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KABUL -- The United States is spending \$92 million to build Afghanistan a new "Pentagon," a massive five-story military headquarters with domed roofs and a high-tech basement command center that will link Afghan generals with their troops fighting the Taliban nationwide.

But when Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak asked for a bigger office in the building -- a change that would cost about \$300,000 -- he got a firm "no." Such changes cost time and money, U.S. military officials said, and in Afghanistan, both are in ever-shorter supply.

"We could do them, but we're not going to do them," Col. Andrew Backus, the director of engineering for the NATO command in charge of training and equipping the Afghan security forces, said of the Afghans' proposed revisions. "What we're going to do is finish the project with strict change control and turn it over to the Afghans. And if they want to change it, then they can change it."

The military headquarters is one of the most prominent public symbols of America's ongoing financial commitment to Afghanistan.

Rising amid Kabul's dusty streets, the 516,000-square-foot building, still cloaked in scaffolds and cranes, dwarfs other buildings in town.

"Once it's finished, it will be a permanent and a very significant illustration of the U.S. support for Afghanistan," Wardak said in an interview.

Even with American troops beginning their withdrawal, the U.S. government is still working its

way through a \$10 billion menu of construction projects.

Of the 1,150 buildings planned, more than 600 have been completed, with a total value of \$4 billion.

The United States is also building a \$54 million Kabul headquarters for the Interior Ministry, which oversees the Afghan police, and a \$102 million base for the military's 201st Corps in eastern Afghanistan.

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