



Occasional Paper 3

AFGHANISTAN'S GORDIAN KNOT: AN ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL CONFLICT AND STRATEGIES FOR PEACE

Hafizullah Emadi



East-West Center
Honolulu, Hawaii

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FOREWORD

Despite the reduced rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, a political settlement to the ongoing civil conflict in that country has not been achieved. In the 1990s, the people of Afghanistan face difficult challenges in finding a basis for reconciliation and in repairing their wartorn society and economy.

In this monograph, Dr. Hafizullah Emadi provides the essential background to understanding the problems of contemporary Afghanistan and suggests some approaches to a solution. He shows that no ruling group has been able to establish internal political hegemony since the beginning of the nation's modern history in 1919. Afghanistan has been continuously fractured by deep conflicts between forces of tradition and secular modernization, by the splintering of political groups before and during the present conflict, and by outside pressures arising from a combination of Cold War and local rivalries. Theocratic, factional, and foreign schisms remain major barriers to the resolution of the current political stalemate.

Looking toward the future, Dr. Emadi argues that neither the Kabul government nor the resistance groups can expect to unify the country by military force. He suggests a democratic, political approach based upon establishing a coalition government, holding national elections under United Nations auspices, and creating a federal state providing substantial local autonomy. Dr. Emadi also argues that outside countries can do their part to further the peace process by shutting off military supplies to the two sides and encouraging a process of negotiation.

The East-West Center's International Relations Program supports research, writing, and dialogue that can contribute to the building of a more peaceful and prosperous Asia-Pacific region. We publish this monograph in the hope that it will foster improved understanding of the sources of conflict in Afghanistan and contribute to the policy debate on means of resolving that long-standing and tragic conflict.

Charles E. Morrison
Coordinator, International Relations Program

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INTRODUCTION

When the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, scholars and politicians speculated on why the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan and how to end its occupation of the country. The Soviet Union was compelled to withdraw its forces a decade later, but the internal conflict goes on. Any effort to create an internal consensus requires a detailed analysis of the failure and collapse of the Afghan state prior to and during the Soviet occupation if historic mistakes are to be avoided in the future.

The Afghan ruling class and the superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union—have failed three times to build a successful hegemonic project with its corresponding political strategies. The first failure was marked by political and social crises in the constitutional period, 1963–1973. The second failure was reflected in the crisis of legitimacy during the republican regime from 1973 to 1978. The third failure was manifested by a leadership crisis in the democratic regime of 1978 that resulted in the 1979 occupation by the Soviets. Prior to and during this period, the ruling class in Afghanistan resorted to the use of force in maintaining its sociopolitical domination. The ruling class did not realize that maintaining hegemony also required political, moral, ethical, and intellectual leadership. It is through these practices that a social class or class faction gains the active consent and support of the civil society and articulates a national development strategy based on political compromises. The leadership in Afghanistan not only lacked the public support of its citizens and strategic foresight in building a modern secular society, but it also lacked the financial resources necessary to support social development projects in the country. To maintain its rule and to modernize the country's economic backwardness the ruling class relied on the superpowers for economic,

political, and military support. This strategy of development antagonized various social groups espousing different ideologies for social and economic development.

This monograph focuses on the failure of Afghanistan's ruling class to establish internal political hegemony and its efforts to forge alliances with rival superpowers—the United States and the USSR. This failure of policies resulted in clashes between contending ideological groups and radical political change during the 1970s, and finally provoked the Soviet occupation of the country from December 1979 until February 1989. By suggesting a political solution to the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan since the Soviet withdrawal, the author hopes that a second Lebanon in the Middle East can be avoided.

SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan is a developing society in West Asia with approximately 15.6 million inhabitants! There are many ethnolinguistic communities in Afghanistan. Pushtuns are the dominant ethnic group, inhabiting for the most part the southeastern and eastern parts of the country. Islam is the dominant religion. While there is no precise data on the ratio of religious denominations, it is estimated that at least 75 percent of the people are Sunni and possibly as many as 24 percent are Shia, while less than 1 percent are of other faiths. Non-Muslim people such as Jews and Hindus are few in number, but they are not insignificant. Prior to their migration to Israel, the Afghan Jews played an important role in the country's economy as businessmen and traders. Hindus and Sikhs have also engaged in business and trade activities, and a number of them have also been involved in politics. Table 1 estimates the number of the many ethnolinguistic communities in the country.

Since the establishment of Afghanistan in 1747, Pushtuns have dominated the ruling class. They also constitute a preponderant segment among the wealthiest merchants, landowners, and Muslim clerics. One of the compelling features of economic and political developments in Afghanistan has been the concentration of socioeconomic development projects in most Pushtun-settled areas and the appointment of Pushtun administrators in non-Pushtun regions. National oppression and sociopolitical tensions were further compounded by religious differences within the country. For these reasons the society is bitterly divided with competing ethnolinguistic and religious loyalties.

The State and Reforms

When Afghanistan gained its independence from the British in 1919, the ruling class headed by King Amanullah tried to build a modern secular

society similar to that of European countries. He initiated a number of reforms, which were far-reaching in their impact on Afghan society. Social reforms gave women freedom of choice in marriage and equal legal rights with men. A minimum age requirement was set for marital partners who were advised to practice monogamy. The campaign against illiteracy resulted in compulsory education for both sexes and the establishment of adult education, including the recruitment of teachers for nomadic populations. Among political reforms was the creation of Afghanistan's first constitution that granted civil rights to all Afghans. The state also took steps to limit or abolish privileges for tribal leaders and members of the royal family. Religious reforms were intended to separate religion from politics, and so to wrest the power and influence of Muslim religious leaders over the Afghan people. The state reduced the subsidies and salaries of religious leaders, and increased state control over their teaching methods. The state also abolished the *muhtasib*, Afghanistan's "religious police."² The implementation of these reforms antagonized feudal landowners, conservative clerics, and tribal chiefs. They opposed the state's reforms, claiming that they were anti-Islamic and called upon their supporters to rebel. The Khost tribes of Paktiya province in the spring of 1924 were the first to do so.

To placate opponents and restore stability, the Kabul government temporarily canceled most of the reforms. These concessions did not appease opposition forces, however, who were aided and abetted by the British government. Rebellion gradually spread and developed in several regions. It was during this time that Habibullah, a soldier who was also known as *Bacha-e-Saqaw* (water carrier's son) organized groups of armed men to overthrow the royal government in Kabul. According to Habibullah's autobiography, he was born and raised in Kalakan district, Parwan province. He was recruited as a soldier in King Amanullah's army, *Qita Namuna* (model battalion). During the Khost rebellion in 1924, Habibullah deserted the army and went to British India. In Peshawar city he ran a teahouse. A few years later he returned to his native town, Kalakan, where he was warmly greeted by his friends because he had amassed considerable wealth by attacking and plundering caravans. Soon Habibullah's fame spread throughout the country. In his autobiography he stated that

I was Lord of Kalakan, and Ruler of the caravans . . . I realized that to enhance and sustain my position, I must not rest on my laurels. Moreover, I could not continue indefinitely as a mere robber of the trade routes. . . . I must do more than that.³

In late 1928 Habibullah launched a frontal attack on Kabul and defeated King Amanullah. King Amanullah escaped south to Kandahar and organized another army to recapture Kabul but met with defeat again. He fled the country in January 1929.⁴

Habibullah seized the throne and ruled the country for nine months. During his reign educational institutions were closed down, social and economic development projects initiated by King Amanullah were abolished, and anarchy and chaos prevailed throughout the country. Although the British were happy with the overthrow of Amanullah, they were not pleased with Habibullah's rule because neither could he maintain stability, nor effectively protect British interests in Afghanistan. Mohammad Nadir was a general in King Amanullah's army and later was appointed ambassador to France. A strong supporter of British policy, in October 1929 he and his brothers mobilized the people of Paktiya and Nangarhar provinces, organized an army, defeated Habibullah, and Nadir proclaimed himself the new king.⁵

During his rule (1929–1934), King Nadir tried to consolidate his position. In doing so he reinstated Islamic institutions and allied himself with conservative clerics. To win the support of the religious leaders, King Nadir created the *Jamiat ul Ulama* (Society of Islamic Leaders), abolished all restrictions that King Amanullah had imposed upon religious leaders, and dismantled every progressive reform associated with the king. For example, the Amaniya school, which was named after King Amanullah, was renamed Nijat, or "salvation school." King Nadir initiated a number of social and economic development projects that included the building of a few modern schools and the establishment of several industrial and manufacturing enterprises.⁶ The British government provided substantial aid to Afghanistan to enable King Nadir to build a modern army. Although King Nadir succeeded in building a modern army, he failed to formulate political strategies to cultivate popular obedience. In 1934 King Nadir was assassinated by a pro-Amanullah student in Kabul and was succeeded by his son, Mohammad Zahir, who ruled the country until 1973.

The State and Superpowers

Prior to and after World War II, the industrial class was weak and not in a position to help with the modernization of the country. In the post-World War II period, merchants and traders, whose interests were closely tied to those of Western countries, emerged as a new class and consolidated their positions within and outside the government. Under their influence, the state expanded foreign, economic, and trade relations and requested financial and economic support from the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective blocs. The United States at that time directed economic and technical assistance to Afghanistan not only to counter Soviet influence in the country but also to establish closer links between Afghanistan and the United States. Toward this end the United States expanded its trade relations with the country.⁷

Simultaneously, the Soviet Union also expanded its activities in

Afghanistan. To achieve this the Soviet Union provided military, economic, and technical assistance to Afghanistan. The Soviet policy for winning Afghanistan to its side was described by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev during his 1955 visit to Afghanistan:

I went there [to Afghanistan] with Bulganin on our way back from India. It was clear that America was courting Afghanistan. . . . The Americans were undertaking all kinds of projects at their own expense. . . . The Americans hardly bother to put a fig leaf over their self-centered, militaristic motives. . . . It is my strong feeling that the capital which we have invested in Afghanistan hasn't been wasted. We have earned the Afghan's trust and friendship, and it hasn't fallen into the American trap; it hasn't caught on the hook baited with American money.⁸

Afghanistan's increasingly close ties to the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective blocs divided the trading and merchant classes into pro-Western and pro-Soviet groups. These ties also helped to cultivate similar tendencies within a segment of the intelligentsia, manifested in the formation of pro-Western and pro-Soviet political organizations as well as the establishment of other political organizations espousing alternate strategies of development and their subsequent struggle for political and social change in the country.

Political Movements

Although anti-establishment movements and struggles for political change, social reforms, and equality began in the early 1940s, these movements were poorly developed at first. In the immediate post-World War II period, *Wishzalmayan* (Awakened Youth) was established. Members of this organization engaged in political and ideological work among college students and government employees. Some of them advocated various political and ideological views and began publishing several newspapers as a means of propagating their political views. Among the most important publishers with their corresponding papers were Faiz Mohammad Angar's *Angar* (Burning Embers); Dr. Abdurrahman Mahmoodi's *Nida-e-Khalq* (The Voice of the People); Mir Ghulam Mohammad Ghubar and Abul Hay Aziz's *Watan* (Homeland); and Gul Pacha Ulfat's *Ulus* (People).⁹ Members of the *Wishzalmayan* came mainly from middle-class families. The prime objective of the organization was to liberalize all aspects of life and give the middle class a greater role in the country's political life.

In order to neutralize the influence of the left, the government encouraged some intellectuals of ruling-class families to establish a competing political organization, the *Club-e-Milli* (National Club), in 1952 and provided them with some financial assistance.¹⁰ The club's narrow social base failed to attract participation from the lower social classes and

intellectuals associated with them. Next, the government pursued a repressive policy toward leftist intellectuals and other opposition forces. As a result of this policy, many anti-government intellectuals were jailed and many others sought refuge in the neighboring countries of Pakistan and India. Although the government cracked down on freedom of speech and of assembly, the political struggle for democracy continued. This situation and contradiction within the ruling family forced the current prime minister (Mohammad Daoud) to resign in 1963. King Zahir asked Minister of Mines and Industries Mohammad Yusuf to form a new government. This interim government appointed a committee to draft a new constitution that was endorsed by an elected legislature in 1964. Although the constitution barred members of the royal family from holding top government positions, they continued to hold key posts in the state bureaucracy. While the constitution approved the formation of political parties and a free press, in practice the government did not officially recognize political parties and subjected newspapers to state censorship.

During the constitutional decade (1963–73), several political organizations representing political views of various social classes emerged. The best organized ones were (1) *Sazmani Demokratiki Navin-e-Afghanistan* (The New Democratic Organization of Afghanistan—NDOA known as *Shula-e-Jawid* (Eternal Flame); (2) *Hizbi Demokratiki Khalq-e-Afghanistan* (Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan, or PDPA); (3) *Sazmani Jawanani Musulman* (Muslim Youth Organization) known as *Eikhwan ul Muslimin*, or Islamic Brotherhood; and (4) *Afghan Millat*, or Social Democratic Party of Afghanistan.¹¹

The New Democratic Organization of Afghanistan (NDOA) was established in 1965. It adopted a pro-Beijing line in its domestic and international policies and supported Chairman Mao Zedong's ideology of revolution, believing that political power comes out of the barrel of a gun. *Shula-e-Jawid* was the political and theoretical organ of the organization. A great number of intellectuals of various ethnolinguistic communities in schools and colleges were attracted to its philosophy of self-determination of nations and the struggle of oppressed nationalities. The organization established links with peasants and laborers and supported their struggle for better living and working conditions, pay raises, insurance, etc., with the intention of enlisting workers and peasants in a new democratic revolution.

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was founded on 1 January 1965. Due to personality clashes among its leaders and differences over the methods of promoting political change, the party soon split into two factions: *Parcham* (Banner) and *Khalq* (People). Both factions remained loyal to Moscow and supported the Soviet Union's domestic and foreign policies. The Parchamis headed by Babrak Karmal concentrated

on social and political reforms by seizing key positions within the bureaucracy, although they also vocally supported a revolution from below. Members of the party came from upper-middle-class families of Persian-speaking communities in urban areas.

The Khalq organization, in contrast to Parcham, was rooted in Pushtu-speaking rural communities. The Khalqis focused their political and organizational work on army officers and sought social and political change by organizing a military coup. While both Parchamis and Khalqis supported the monarchy and participated in parliamentary elections, the NDOA condemned participation in parliament on the grounds that political change cannot come as a result of reforms but must be installed by a social revolution from below and guided by a revolutionary organization.

Sazmani Jawanani Musulman (SJM) was established as a religious organization in the mid-1960s. Its members were religious teachers and intellectuals advocating a return to the Islamic way of life. The organization did not articulate revolutionary armed struggle as a means of social transformation of the country. Its main concern was the Islamization of the state apparatus. SJM opposed Western cultural influences, particularly the liberation of women. The leadership in Afghanistan, particularly the government of Prime Minister Mohammad Musa Shafiq (1972-73), regarded the formation of SJM as a counterbalance to the growing influence of radical and antiestablishment movements in the country and tacitly supported it.

Afghan Millat, or the Social Democratic Party of Afghanistan, also was founded in the mid-1960s by a group of influential bureaucrats associated with the royal family. The party maintained a pro-establishment policy and postulated the political view of a greater Afghanistan that would include part of Iran and Pakistan, which were historically within the boundaries of the country in 1747. The party agitated for Pushtun nationalism and advocated nationalistic development policies, including a ban on imported goods.¹² Members of the party came from Pushtu-speaking communities. The party supported the cause of the Pushtun people residing in Pakistan for autonomy and expressed its solidarity to them by organizing annual rallies on the eve of Pushtunistan Day in Kabul and in other Afghan cities. It did not advocate revolutionary transformation of the country, and because of its narrow ethnic nationalism, the party could not mobilize other ethnic communities to its side.

Fracturing of the Body Politic

During the constitutional decade (1963-73) the country's economy was in a shambles, and living conditions for the overwhelming majority of the people deteriorated to the extent that approximately one million laborers were forced to migrate to Iran in search of employment. During this

period several governments were formed one after another, none of which could offer viable solutions to the political and economic crises threatening political stability. As polarization occurred within the government, radical political groups outside the government, each with different strategies, organized their rank and file to work for a social revolution. The ruling class headed by the royal family was divided on how to defuse social and political tensions and maintain their leadership. The conservatives agitated for the imposition of laws to suppress their opponents. Former Prime Minister Mohammad Daoud believed that the ruling class could maintain its domination by transforming the monarchy to a republic. To achieve this objective Daoud began organizing his supporters in the army and forged an alliance with the pro-Soviet Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). On 17 July 1973, Daoud supporters in the Afghan armed forces staged a military coup and declared Afghanistan a republic. President Daoud justified the overthrow of the monarchy on the grounds that

democracy or the government of the people was changed into anarchy and the constitutional monarchy to a despotic regime. All these forces struggled against one another and the people, and in pursuing the principle of divide and rule, fire was lighted throughout the country. So in this turbulent and dark atmosphere impregnated with misery, poverty, and misfortune they (the ruling class and official bureaucrats) were able to attain their material and political ends . . . the system has been overthrown and a new order which is the republican regime has been established which conforms to the true spirit of Islam.¹³

President Daoud believed that alliance with the PDPA would strengthen his power base. He appointed members of the PDPA to key positions in the government. During his first two years in office, President Daoud maintained close ties with the Soviet Union and its bloc. Relations with Pakistan remained hostile because Afghanistan's government continued to support the rights of self-determination for the Pushtun people of Pakistan. To consolidate his position President Daoud banned political parties and assemblies, clamped down on the free press, and began a systematic persecution of his political opponents. Members of the NDOA and its splintered organizations such as SAMA, Surkha, and Akhgar went underground, and key leaders of SJM, among them Burhanuddin Rabbani, head of *Jamiat-e-Islami* (Islamic Society), and Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, head of *Hizbi Islami* (Islamic Party), fled to Pakistan.¹⁴

President Daoud's association with the PDPA antagonized conservatives and liberals who regarded Daoud as a Soviet puppet. Daoud's pro-Soviet foreign policy was perceived as a threat to regional stability by Pakistan, Iran, and the United States. The government of Pakistan supported the Islamic fundamentalists and hoped to use them against

President Daoud to force him to abandon his anti-Pakistan policies. Iran's Shah Mohammad Pahlavi, encouraged by the United States, also pursued a similar policy toward Afghanistan with the firm intention of persuading the leadership in Kabul to cease its support for Baluch irredentists in Iran. To remedy the situation Daoud adopted a rapprochement policy toward his opponents at home and abroad with the hope that it would strengthen his position both nationally and internationally. To this end Daoud appointed conservative politicians, bureaucrats, and technocratic elites of the past regime to key positions in the bureaucracy, at the same time dismissing members of the PDPA from the cabinet. President Daoud also tried to normalize Afghanistan's relations with the two U.S. allies, Iran and Pakistan. According to documents seized by Iranian students from the U.S. embassy in Tehran, in 1980, U.S. policymakers characterized President Daoud as follows:

He is a strong nationalist who will seek aid wherever it is available. He claims to be a nonaligned neutral, but his determination to modernize Afghanistan resulted in a heavy reliance on the Soviet Union for assistance when he was prime minister. He listed U.S. military aid to Pakistan and inadequate U.S. support for Afghanistan as the precipitating factors in his turn to the U.S.S.R. He felt that there was little danger in relying on that country for economic and military supply. According to news accounts, Daoud once said he was happiest when he could light his American cigarettes with Soviet matches.¹⁵

To strengthen Afghanistan's relations with its Islamic neighbors, President Daoud visited several Middle Eastern countries including Iran. Intending to reduce Afghanistan's dependence on Soviet aid, Iran's shah promised President Daoud a huge amount of financial aid, substantially more than the amount received from the Soviet Union over the past 30 years. Afghanistan's relations with the United States also improved. Among the accomplishments of this relationship was the establishment of a joint commission to deal with the battle against narcotics, and Afghan support in the United Nations on the Guam and Puerto Rico issues backed by the United States. President Jimmy Carter also extended an invitation to President Daoud to visit the United States.¹⁶ The Soviet Union was dismayed with President Daoud's new pro-U.S. direction. During Daoud's official visit to Moscow on 12 April 1977, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev advised him to "get rid of all imperialist advisers from Afghanistan." Reportedly, President Daoud responded that the Afghans are their own masters.¹⁷

When Leonid Brezhnev failed to get President Daoud's support, Soviet leaders tried to get rid of him. They urged Daoud's opponents, the two factions of the PDPA, Khalq and Parcham, to resolve their differences, unite under a single leadership, and seize political power in the country. In the summer of 1977, Khalq and Parcham joined together to organize

a military coup. This threat persuaded President Daoud to arrest key leaders of the PDPA and to order the army to maintain a state of alert. However, on 27 April 1978, military officers loyal to the PDPA executed a successful coup, which resulted in the death of the president and his supporters and declared the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

POLITICS OF CHANGE AND RESISTANCE

The Birth of the Democratic Republic

On the evening of 27 April 1978, PDPA leaders were released from Kabul prisons. The party's Central Committee met and established the Revolutionary Council to govern the country by means of decrees and regulations issued by the Central Committee. The council was comprised of 30 civilian and 5 army officers. Noor Mohammad Taraki, general secretary of the PDPA, was elected chairman of the Revolutionary Council and president of the country. Taraki justified the military coup, or the April "revolution," on the grounds that President Daoud's regime did not improve the lot of the working class and peasantry, and had sacrificed the national interest by establishing links with Western "imperialist" countries.¹⁸ To legitimize its action, the PDPA abrogated the 1977 constitution, and issued a decree depriving 23 members of the royal family from Afghan citizenship.¹⁹ It also issued a decree ordering the news media to communicate in the languages of tribes and national minorities in Afghanistan. The Ministry of Radio and Television and the Ministry of Information and Culture responded by henceforth broadcasting programs and issuing publications in the major minority languages: Uzbeki, Turkmani, Baluchi, and Nuristani languages.²⁰

To attract peasants and low-income workers, the new government introduced a number of reforms intended to improve the social and economic conditions of these social groups. Three decrees in particular would have had a far-reaching impact on people's lives if they had been implemented. Decree no. 6 was designed to break feudal practices by exempting peasants from payment of debts and interests to landowners. Decree no. 7 aimed to restrict the payment of *mahr* (dowry) and raise the marriage age to 16 for girls and 18 for boys. Decree no. 8 would have confiscated lands from rich landowners and redistributed them to poor peasants.²¹

In implementing the reforms, the party used coercive measures including arrest, torture, and execution of all critics. Opposition and rebellion against the regime started in isolated areas but soon spread throughout the country. Political and personal differences within the PDPA leadership further aggravated political instability. Leaders of the Parcham faction who believed in decelerating the reform process were dismissed from

top government posts and sent into diplomatic exile. As more and more Parchami bureaucrats left the government, the party's ability to effectively fight a growing opposition weakened. To maintain stability and strengthen unity, President Taraki decided to reconcile his differences with the Parcham faction and slow the process of change in the country. For this reason Taraki went to Moscow not only to discuss developments in Afghanistan with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev but also to consult with the Parcham leader, Babrak Karmal, about PDPA unity. During the meeting an agreement was reached to rehabilitate the Parchamis and remove Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin, who was considered responsible for the repressive measures that provoked revolts throughout the country.

Upon his return home President Taraki tried to force Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin to resign. Prime Minister Amin had full control of the army and the police and President Taraki was no match for him. The next day President Taraki and his followers plotted to ambush and assassinate him as soon as he entered the palace. Prime Minister Amin was informed in advance and went with his bodyguards to the palace. Taraki's followers fired upon Prime Minister Amin but missed. Prime Minister Amin went to the Ministry of Defense, took command of the army and ordered Taraki's death. On 16 September 1979, Amin convened a meeting of the Central Committee that elected him president of the country and general secretary of the PDPA. In order to consolidate his position and exonerate himself from the crimes committed by the ruling party, Amin dismissed and then executed key supporters of Taraki and blamed the dead president for the execution of approximately 12,000 political prisoners.²² To appease the public Amin publicly declared justice, legality, and security as the cornerstone of his government's developmental policies.

However, President Amin was in no position to maintain stability in the country because the ruling party was bitterly divided and opposition forces, particularly the Islamic fundamentalists supported by Pakistan and the United States, who provided military and financial support, were gaining strength day by day. This situation led Amin to consider normalizing relations with Pakistan and the United States in the hope that the two countries would cease their support to his opponents. Finally the Soviet Union, concerned that Afghanistan was slipping away from its sphere of influence, decided to intervene by deploying approximately 4,000 troops to Afghanistan on Christmas eve of 1979.²³

The Soviet Intervention

On 27 December 1979, Soviet armed forces launched a frontal assault on Kabul's presidential palace resulting in the death of President Amin and the coming to power of Babrak Karmal. In a public speech President Karmal praised the Soviet troops for liberating the Afghan people from Amin's

tyranny and oppression, and he called upon the people to support the new government. To attract public support, President Karmal issued an amnesty for all political prisoners and appointed a number of non-party individuals into high government posts. He also declared that the state would build new mosques and renovate the old ones. The design of the national flag was changed from all red (symbolizing revolution) to the traditional colors of black, red, and green as a sign of reconciliation with Islamicists and traditionalists and claimed that the new regime was based on the principle of national democracy. In foreign policy the regime adopted a conciliatory policy toward Iran and Pakistan and prepared to normalize relations with them.

The Soviets and the Afghan Resistance

The number of Soviet troops in Afghanistan numbered 50,000 by the first week of January 1980 and approximated 120,000 to 150,000 by 1986.²⁴ The Soviet occupation spurred Afghan nationalism and anti-Soviet sentiments throughout the country. President Karmal attempted to convince the public that the Soviets had been invited to Afghanistan to deter foreign aggression and would leave as soon as foreign aggression ceased within the country. The armed struggle against Soviet forces intensified in various parts of the country. Three types of resistance organizations emerged to fight the Soviet forces and the Babrak regime in Afghanistan: (1) revolutionary organizations, (2) nationalist organizations, and (3) Islamic parties.

The revolutionaries are composed of splintered organizations of the NDOA. They are SAMA, Surkha, Paykar, Sawo, Akhgar, and several others. Although they have no regular military bases, they are active throughout the country. The nationalists are a relatively small group within the resistance movement. Key leaders of the movement are in exile in Pakistan or in Western European countries. The Afghan Islamic parties are divided into two groups: the Iran-based Shiites organized among six major parties and the Pakistan-based Sunnis divided into seven parties.

The Iran-based Islamic parties are loyal to the leadership in Iran and have since been supported by the government of Iran. For a long time these parties supported the political views of Iran's religious establishment and mobilized Afghans around the political slogan "neither West nor East but Islam." They criticized the Pakistan-based Islamic parties as a Western ally. Most party leaders are clerics and landowners. There are several Afghan Islamic parties based in Iran, of which the six listed in table 2 are the principal ones.

Islamic parties based in Pakistan, like those in Iran, are differentiated by personal and tribal loyalties (see table 3). These parties have been supported by various Middle Eastern and Western European countries and the United States. They can be identified as either moderates or fundamen-

political power with the ruling party in Kabul. It also initiated dialogue with the opposition forces inside the country and issued a policy statement directing members of the ruling party whom to contact. The statement read as follows:

To contacting opponents who have got exhausted and for whom yesterday's slogans of the counter-revolutionary organizations are not interesting and who have realized the futility of the war. It is necessary to resolutely deal with the political forces who are in a position and are ready for compromise with people's power. It is also necessary to establish active contacts with the silent personalities of the past regime and with the Islamic parties who intend to follow an independent line. At the present stage, the establishment of a government of national reconciliation is possible with participation of the above groups.³¹

In late 1987, the Kabul government formed a national reconciliation committee comprised of veteran bureaucrats of Mohammad Zahir's pre-1973 rule and some members of King Zahir's family.³² It also called upon the ex-king then and now residing in Italy, to play a role in the reconciliation process in order to end Afghanistan's civil war. Zahir, who had the support of some Pushtun tribes but lacked widespread popular support, stated that "he would be willing to return to Kabul—but only under the right conditions,"³³ such as international guarantees for his safety and the assurance of political stability in the country.

To further expand its power base, the Kabul regime also permitted the formation of independent civic and political organizations that supported government policies of national reconciliation. *The Central Asian Newsletter* reported that several new parties had been created in Kabul, all containing at least the 4,000-member minimum required to be designated as a party. The Revolutionary Organization of Workers of Afghanistan, with the popular acronym SAZA, was the most prominent among them. Its leader is Bashir Baghlani. This party has approximately 80,000 members, the majority of them Persian speakers, and is actively recruiting new membership. Taza Khan, a Pushtun from Khost, leads the smaller organization of Avant Garde Workers of Afghanistan (popular acronym SPAZA), with approximately 4,000 members.³⁴

In order to draw the people to its side, the Kabul government revoked some of the earlier reforms and amended land-reform bills so that feudal landowners cooperating with the government could keep their land and properties. The government succeeded in co-opting some landowners and leaders of some of the independent resistance groups by offering them weapons and money and granting local autonomy. As a result of this policy, Sayed Mansur, chieftain of the Ismaili sect of Kayhan district, Baghlan province, participated in this new government of national reconciliation.

He organized Ismailis in Kayhan and called upon Ismailis of Shiber district, Bamiyan province, to settle in Kayhan where they would be given land and property. The Kabul government has provided military equipment such as automatic machine guns, artillery, tanks, and technical personnel to the Ismailis. Mansur's son Jaffar, 25, was appointed governor of Baghlan province and was also made a full general in the army, in command of 13,000 troops and militia. Khair Mohammad of the Alyzai tribe in Herat, was given 20 tanks, 100 four-wheel-drive vehicles, and a large amount of weaponry and food in return for keeping a tight control of the 80 villages in his area.³⁵ Although Karim Aga Khan, the religious leader of the Ismaili people, issued directives to his followers in Afghanistan urging them toward unity and neutrality in the conflict, Ismailis have been forced to take sides and support either the government or the resistance groups.

To appeal to the masses, the ruling PDPA held its Second Party Congress from 27 to 28 June 1990 and decided to change its name from the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan to *Hizbi Watan* (Party of the Homeland). The party also renamed its politburo the Executive Committee, and the Central Committee became the Central Council.³⁶ With these changes the ruling party had two objectives: to break completely from the party's past and to attract the support of nationalists and liberals. In order to expedite the process of national reconciliation, President Najibullah promised that if a national election was held, he would transfer some of the state powers, for example, control of the national media and part of the military to an interim commission.

The Politics of Building an Islamic State. Since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in December 1979, the Islamic parties, collectively known as Mujahidin, have opposed Soviet occupation and its client regime in Kabul. They fought to expel the Soviets from the country and establish a theocratic state based on Islamic teachings, using religion as a rallying call to unite people in their fight against the Soviet occupation forces and the puppet government in Kabul. Pakistan's government supported these Islamic parties at the expense of secular and nationalist forces within the resistance movement in Afghanistan, and this resulted in the assassination of prominent personalities in these groups. They included Bahaouddin Majrooh, head of the Afghanistan Information Center in Peshawar, on 11 February 1988; Qayyum Kalakani, leader of SAMA organization and head of the National United Front of Afghanistan (NUFA), on 27 January 1990 in Peshawar;³⁷ and Saadat Shagiwal, a member of the leadership council of the Afghan Millat, in March 1990.³⁸ Many others were harassed and forced to choose exile in Europe and North America.

When the Soviet troop withdrawal was completed on 15 February 1989, the Pakistan-based Islamic parties, pressured by Pakistan and the United States, agreed to convene a *shura* (council) for the purposes of forming an interim government in opposition to the continued Soviet-backed government in Kabul. The council, which was comprised of delegates selected by seven Pakistan-based Islamic parties, rejected the Iran-based Shiite organization's demand for 20 percent of the seats in the *shura*.³⁹ Iranian groups refused to participate in the *shura*. The Pakistan-based Islamic parties convened the *shura* on their own and established a government in exile. This Afghan Interim Government (AIG) has been recognized only by a few Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Bahrain, and Malaysia.

In March 1989, Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the United States encouraged the AIG to launch a major offensive on the city of Jalalabad near the Pakistan border. The prime objective of such a coordinated frontal assault by the combined forces of Mujahidin was to seize territory in Afghanistan in which to establish a base inside the country for the purpose of gaining the recognition of legitimacy by countries supportive of the resistance struggle. Although the AIG failed and suffered tremendous casualties in the process, it continues to fight the regime in Kabul and to oppose its policies of national reconciliation. The AIG rejects any dialogue with the Kabul government and insists on the establishment of an Afghanistan Islamic state. It did not heed the repeated calls of the Iran-based Shiite organizations calling for their participation in the AIG. Thus, in June 1990 the Iran-based Islamic parties united and formed an alliance called *Hizbi Wahdat-e-Islami* (Islamic Unity Party, IUP). In mid-July 1990, the IUP submitted another proposal to the AIG to discuss issues concerning the future of Afghanistan. The talks failed because the two sides could not agree on an election formula and the conditions of IUP's participation in the AIG.⁴⁰

The AIG has not yet succeeded in establishing hegemony over the other resistance parties in Afghanistan. To succeed in this objective, the AIG has no other option but to accommodate the interests of the nationalists, liberals, and progressive organizations as well as grant the demand of the Shiite parties for a fair representation in the AIG cabinet. Such a concession would not only unite the resistance forces but also strengthen their position in fighting the regime in Kabul. If the AIG fails to establish domination over the resistance movements and to gain international recognition, the leaders of the moderate groups, Mujaddadi, Sayaf, and Gaillani, might be compelled to compromise with the Kabul regime for the formation of a provisional government. Former King Zahir, who is favored by both the Kabul regime and the moderate Islamic groups, could then play an active role in the process of national reconciliation as head of the provisional government.

External Dimensions

External forces remain very important for Afghanistan's future. Its neighbors, Iran and Pakistan have a particular interest in the future development of the country. They do not want Afghanistan to be a threat to their own security. The superpowers have similar intentions and expressed this by supporting their respective clients as they fight for dominance.

The Role of Iran and Pakistan. Approximately 2.4 million refugees have settled in various towns and cities in Iran since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan began in December 1979.⁴¹ The government of Iran provided limited support to the refugees and supplied arms to the pro-Iranian Shiite organizations in Afghanistan with the hope of expanding its influence in Afghan politics. Later the Iranian leadership was dismayed by how little its Afghan Shiite organizations had achieved and decided to encourage new parties based on the model of Iran's Revolutionary Guard and Hizbullah. Organizations such as *Sepa-e-Pasdaran* (Revolutionary Guard) and *Hizbullah* (Party of God) were created in Afghanistan and provided with military and technical assistance.⁴² The Iranian leadership also sent special missions to Afghanistan to work and organize people in the Shiite communities and to spread the doctrines of the Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic Revolution.

From December 1979 to late 1986, the Iranian leaders maintained that the Soviets must withdraw their troops unconditionally from Afghanistan, and they refused to participate in the UN-sponsored peace talks between Islamabad and Kabul on the grounds that the Mujahidin were excluded from the meeting. Then, in 1987 Iran proposed a meeting of Pakistan, Iran, and the Soviet Union with the Mujahidin. Since the regime in Kabul was not included in these talks, the proposal did not receive serious attention by Pakistan and the Mujahidin. Iran's policy toward Afghanistan underwent a slight change in the summer of 1987 when Iran initiated a rapprochement with the Soviet Union. President Hashemi Rafsanjani met Soviet leaders in Moscow and supported their intention to withdraw, stating "if you have resolved to pull out of Afghanistan we are prepared to assist you, so that after your departure there will be no U.S. domination in Afghanistan."⁴³ This, however, soured Iran's relations with the Afghan resistance organizations in Pakistan. Although Iran improved its relations with the Soviet Union, it continued to publicly condemn the Soviet Union for occupying Afghanistan.

After the Soviet troop withdrawal, the Iranian leadership continued supporting the Iran-based Afghan Shiite organizations and encouraged Pakistan to use its influence on the resistance groups in Pakistan so as to assure fair representation of the Iran-based Shiite organizations in the shura,

talists. The moderates led by Mujaddadi, Sayaf, and Gaillani supported the return of King Zahir and a national election to be held after the Soviets withdrew. The fundamentalists led by Rabbani, Hikmatyar, Khalis, and Mohammadi rejected national reconciliation, opposed the return of King Zahir, and called for the establishment of an Islamic state.

During the nine-year war between the Soviet-backed government and the opposition, the Pakistan-based Islamic parties could not resolve their ideological, political, and personal differences. The power struggle among them continued and was further intensified after the Soviets left the country in February 1989. Sayed Jamal, commander of Hizbi Islami of Hikmatyar, led an ambush of 30 commanders of the Jamiat-e-Islami in northern Afghanistan as they were returning to base from strategy talks with Ahmad Shah Massud. Five of the commanders were brought back to the Hizbi Islami base and executed, as ordered from commanders' bases in Peshawar.²⁵ A few months later the commander of Jamiat-e-Islami, Ahmad Shah Massud, retaliated by capturing Sayed Jamal and his associates. He sentenced them to death for murdering his men and executed them on 23 December 1989.²⁶

Despite the often intense internecine warfare among the Afghan parties, the Mujahidin still succeeded in inflicting heavy casualties on the Soviet military during their nine-year occupation of Afghanistan, including 13,310 dead and 35,478 injured.²⁷ Facing growing public disenchantment at home and opposition in the international arena, the USSR was forced to find a political solution that would end Soviet involvement in Afghanistan.

Negotiating a Way Out of Afghanistan

After its occupation of Afghanistan, the Soviet leadership maintained that the limited contingent of the Red Army would remain in Afghanistan until external intervention in the internal affairs of the country had ceased. In January 1980, the United Nations Security Council convened an emergency special session of the UN General Assembly and passed a resolution calling for the immediate, unconditional, and total withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country.²⁸

In April 1981, UN Secretary General Javier Pérez de Cuellar began to search for a peaceful settlement to end the Soviet occupation of the country. He appointed his personal representative Diego Cordovez to travel to Kabul, Tehran, and Islamabad to discuss with these countries' leaders the ways and means of ending the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Since the Afghan resistance forces collectively known as *Mujahidin* were excluded from the meeting, the government of Iran declined to participate in the negotiation. Seven rounds of "proximity talks" between Afghanistan and Pakistan were completed by March 1987. The first direct high-level diplomatic negotiations between Soviet and Pakistani officials held between

November 1986 and February 1987 resolved three important issues: (1) the U.S. and USSR guarantee to end outside interference after the Soviet withdrawal, (2) the means of monitoring the withdrawal, and (3) a plan for repatriating refugees.

Before withdrawing their troops from Afghanistan, Soviet leaders decided to install a new president in Afghanistan because Karmal was regarded as a Soviet puppet by critics inside and outside the country. As a result, Karmal resigned from both party and state offices, and Najibullah, head of the country's intelligence service department, *Khedamati Aitilaat-e-Dawlat* (KHAD), was elected PDPA party chair and president of the country. At the same time, KHAD was promoted to a ministry with the new title of *Wizarati Aitilaat-e-Dawlat* (WAD). President Najibullah tried to promote policies aimed at convincing people that the new government was sovereign and independent from foreign interference. In July 1987, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev met his Afghan counterpart in Tashkent and discussed details of the Soviet troop withdrawal from the country. Five months later the Soviet leadership announced plans to pull out its troops from Afghanistan within a 12-month period.²⁹ With the Soviet announcement, the Geneva talks, which had been going on since 1981, now focused on negotiating the terms of withdrawal.

The UN-sponsored Geneva accord, which was signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan, also was endorsed by the United States and the Soviet Union acting as international guarantors in Geneva on 14 April 1988.³⁰ Following the Geneva talks the Soviet Union declared that it would start withdrawing its troops beginning 15 May 1988 and would complete it within seven months. The last Soviet unit left on 15 February 1989.

POST-SOVIET WITHDRAWAL PERIOD: STRATEGIES OF NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION

Internal Dimensions

Afghanistan now faces the task of deciding how to resolve the differences that hampered the cohesiveness of the people's struggle to rebuild their infrastructure. Afghan leaders also need to determine how to incorporate the progressive elements of Islamic ideology into the art of building a modern society that will be acceptable to Islamic forces within and without the country.

The Politics of National Reconciliation. Prior to Soviet troop withdrawal the Kabul government attempted to expand its base of support in order to retain its position after Soviet troops left the country. It declared a policy of national reconciliation and invited opposition forces to share

which was organized to establish an Afghan Interim Government (AIG). When the Pakistan-based Islamic parties did not yield to these demands, Iran modified its position and declared that it supported a political solution to Afghanistan based on political negotiations between the Mujahidin, the regime in Kabul, and non-party persons within the Kabul regime.⁴⁴

Pakistan also plays an important role in Afghan politics. It provides shelter for more than 3.1 million refugees in Pakistani cities, mainly in Peshawar and Quetta.⁴⁵ Since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the leadership in Pakistan has established its influence on the resistance movements and channeled military aid provided by the Western countries to the seven Islamic parties. Prior to the Soviet withdrawal and the signing of the Geneva accord, the leadership in Pakistan insisted that there must be a new government in Afghanistan.

The prime objective of Pakistan in Afghan politics is the establishment of a pro-Pakistan government in Kabul because such a government could provide Pakistan with a "strategic depth" in the event of a military confrontation with its neighbor, India. Furthermore, Pakistan regarded the seven Islamic parties to be the best candidates because they not only could protect Pakistan's national interests in Afghanistan but they would also recognize the Durand Line as an official border between the two countries. (The Durand Line which was drawn by the British government in 1893 divides the Pushtuns and Baluch people between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the Pushtun-dominated government of Afghanistan supported the rights to self-determination for the Pushtuns and Baluch residing on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line.)

The Role of the Superpowers. After its troop withdrawal in February 1989, the Soviet Union declared its support for the policies of President Najibullah with the establishment of a government of national reconciliation. It is estimated that the Soviet Union continues to provide more than \$300 million a month in military and other aid to the Kabul government.⁴⁶ The Soviet leadership rejected the demand of Pakistan and the United States calling for President Najibullah's resignation prior to any political negotiation regarding the future of Afghanistan, and the Soviets insisted that the ruling party must be part of any government established in Kabul. Before the signing of the Geneva accord, the United States did not insist on the establishment of a new government in Kabul because U.S. policymakers have maintained that the government of President Najibullah would collapse within a few days, weeks, or a month after the Soviets left the country. The United States proposed a negative symmetry (the mutual halting of military aid by the United States and the Soviet Union to their clients, the Afghan Interim Government [AIG] and the Kabul government respectively), but the proposal was rejected by the Soviets, who referred to the

Soviet-Afghan treaty of December 1978 and earlier treaties between the two countries.

Shortly after the Soviet withdrawal, the United States and Saudi Arabia agreed to provide \$715 million to the AIG in order to match Soviet assistance to the Kabul government.⁴⁷ Although the U.S. administration pledged to continue supporting the AIG, it was disappointed with the inability of the AIG in toppling Najibullah's government. This factor compelled the United States to reverse its earlier suggestion of negative symmetry, arguing that the Soviet Union had created a new imbalance by providing the regime in Kabul with modern military equipment since its troop withdrawal. The U.S. administration maintained that President Najibullah must resign before any political settlement is reached and a broad-based government be established in Kabul. The United States continued providing military aid to the AIG, but it did not extend official recognition to the AIG beyond appointing a special envoy Peter Tomsen to supervise, guide, and coordinate the AIG.⁴⁸

U.S. policy was further modified because of the failure of the AIG to establish a base inside the country. In March 1990 Secretary of State James A. Baker III, during his meeting with his Soviet counterpart, Eduard A. Shevardnadze, said that President Najibullah's ouster was no longer a condition for ending the conflict.⁴⁹ The United States, however, did not cease its political, financial, and military support to the AIG. As a token of goodwill for U.S. support during and after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the AIG supported the U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf war by sending 300 ground troops to join the U.S.-led coalition forces in the liberation of Kuwait.⁵⁰ When the Persian Gulf war ended, the U.S. administration reportedly considered shipping 7,000 tons of captured Iraqi weapons such as Soviet-made small arms, rocket launchers, artillery, and ammunition to the AIG in Pakistan.⁵¹

Since relations between the United States and the Soviet Union have greatly improved in recent years, continued close cooperation between them could help lead to the resolution of the armed conflict in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union does not support the establishment of a theocratic state in Afghanistan, fearing that such a state might foment trouble among the Muslim populations of Tadjikistan and Uzbekistan, Soviet republics bordering Afghanistan. Similarly, the United States does not support the establishment of a government in Afghanistan hostile to the United States and Afghanistan's neighboring countries. If the United States and the Soviet Union could agree on a compromise candidate to fill the presidential vacancy, an Afghan with no party affiliation who could reconcile the warring factions in Afghanistan as well as balance the interests of both superpowers—then, perhaps, the nine year-old civil war could be resolved.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES OF DEVELOPMENT

Since the post-World War II period, the ruling class in Afghanistan have failed to establish their hegemony over the civil society not only because they lacked a coherent political strategy for building a modern society but also they were unable to gain the active consent of the people. The ruling class relied on the army for maintaining stability and forged alliances with the superpowers to garner economic and political support. The subordinated social forces struggled for equality and social justice before the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and after they struggled to free their homeland from the foreign presence with the ultimate objective of toppling the Soviet-backed government in Kabul and of reasserting Afghan control over the future of the country's politics.

During the nine years of Soviet occupation both the Kabul regime and the AIG have failed to rally the public to their support because neither political party has succeeded in establishing an alliance with the various social forces and formulating a comprehensive democratic political strategy that represents the interests of all the diverse social classes in Afghanistan. The progressive and nationalist forces also are not in a position to provide leadership for the country. These unstable circumstances may well lead to two possible scenarios aimed at ending armed conflict in the country: establishing a coalition government and calling a national election.

Establishing a Coalition Government

Although the Pakistan-based Islamic parties succeeded in forming an Afghan Interim Government in exile soon after the Soviet troops left the country, the AIG failed to gain public support and diplomatic recognition from international communities. The inability of the AIG to topple the Kabul regime, on the one hand, and the failure of its leaders to resolve their ideological, political, and personal differences, on the other hand, compelled many field commanders inside Afghanistan to seek alternative solutions to the ongoing conflict in the country.

In May 1990, a group of nearly fifty commanders convened a meeting to discuss the formation of an alliance inside Afghanistan. Commanders like Ahmad Shah Massud, Abdul Haq, Jalaluddin Haqqani, and Amin Wardak maintained that they would refuse any political formulation by the AIG on the future of the country without their direct participation.⁵² A number of local commanders who enjoy popular support and are exhausted from the nine-year war have indicated they might strike a deal with the Kabul government and work toward establishing a coalition government. To achieve this objective, the two parties might form a joint committee whose immediate task would be to search for a non-party person

to serve as the head of the coalition government. In this coalition government the role of the ruling party in Kabul would be restricted to national defense and that of local commanders to the internal security and civil administrative affairs of the country. Such a government would be expected to pursue a decentralized administrative policy by involving tribal chiefs in local politics and keeping Afghanistan unaligned in its foreign policy orientation.

Calling a National Election

Any political formula to the crisis in Afghanistan that does not take public consensus into consideration is bound to collapse. A viable alternative for achieving a durable peace is to allow the people of Afghanistan to freely determine their future. Close cooperation by the two superpowers could expedite the peace process in the country. Since the fall of the republican regime in 1978, the Soviet Union's support of the Kabul regime and the United States backing of the AIG make the superpowers major players in resolving peace for Afghanistan. These two countries with the cooperation of Pakistan and Iran, which share borders with Afghanistan, would do well to consider the following policies:

- (1) Arms must stop being shipped to the regime in Kabul and the AIG in Pakistan;
- (2) The United States must use its influence to convince leaders in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to refrain from providing financial and military support to the AIG. Iran might cease its support to its Afghan client, the IUP, if it is assured that Saudi Arabia will not attempt to influence, politically and ideologically, the Afghan resistance;
- (3) The Kabul government and the AIG must be persuaded to observe a ceasefire. Although there is no guarantee that the warring factions would honor a ceasefire, the degree and intensity of the armed struggle will decline and diminish when both parties run out of military supplies;
- (4) The Kabul government and the AIG must be encouraged to work toward a political transition and participate in a national election held under the auspices of the United Nations;
- (5) The election should be held on the basis of direct-secret ballots in Afghanistan as well as in refugee camps in Iran and Pakistan;
- (6) Any individual or political party that wins the majority in the national election must be recognized by all other political groups as the legitimate government;
- (7) This new government must receive economic, technical, and military assistance in its efforts to organize and rebuild the country;
- (8) To maintain stability the new government must guarantee that a national-democratic constitution will be written based on a federal type

of government, granting provinces autonomy, allowing people to participate in the executive affairs of the province, and supporting the establishment of a multiparty system in the country.

Postwar Reconstruction

The superpowers could play an important role in assisting the popular government in the reconstruction of the war-torn country by providing economic and technical assistance. International assistance would enable the newly established government to deal with the problems of resettling internal and external refugees. In the process of repatriation of refugees and reconstruction of the country, priorities must be established. The war has destroyed most of the country's infrastructure. Prior to the establishment of the "democratic" regime in 1978, approximately 80 percent of the country's population was engaged in agricultural activities. Today the figure is estimated to be 23 percent. The war also claimed the lives of approximately 1 million people, forced an estimated 5.1 million people to seek refuge in the neighboring countries, and caused 24 percent of the rural population to seek shelter in urban areas and other government-controlled areas. For example, Kabul's population increased from 900,000 in 1979 to approximately 3 million by 1989. Most agricultural land and irrigation systems—canals, ditches, etc.—have been severely damaged or destroyed. In 1987 total agricultural production was estimated to be 53 percent of that in 1978.³³ Rehabilitation of the country's infrastructure is crucial to refugee resettlement. Although the government-sponsored land reform failed due to opposition by tribal chiefs and feudal landowners, the new government could provide an alternative by allocating funds to bring uncultivated and barren lands under cultivation and distributing them to landless and poor peasants. The late professor Louis Dupree, who spent a great deal of his time with Afghan refugees in Pakistan, formulated table 4 based on figures from the United Nations appeal in 1988 for aid necessary for Afghanistan's postwar repatriation and reconstruction.

The war has destroyed or damaged approximately 2,000 (59.9 percent) schools, 5,103 (33.3 percent) villages and towns, and 49 hospitals (60 percent) throughout the country.³⁴ The country needs professionals, experts, and international funds. A great number of Afghan professionals were killed during the nine-year war, and many others migrated to the West. Although a number of these people may return home to participate in the rebuilding of the country, there will be an urgent need for more experts and professionals.

To rebuild the country and maintain stability, a new government is obligated to create the necessary conditions for popular participation in the decision-making process within a federal system. Then, popular support of and participation by the people may succeed in resolving the

socioeconomic and political crises and enhancing stability in the country. If the struggle for power by various forces continues for much longer, it will undermine stability in the future. The new government that could arise as a result of such a free and internationally supervised election should embody the will as well as the support of the people and be sustainable.

NOTES

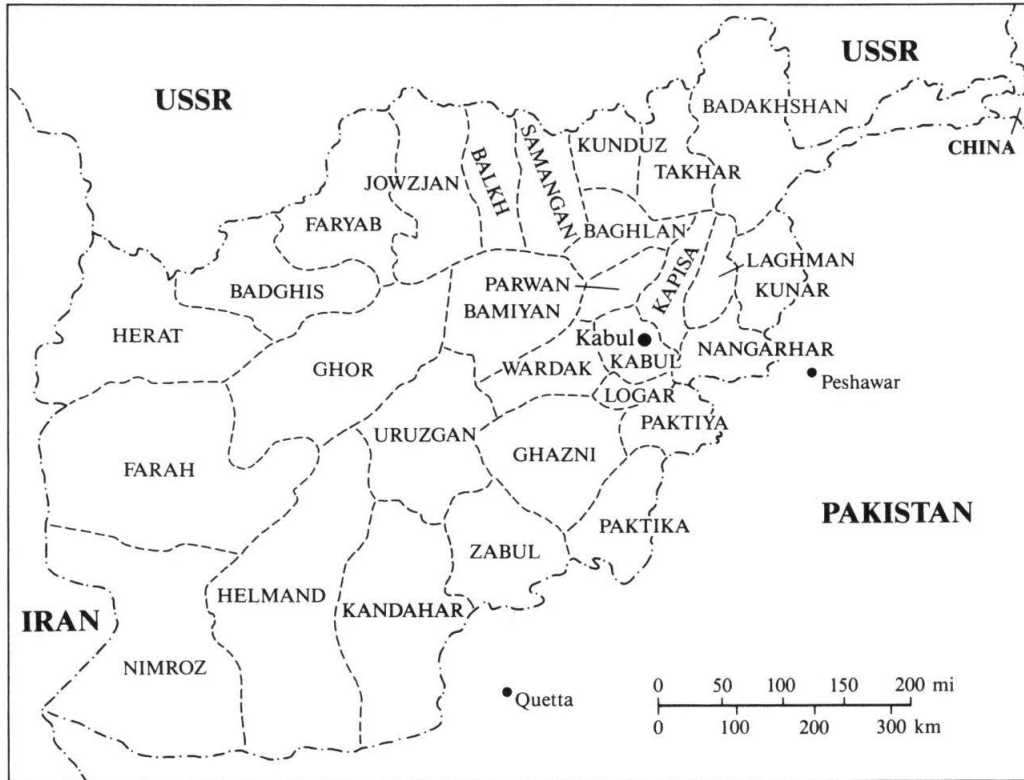
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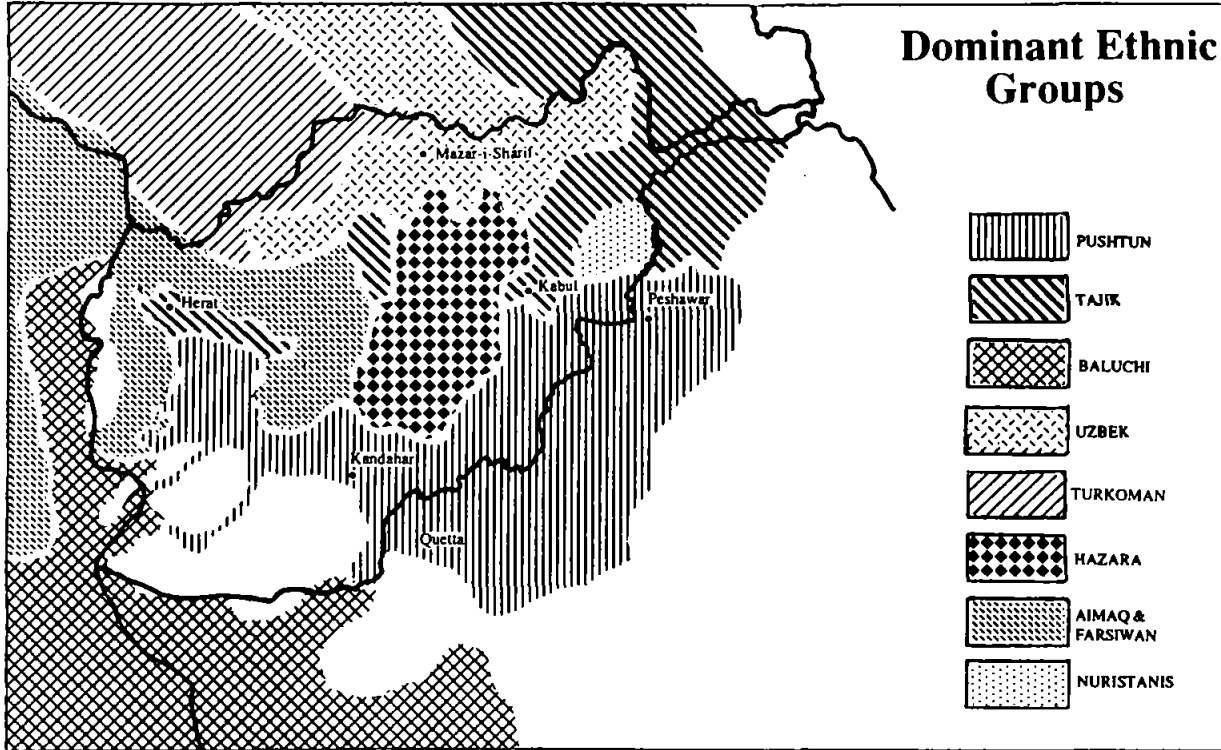
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hafizullah Emadi whose main academic interest is state in the international system is the author of *State, Revolution and Superpowers in Afghanistan* (Praeger, 1990). After receiving his doctoral degree from the University of Hawaii-Manoa in August 1988, Emadi joined the East-West Center's International Relations Program in March 1990. A published poet, he has also taught at Honolulu Community College and continues to write articles on state and politics of development in Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe for U.S. publications.



Map 1. Afghanistan's Provincial Boundaries



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Map 2. Afghanistan: Ethnolinguistic Mosaic

Source: Roseanne Klass, ed., *Afghanistan: The Great Game Revisited*, rev. ed., New York: Freedom House, 1990, p. 194.

Table 1. Ethnolinguistic Communities in Afghanistan

Ethnic Group	Language	Religious Sect	Estimated No.
Pushtuns	Pushtu	Sunni (a few Shiites)	6,500,000
Tadjik	Persian	Sunni (a few Shiites)	4,100,000
Hazara	Persian	Shia, Ismaili & some Sunni	1,780,000
Uzbek	Uzbeki	Sunni	1,100,000
Aimaq	Persian with some Turkic words	Sunni	800,000
Farsiwan	Persian	Shia	600,000
Brahui	Brahui (Darvidian)	Sunni	200,000
Turkmen	Turkmani	Sunni	200,000
Baluch	Baluchi	Sunni	100,000
Nuristani	Kafiri (Indo-European)	Sunni	100,000
Hindu	Speaks Persian and Pushtu (mother tongue is either Hindi or Punjabi)	Hinduism	20,000
Sikh	Speaks Persian and Pushtu (mother tongue is either Hindi or Punjabi)	Sikism	10,000
Pamiris	Indo-Iranian dialect	Sunni & Ismaili	1,000-5,000
Kohistani	Dardic dialect	Sunni	1,000-5,000
Gujar	Indo-European (Pushtu)	Sunni	1,000-5,000
Qirghiz	Turkic	Sunni	1,000-5,000
Jat	Indo-European (Pushtu)	Sunni	100-500
Arab	(Arabic and Persian)	Sunni	100-500
Mongol	Persian with some Mongol words	Sunni	100-500
Jews	All speak Persian and Pushtu (mother tongue is Hebrew)	Judaism	100-500

Source: Robert L. Canfield, "Ethnic, Regional and Sectarian Alignments in Afghanistan" in Ali Banuazizi and Myron Weiner, eds., *The State, Religion and Ethnic Politics: Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan*, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1986, p. 78; and Hassan Poladi, *The Hazaras*, Stockton, California: Mughal Publishing Company, 1989, p. 66.

Table 2. The Iran-based Afghan Shiite Parties

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1. **Shura-e-Itifaki Islami (Council of Islamic Union)**
Head: Sayed Ali Bihishti
Ideology: Supporting sovereignty for the Hazara communities
Composition: 4,000 staffers; 8,000 partisans
Main Front Commander: Sayed Jaglan, Wardak and Ghazni provinces
Bases of Operation: Bamiyan, Baghlan, and Balkh provinces

 2. **Harakat-e-Islami (Islamic Movement)**
Head: Sheikh Muhsini
Ideology: Supporting an Islamic republic
Composition: 200 staffers; 15,000 partisans
Main Front Commander: Mohammed Anwari, Bamiyan province
Bases of Operation: Faryab, Kabul, Jowzjan, Balkh, and Samangan provinces

 3. **Al-Nasr (Victory)**
Head: Mir Hoseyn Sadequi
Ideology: Supporting autonomy for the Hazara communities
Composition: 1,500 staffers; 4,000 partisans
Bases of Operation: Helmand, Ghor, Bamiyan, and Faryab provinces

 4. **Sepa-e-Pasdaran (Revolutionary Guard Corps)**
Head: Hojetoleslam Zahedi
Ideology: Shia, pro-Khomeini
Composition: 3,000 staffers; 8,000 partisans
Bases of Operation: Ghor, Helmand, Bamiyan, and Herat provinces

 5. **Hizbullah (Party of God)**
Head: Ali Zahedi
Ideology: pro-Khomeini
Composition: 1,500 staffers; 3,000 partisans
Main Front Commander: Qari Yak Dasta, Herat province
Bases of Operation: Ghor and Helmand provinces

 6. **Wahdat-e-Hashtgana (The Alliance of 8)**
 Composed of the Harakat-e-Islami, Nasr, Sepa-e-Pasdaran, Hizbullah, Dawat (Invitation), Nahzat (Progress), Nayro-e-Islam (Islamic Strength), and Jabha-e-Mutahid (United Front)
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Source: Adapted from Mark Urban, *War in Afghanistan*, London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 2nd ed., 1990, pp. 330-332; Grant M. Farr, "The Rise and Fall of an Indigenous Resistance Group: The Shura of the Hazarajat," *Afghanistan Studies Journal*, Premier Issue, Spring 1988, pp. 49-60; *Jaraga* (Urgani Tiyuriki Etihadi Marksistha-e-Afghanistan, or Theoretical Organ of the Union of Marxist-Leninists of Afghanistan), September, 1985, pp. 7-8.

Table 3. The Pakistan-based Islamic Parties

1. Jamiat-e-Islami (Islamic Society)**Head:** Burhanuddin Rabbani**Ideology:** Islamic Fundamentalist**Composition:** 5,000 staffers; 30,000 partisans**Main Front Commanders:** Ahmad shah Massud, Panjsher valley; Ismael Khan, Herat, Farah and Badghis provinces; Zabiullah Khan (killed, 1984), Balkh and Samangan provinces**2. Hizbi Islami (Islamic Party)****Head:** Gulbuddin Hikmatyar**Ideology:** Islamic Fundamentalist**Composition:** 2,500 staffers; 20,000 partisans**Main Front Commanders:** Farid, Kapisa and Parwan provinces; Mahmood, Nangarhar province (switched loyalty to Hizbi Islami led by Khalis, 1986); Abdul Ghayour, Baghlan province; Laghman commander unnamed**3. Hizbi Islami (Islamic Party); Offshoot of Hikmatyar's Hizbi Islami****Head:** Mohammad Yunus Khalis**Ideology:** Islamic Fundamentalist**Composition** 2,500 staffers; 17,000 partisans**Main Front Commanders:** Jalaluddin Haqqani, Paktiya province; Abdul Haq, Kabul province; Abdul Qadir, Nangarhar province; Qari Samad (killed, 1985), Logar province; Mullah Malang, Kandahar province**4. Mahazi Melli-e-Islami (National Islamic Front)****Head:** Sayed Ahmad Gaillani**Ideology:** Conservative, pro-Pushtun establishment**Composition:** 2,500 staffers; 18,000 partisans**Main Front Commanders:** Amin Wardak, Wardak province (switched loyalty to Hizbi Islami led by Khalis, 1988); Abdul Latif, Kandahar province; Rahmatullah Safi, Paktiya province; Zaman, Nangarhar province**5. Harakati Enqilabi Islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement)****Head:** Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi**Ideology:** Conservative, pro-establishment**Composition:** 2,000 staffers; 20,000 partisans**Main Front Commanders:** Sayed Murtaza, Logar province; Mohammad Shah, Farah province; Shafiullah (killed, 1985), Koh-e-Safi district; Qari Taj Mohammad, Ghazni province; Mohammad Nasim Akhundzada, Helmand province

Table 3. (continued)

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- 6. Ittehad Islami-e-Mujahidin-e-Afghanistan (Islamic Unity of Afghan Mujahidin)**
Head: Abdur Rabb Rasoul Sayaf
Ideology: Wahabi, conservative
Composition: 900 staffers; 4,000 partisans
Main Front Commanders: Abdul Hay, Kandahar province; commanders of Kabul and Paktiya provinces unnamed
- 7. Jabha-e-Milli-e-Nijat (National Liberation Front)**
Head: Sebghatullah Mujaddadi
Ideology: Monarchist, pro-Pushtun establishment
Composition: 1,500 staffers; 3,500 partisans
Main Front Commanders: Mohammad Zarin, Kunar province; Abdul Bashir, Helmand province
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Source: Adapted from Mark Urban. *War in Afghanistan*. New York: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 2nd ed., 1990, pp. 328-330; U.S. *Department of State Bulletin*, March, 1988, p. 8.

Table 4. Estimated Fund for Postwar Repatriation and Reconstruction, 1989-1990

Projects	Economic Aid (in US\$ million)
<i>Repatriation of refugees</i>	
Health services	80.0
Transportation	169.4
Water supply	3.0
Household goods	5.0
Shelter	22.0
Agricultural inputs	4.8
Administrative expenses	13.2
<i>Food aid</i>	
Repatriation refugees—internally displaced	239.5
Vulnerable groups	6.1
School children	6.3
Food-for-work program	80.0
Agency operation support	3.5
<i>Agriculture and irrigation</i>	
Agriculture inputs	164.5
Agriculture	56.8
Irrigation	53.1
Rural development	58.0
<i>Social development</i>	
Public health	37.2
Drugs and medicines	19.0
Water supply	17.7
Education	50.0
Clearance of mines	9.0
<i>Communications, industry, and power</i>	
Transport-logistics	42.4
Communications	16.7
Industry	40.3
Power	29.9
<i>Administration and management</i>	
Planning	6.0
Project-formulation and monitoring	1.5
Management	0.5
Monuments-culture survey	2.7
Total	1,166.1

Note: The author of the above table estimated economic aid figures based on his belief that a political settlement would be possible and refugees would be allowed to return to Afghanistan in 1989-1990. Although this did not occur, these same figures can still reflect the projections for 1992-93, if the situation stabilizes and allows for the repatriation of refugees.

Source: Louis Dupree, "Post-Withdrawal Afghanistan: Light at the End of the Tunnel" in Amin Saikal and William Maley, eds., *The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 49.

