

National Security Council

Pch. Defence

BY MUHAMMAD MEHDI

Sovereignty of a state exists in the developed or swiftly developing countries, it will emerge that they achieved their goals with the continuity of their policies.

Many voices are being heard in Pakistan that a new institution with the name of the National Security Council should be formed in order to provide stability and continuity to the system. Before instituting this council, which could introduce permanent Marshal Law, it would be worthwhile to examine the National Security Councils of America and India. Today, in Pakistan every supporter of the National Security Council is also quoting the examples of the said countries with the plea that if the above countries are running successful democratic dispensations with the help of National Security Councils then why not Pakistan? Let us analyse the law of the National Security Councils in India and America.

The American President is the head of American Security Council. Vice

President, Secretary of State, Secretary Finance, Secretary Defense, Assistant to the President for National Security are the key members of the said council. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee participates as Advisor on Military Affairs and Director CIA participates as Intelligence Advisor. Presidential Chief of Staff, Assistant to the President for Economic Policy participates in the meetings. Attorney General, Director Administrative office and other senior government officers also participate in the meeting in respect of their departments' issues. This is worth mentioning that American National Council is an institution which assists the President on foreign and national security issues and provides comprehensive coordination among the government departments.

During the process of institution-making in India, Pandit Nehru did not allow the Indian Army to participate in any decision making institu-

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formed by an official order. Three organisations are working under it i.e. Strategic Policy Group, National Security Advisory Board and a Secretariat. The Chiefs of Indian Armed Forces are the members of Strategic Policy Group. Other members of the said group are Secretary Cabinet, Secretary Foreign Affairs, Secretary Defense, Secretary Finance, Secretary Internal Affairs, Secretary Atomic Energy, Chiefs of Intelligence Agencies and Governor Reserve Bank. National Security Advisory Board consists of retired Military and civilian Officers.

It is clear from the above that there is no similarity among the National Security Councils of America, India and that of Pakistan apart from their names. It is also evident from the above that the National Security Councils of America and India are being chaired by their Chief Executives. America has only one army officer in its Security Council who only

provides technical assistance and advice on military affairs. Although his designation is Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee but in the above Council he participates just as an Advisor. Whereas in India, the army was not even considered to be given any role in the Security Council.

In Pakistan, the situation is totally different. Here in the National Security Council, the Chief Executive of the Country will sit with his subordinates and in current scenario the Chief of Army Staff will chair the meetings. What will be the position of the Prime Minister in the presence of five army officers? It is understandable that if the system is implemented, it will not be necessary that all the Chief Ministers and the Prime Minister will have the same voice, but there is a strong possibility they will sit in the meeting as opponents. It is a normal practice in Pakistan that every military ruler brought his own system in the country, and with his departure his system was thrown into the dustbin. Certainly General Musharraf knows that "History repeats itself". It is important to study the long-term ramifications of crucial national security decisions before they are put into practice.

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