- English Translation

Ahmad Shah, son [of] Dust Mukhammajan, was born in 1953 in the village of Jangalak (Bazarak rural district, Panjshir district) into the family of an important feudal lord who was a career military man (his father retired in 1976 as a colonel). He is a Tajik and Sunni Muslim. He graduated the Kabul theological lycee "Abu Hanifiya" and studied at the engineering school of Kabul University, where he joined the "Muslim Youth" organization, where among the founders were B. Rabbani, G. Hekmatyar, R. Sayaf...

In 1973 after the coup the supporters of "Muslim Youth" organized a plot in the army to overthrow the Daud regime and proclaim an Islamic republic. The plot was exposed and its participants executed. A. Shah managed to hide.

In 1974-5 he took an active part in preparing and carrying out an uprising in the village of Bazarak in the Panjshir district; it took place on 21 June 1975, but it was crushed because of a lack of support from the population. According to some information, Ahmad Shah emigrated (Egypt, Lebanon), where he took part in combat operations and committed terrorists acts in armed Palestinian groups. He studied the experience of guerilla warfare in the Near East, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. The M. Daud regime declared him a war criminal. In 1977 Ahmad Shah joined with B. Rabbani (IOA), a Tajik, whom he considered the most worthy leader of the Islamic movement in Afghanistan.

In 1978 he returned to Afghanistan after the April Revolution and began to create armed detachments in the Panjshir Valley. Having organizational and propaganda skills and theological training (a factor of no little importance in the Muslim world), combat experience, and skillfully using the nationalist sentiments of the Tajiks and the dogma of Islam, enjoying the personal patronage of B. Rabbani, by the end of 1979 Ahmad Shah managed to create and lead a group of rebels in the Panjshir.

Initially there were 20 fighters by his own admission, but the experience of terrorist acts allowed him to quickly kill chiefs contending for leadership in the area and establish his supremacy. Ahmad Shah did not acquire the pseudonym Masoud, which means "lucky", by coincidence. Moreover he has proved this to everyone: he is a strong-willed and energetic person who displays persistence and purposefulness in achieving set tasks.

Ahmad Shad considers the US and Pakistan together with the Soviet Union to be to blame for Afghanistan's predicament, but he is convinced that no regime can exist without the support of and friendly relations with the USSR.

He has a negative opinion of the leaders of the "Alliance-7" and here his main enemy is G. Hekmatyar.

After the Parchamists came to power in 1979 persecutions of the Khalqists

began. The majority of officials of government institutions were representatives of this faction of the PDPA in the Panjshir district; fearing repression by the Parchamists they defected to the IOA, joining the ranks of A. Shah.

He is one of the most influential leaders of the counterrevolution. Being an ardent opponent of the present political system, Ahmad Shah considers the leaders of the PDPA and the government to be his main enemies. An active nationalist and an anti-Soviet, he opposes the presence of Soviet troops. He has close contacts with representatives of the leading capitalist countries; he especially eagerly established ties with the French (he speaks French and English fluently).

He has organizational abilities and outstanding personal and professional qualities. He is a strong-willed, energetic, bold, and decisive leader. He is resolute in achieving the assigned missions and keeps his word. He is an intelligent, clever, and brutal enemy. He has unchallenged authority among the rebels and a strong influence on the civilian population of the zones under [his] control. An experienced conspirator, he is reserved, cautious, vain, and ambitious.

An analysis of the closest circle of Ahmad Shah permits the conclusion that he does not completely trust any of his subordinates.

He places constant emphasis on ensuring his security. His personal guard was selected from those devoted to him. He always has three bodyguards with him. Detachments of up to 100 rebels are selected as his escorts and guard force during movements. He has no permanent residence and changes his location constantly.

He is religious and observes the Muslim way of life strictly. He is unpretentious in manner and hardy. He dresses modestly, as a rule wearing a semi-military style uniform and a "Nuristani" (a beret-type headgear made of wool). His personal weapon is an AKSU [trans. note: the folding-stock assault rifle issued to Soviet airborne troops] and a pistol.

Rumors are spread among the local population in order to mislead [enemies] about Ahmad Shah's activities and the places he stays; they are also spread through an agent network and inserted into various government institutions, even to the highest levels of the Party and government staff, the Ministry of State Security and Ministry of Defense. His persona, which has become legendary and semi-mythical, is aided by spreading disinformation about his personality. Many Afghans eagerly accept the most improbable stories about his victories, believe in him, and help spread [the disinformation] further, as a rule, embellishing it.

Ismail son of Muhammad Aslam (Ismail Khan) was born in 1947 in the village of Nasrabad, Shindand district, Herat province. He is a Pushtun of the Alizai tribe. He graduated the "Kharbi pukhantun" Military School. Until 1979 he was a captain ("turan") and commanded a battalion of the 17th Infantry Division, so he received the nickname "Turan". After the Herat mutiny (March 1979) he deserted and headed an armed formation of the IOA in the Herat vicinity.

He is married and his family lives in Tayabad (Iran). He is reserved and cautious and often changes the location of his headquarters. He is extraordinarily cruel and deals personally with prisoners.

He is the commander of the armed groups of the IOA in the province of Herat and considered second after Ahmad Shah as a rebel leader in Afghanistan.

About 2,000 rebels operate under his command. He enjoys the respect of the local population since he forbids plundering.

Maulawi Jelaluddin Khakani was born in 1935 into the Mizi family of the Jadran tribe. He graduated from a religious school (medressah) in Pakistan. He received his clerical degree and opened a medressah in the village of Farakh, Paktia province, on return to Afghanistan. During the rule of Zahir Shah and M. Daud he took an active part in the anti-government activity of the "Muslim Brotherhood" (Paktia) organization.

After April 1978 he was one of the first to fight against the PDPA. He supported the political policy of the IPA and was considered a representative of G. Hekmatyar in Paktia. Then he joined the IPKh. He later declared himself independent of the remaining opposition organizations and the military commander of the Jadran tribe. With full mobilization of his tribe he is able to deploy up to 10,000 armed fighters.

Jelaluddin regularly visits Saudi Arabia, where he holds direct talks with representatives of the government of that country. He also receives weapons, ammunition, and also financial support personally, bypassing the IPKh headquarters in Peshawar.

He is described as a cruel and uncompromising person. He is implacably opposed to the Najibullah regime in Afghanistan. He wages armed combat on a platform of establishing an Islamic republic on orthodox Islamic principles. Jelaluddin's armed formations number up to 3,000 and are located mainly in the area the Jadran tribe lives in the provinces of Paktika and Paktia.

Said Mansur son [of] Said Marteza (pseudonym - Said Pancha) was born in the province of Parwan in 1955. A Tajik, he graduated a 12-year lycee and worked for some time as a petty trader. He then entered Kabul University but completed

only two years. He joined the Islamic Party of Afghanistan during his first year. In 1978 G. Hekmatyar appointed him head of the IPA rebels in the province of Baghlan. The main area of operations of his group adjoins a sector of the Doshi-Salang route.

He displays exceptional brutality toward people suspected of loyalty to the ruling regime. He is intelligent, clever, and resourceful.