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THESIS

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE REGIME-STABILIZATION EFFORTS BY THE SOVIET UNION AND THE U.S.-LED COALITION IN AFGHANISTAN

by

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December 2018

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In December 1979, the 40th Russian Army crossed the Amu River in support of the pro-communist regime in Afghanistan, but after a decade of war and stabilization efforts, Afghanistan nose-dived into instability. Ultimately, the Soviet Union withdrew, leaving behind a country facing a civil war. In 2001, a U.S.-led coalition of more than 40 countries entered Afghanistan and instated a liberal political regime as a stabilization measure. Yet, Afghanistan is still far from stability and peace. The thesis asks: How do the regime/state stabilization efforts of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan compare? Acknowledging that the efforts of the two great powers differ in magnitude and duration, as well as in their ideological impetus, this thesis offers a comparative case study of the regime/state stabilization efforts of both eras. Specifically, it compares the building of security forces, the development of institutions, and the development of the economy and infrastructure. Although prior research has examined particular aspects of the Soviet and U.S.-led stabilization efforts in isolation, few sources offer a comparative analysis from a comprehensive view. This thesis contributes to closing that gap. Furthermore, the answer to the research question has implications not only for the stability of Afghanistan but also the regions of Central and South Asia.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE REGIME-STABILIZATION EFFORTS BY THE SOVIET UNION AND THE U.S.-LED COALITION IN AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT

In December 1979, the 40th Russian Army crossed the Amu River in support of the pro-communist regime in Afghanistan, but after a decade of war and stabilization efforts, Afghanistan nose-dived into instability. Ultimately, the Soviet Union withdrew, leaving behind a country facing a civil war. In 2001, a U.S.-led coalition of more than 40 countries entered Afghanistan and instated a liberal political regime as a stabilization measure. Yet, Afghanistan is still far from stability and peace. The thesis asks: How do the regime/state stabilization efforts of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan compare? Acknowledging that the efforts of the two great powers differ in magnitude and duration, as well as in their ideological impetus, this thesis offers a comparative case study of the regime/state stabilization efforts of both eras. Specifically, it compares the building of security forces, the development of institutions, and the development of the economy and infrastructure. Although prior research has examined particular aspects of the Soviet and U.S.-led stabilization efforts in isolation, few sources offer a comparative analysis from a comprehensive view. This thesis contributes to closing that gap. Furthermore, the answer to the research question has implications not only for the stability of Afghanistan but also the regions of Central and South Asia.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABP	Afghan Border Police
ALP	Afghan Local Police
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANAP	Afghan National Auxiliary Police
ANCOP	Afghan National Civil Order Police
ANP	Afghan National Police
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APRP	Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program
ASF	Afghan Security Forces
ATA	Afghan Transitional Administration
AWOL	Absent Without Leave
AUP	Afghan Uniformed Police
CERP	Commander's Emergency Response Program
CHLC	Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells
CM	Capability Milestone
CSTC-A	Combined Security and Transition Command
DRA	Democratic Republic of Afghanistan
ETTs	Embedded Training Teams
FDD	Focused District Development
IJC	ISAF Joint Command
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
KhAD	Khidmat-e-Aetla'at-e-Dawlati
KMTC	Kabul Military Training Center
KPA	Kabul Police Academy
MoD	Ministry of Defense
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NFF	National Fatherland Front
NTM-A	NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan
MoI	Ministry of Interior
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom

OSC	Office of the Security Cooperation
PDPA	Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PMTs	Police Mentoring Teams
PRTs	Provincial Reconstruction Teams
SFA	Security Force Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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I. INTRODUCTION

> We meet here during a crucial period in the history of our nation, and of the civilized world. Part of that history was written by others; the rest will be written by us.
>
> George W. Bush.[1]

> I had a very bad relationship with an officer in my platoon. I hated him so much that I told him 'If I ever get out of the Army I'll kill him.' And he said, 'Well, I am going to send you to a place from which you will never return.'
>
> Afganets[2]

In December 1979, a limited contingent of the 40th Russian Army crossed the river Amu and entered Afghanistan to support the pro-communist regime and sympathizers in the country.[3] This invasion of Afghanistan, which took the world by surprise, continued as a bloody experience for a decade and finally ended in chaos both for the Soviet Union and for Afghanistan.

More than a decade later, Afghanistan was invaded again, this time by the United States with a coalition of more than 40 countries. This later invasion was a byproduct of the tragic incidents of 9/11, in which 3000-plus innocent civilians were killed by terrorists with ties to Afghanistan, which had become a chaotic backwater and a safe haven for the terrorist groups since the Soviet's defeat and withdrawal.[4]

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1 Francis Fukuyama, *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 1.

2 Mark Galeotti, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Union's Last War* (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1995), 34.

3 Lester W. Grau and Michael A. Gress, trans., *The Afghan War: How a Super Power Fought and Lost* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 1.

4 Miles Kahler, "State Building after Afghanistan and Iraq," in *The Dilemmas of State Building: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*, eds. Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk (New York: Routledge, 2009), 287.

During both periods of invasion of Afghanistan, exhaustive efforts were initiated to stabilize the regimes of the time: The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion and the Northern Alliance (and coalition) in the post-9/11 phase. The stabilization efforts focused on the development of institutions like building Afghanistan's security forces to include the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police (known as Sarandoy in the Soviet era),[5] political development, economic and infrastructural development and above all pacification efforts and national reconciliation. The first effort by the Soviet Union met its Waterloo by 1989, while the second effort by the U.S.-led coalition is still far from victory, despite the vast expenditures of blood, treasure, and time.

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis analyzes the regime-stabilization efforts of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan and asks: How do the regime-stabilization efforts of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan compare?

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Afghanistan has been in turmoil for decades. The ouster of King Zahir Shah by Muhammad Daoud Khan[6] in 1973 and the later invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union slid the country into a chaos that continues under the current president, Ashraf Ghani. The latest invasion of Afghanistan by a U.S.-led coalition of more than 40 countries has almost reached a dead end, as little progress is being made toward an enduring peace. The Taliban-led insurgency is gaining momentum, and the influence and control of the Afghan government is not encouraging.

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5 Antonio Giustozzi, *War, Politics and Society in Afghanistan: 1978–1992* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2000), 67.

6 Rodrick Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan 1979–89* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2011), 28–31.

The Soviet war effort focused primarily on strengthening the pro-communist government of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA[7]), which had already lost its popularity among the masses. It was on the decline after unpopular policies[8] and infighting between its *Parcham* and *Khalq* factions.[9] The rebellion and revolt against the PDPA government had already started[10] when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979, presumably to support the pro-communist government of President Nur Muhammad Taraki and reassert their control over Kabul.[11] The Soviets were also wary of the reputed inclination of Hafiz Ullah Amin toward the United States. The Soviet Union also looked at Hafiz Ullah Amin with suspicion because he had killed the strong pro-communist President Nur Muhammad Taraki and had taken over power in October 1979.[12] By contrast, in case of the U.S.-led coalition, Afghanistan was invaded with an aim to track the 9/11 terrorists belonging to al-Qaeda who were using Afghanistan as a safe haven under the patronage of the Taliban regime. It was a reactive act and not a one-sided aggression like that of the Soviet invasion of 1979, although many question its viability and necessity.

This thesis is undertaken to ascertain whether, on a comparable battleground, the stabilization strategies of the two rival superpowers are also identical. These findings might shed light on whether the outcome for Afghanistan and the region are likely to be the same. This thesis examines the experiences of both periods of Afghan history and

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7 Thomas Barfield, *Afghanistan: A Cultural and Political History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010). PDPA was established on January 1, 1965, as a political party at the time when King Zahir Shah was ruling Afghanistan. In 1967, it split into two factions named The Khalq (the people) and The Parcham (the flag). With time, both factions developed serious differences with each other based on the ethnic composition of both groups. In 1973, the party helped Prime Minister Muhammad Daoud Khan in overthrowing King Zahir Shah, who then took over as the president of the country. However, he developed friction with the PDPA and started firing its members from government offices. This antagonized the Soviets as the PDPA was more of a Marxist party and affiliated with the Soviet Union. The friction finally led to the Saur revolution in which PDPA seized power by toppling the government of Muhammad Daoud Khan and a takeover by Nur Muhammad Taraki as the president of Afghanistan. Later, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979 to protect the government of President Nur Muhammad Taraki from the suspected pro-American faction of PDPA led by Hafiz Ullah Amin.

8 Giustozzi, 10–19.

9 Braithwaite, 30–31.

10 Braithwaite, 40–57.

11 Braithwaite, 74.

12 Braithwaite, 71–74.

focuses on similarities and differences to effectively draw pertinent lessons. The comparative analysis of both stabilization endeavors will assist in determining the future path of the current invasion of Afghanistan.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

A large literature exists on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the response by the United States and its allies during the Cold-War era, the Soviet strategy and the U.S. counter-strategy, and the Mujahideen struggle against the Soviet and PDPA regime.[13] Similarly, literature is available on the post-9/11 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, covering the successes and failures in the War on Terror, the fall of the Taliban, the formation of the Karzai regime, the subsequent anti-Taliban regimes or Afghan political governments, and the stabilization efforts by the U.S.-led coalition of more than 40 countries. Although literature specific to stabilization efforts by the Soviet and the U.S.-led coalition in respective eras is available, much less literature exists, particularly specific to the Soviet stabilization efforts in Afghanistan. The literature of the Cold-War era mostly covers U.S. and allied counter-measures against the Soviet Union, famously branded "Afghan jihad" or "Charlie Wilson's war."[14]

The literature on stabilization efforts in general is available and focuses on different aspects like regime stabilization, state stabilization, and nation building under the overall ambit of peacekeeping operations. Additionally, the comparative analysis of the stabilization efforts of the two eras (the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979–1989 and the current U.S.-led coalition's invasion of Afghanistan in 2001–2014, i.e., until the election of President Ashraf Ghani) has seldom been conducted as a unified effort, although comparative analysis of some of the factors has been carried out in isolation.[15]

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13 Giustozzi, *War, Politics and Society in Afghanistan: 1978–1992;* Braithwaite, *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan 1979–89;* Mark Galeotti, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Union's Last War* (London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1995).

14 George Crile, *Charlie Wilson's War* (New York: Grove Press, 2003)

15 Comparison of efforts to build security forces in Afghanistan has been carried out by Olga Oliker in her book *Building Afghanistan Security Forces in Wartime*. The book was published in 2011 by RAND Corporation and focuses only on comparison of the development of security forces in the two eras and does not include other aspects pertaining to state or regime stabilization.

1. The Theoretical Context of Stabilization

As a theoretical framework, stabilization efforts include regime stabilization, state stabilization, nation building, and aspects like Third World state building and Western state building.[16] This area of study also includes domestic stabilization efforts and foreign directed/driven stabilization measures. These terminologies vary slightly in scope and definition but overlap each other considerably.

Stability operations fall under the overall ambit of peacebuilding operations.[17] They include: 1) shaping the security environments for subsequent stability phases; 2) providing support to much needed governmental institutions; 3) building emergency infrastructure; and 4) and providing humanitarian assistance operations.[18] In 1992, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali categorized peace operations as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding operations.[19] The last category included stability operations like training of security personnel, monitoring elections, building or restructuring government institutions, and reconciling political factions. Many scholars, such as Francis Fukuyama, Simon Chesterman, James Fearon, David Laitin, Stephen Krasner, and Roland Paris, have argued in different ways that the aspect of building institutions for the transition from war to peace has been under emphasized in peacebuilding operations.[20] Fukuyama criticized the international community for their failure to address the important aspect of institution building in their peacebuilding measures in countries like Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo.[21] In the view of Simon Chesterman, this neglect in Bosnia and Kosovo resulted in the failure to transition from war to peace.[22]

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16 Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk, *The Dilemmas of Statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

17 Paris and Sisk, 5.

18 Paul K. Davis, *Dilemmas of Intervention: Social Science for Stabilization and Reconstruction* (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2011), xv.

19 Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace–A/47/277 S/24111–UN Documents: Gathering a Body of Global Agreements," http://www.un-documents.net/a47.277.htm.

20 Paris and Sisk, 8.

21 Paris and Sisk, 8.

22 Paris and Sisk, 9.

2. State Building: What It Is and What It Is Not

"State building" refers to building or constructing government institutions after an initial peacebuilding drive in countries that emerge from conflicts.[23] These conflicts may be internally or externally driven. Francis Fukuyama explains state building as "the creation of new government institutions and the strengthening of existing ones."[24] He argues that there is a lot of expertise about the transfer of resources across international borders but the actual state-building aspect comprises much more than that and is not well understood and executed by international actors.[25] In *Statebuilding: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century,* Fukuyama cites the example of the AIDS epidemic in Africa and contends that the antiretroviral drugs (required for curing the epidemic) can be made available to these countries by the international community. Nevertheless, he refers to the availability of antiretroviral drug as just one part of the problem related to the matter of resources. The other more pressing requirement is the availability and formation of state institutions to administer AIDS recovery programs.[26]

Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk do not consider state building to be synonymous to peacebuilding; however, it can be referred to as a subcomponent of peacebuilding operations. They argue that peacebuilding is the creation of an environment in which violence is subdued greatly for the subsequent components of long-lasting peace.[27] State building is fostered over the peace environments achieved in the initial phase and refers to constructing and strengthening governmental institutions.[28]

Lakhdar Brahimi, an eminent and highly regarded former UN diplomat, considers state building a main objective of any peace operation in a country witnessing a

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23 Paris and Sisk, 14.

24 Francis Fukuyama, *Statebuilding: Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (New York: Cornel University Press, 2004), ix.

25 Fukuyama, *Statebuilding*, ix.

26 Fukuyama, x.

27 Paris and Sisk, 14.

28 Paris and Sisk, 14.

conflict.[29] He illustrates a few key activities pertaining to state building as a main objective of the peace operation, including reintegration and national reconciliation, rule of law, and the electoral process.[30] He argues that institution and system building is in fact state building that should be the focus of the international community while maintaining peace in a country.[31]

According to UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, peace operations can be categorized as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and peacebuilding operations.[32] The last category includes stability operations like training security personnel, monitoring elections, building or restructuring government institutions, and reconciling political groups.

3. State Building vs. Nation Building

State building differs from nation building in many aspects. State building mostly refers to the development of concrete foundations of institutions, whereas nation building relates to the fostering of a population's national identity and cohesion.[33]

The terminology of nation building is extensively used in the United States more than in other Western countries, which advocate state building over nation building.[34] Fukuyama argues in his book *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq* that America's reference to nation building is similar to state building and evolving political institutions and advocating and sponsoring economic development. He further explains nation building to be a larger phenomenon encompassing state building coupled with economic development. The other Western powers, however, object to the use of the nation building terminology as they contend that a nation building effort by an outside

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29 Lakhdar Brahimi, "Statebuilding in Crisis and Post Conflict Countries," *7th Global Forum on Reinventing Government: Building Trust in Government* (June 2007) http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN026305.pdf

30 Brahimi, 4.

31 Brahimi, 5.

32 Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace–A/47/277 S/24111–UN Documents: Gathering a Body of Global Agreements," http://www.un-documents.net/a47.277.htm.

33 Paris and Sisk, 15.

34 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 3.

force is not an attainable objective.[35] They argue that nations evolve from inside, through an evolutionary process.

Most scholars consider case studies of Japan and Germany after World War II as the model for successful nation building because both turned into stable and prosperous democracies. Fukuyama, however, argues that scholars misunderstood the political developments in these countries.[36] He argues that the state institutions in these countries were very strong and even survived the influence of the outside powers. He considers the outside powers' contribution to the political development in these countries to be exaggerated out of proportion and believes that both countries had institutions that became weak due to war but never became nonexistent.[37]

For Jochen Hippler, "nation building" is an old term that rose and fell in the 1950s and 1960s and finally vanished in the 1970s.[38] He argues that the concept of nation building initially focused on the Westernization or modernization of Third World countries. He contends that "the term 'nation-building' is used today in a markedly vague and inconsistent manner."[39] In a way, he reaffirms Fukuyama's views that the term "nation building" is loosely used by Americans for state building.

The concept of nation building in the United States has been in discussion quite often. In another book about state and nation building, Fukuyama explains that for some conservatives nation building is a futile effort in international welfare.[40] However, the concept gets full endorsement from international financial institutions that regard it as a viable proposition if appropriate resources are at the disposal of the outside powers.[41] It is perceived that this endorsement comes as these institutions consider only the

35 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 3.

36 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 4.

37 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 4.

38 Jochen Hippler, "Violent Conflicts, Conflict Prevention and Nation-building–Terminology and Political Concepts," in *Nation-building: A Key Concept for Peaceful Conflict Transformation?* (London: Pluto Press, 2005), 3–14.

39 Hippler, 6.

40 Fukuyama, *State-Building*, 99.

41 Fukuyama, *State-Building*, 100.

reconstruction part of nation building, which is obviously easily achievable through these institutions.

Reconstruction and development are considered to be two main components of nation building.[42] For Fukuyama, reconstruction relates to the restoration of damaged countries and has been historically achieved by the outside powers.[43] Japan, Germany, and Italy can be termed as reconstruction efforts by the United States that proved successful. On the other hand, the development part, which relates to the creation of new institutions and the undertaking of economic development,[44] must be dealt with by the legitimate government of the country itself for long-lasting outcomes; although the implementation is very difficult, Afghanistan and Iraq under the U.S. and allied forces are relevant examples of development.[45]

Fukuyama argues that the development part can be dealt with by the country itself, i.e., be domestically driven, if the institutions are still intact to some degree as with post-World War II Japan and Germany.[46] Yet, in the case of failed states like Somalia and Afghanistan, the development phase of nation building could not be pursued by the countries themselves as these countries had witnessed widespread suffering over decades, and the state institutions had eroded to the point of being non-existent.[47]

4. State Building or State Stabilization vs. Regime Stabilization

Authors like Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolynec overlappingly use the terminology of regime stabilization with state building, apparently due to the Soviet efforts of investment in the regime of the PDPA. In their article "4-D Soviet Style: Defence, Development, Diplomacy and Disengagement in Afghanistan during the Soviet Period," the authors examine "Soviet regime stabilization efforts … related to Soviet

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42 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 4.

43 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 5, 7.

44 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 5.

45 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 7.

46 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 4.

47 Fukuyama, *Nation-Building*, 4.

statebuilding and social and economic development efforts."[48] The authors use the term "regime stabilization" for state stabilization and do not differentiate between the two terms.

D. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The primary goal of this thesis is to analyze how the current military and development campaign led by the United States and a coalition of more than 40 countries over 15 years compares with the Soviet Union's campaign of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. I hypothesize that the current regime/state stabilization efforts by the U.S.-led coalition are similar to the Soviet Union's regime stabilization efforts, although they differ in magnitude and duration. The comparative analysis will explain why Afghanistan is still unstable despite a military and development campaign led by the United States and a coalition of more than 40 countries for more than 15 years. The military gains achieved up to 2003 are on the reverse as the Taliban, who were once defeated by 2003, are again the ruling majority of Afghanistan directly or through many warlords. The Taliban, instead of perishing in oblivion, still pose a serious threat to the Afghan government.

E. RESEARCH DESIGN

This thesis uses a comparative case study approach comparing the current U.S.-led War on Terror in Afghanistan with the Soviet Union's invasion and occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. The thesis focuses only on the comparison of the regime/state stabilization efforts of both eras. The thesis examines the parallels and disconnects between the two efforts. The case studies of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition were chosen because of many similarities ranging from the terrain, environment, and time period to the problem areas being faced by both countries. While comparing the outcomes of the two case studies, the thesis keeps in view the differences in the obtaining environments at the time of the invasions and the ideological differences in both invasions.

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[48] Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolynec, "4-D Soviet Style: Defence, Development, Diplomacy and Disengagement in Afghanistan during the Soviet Period," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* (2010): 306–327. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13518041003799600

This thesis compares the two state and regime stabilization efforts in Afghanistan with a focus on the following four factors: 1) the building of security forces to include Army and Police, 2) political development, 3) institution development, and 4) economic and infrastructural development.

For the purpose of research, this thesis uses a variety of sources including scholarly journals, openly available policy papers, books, and open publications of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition.

F. THESIS OVERVIEW

This thesis is divided into four chapters. After the Introduction, Chapter II highlights the background of the Soviet Union's war in Afghanistan and examines the Soviet Union's regime stabilization efforts in Afghanistan. Chapter III details the background of post-9/11 Afghanistan covering the time period up to 2014 (i.e., the election of President Ashraf Ghani) and examines the U.S.-led coalition force's regime/state stabilization efforts. Finally, Chapter IV encompasses analysis and conclusion.

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II. SOVIET REGIME STABILIZATION EFFORTS IN AFGHANISTAN

The Soviets made great efforts to stabilize the Afghan regime of the time during their decade-long stay in Afghanistan. The Soviet war aims in Afghanistan focused primarily on strengthening the pro-communist government of the PDPA, which had already lost its popularity among the masses. The Soviets' regime stabilization in Afghanistan focused on building the Afghan security forces, including the Afghan National Army and the Ministry of Interior (MoI) Forces (known as "Sarandoy"[49]); political development, including pacification efforts and national reconciliation; and economic as well as infrastructural development.

The present chapter discusses Soviet regime stabilization efforts in Afghanistan in detail. Specifically, it finds that the extensive Soviet efforts in Afghanistan failed badly in an asymmetrical conflict. There are several reasons for this ultimate failure. First, although investment in the Afghan military was considerable both qualitatively and quantitatively, the Soviets organized the Afghan military along the lines of the Red Army—for better and worse—to counter the threats faced by the pro-communist PDPA. The Soviets also believed in the importance of the MoI forces, including the Afghan Police (Sarandoy), the Border Guard, and militia forces in addition to the notorious Afghan intelligence agency—the KhAD. This emphasis on overlapping domestic security agencies reflected a tried-and-true Soviet model of internal pacification superimposed uneasily on the Afghan situation, as evidenced by both the staggering rate of desertion from these forces and the suspicions of infiltration by the very insurgents these agencies were established to defeat. Indeed, the Soviets invested heavily in the stabilization and strengthening of the PDPA and *only* the PDPA—rather than broadening the political base of Afghanistan by abolishing the one-party system and introducing political pluralism.

The Soviet political efforts in Afghanistan meant bringing warring factions into the folds of the PDPA instead of recognizing them as a separate entity. This aspect

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[49] Giustozzi, 67.

created serious hurdles for the Soviets and contributed greatly to their failure to pacify the mujahedin groups fighting both the Soviets and their political affiliates, the PDPA government. Tellingly, the Soviets tried national reconciliation in the beginning but could not pursue it vigorously as they were focused more on political development to maintain the one party system. The Soviets also invested in economic development and nation building projects in Afghanistan to pacify the resistance movement by the mujahedin but could not achieve the desired results through the development strategy. This chapter details Moscow's ambitions for a "Sovietized" Afghanistan and provides the context for the frustration of these goals on the ground.

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND—RUSSIAN INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN

The bloodless coup of July 1973, resulting in the removal of King Zahir Shah, ushered in a new era of instability that would be considerably bloodier. During the coup, the pro-communist Mohammad Daoud overthrew the Afghan monarchy, which had ruled the country since 1929.[50] Mohammad Daoud had already enjoyed close ties with Russians during the 10 years of his premiership (from 1953 to 1963).[51] Daoud had received Russian support on economic issues in addition to close cooperation on the dispute with Pakistan over Pashtunistan.[52]

After the overthrow of the Afghan monarchy, Daoud took over as president rather than becoming the Shah like his predecessor had done.[53] Daoud ruled with an iron hand and imposed serious repressions on the parties and the students, curtailing their

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50 M. Hassan Kakar, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and the Afghan Response, 1979–1982* (California: University of California Press, 1995), 12.

51 Kakar, 7.

52 Kakar, 9. Since Pakistan's independence in 1947, there have been tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan over the adjoining international border known as Durand Line. The Durand Line has been recognized by the international community as Pak-Afghan border since 1947 but the Afghan government claimed the adjoining Pakistan Pashtun areas to be historically their part. Pakistan has always denied this claim. Afghanistan was the only country that did not accept Pakistan's independence in 1947 due to the border issues and Pashtun nationalism. The relations between the two countries remained strained in the past as Afghanistan has always used covert tactics to raise Pashtun nationalist issues. Attacks on Pakistan's embassy and consulates in Afghanistan in the past are well known.

53 Kakar, 12.

freedom.[54] Daoud arrested several political leaders and even executed five, which were the first political executions in more than 40 years.[55] Daoud also strengthened relations with the United States, the Shah of Iran, and the Saudis[56], which caused serious issues with the Russians, who were not happy with Daoud's leaning towards the West.[57] The Russians turned to the PDPA, headed by Nur Mohammad Taraki with Babrak Karmal as a member.[58] The PDPA staged a coup in April 1978 when Daoud's government arrested many leaders of the PDPA including Hafizullah Amin. The leaders were arrested after the PDPA's demonstrations following the killing of one of their leaders.[59] In the ensuing coup by the PDPA, Daoud was killed in Kabul—along with his family members—by military officers who were loyal to the PDPA leadership.[60] With the death of President Daoud, more than 200 years of Durrani Pashtuns' rule in Afghanistan (since 1747) ended. Nur Mohammad Taraki took over as Prime Minister of Afghanistan and appointed Babrak Karmal and Hafizullah Amin as his Deputy Prime Ministers.[61] The initial government consisted of both Khalq and Parcham factions.

Taraki could not establish a strong government, and he relied heavily on the Soviet Union for maintaining control over the country. The reliance on the Soviets meant provision of the military and financial support by the Soviets to the weak Taraki regime.[62] The government could not function smoothly and remained divided between the two factions of the PDPA. In July 1978, Taraki and Amin decided to get rid of

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54 Braithwaite, 31.

55 Braithwaite, 31.

56 Braithwaite, 32.

57 Braithwaite, 32.

58 Kakar, 14.

59 Kakar, 14. In 1977, there was a series of attacks resulting in deaths of scores of people in Kabul. In one such attack, a prominent PDPA leader, Mier Akbar Khybar, was killed. The PDPA blamed the government for the death of their leader and started protests. The government clamped down on the protests with arrests of the PDPA members, including Hafizullah Amin.

60 Kakar, 15.

61 Joseph J. Collins, *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan: A Study in the Use of Force in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1986), 54.

62 Collins, 55–61.

Babrak Karmal—a Parcham leader—and sent him to Czechoslovakia as an ambassador.[63] Subsequently, the PDPA government undertook a serious purge of the Parcham faction and killed thousands of their members and supporters. According to one estimate, at least 20,000 people were killed.[64] Ultimately, Babrak Karmal went into exile in Prague[65] rather than coming back to the country as ordered by Hafizullah Amin.[66]

The government issued various decrees that proved highly unpopular among the peasant class, the clergy, and the landowners in addition to the Parcham faction, which was already provoked. The decrees issued by the government and the purges resulted in mass rebellion and the rise of anti-government forces, which were mostly Islamic parties. The insurgency took a momentous turn after the massacre of Herat in which the rebels attacked the city amid the significant presence of Soviet advisors. In the ensuing battle for control of Herat, the local army also revolted and fought alongside the rebels.[67] According to Collins, around 50 Soviet advisors were brutally killed by the insurgents through assassination squads specifically formed for the task.[68] These squads searched for the Soviet advisors and beheaded those who were caught.[69]

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63 Collins, 55.

64 Collins, 55.

65 Hafizullah Amin was from the Khalq faction while Babrak Karmal was from the Parcham faction of the PDPA. The two factions developed strained relations over the year. In the power struggle for the control of the PDPA, Hafizullah Amin won the support of the PDPA Politburo and took over as the First Secretary of the party. Babrak Karmal was sent as ambassador to Prague as were six other Parcham leaders deputed ambassadors in different countries. Hafizullah Amin continued targeting the Parcham leaders and sympathizers. In August 1979, Hafizullah Amin arrested few Parcham leaders, including military generals, for plotting a coup against Hafizullah Amin. Babrak Karmal and other envoys were also called for interrogation in relation to the coup attempt by their faction leaders. Knowing the consequences of falling back to Kabul, Babrak Karmal and all other envoys refused to abide by the orders and were exiled in different countries. According to Diego Cordovez and Selig S. Harrison, in their book *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal*, Babrak Karmal traveled to Moscow in October 1979. Later, he was instated as the president of Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion of the country and killing of Hafizullah Amin by the Soviets.

66 Diego Cordovez and Selig S. Harrison, *Out of Afghanistan: The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 30.

67 Collins, 59.

68 Collins, 59.

69 Collins, 59.

During this turbulent period, Hafizullah Amin consolidated his position over the government after developing serious issues with Taraki. He finally took power on September 16, 1979 and killed Taraki later at his home.[70] The murder of Taraki raised alarms in Moscow as Hafizullah Amin was suspected to be inclined toward the United States.[71] Russia then opted to intervene in Afghanistan more openly.

In December 1979, the Soviet 40th Army invaded Afghanistan in support of the communist party. Russian military units targeted various military and strategic centers, including various tank units, television and radio stations, the MoI, and the Presidential palace with a view to control the nerve center of the Kabul regime.[72] Many Afghan members of the PDPA accompanied Russian units in their march toward strategic centers in Kabul. Hafiz Ullah Amin was killed, and Babrak Karmal was reinstated as the Soviets considered him more loyal.[73]

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan came as a surprise to many. The next decade witnessed an armed resistance by the Afghan freedom fighters—famously labeled *mujahedin*—against the Soviet Army and the puppet government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA). Nevertheless, this era of Afghan history also witnessed widespread Afghan suffering and mass casualties that were largely inflicted by the Soviets.

The armed struggle by the mujahedin was supported financially and militarily by the United States and Saudi Arabia and was regulated through Pakistan. Various Afghan tribes were formed into many groups that were trained and armed by the United States and Pakistan, battling against the Soviets through jihadist and freedom-fighter mindsets. The struggle bore fruit in the shape of the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan in 1989 after a decade of bloody war.

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70 Martin Ewans, *Afghanistan: A New History* (London: Curzon Press, 2001), 146.

71 Ewans, 147.

72 Kakar, 22.

73 J. Bruce Amstutz, *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1986), 88.

B. SOVIET UNION'S REGIME STABILIZATION MEASURES IN AFGHANISTAN

The Soviet stabilization strategy in Afghanistan revolved around the establishment of a strong communist party and its subsidiary organizations.[74] The Soviets believed that the communist party in Afghanistan, the PDPA, would then control all state institutions, much as pro-Soviet communist parties proliferated in East-Central Europe after World War II.[75] It was desired that the Red Army would work hand-in-glove with the Afghan Army to defuse the insurgency in the countryside followed by enforcement of a social reform agenda.[76] The Soviet state-building strategy can be explained through Figure 1.

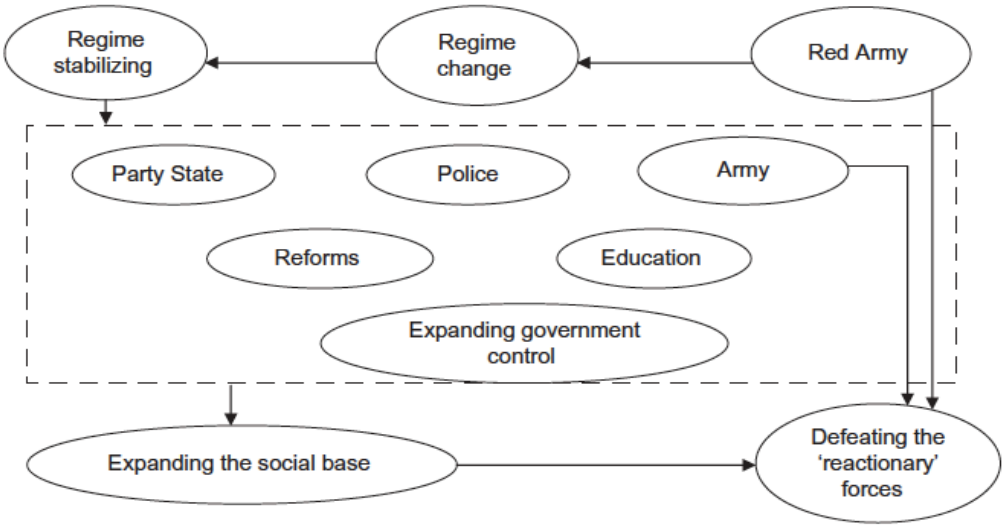

Figure 1. Soviet State Building Strategy in Afghanistan[77]

74 Minkov and Smolynec, 314.

75 Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict, revised and enlarged edition* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1960 and 1967), 88–91; Thomas W. Simons, Jr., *Eastern Europe in the Postwar World* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1991), 59.

76 Minkov and Smolynec, 314.

77 Source: Minkov and Smolynec, 314.

The stabilization efforts focused on building Afghanistan's security forces (on the Soviet model) to include the Afghan National Army and the Sarandoy, political development including pacification efforts and national reconciliation, and economic as well as infrastructural development.

1. Building of the Security Forces

The Soviets focused mainly on developing the Afghan security forces both under the Ministry of Defense (MoD) and the MoI. An exhaustive effort was undertaken to improve the forces, including (in some cases even first-time raising of units, divisions, and corps) development, training, and provisioning of equipment. The Soviets were of the view that strong Afghan security forces would be able to relieve the Soviet 40th Army from Afghanistan by taking over the tasks of security and military duties.

a. Development of the Forces Under the MoI

The Sarandoy were mainly comprised of the local population, organized and raised to serve at pre-designated locations that were close to the homes of the rank and file. They were under the direct control of the central government and were organized in companies, battalions, and brigades. In 1979, the force was comprised of 8,500 personnel. The Soviets had the goal of raising the manpower to 75,000, which was achieved by 1983. The strength later grew to approximately 100,000, although the ultimate goal of 115,000 personnel was never achieved.[78] According to Antonio Giustozzi, the Soviets succeeded in raising the total manpower of the Sarandoy to 155,000 by the year 1989 from a mere 8,000 at the end of the year 1979.[79] According to Olga Oliker, the MoI numbers of personnel were as shown in Figure 2.

78 Olga Oliker, *Building Afghanistan Security Forces in Wartime* (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2011), 27.

79 Giustozzi, 266.

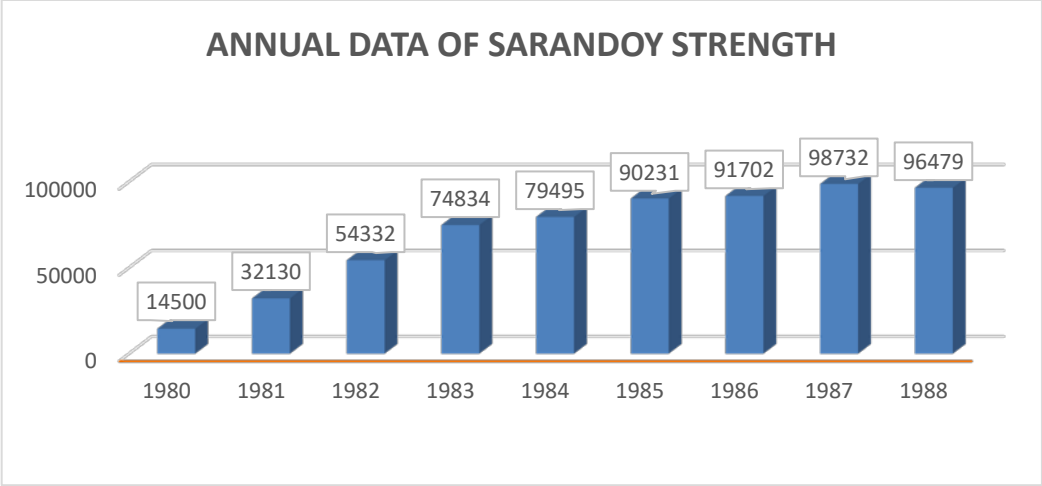

Figure 2. MOI Number of Personnel over Time[80]

The Soviets relied heavily on the Sarandoy in the beginning. The Soviets desired a force under the MoI with the policing mission and combat potential to share the load of the military by conducting combat on a lower scale. In the beginning, the military was involved in policing duties as well, in addition to hard-core military operations. The policing duties, however, seemed to reduce considerably the combat readiness of the military. The Soviets were of the opinion that the Sarandoy could counter the rise in crime that was anticipated after the PDPA government took measures to strengthen their rule in the country.[81] The Soviet advisors anticipated the need for strict measures to pacify the resistance by the Islamic parties. The Soviets believed that the strict measures would then deteriorate the law and order situation in the cities and would increase the role of Sarandoy to control the situation. Soviet expectations proved to be wrong; the situation grew more violent with every passing day and affected the Sarandoy, which saw massive desertions and the subsequent disbandment of units in the initial phases of the Soviet invasion.

The Soviet Union thus focused both on the recruitment and training of the Sarandoy. The Soviets controlled the operations of the Sarandoy through the attachment

80 Source: Oliker, 26.

81 Oliker, 27.

of approximately 5,000 Soviet advisors who were tasked to focus more on organizational functions and to build up the force to enable it to share the burden of the Soviet military.[82]

The Sarandoy mainly focused on fighting the counterrevolutionary insurgents and even assisted the Soviet and Afghan armies in holding a particular area after military operations. Some of the responsibilities assigned to the Sarandoy were[83]:

- Policing duties in areas of deployment with protection of key assets of importance.
- Assisting the armed forces in hostage rescue operations.
- Providing security for convoys on roads during the initial phases of Soviet invasion and consolidation.
- Gathering intelligence for the Soviet military.

Sarandoy training was conducted both inside Afghanistan and in the Soviet Union. From 1978 to 1986, around 12,000 Sarandoy officers were trained in institutions under the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD).[84] Essential training for a limited number of Sarandoy junior commanders was also conducted in Tashkent each year by the Soviets.[85] Inside Afghanistan, the training was conducted through various operations with the military or even independently. The advisors attached to the Sarandoy units played pivotal roles in training the Sarandoy during operations. The equipment provided by the Soviet Union included small arms, mortars, armored vehicles, and automobiles, which enhanced the efficiency of the Sarandoy to some extent.[86]

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82 Oliker, 28.

83 Oliker, 30.

84 Oliker, 29.

85 Oliker, 29.

86 Oliker, 25.

The Soviet Union created Kobalt teams to assist the command echelon of the Sarandoy.[87] The teams were composed mostly of individuals with expertise in criminal investigation.[88] The teams were mostly focused on carrying out operations to hunt the mujahedin leaders.[89] Rodric Braithwaite is of the opinion that around 23 Kobalt teams were deployed in Afghanistan, each consisting of seven people with essential communications and transport to perform their tasks in the field to assist the command echelon of the Sarandoy and to track down the insurgents.[90]

The major issues that the Soviets confronted with the Sarandoy were desertions and a trust deficit[91] that seriously affected their performance and the Soviet dependence on them. The Soviets believed the Sarandoy to be infiltrated by the insurgents. Some Soviet advisors were of the view that a few ambushes in the past on Soviet personnel were likely the result of information provided by the Sarandoy to the insurgents.[92] Soviet advisors were reluctant to share exact information with their counterparts in the Sarandoy units, even avoiding sharing exact operational plans, out of concern that this information would be leaked to the insurgents.

b. Khidmat-e-Aetla'at-e-Dawlati

The Khidmat-e-Aetla'at-e-Dawlati (KhAD)_—the Intelligence Agency of Afghanistan—existed before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and was known as the AGSA (Department for Safeguarding the Interests of Afghanistan).[93] Later, its name was changed to KAM (Workers' Intelligence Department) and finally to KhAD. Initially, the

87 Braithwaite, 134.

88 Braithwaite, 134.

89 Braithwaite, 134.

90 Braithwaite, 135.

91 Oliker, 31–32.

92 Oliker, 31.

93 Kakar, 153.

intelligence agency functioned as a department in the Prime Minister's office.[94] Later, it was upgraded to Wizarat-i-Amaniyyat-i-Dawlati (WAD), becoming a ministry in 1986.[95]

The Soviets invested in the training, development, and expansion of the KhAD through their KGB, which played an instrumental role throughout its stay in Afghanistan. The KhAD was trained by the KGB both in the USSR as well as in Kabul in a training center.[96] The Soviets increased the budget of the KhAD from 36 million Afghanis in 1982/83 to more than 8,000 million Afghanis in 1985/86. The annual increases in budget are evident from the data of the annual strength of the KhAD presented in Figure 3.

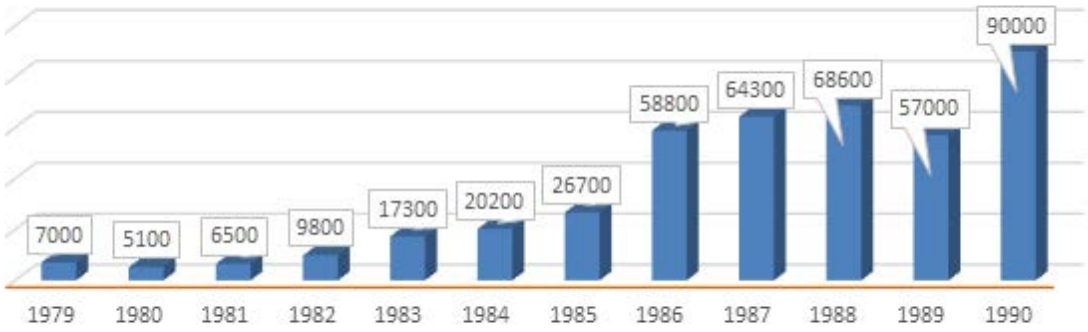

Figure 3. Annual Strength of the KhAD[97]

The KhAD's tasks included establishment of intelligence networks throughout the country. It also carried out small-scale operations in support of the larger military operations against the mujahedin groups. The agency was also utilized by the Soviet KGB for negotiations with local leaders.[98] The KhAD also functioned as political police involved in the arrests of opponents of the PDPA and its leaders in addition to its functions for the support of military operations. The KhAD was even successful in penetrating the camps of mujahedin groups inside Pakistan.

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94 Giustozzi, 98.

95 Giustozzi, 98.

96 Oliker, 32.

97 Source: Giustozzi, 266.

98 Oliker, 33.

Later, however, friction developed between the Soviets and the KhAD, which was believed to have been infiltrated by the insurgents. The ensuing distrust between the KGB and the KhAD affected the overall output of the intelligence agency.[99]

c. Development of the Forces Under the MoD

During a decade-long effort, massive Soviet investment is visible in terms of the development and reorganization of the security forces, including the Afghan military, the Airforce, Border Guard, and the Afghan tribal and citizen militia.

(1) The Afghan Military

The political wrangling between various factions of the PDPA, and the coups before that, had seriously affected the functionality of the Armed forces. By 1980, the military strength had fallen to 25,000, which is a very alarming number and a serious weakness for a military that was comprised of three corps.[100]

At the time of the invasion of Afghanistan, the military was organized into three corps (namely 1, 2, and 3 Corps,[101]) and ten divisions (details at Table 1.)[102] The military was equipped with modern Soviet equipment like tanks, weapons, artillery, and air force.[103] The force was, however, numerically depleted to a greater extent due to infighting between Khalq and Parcham factions of the PDPA.[104] Both Hafizullah Amin and Babrak Karmal removed officers whose loyalty differed from theirs.

Babrak Karmal desired to disband the entire existing Army, as he doubted its loyalty.[105] But the Soviets considered it to be a colossal effort that would place a heavy and protracted burden of fighting on the 40th Army. As a result, Babrak Karmal was not allowed to make his grandest move against the army.

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99 Oliker, 35.

100 Braithwaite, 137.

101 Oliker, 37.

102 Giustozzi, 269.

103 Braithwaite, 136.

104 Braithwaite, 136.

105 Oliker, 38.

The Soviets undertook a major restructuring of the Afghan military after the invasion. According to Rodric Braithwaite, by the end 1980 the Soviet military had attached around 1,600–1,800 advisors with various Afghan military outfits, including 60–80 General officers.[106] The number of advisors in each military setup varied, e.g., each battalion had 3–4 officers, each regiment had 4–5 officers, and each division had 11 or 12 Soviet officers with a matching number of interpreters.[107] These advisors wore Afghan military uniforms and lived with the Afghan units. The advisors were mostly experienced military personnel and carried out training of the Afghan forces. They were required to coordinate the military operations of Afghan forces with the 40th Soviet Army. These advisors even participated directly in active operations, which is evident from the fact that two Soviet general officers died in Khost province in 1982 while supervising Afghan military operations in helicopters.[108]

The Soviets divided the entire area into 21 zones of operation having various military commands.[109] Each command had military personnel assisted by Soviet advisors along with the presence of KhAD teams. A major reorganization of the army was undertaken in 1984–1985.[110] The Soviets established all infantry divisions along standard Soviet lines and utilized them only for hard-core military operations instead of engaging them in security duties. This measure was aimed to increase the combat potential of the military by not engaging them in security duties, which is primarily the task of police. In addition, many additional infantry and armored divisions were raised, besides completing the strength of the existing force. Details of the various divisions raised after the invasion is reflected in Table 1.

After the Soviet invasion, desertion increased alarmingly as entire units and brigades started deserting. In Kunar province, for example, two entire brigades of 9

106 Braithwaite, 150.

107 Braithwaite, 150.

108 Braithwaite, 151.

109 Oliker, 39.

110 Oliker, 39.

Division deserted.[111] This incident was matched in other provinces. Although the force looked very solid on paper, on the ground the divisions were toothless. There were divisions with a total strength of only 1,000 present. (In contrast, there are generally 10,000 personnel for a normal division.)[112] To make up the manpower deficiency, the Soviets relaxed the conscription age and called up all reservists under 39 years of age.[113] The mass desertion of Afghan forces decreased considerably after 1980.[114] Still, throughout their stay in Afghanistan, the Soviets considered a 30-percent desertion rate to be normal and acceptable.[115]

Even before invasion, the Afghan Army relied heavily on Russian equipment. After the invasion, the Soviets provided a lot of equipment to the military to initially complete the existing deficiency and then address the ongoing losses during the Soviet tenure in Afghanistan. There was a time when there was more equipment than operators or drivers.[116] Details of equipment held by the Afghan military appear in Table 1.

Table 1. Data of Military Assistance by USSR to Afghanistan[117]

	Military Assistance from USSR		
Equipment	Up to 1989	1989	Handed over at the time of Withdrawal
Tanks	767	305	990
BMP[118]	491	283	
BTR[119]	1338	705	
Guns and Mortars	1212		224
Light Weapons	119,000	40,000	231

111 Braithwaite, 136.

112 Braithwaite, 136.

113 Oliker, 39.

114 Braithwaite, 137.

115 Braithwaite, 137.

116 Oliker, 69.

117 Adapted from Giustozzi, 272, 274.

118 An infantry combat vehicle, which is tracked and amphibious also. It was known as Boevaia Machina Pekhoty in Russian.

119 An armored personnel carrier, also called an APC in Western terminology. In Russian, it was known as Bronetransporter.

The training of the Afghan military remained a focal point of the Soviet Union's advisors throughout their stay in Afghanistan. The Soviet and Afghan forces trained separately, although they operated jointly.[120] The basic training for young soldiers was spread over 45 to 60 days before they were inducted into actual combat.[121] Yet, this practice was never followed strictly and young soldiers were inducted into combat with little or no training. The soldiers located in or close to Kabul received more training than others further from the capital. The Soviets also imparted general literacy training to the soldiers, besides training them in military subjects.[122]

The training also included certain courses in the Soviet Union for better grooming of the military personnel.[123] In 1987, the Soviets introduced a six-month specialized training program to be run in each corps.[124] This program could not be followed strictly as at that time the Soviets focused more on imparting training to facilitate their withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Soviet advisors were also of the view that joint operations served the purpose of training as the two forces would plan and execute the operations jointly.[125] Throughout their stay in Afghanistan, however, the Soviet advisors complained of poor training standards of the Afghan military including lack of discipline, weak command and control, non-adherence to standard operating procedures (SOP), and very weak discipline.[126]

The standard of the Afghan military remained low to the extent that before leaving the country, the Soviet Union's advisors did not consider their counterpart units to be able to absorb attacks. They were only believed to be able to withstand an attack by the mujahedin if they are in large formations.[127] Moreover, despite the development of

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120 Oliker, 45.

121 Oliker, 45.

122 Oliker, 46.

123 Oliker, 46.

124 Oliker, 46.

125 Oliker, 46.

126 Oliker, 47.

127 Oliker, 47.

the Afghan military, their independent role during operations remained very limited, and they mostly remained dependent on their Soviet counterparts.

(2) The Afghan Air Force

The Afghan Air Force achieved better success compared to other organs of the military. Afghanistan had received Soviet-made air technology prior to the Saur revolution and in the years after that. At the start of the Soviet invasion, major air assets were stationed at Kabul, Bagram Shindand, Kandahar, and Mazar i Sharif.[128] The Soviet Union kept its assets mostly in Kunduz, Faizabad, and Jalalabad.[129]

The Soviets delivered assembled aircraft to Afghanistan before the invasion. At the time of the invasion, the Afghan Air Force was already equipped with MiG-21 PFs, which were later replaced by the Soviets with their MiG-21bis.[130] Similarly, Afghan military aviation was also equipped with Soviet helicopters. The Soviet Union even supplied 45 Mi-35 to Afghan aviation in 1989/90.[131] According to Antonio Giustozzi, the Soviet Union provided 76 planes and 36 helicopters to the Afghans before 1989. In 1989, they delivered another supply batch consisting of 59 planes and 12 helicopters.[132] The military aid continued throughout the years of Soviet stay in Afghanistan. The financial assistance to the military is illustrated by Giustozzi in Table 2:

Table 2. Soviet Military Assistance to Afghanistan[133]

Year	Assistance in millions of rubles	Year	Assistance in millions of rubles
1980	267.6	1986	579.1
1981	231.5	1987	1063.4
1982	277.9	1988	1629
1983	221.4	1989	3972
1984	366.3	1990	2200
1985	516.3		

128 Oliker, 48.

129 Oliker, 48.

130 Oliker, 49.

131 Giustozzi, 112.

132 Giustozzi, 274.

133 Adapted from Giustozzi, 274.

Throughout the Soviet period in Afghanistan, a sufficient number of pilots could not be trained on available air assets.[134] This deficiency of pilots is even evident from the fact that the Soviets did not replace the old aircraft with the new Su-22Ms because there were not enough pilots to fly these craft.[135] Independent flying by Afghans also remained an issue. The Afghan pilots had problems ranging from reluctance to fly during fasting period and on Fridays, lack of appetite for flying at all, and hesitation to drop heavy bombs (such as 500 kgs.) as they believed it to be an unjustified act against their fellow countrymen.[136] Instead, they opted for lighter weapons for their limited destruction power.[137] Lingering issues also included stealing of fuel and reluctance to keep the equipment battle-worthy.[138]

(3) Border Guard

The Border Guard comprised the forces under the MoD entrusted with guarding the frontiers of Afghanistan.[139] A small border force comprised of only 1,200 personnel existed prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and was tasked to perform customs duties only.[140] The Border Guard were created in 1980 with the assistance of the Soviet military and the KGB,[141] as the Soviets did not want to employ themselves in operations close to the border.[142] The strength of the Border Guard kept increasing until 1983 as more and more people were recruited despite the recruitment and retention issues in

134 Oliker, 49.

135 Oliker, 49.

136 Oliker, 50.

137 Oliker, 50.

138 Oliker, 68.

139 Oliker, 51.

140 Giustozzi, 100.

141 Oliker, 51.

142 Giustozzi, 100.

Afghanistan.[143] By 1983, the strength of the Border Guard remained a healthy figure of 27,725.[144] After 1983, however, the Border Guard grew at a disappointing rate, as it is reported that in 1987 its strength was merely 30,000, which is an increase of only 3,000 in four years.[145]

The force was primarily employed and tasked to seal off the border with Pakistan, which was extremely porous and highly vulnerable due to the activities of the mujahedin. The force was trained mainly by the KGB and employed a number of techniques to seal the border, including mining, but failed to effectively perform the task due to a number of reasons.[146] In later years, the tribal militias and Border Guard were integrated to form a joint force,[147] although their effectiveness remained questionable.

(4) Development of the Afghan Tribal and Citizen Militias

The development of tribal and citizen militias is another noteworthy aspect that was undertaken by the Russians. The citizen militia was more of a propaganda tool as they were comprised of non-paid individuals who were members of the PDPA.[148] The militia was used to protect the villages and towns from the mujahedin.

The tribal militia was a more organized force that existed even before the revolution. The tribal militias also comprised the mujahedin forces loyal to the Afghan government or the mujahedin leaders who had defected from their previous

143 Oliker, 65–67. Recruitment and retention in Afghan security forces remained a serious problem for the Soviets in Afghanistan. Many steps were taken to ensure retention in the forces. Similarly, recruitment issues were serious and efforts were made to resolve the difficulties like increase in pay packages, provision of better facilities to the soldiers, portrayals of a more Islamic look by the units to attract more people who were weary of the foreign non-Islamic military by imbedding religious leaders in the forces, decrease in the age of conscription, and easy waivers over age issues. These issues have been covered in detail by Olga Oliker in her book, *Building Afghanistan Security Forces in Wartime*.

144 Oliker, 51.

145 Oliker, 51.

146 Giustozzi, 99–103. Controlling the porous borders remained a serious problem for the Afghan security forces and the Soviets. Giustozzi explains that the rate of infiltration of the mujahedin in Afghanistan remained very high and the security forces failed to stop the caravans flowing into the country. As per record, in 1985, the security forces accepted to be able to intercept only 12–15 percent of the infiltrating caravans (even more optimistic data, yet very low percentage of interception), the mujahedin claimed that only 3 percent of the caravans had been intercepted.

147 Oliker, 55.

148 Oliker, 53.

affiliations.[149] The militias consisted of regional or tribal regiments and the border militias. The command structure of these militias varied. Some were commanded by military officers, though a few were commanded by their own elders, who were given military ranks. They reported either to the respective military units with which they were affiliated or to the KhAD.[150]

The border militia was responsible for controlling the border and was placed under the MoD after switching from some other ministries. The border militia recruited from the local areas where they used to be deployed. They were commanded by military officers and trained through military units. The recruitment in these militias was used as a tool to reconcile with the tribes in adjoining areas through the provision of vacancies to tribal elders.[151]

Regional militias were entrusted to maintain peace in the mainland of Afghanistan. These were the forces who were tasked and employed to check the movement of the mujahedin from one area to another by establishing various check posts.[152]

A major restructuring of the militia was done in the tenure of Babrak Karmal.[153] He organized the militia in close liaison with the military and the KhAD. He also streamlined the selection process of the commanders of the militia units and gave due credence to the former mujahedin commanders. These regional militias were employed alongside the military units and normally formed an additional company of the regiment or an additional regiment of a brigade.[154]

The Soviets used these militias as a second-tier force alongside the military. Moreover, the recruitment in the militia was done as a pacification tool to appease the

149 Oliker, 54.

150 Oliker, 54.

151 Oliker, 54.

152 Giustozzi, 201.

153 Giustozzi, 202.

154 Giustozzi, 202.

dissident mujahedin commanders. The joint strength of all the militia rose from 8,000 members in 1980 to 170,000 in 1989, which is a solid strength.[155]

2. Political Development and National Reconciliation

The Soviets were divided in their opinion on the activation of political pacification measures. Few advisors thought that the overthrow of Amin would, by itself, be a positive message to the public and that resentment against the government would subside. There were others who, even as early as 1980, considered military action as a non-solution to the problems of Afghanistan.[156]

The government took some pacification measures in the beginning of 1980, when an effort was made to contact the active mujahedin commanders to achieve some sort of national reconciliation to counter the growing uprising against the Soviets. But the contacts could not be continued mainly due to the strong opposition of the Soviet advisors and the PDPA leadership.[157] The government decided to establish party offices by raising district units to bring more people into the fold of the PDPA, but the execution could not be done as planned.[158] It was basically due to the lack of requisite control in all the districts.

Overall, the political development can be divided into two main categories: 1) the pacification policy, which continued until 1987; and 2) the national reconciliation, which was started by Babrak Karmal but was more often associated with President Najibullah from 1987 until the Soviet Union's withdrawal and even later until 1992.

Although the Soviet Union could not achieve a broad-based political reconciliation, the local-level reconciliation remained the focus of the Soviet occupation. Kunduz in 1980, Kunar in 1984, the Nazian valley south of Jalalabad in 1980, and Zabul in 1984 are a few examples where local reconciliation was done with government

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155 Giustozzi, 285.

156 Giustozzi, 122. Antonio Giustozzi mentions that during 1980, few top Red Army military officers, such as Sergey Sokolov, Valentin Varennikov, and Sergey Akhromeev, were of the view that pure military victory was not achievable in Afghanistan.

157 Giustozzi, 120.

158 Giustozzi, 120.

forces.[159] This arrangement was more likely necessitated by the repression of the local population by the mujahedin of the area.[160] The KhAD remained instrumental in achieving such breakthroughs with informal agreements.[161] But an agreement reached at any one time did not mean reconciliation forever.

The Soviets also used economic levers for political favor.[162] An effort was made to increase the prices of cotton – a commercial crop, inducing the people to cultivate cotton instead of wheat, which would benefit the peasants and earn their support for the government. Moreover, the government also started purchasing wheat from local peasants at a higher rate to benefit this particular class and to make it harder for the mujahedin to purchase an expensive dietary staple.[163]

The first proper attempt to find a political solution to the government's isolation came in 1981.[164] The government announced an amnesty on July 18, 1981 for all those who laid down their arms.[165] The major step for pacification was the creation of the National Fatherland Front (NFF), which was apparently not a PDPA. Through this measure, an effort was done to target those who wanted to side with the government, but at the same time were against the ideology of the PDPA.[166] Many *jirga*[167] were held

159 Giustozzi, 126.

160 Giustozzi, 126.

161 Giustozzi, 127.

162 Giustozzi, 129.

163 Giustozzi, 129.

164 Giustozzi, 142.

165 Giustozzi, 142.

166 Giustozzi, 142.

167 Mohsin Abbas Malik, "Information Operations and FATA Integration into the National Mainstream" (master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2012), 77, https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/17410/12Sep_Malik_Mohsin.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y. Jirga is an Afghan or Pashtun tradition of joint assembly of elders to resolve domestic issues concerning the population through consensus. It is a tradition that existed in Afghanistan and parts of Pakistan (mainly the Pashtun population) in the absence of present day practice where written rules and regulations exist. Its primary purpose is to resolve the conflicts and issues in line with Pashtunwali (Pashtun ethical, non-written set of cultural code) and aimed at averting wars among the tribes through negotiation.

under the umbrella of the NFF, but the first two years did not see any major development.[168]

The NFF mainly targeted tribal elders and gave them more liberty of economic and development work besides giving them authority to nominate various members for the functioning of government.[169] It tried to engage the Pashtun population and even nominated Saleh Muhammad Zeray of the Durrani tribe from Kandahar province as the first president of the NFF.[170]

The NFF, however, could not deliver much, and by 1987 its decline as a pacification strategy was evident. It could not penetrate the rural areas and only found routes in a few major cities and towns. Moreover, it failed to engage the majority of the Pashtun population and concentrated more in northern areas.[171] In 1987, President Najibullah declared the NFF to be a failure because it was seen as an extension of the PDPA.[172]

After the failure of the NFF, Najibullah formed a new government in Afghanistan in 1987 and adopted an ambitious program of 'national reconciliation'.[173] National reconciliation mainly targeted the peasant class and advocated political pluralism against one-party rule supported by Babrak Karmal. National reconciliation was based on a three-point approach: 1) a cease fire for at least six months; 2) commencement of dialogue with warring factions; and 3) establishment of a coalition government with representation of all the factions and stake holders.[174] In mid-1987, a law was approved for legalizing political parties after a six-month ceasefire with the mujahedin groups.[175]

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168 Giustozzi, 143.

169 Giustozzi, 143.

170 Giustozzi, 144.

171 Giustozzi, 144.

172 Giustozzi, 146.

173 Giustozzi, 154.

174 Riaz M. Khan, *Untying the Afghan Knot: Negotiating Soviet Withdrawal* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 188.

175 Giustozzi, 161.

Najibullah offered various proposals for national reconciliation, such as greater economic benefits coupled with more political pluralism. The mujahedin groups were offered more room for independence and less governmental control as exercised in the past if they joined hands with the government.[176] The mujahedin groups rejected the ceasefire offer through their spokesman Burhanuddin Rabbani.[177] Although the Peshawar parties rejected the reconciliation policy, many approached the government for accruing benefits.[178]

In 1987, the *Loya Jirga* ratified a new constitution for Afghanistan that abolished the one-party system; established Loya Jirga, Sena, and Wolasi Jirga; and changed the name of the country from the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan to the Republic of Afghanistan.[179] Upon ratification of the new constitution, elections in Afghanistan were held in April 1988.[180] The mujahedin groups boycotted the elections, thereby diminishing the utility of elections for enduring peace in the future. The national reconciliation strategy initiated by President Najibullah with Soviet backing could not meet the desired expectations.

3. Economic Development and Nation Building

Afghan economic dependence on the Soviet Union[181] increased manifold after the invasion of Afghanistan as the Soviets believed that the military alone was not the solution to the complexities of the Afghan issue. They believed in a long-term approach

176 Giustozzi, 163–165.

177 Khan, 190.

178 Giustozzi, 166.

179 Giustozzi, 154-162.

180 Giustozzi, 161.

181 Afghanistan has a history of economic dependence on the Soviet Union prior to the invasion of the 1979. Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolynec explain in their article titled "4-D Soviet Style: Defense, Development, Diplomacy, and Disengagement in Afghanistan During the Soviet Period. Part III: Economic Development," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, that by 1978, Afghanistan was the third largest recipient of aid from the Soviet Union. The Soviets had a significant number of advisors–both technical and economic experts–present in Afghanistan, looking after a number of projects being undertaken. Anton Minkov and Gregory Smolynec highlight that these projects–with a very high optic value–included development ventures like a concrete highway system from Kabul to Kandahar, the Salang tunnel–the longest highway tunnel in the world, and a chain of apartment complexes.

encompassing both military and economic aid coupled with kinetic operations.[182] Military aid to Afghanistan during the period from 1968 to 1978 remained at an average of 95 million rubles annually. In contrast, military aid from 1980 to 1989 increased as shown in Figure 4.

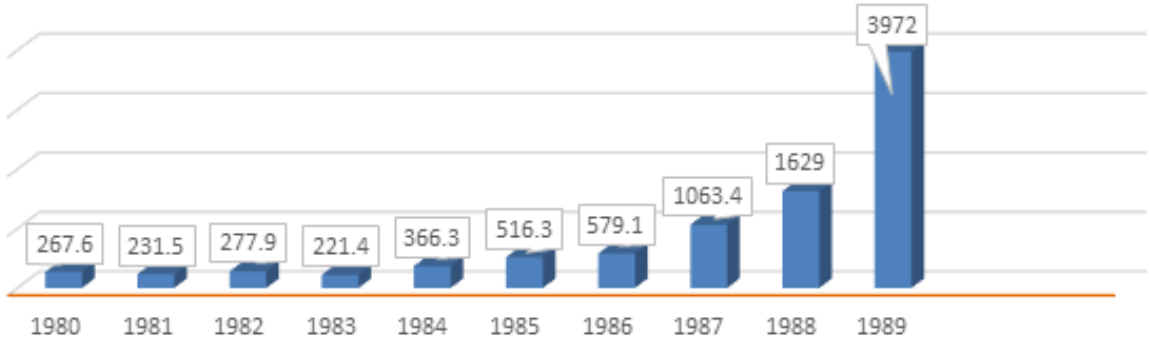

Figure 4. Soviet Military Aid to Afghanistan (millions of rubles)[183]

The data shown in Figure 4 imply that the Soviets increased the military aid drastically after the invasion. The major aid was increased substantially in the years 1988 and 1989 (i.e., the time when the Soviets' withdrawal had commenced).

The Soviets brought their five-year economic cycle system to Afghanistan, with a focus on increasing the bilateral trade and enhancing the state share in various projects.[184] Mining and manufacturing proved to be successful public sectors. The Afghan government fully controlled the oil and gas industry and earned a handsome return from it through the transportation of resources to the Soviet Union, which influenced the industries through its technicians and therefore had full technical control over it.[185]

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182 Minkov and Smolynec, 602.

183 Source: Minkov and Smolynec, 603.

184 Minkov and Smolynec, 604.

185 Minkov and Smolynec, 605.

The Soviets invested heavily in building the industrial enterprises through the provision of technical skills. The Soviets built around 100 industrial enterprises by 1986 which had a far-reaching impact on the economic output of Afghanistan.[186] A few notable development projects included the establishment of a textile mill in Kandahar, a transportation service in Kabul, the Jarkuduq gas field, and a fertilizer plant in Mazar-i-Sharif, etc.[187] The main area targeted for development projects was northern Afghanistan, as this area was relatively peaceful and development work was possible. This model of state presence in the industrial sector continued until 1986, when Najibullah changed the economic policy toward privatization.[188] He allowed a number of private sector projects with the obvious aim of appeasing the elite class.

Afghanistan's agriculture sector also received the Soviets' attention. The efforts to influence the agriculture sector, however, substantially failed. The land reform initiative that was launched by Hafizullah Amin seriously back fired. The government's plan to influence the rural areas through such measures proved counter-productive.

As previously mentioned, the government raised the prices of cotton in an effort to gain favor with the local farmers and simultaneously make a staple diet of mujahedin more expensive.[189] The idea could not yield better results, and the agricultural sector remained under developed due to the struggle between the government and the mujahedin. A major portion of population that was dependent on agriculture could not benefit.[190]

Foreign aid remained a hallmark of the Afghan economy during the entire occupation period by the Soviets. The Afghan government could not resolve the issue of reliance on foreign aid during the period from 1978 to 1988.[191] During this period,

186 Minkov and Smolynec, 606.

187 Minkov and Smolynec, 606.

188 Minkov and Smolynec, 607.

189 Giustozzi, 129.

190 Minkov and Smolynec, 608.

191 Minkov and Smolynec, 612.

Afghanistan's expenditures surpassed its revenues exceedingly.[192] The foreign aid was 8.9 billion Afghanis ($ 178 million) in 1980.[193] By 1988, it increased to 33.8 billion Afghanis ($676 million).[194] The situation had very adverse effects on the public as the prices of daily need commodities increased by 500 percent to 1,000 percent.[195]

To conclude, it can be said that the Soviets launched massive combat operations to help the falling pro-communist PDPA re-establish its writ in the territory. The military operation met with a qualified success in the beginning. The Soviets associated the military operation with an extensive regime stabilization reform strategy along with a political policy for pacification of the insurgents. However, this strategy could not yield the desired results of controlling the entire population and area. The solution to the problem actually lay elsewhere.

192 Minkov and Smolynec, 612.

193 Minkov and Smolynec, 613.

194 Minkov and Smolynec, 613.

195 Minkov and Smolynec, 613.

III. THE U.S.-LED COALITION'S STATE STABILIZATION EFFORTS IN AFGHANISTAN

On January 28, 2018, a Taliban attacker detonated an ambulance loaded with explosives in Kabul, killing 95 people and wounding 191 others.[196] This attack happened only one week after the Taliban targeted a famous hotel in the capital city of Kabul, resulting in the deaths of 22 people.[197] In August 2018, the Taliban attacked the city of Ghazni, which is less than a hundred miles from Kabul, killing dozens of security forces and controlling it for days before coalition forces finally defeated them.[198] During the Ghazni attacks, Afghan security forces relied heavily on U.S. special forces and air power to beat back the Taliban.[199] These attacks in and so close to the capital—a high-security zone—raise doubts regarding the ability of the Afghan security forces to operate without coalition support. That these attacks are frequent, even after 17 years of war, speaks to the need for continued support of the Afghan forces and state institutions.

This chapter details the U.S.-led coalition's state/regime stabilization efforts in Afghanistan. Specifically, it finds that the extensive coalition efforts in Afghanistan are still far from ensuring stability of the country.

A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND—THE U.S.-LED COALITION'S INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan witnessed widespread suffering even after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 due to infighting between various mujahedin groups. Rather than a process of state stabilization, the remaining state institutions were totally destroyed amid a decade-long conflict. Unfortunately, the world also turned a blind eye to the country because with the

196 Ehsan Popalzai and Laura Smith-Spark, "Taliban Attacker Driving Ambulance Packed with Explosives Kills 95 in Kabul," CNN, January 28, 2018, https://www.cnn.com/2018/01/27/asia/afghanistan-kabul-blast-intl/index.html.

197 Popalzai and Smith-Spark, "Taliban Attacker Driving Ambulance Packed with Explosives Kills 95 in Kabul.

198 Mujib Mashal, "Why the Taliban's Assault on Ghazni Matters," *New York Times,* August 13, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/13/world/asia/why-the-talibans-assault-on-ghazni-matters-for-afghanistan-and-the-us.html

199 Mashal, "Why the Taliban's Assault on Ghazni Matters."

communist bloc contained, Afghanistan held no further interest to the world powers. A cancer that had developed in the late 1970s was left to metastasize at a time when it needed immediate attention. By 1995, continuous Afghan destabilization gave rise to the Taliban, which crept all over the country, ultimately controlling 95 percent of Afghanistan—except for a small part in the north of the country where a famous warlord, Ahmed Shah Masoud, remained entrenched. The authoritarian Taliban regime instituted a brutal government that ruthlessly handled opponents. Afghanistan descended further into chaos. It also gave protection and space to the notorious al-Qaeda elements who used Afghanistan for their clandestine activities. Terrorists with ties to Afghanistan killed 3,000-plus innocent civilians in the United States on September 11, 2001.[200]

On October 7, 2001, U.S. President George W. Bush addressed the nation in a televised address informing the world that the U.S. military was invading Afghanistan in an operation named *Operation Enduring Freedom* (OEF).[201] The actual contacts with the Northern Alliance forces' commanders in the Panjshir Valley in north Afghanistan had started much earlier.[202] General Muhammad Fahim and Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, leaders of the Northern Alliance forces, were engaged for rallying an offensive against the Taliban.[203]

The invasion slid Afghanistan further into chaos, and the Taliban regime crumbled in the face of OEF. Although they were ousted, the Taliban could not be annihilated totally and were replaced by a Northern Alliance dominated group that consisted mostly of anti-Pashtun elements—a factor on which the Taliban relied for their resurgence in the latter half of the decade.

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200 Miles Kahler, "State Building after Afghanistan and Iraq," in *The Dilemmas of State Building: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*, Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk (New York: Routledge, 2009), 287.

201 Bob Woodward, *Bush At War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 209.

202 Woodward, 155.

203 Woodward, 155.

B. U.S.-LED COALITION'S STATE STABILIZATION MEASURES IN AFGHANISTAN

The U.S.-led coalition's strategy of state stabilization evolved over time in the face of a fluid insurgency. In the beginning, the operational focus remained on combat operations to overthrow the repressive Taliban regime and replace it with a transitional government. Initially, also, the U.S. military that was engaged in Afghanistan had antipathy for any state stabilization measures.[204] The military remained reluctant to support nation-building in Afghanistan and only recognized its value once the Taliban started a strong insurgency in 2004.[205] Operations in Iraq also proved to be a major distraction to the war in Afghanistan.[206] The United Nations Secretary General remarked, "The billions spent in Iraq were the billions that were not spent in Afghanistan."[207] Only at the end of George W. Bush's presidency did nation building in Afghanistan gain maximum momentum and attention.[208]

The condition of state institutions in 2001 was deplorable. The institutions hardly existed due to the chaotic environment from 1979 to 2001. The infighting between the mujahedin groups resulted into total annihilation of the remnant state institutions like the ministries and the security forces. Almost everything had to be built from scratch, requiring great effort, energies, and funding as compared to the previous regime stabilization measures in Afghanistan during the Soviet's invasion of Afghanistan. The stabilization efforts of the U.S.-led coalition focused on building Afghanistan's security forces to include the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP), political development including introduction of a presidential form of democracy and national reconciliation barring Taliban factions, and economic as well as infrastructural development.

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204 Conor Keane, U.S. *Nation-Building in Afghanistan* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 59.

205 Keane, 60.

206 Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia* (New York: Penguin Group, 2008), XL1.

207 Rashid, XL1.

208 Keane, 2.

The United Nations held donors' conferences in January 2002 and April 2002 in Tokyo and Geneva, respectively, that focused on the state stabilization measures.[209] In Tokyo, the donor countries pledged $4.5 billion to support the task of rebuilding Afghanistan.[210] The conference raised many hopes of rebuilding Afghanistan but did not differentiate between humanitarian relief and infrastructural development. Subsequently, the next two years focused more on humanitarian work.[211] The conference in April 2002 focused specifically on the development of the state institutions. In the conference, the United States took responsibility for building the ANA, Germany took responsibility for rebuilding the ANP, Italy took responsibility for development of the justice system, Britain took responsibility for the counter-narcotics effort, and Japan took over responsibility for disarming the militias.[212] In the latter half of the decade, the responsibilities and set targets continued to evolve for a better and synergized effort for state stabilization.

1. Building of the Security Forces

The U.S.-led coalition's focal effort remained on Security Force Assistance (SFA).[213] During the donor conference in April 2002, the United States took responsibility for rebuilding the ANA while Germany took the lead in rebuilding the ANP.[214] In the initial period, the SFA mainly focused on limited development to ensure rebuilding forces free of Taliban influence.[215]The elections of 2004/2005 in Afghanistan necessitated major development of the SFA to ensure the holding of peaceful elections. The hasty arrangements affected the development process. The SFA gained momentum,

209 Rashid, 178–179.

210 Rashid, 178.

211 Rashid, 178.

212 "United Nations and Afghanistan," UN News Centre, April 4, 2002, https://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/afghanistan/infocusnews.asp?NewsID=162&sID=1.

213 Cyrus Hodes and Mark Sedra, "Security-Sector Reform, The Adelphi Papers 47" (October 2007): 53, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/05679320701737539.

214 "United Nations and Afghanistan," UN News Centre, April 4, 2002.

215 Terrence K. Kelly, Nora Bensahel, and Olga Oliker, *Security Force Assistance in Afghanistan: Identifying Lessons for Future Efforts* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011), xv.

however, after the surge of the Taliban toward the end of the second term of President George W. Bush, when more funds were allocated.[216] An exhaustive effort was undertaken for the rebuilding, development, training, and provisioning of equipment to the security forces of Afghanistan. Approximately $29 billion were spent from 2002 to 2010 for the SFA.[217]

The United States commenced SFA efforts by opening an Office of Security Cooperation (OSC) in the U.S. embassy in Afghanistan.[218] In 2003, the U.S. State Department started assisting the police training through hiring DynCorp International.[219] In 2005, Combined Security and Transition Command Afghanistan (CSTC-A) was established to develop the ANA and later the ANP.[220] A NATO-led security force named the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), established by the United Nations in 2001 in light of decisions in the Bonn conference,[221] formed a joint command in Afghanistan in October 2009 called the ISAF Joint Command or IJC for looking after the development of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).[222] NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) was established in 2009 and combined with the CSTC-A to look after the SFA in Afghanistan.[223]

a. The Afghan Military

The major focus of the U.S.-led coalition remained on the development of the ANA, which was considered to be a centerpiece in the effort to establish peace in the country. U.S. General Tommy Franks deemed development of the ANA to be an important step in ensuring prosperity and peace in free Afghanistan.[224]

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216 Keane, 2.

217 Keane, 91.

218 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, xvi.

219 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, xvi.

220 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, xvi.

221 Keane, 89.

222 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, xvi.

223 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, xvi.

224 Keane, 91.

The 1990s had transformed the ANA into militias under different warlords.[225] The central concept of a national army was completely abolished due to lack of a central government. The army operating under the Taliban was also non-existent after the invasion of 2001 by the United States. Hence, the ANA had to be raised from the scratch, which required considerable effort. Moreover, in view of the defeat of the Taliban in the beginning, before their reemergence in the latter half of the decade, the initial plan of the U.S.-led coalition was to build a small, but well-trained Afghan National Army.[226] After the reemergence of the Taliban however, the focus shifted toward quantity also.

In the beginning, the United States relied on certain militias that were helpful against the Taliban and termed them Afghan Security Forces (ASF).[227] These forces were not part of the Afghan government and were paid wholly by the United States.[228] With the passage of time, the need arose to develop and ethnically balance a well-trained army under the control of the central government.

The Pentagon's initial efforts for development of the ANA was a lukewarm approach. The efforts commenced in April 2002 when the United States pledged $290 million a year for the development of the ANA in the Bonn conference of the donor countries.[229] The bureaucratic delays resulted in non-implementation of the plans until June 2002. The pledges remained pledges, and the United States dedicated only $70 million in 2002. This sum increased in 2003 to $151million.[230] These resources dedicated for the development of the ANA were extremely less, which is also evident from the fact that after the reemergence of the Taliban, the total amount dedicated for the development of the ANSF from 2006 to 2008 rose to $5.9 billion.[231] The initial reluctance of the

225 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 18. At the time of the invasion in 2001, the Afghan militia operating under various warlords numbered approximately one million. These anti-Taliban forces under the warlords were called Afghan Militia Forces (AMF).

226 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, 17.

227 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, 20.

228 Kelly, Bensahel and Oliker, 20.

229 Keane, 92.

230 Keane, 92.

231 Keane, 93.

Pentagon and its subsequent realization of the importance of the building of a strong ANA delayed the development process of the ANA. The funding for the ANA kept increasing after 2008. By June 2014, the United States had spent $31.9 billion to raise and train the ANA.[232]

The planning strength of the ANA also varied over the years for different reasons ranging from the bureaucratic delays to the prevalent environment of the Taliban insurgency. The initial plans were to develop an ANA with a total strength of 60,000 personnel.[233] The planning included raising seven military corps covering the entire area of Afghanistan. Six corps were planned to be combat, and one stationed in Kabul was to be quick-reaction corps.[234] Out of six corps, four were focused on the south and southeast (201, 203, 205, and 215 Corps), while two were focused on the north (207 and 209 Corps).[235]

There has been a gradual increase in the strength of the ANA over the years. The United States planned to train 12,000 ANA troops by April 2003,[236] but the goal was revised to training 9,000 personnel by November 2003 as the planned figures could not be met.[237] These ambitious goals affected the training considerably. By the spring of 2006, when the Taliban had launched a major offensive in the south, the ANA comprised 37,000 personnel instead of the initially planned total strength of 60,000 personnel.[238]

The strength of the ANA kept increasing in response to the Taliban insurgency and the realization of the importance of the ANA to the coalition's policy makers. The strength of the ANA reached 81,000 before April 2009 and touched the 92,000 mark by

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232 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) *Quarterly report to the United States Congress* (July 30, 2014), https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2014-07-30qr.pdf.

233 "United Nations and Afghanistan," UN News Centre, April 4, 2002.

234 Rashid, 202.

235 Department of Defense, United States of America, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (Report to Congress, June 2018), https://media.defense.gov/2018/Jul/03/2001938620/-1/-1/1/1225-REPORT-JUNE-2018-FINAL-UNCLASS-BASE.PDF.

236 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 21.

237 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 21.

238 Rashid, 203.

September 2009.[239] It further increased to 100,131 personnel by December 2009.[240] By June 2014, the total strength of the ANA was 188,170 personnel, including 6,731 personnel of the Afghan Air Force.[241] Recruitment and retention challenges continuously affected the ANA's strength development.[242]

The United States devised an elaborate training system for the ANA. The training of the ANA commenced in May 2002 under the Special Forces Group of the United States.[243] The training regime was two-fold with initial training in the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC) and subsequent training through a newly devised advisory mission called Embedded Training Teams (ETTs).[244] The ETTs conducted the training in the ANA battalions called *kandaks*. Each ETT was comprised of 16 U.S. personnel who were scheduled to remain with the Afghan kandaks and brigades to prepare them for various operations.[245]

The training of the ANA gained momentum in 2004, as the Taliban started increasing their influence in the Afghanistan.[246] The training capacity of the KMTC was increased considerably to training five kandaks every month by January 2005.[247] The focus on quantity shifted back to quality in 2005 as it was decided to train two kandaks every month. The shift was necessitated by the lack of requisite funds for the KMTC and difficulty in fielding the required number of ETTs with each kandak.[248] The training duration of each kandak was also reduced from 14 weeks to ten weeks.[249]

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239 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 56.

240 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 56.

241 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly report to the United States Congress* (July 30, 2014), https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2014-07-30qr.pdf.

242 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 24.

243 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 22.

244 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 26.

245 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 26.

246 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 32.

247 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 32.

248 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 33, 40.

249 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 40.

ETTs proved to be a good step in training the ANA. ETTs even conducted combat operations with their affiliated ANA outfits.[250] Provision of the required number of ETTs personnel remained a problem however. The increase in the ANA's strength in 2005 put extra drain on the ETTs. With an increase in the training of extra kandaks in the KMTC, the requirement of ETT personnel rose from 410 to 700.[251] To compound the deficiency, the number of personnel in each ETT was decreased from 16 to 12 personnel.[252] Although the number of personnel for the ETT was increased in 2005 by the U.S., the gap could not be filled entirely.[253] In 2007, the total requirement of the ETT exceeded 3000 personnel, but just more than 1000 personnel could be provided to the ANA.[254] The quality of the trainers also remained an issue as many U.S. personnel were put in the field with limited advisory training.

Desertion and attrition had been major issues concerning ANA development. The desertion rate in 2003 was 22 percent and was linked to salary issues and discipline problems.[255] In 2005, it increased to 25 percent, and it decreased to 16 percent in 2006.[256] The desertion rate was so high in 2004 and 2005, especially in the field formations, that in the 205th Corps deployed in Kandahar, 1200–1500 personnel deserted out of a total strength of 2,400 personnel. That is more than 50 percent for that particular corps.[257] The rise in desertion during the period of 2004 to 2005 can be attributed to the increased attacks by the Taliban.[258] From 2006 to 2007, the official desertion rate improved and remained between 12 percent and 13 percent. The rate of soldiers going absent without leave (AWOL) remained alarmingly high. In 2006, it was reported that the AWOL

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250 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 43.

251 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 33.

252 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 33.

253 Kelly, Bensahe,l and Oliker, 33.

254 Anthony H. Cordesman, Arleigh A. Burke, David Kasten, and Adam Mausner, *Winning in Afghanistan: Creating Effective Afghan Security Forces* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2008), 45.

255 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 25.

256 Rashid, 203.

257 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 42.

258 Hodes and Sedra, 58.

figures remained as high as 40 percent.[259] These calculations were done for a regional corps in Herat. The desertion rates reduced considerably during the years nearing 2014.[260]

Attrition remained a continuous problem for the ANA. Some 39,136 ANA personnel were removed from the ANA's strength in 2013/2014.[261] The casualty rate remained a concern as 2,330 ANA personnel were killed and 12,696 were wounded in action from 2012 to 2014.[262]

Despite extensive efforts, no ANA unit was considered fit for conducting independent operation until August 2007. The situation improved after 2007. In 2008, 18 out of 72 ANA kandaks were given CM1 status (Capability Milestone status, capable to act independently with specific assistance from the coalition forces).[263] The system of awarding CM status is not very reliable as the data required for assessment is provided by the ANA units and is not considered very accurate.[264] The situation improved manifold later as the ANA was considered more reliable than the ANP and mostly led operations with specific assistance from the coalition forces. Nonetheless, the ANA's performance against the Taliban offensive cast serious doubts on its capability to perform independently.[265] During the recent attacks by the Taliban, the ANA relied exceedingly on coalition forces for the clearance of areas occupied by the Taliban insurgents.

In October 2014, Rahim Wardak, a former Afghan defense minister, deemed the ANA to be a child, not even a teenager.[266] Even in early 2014, the ANA's dependence on

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259 Hodes and Sedra, 58.

260 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* (July 30, 2014), 101, https://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/2014-07-30qr.pdf.

261 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* (July 30, 2014), 102.

262 Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress* (July 30, 2014), 102.

263 Cordesman, Burke, Kasten, and Mausner, 52.

264 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 94–95.

265 Mashal, "Why the Taliban's Assault on Ghazni Matters."

266 Mark Sedra, "An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan's Security Sector," *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, no.3 (November 2014), Art 35, 2, http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.ei.

NATO remained a worrisome factor. The dependence mostly related to air and medical support.[267]

b. The Afghan National Police

Germany took the responsibility for rebuilding the ANP during the donor conference held in 2002 under the auspices of the United Nations.[268] Germany commenced the formal process of rebuilding the ANP by signing an agreement with the Afghan Interior Ministry in March 2002.[269] Germany started reforms of the ANP by considering the existing police officials, unlike the rebuilding process of the ANA, which was raised from scratch.

Germany's performance in the police reform sector remained far below the expected level.[270] Germany initiated a reform process with five priority areas that included providing advice for the reform, reconstruction of buildings, provision of equipment, coordination of donor activities, and raising the Kabul Police Academy (KPA).[271] Between 2002 and 2006, Germany expanded a meagre amount of $89 million for rebuilding the ANP and provided only 41 trainers to train 3,500 police personnel over a time period of three years.[272] Germany could not do much other than standing up the KPA.[273] By 2006, a force of only 3,302 could be rolled out of the KPA.[274] Most of the ANP in different regions remained without any training at all.

The United States stepped into the ANP reform system in 2003 and incorporated DynCorp through the State Department by allocating $24 million for setting up seven

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267 Sedra, "An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan's Security Sector," 5.

268 "United Nations and Afghanistan," UN News Centre, April 4, 2002, https://www.un.org/apps/news/infocus/afghanistan/infocusnews.asp?NewsID=162&sID=1.

269 Hodes and Sedra, "Security-Sector Reform, The Adelphi Papers 47," 62.

270 Rashid, 204.

271 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 28.

272 Rashid, 204.

273 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 29.

274 Hodes and Sedra, "Security-Sector Reform, The Adelphi Papers 47," 63.

regional training centers.[275] Afghanistan was divided into eight zones that corresponded largely to the deployment pattern of the ANA. Although required training could not be imparted to the ANP due to a limited number of trainers, the strength of the force kept increasing, reaching 65,000 at the start of 2007.[276] The ANP was so undertrained that an assessment detailed that at least 85 percent of police officers lacked the ability to perform basic police tasks.[277]

Although the strength of the ANP was officially at 82,000 personnel by May 2007, the ground situation reported was much different from the official stance.[278]There were serious irregularities in the payrolls of the regional ANP. The salaries kept flowing out of the fund, but the police on the ground did not exist.[279] Only 35–60 police were reported in 2006 to be in each district of the Kandahar province.[280] Such irregularities continued even until 2014, when the overall strength of the ANP was reported to be 150,688.[281] According to a report of the U.S. Department of Defense in August 2014, 4,500 ANP personnel in pay rolls were found to be bogus, amounting to improper payment of $40 million.[282]

The system of advisors with field units of the ANP commenced in the same manner already employed in the ANA. DynCorp fielded the first batch of 16 police trainers with the field units of the ANP in early 2005 but could not expand the program further due to security limitation and economic costs.[283] The United States designated the ETTs to mentor the police units instead of the ANA. Police mentoring expanded from 2005 to 2007 when separate Police Mentoring Teams (PMTs) evolved. The PMTs were

275 Rashid, 205.

276 Keane, 95.

277 Keane, 95.

278 Keane, 95.

279 Keane, 95.

280 Keane, 95.

281 Mark Sedra, “An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan’s Security Sector,” 6.

282 Mark Sedra, “An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan’s Security Sector,” 6.

283 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 36.

mostly comprised of military personnel.[284] The gap between the required number of PMTs and the assigned figure remained considerable however. In July 2008, the ANP was short of 2300 PMTs—a deficiency that is exceedingly high.[285]

The CSTC-A had already been in the driver's seat of the ANP reform process by 2005.[286] The CSTC-A took three main steps to reform the ANP. The first step was to reform the pay and rank structure and standardize the entire ANP on one line.[287] Second, in September 2006, the Afghan National Auxiliary Police (ANAP) was raised to enable the police to counter the growing insurgency.[288] The ANAP was established in 21 provinces with governors recruiting the local police to assist in law and order, reaching a reasonable strength of 11,271 personnel.[289] ANAP, however, encountered serious issues like the infiltration of Taliban elements in their rank and file, poor training standards, and disloyalty to the central government.[290] As a result, the force was disbanded on September 30, 2008.[291] The third step for reform in police was raising the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) in 2006.[292] The ANCOP was raised after the existing ANP failed to control riots that erupted in Kabul in May 2006 after the killing of five civilians in a roadside accident involving a U.S. military convoy.[293] Over the years, the force increased to eight brigades and was designated as the Public Security Police with a strength of 2,550 personnel.[294] The force was established to act as a rapid reaction

284 Cordesman, Burke, Kasten, and Mausner, 120.

285 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 49.

286 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 61.

287 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 50.

288 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 51.

289 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 52.

290 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 52.

291 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 53.

292 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 53.

293 Hodes and Sedra, "Security-Sector Reform, The Adelphi Papers 47," 61.

294 Department of Defense, United States of America, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (Report to Congress, June 2018), 78, https://media.defense.gov/2018/Jul/03/2001938620/-1/-1/1/1225-REPORT-JUNE-2018-FINAL-UNCLASS-BASE.PDF.

force, designed to operate in high-threat areas.[295] Unfortunately, the reforms could not yield better results, and the ANP remained a below par force.[296] Training, equipping, and the advisory system were the main hurdles in the evolution of the ANP.[297] The employment concept also hurt the ANP, who mostly faced the brunt of the insurgency as they were mostly employed in the lead role.[298]

The CSTC-A undertook another reform effort in November 2007 to retrain the entire personnel of the ANP.[299] The CSTC-A introduced a Focused District Development (FDD) concept to train the entire police of each district at one time while temporarily giving its responsibilities to the ANCOP.[300] After training was complete, designated PMTs were required to accompany the ANP unit for further training until the time the unit qualified for CM1 level.[301] The FDD program proved useful in the beginning but later lost its utility due to slow progress and the limitation in provision of required PMTs as by 2009 only 65 out of 365 police districts could complete the planned training.[302]

Currently, the ANP comprises the normal Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), ANCOP, the Afghan Border Police (ABP), and the Afghan Local Police (ALP) besides a few other subordinate forces. The AUP is a regular Afghan police force designated with routine law and order duties but heavily involved in counter-insurgency operations alongside the ANA. Then ANCOP is a rapid reaction force as highlighted earlier. The ABP is a border force whose major strength was transferred to the MoD in December 2017.[303] By contrast, troops detailed on customs duties at the border and on airports

295 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 53.

296 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 53.

297 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 53–54.

298 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 53–54.

299 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 62.

300 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 62.

301 Cordesman, Burke, Kasten, and Mausner, 120.

302 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 63.

303 Department of Defense, United States of America, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (Report to Congress, June 2018), 41, https://media.defense.gov/2018/Jul/03/2001938620/-1/-1/1/1225-REPORT-JUNE-2018-FINAL-UNCLASS-BASE.PDF.

remained under the MoI.[304] The ALP was formed in 2010 and has been trained by the U.S. Special Forces.[305] The force is locally recruited and is an irregular force operating under the MoI. The ALP consisted of 26,451 in June 2014.[306] Despite the concerns of many based on the negative aspects of the ALP being more of a militia than a police force, the ALP is continuing as a segment of the ANP.

The ANP still faces numerous issues. In spite of the extensive efforts by the coalition forces in terms of time and resources, the ANP is currently seen as a force which is still far from being designated as a professional police force. The ANP is ripe with corruption, drug trade, and criminal acts and is disloyal with incidents of defection to Taliban and the selling of equipment in large scale to insurgents as highlighted by the deputy governor of Ghazni province in December 2013.[307] The presence of "ghost" police personnel in the ANP is also a serious concern; a significant number of personnel only existed on paper and were not present on the ground to perform the duties.[308] The heavy attrition rate is also a serious issue. The attrition rate for the ANP is much higher than the ANA,[309] probably due to the poor training standards. The ANP lost 1,165 personnel from January 2007 to September 2008.[310] During the same period, the ANA lost 420 personnel.[311] In 2009, the corresponding casualty ratio between the ANP and the ANA increased to four times.[312] The sad saga of high attrition rate continued over the years. In only six months of 2014, the ANP lost 3,738 personnel (1,368 killed and 2,370 wounded).[313] These high attrition rates have seriously affected the output of the force.

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304 Department of Defense, United States of America, *Enhancing Security and Stability in Afghanistan* (Report to Congress, June 2018), 103, https://media.defense.gov/2018/Jul/03/2001938620/-1/-1/1/1225-REPORT-JUNE-2018-FINAL-UNCLASS-BASE.PDF.

305 Sedra, "An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan's Security Sector," 7.

306 Sedra, 7.

307 Sedra, 5.

308 Sedra, 6.

309 Sedra, 6.

310 Cordesman, Burke, Kasten, and Mausner, iv.

311 Cordesman, Burke, Kasten, and Mausner, iv.

312 Cordesman, Burke, Kasten, and Mausner, 121.

313 Sedra, "An Uncertain Future for Afghanistan's Security Sector," 6.

2. Political Development and National Reconciliation

The U.S.-led coalition initiated a detailed process of political development in Afghanistan by introducing a presidential form of democracy. The details regarding path to democracy and national reconciliation steps in Afghanistan would be covered in succeeding paras.

a. Path to Democracy

Political development toward democracy in Afghanistan started after the fall of the Taliban regime when various stakeholders—not including the Taliban—held a conference in Bonn, Germany. The Bonn conference, held from November 27 to December 4, 2001, was attended mainly by anti-Taliban factions and set a framework for the future political mosaic of the country. Held under the auspices of the United Nations, the conference was attended by four major Afghan stakeholders in addition to the representatives of regional powers like Russia, Iran, India, and Pakistan.[314] The four Afghan delegations included the Northern Alliance group headed by Younis Qanooni, who controlled most of the Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban regime; the Rome group, under the ex-King Zahir Shah and represented by Dr. Abdul Sattar Sirat; and the Cyprus group who had close ties to the Iran and Peshawar group that consisted mostly of Pashtuns refugees in Pakistan.[315] Hamid Karzai, the future President of Afghanistan, participated in the conference through a satellite telephone operated by the CIA from Kandahar.[316] The ousted regime of the Taliban was absent from the conference for the future of Afghanistan.

The Bonn conference initiated a political process that set Afghanistan on a democratic path, albeit a bumpy, long, and uncertain one. The Bonn conference set a path for the future holding of the Emergency *Loya Jirga*,[317] the formation of a transitional

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314 James F. Dobbins, *After the Taliban: Nation-Building in Afghanistan* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, Inc., 2008), 72–80.

315 Dobbins, 78–79.

316 Dobbins, 77.

317 A Pashtun traditional grand assembly of elders of the country comprising representation from every walk of the life.

government under Hamid Karzai, the conduct of Constitutional Jirga that would draft the new constitution for Afghanistan, and the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2004–2005.[318] The Bonn agreement established an interim administration for six months under the chairmanship of Hamid Karzai, a Pashtun hailing from Kandahar.[319] *Loya Jirga* convened in June 2002 and elected an Afghan Transitional Administration (ATA) under the presidency of Hamid Karzai.[320] President Hamid Karzai appointed a cabinet of ATA with warlords and tribal leaders occupying all the influential posts.[321]

The adoption of the Afghan constitution in January 2003 also put the country on a democratic path. A constitutional *Loya Jirga* drafted the constitution for Afghanistan which was adopted by consensus.[322] The new Afghan constitution called for a presidential form of government and approved the formation of two houses: the *rysi Jirga*, the lower house, and the *Meshrano Jirga*, the upper house.[323] Afghanistan was declared an Islamic republic, and Pashto and Dari became the national languages.[324] The ATA administration announced separate presidential and parliamentary elections to be held in 2004 and 2005, respectively.[325]

Interim President Hamid Karzai stood for the presidential elections along with 15 other candidates and secured the win with 55 percent of the votes.[326] The presidential

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318 David Isby, *Afghanistan, Graveyard of Empires: A New History of the Borderlands* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2010), xi.

319 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

320 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

321 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

322 Isby, xi.

323 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

324 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

325 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan.*

326 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

election of 2004 was a success in terms of the overall security environment of the country.[327] The Taliban failed to disrupt the elections beyond a certain level.[328] The turnout for the election remained over 70 percent.[329] The elections were affected more by charges of vote-rigging than by Taliban violence.

President Hamid Karzai's first tenure is tainted by both the rise of warlords in the government and corruption in the ministries.[330] President Karzai initially tried to limit the powerful warlords with Western help, but later he tried to reconcile with the same warlords as he saw little assistance coming from the U.S.-led coalition.[331] To ensure political survival, the Karzai administration gave patronage to the notorious warlords by appointing them to important slots in the government.[332] Corruption, extensive indulgence of the drug trade, and the lack of rule of law remained the other major issues related to President Karzai's rule.[333]

The second Afghan presidential and parliamentary elections further weakened democratic progress in the country. The 2009 elections were held with Afghan institutions in the lead.[334] The elections were initially planned for May 2009 but were delayed until August due to serious security issues as the Taliban vowed to disrupt the election process.[335] The security situation became challenging due to increased Taliban attacks. The number of casualties for the coalition, the ANA, the ANP, and civilians

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327 Mathew J. Morgan, *A Democracy is Born: An Inside Account of the Battle Against Terrorism in Afghanistan* (London: Praeger Security International, 2007), 84.

328 Morgan, 84.

329 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

330 Vanda Felbab-Brown, *Aspiration and Ambivalence* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013), 64–66.

331 Felbab-Brown, 64.

332 Felbab-Brown, 64.

333 Felbab-Brown, 66.

334 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*.

335 Country Watch, *Afghanistan: 2018 Country Review* (Houston, TX: Country Watch Inc., 2018), 67, http://www.countrywatch.com/Content/pdfs/reviews/B3333LZ9.01c.pdf.

increased alarmingly.[336] In 2009 alone, coalition fatalities reached 520 personnel—an increase of 76 percent from the previous year—and civilian casualties reached 5,978, while casualties of the ANA and the ANP were 928 personnel.[337] This seriously hurt the security equilibrium and affected the elections greatly. On election day alone, 400 attacks were reported by the ISAF.[338] The threats by the Taliban also affected the election turnout, which became as low as 40 percent as compared to 70 percent in the last elections.[339]

Serious election irregularities also tarnished the elections. Two leading candidates for the election were sitting President Hamid Karzai, who was running for re-election, and sitting Foreign Minister Dr. Abdullah Abdullah.[340] Hamid Karzai was alleged to have committed major election fraud, including denial of voting in majority areas of Abdullah Abdullah and showing inflated turnout to benefit Karzai.[341] More than a million votes were invalidated after the recount.[342] Other presidential candidates also questioned the transparency of the elections.

Hamid Karzai could not secure 50 percent of the votes required to avoid a second round of elections. A second round of voting—a run-off election between the two leading candidates—was scheduled to be held on November 7, 2009.[343] However, Abdullah Abdullah withdrew from the run-off election on the pretext of foreseeable irregularities by the Afghan Election Commission. After his withdrawal, Hamid Karzai was declared the winner of the presidential polls of 2009.

The parliamentary elections of 2010 were also affected by the dwindling security spectrum. The elections were initially scheduled to be held in May 2010 but were later

336 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 54–55.

337 Kelly, Bensahel, and Oliker, 54–55.

338 Country Watch, *Afghanistan: 2018 Country Review*, 71.

339 Country Watch, 71.

340 Country Watch, 71.

341 Country Watch, 71.

342 Country Watch, 89.

343 Country Watch, 73.

postponed to be held in September 2010.[344] By the time of the parliamentary elections, there had been surge in the U.S. and coalition forces as the total U.S.-led coalition then roughly numbered 150,000 personnel.[345] The security situation remained volatile however. Leading up to the election, many election candidates were assassinated, and election-related staff and innocent civilians were killed.

The poor security situation showed up through low election turnout: 40 percent.[346] There were reports of serious election irregularities. Out of 10 million eligible voters, 3.6 million voted for the *Wolesi Jirga* candidates.[347] Later, 1.5 million votes were turned down as being bogus.[348] This brings the total turnout for the 2010 parliamentary elections to 21 percent, far below the expectations.[349] On the other hand, the positive aspect of the election was that over 50 percent of the newly elected members of *Wolesi Jirga* were new faces. Despite the controversies over election fraud, the new parliament started functioning by the end January 2011.[350] The second tenure of President Hamid Karzai continued until the appointment of Ashraf Ghani as the next president in 2014.

b. National Reconciliation

National reconciliation in Afghanistan could not be pursued in true letter and spirit. Intermittent efforts continued in one form or the other along with the combat operations by the U.S.-led coalition. The coalition however could not succeed in making a complete wedge between the Pashtuns and the Taliban, a failure that helped the Taliban in continuing and further establishing their control in these areas. The failure in engaging the Taliban in a national reconciliation effort has accrued serious weakening of the government's writ in Afghanistan. The Taliban's grip over Afghanistan is evident from

344 Country Watch, 86.

345 Country Watch, 92.

346 Country Watch, 101.

347 National Democratic Institute, *The 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council Elections in Afghanistan*, 13.

348 National Democratic Institute, 13.

349 National Democratic Institute, 12.

350 Country Watch, *Afghanistan: 2018 Country Review*, 106.

their enhanced control in various districts of the country and the continued targeting of even the safest areas inside Kabul. The U.S.-led coalition started engaging various warlords of Afghanistan after throwing out the Taliban regime, but this could not be termed as a national reconciliation program.

The first concrete national reconciliation program was started in the first half of 2003 when President Hamid Karzai vowed his willingness to talk to "Good Taliban," a policy he laid out while addressing religious scholars in April 2003.[351] Specifically, President Karzai sought to create a wedge in the Taliban by segregating insurgents who were willing to talk to the new administration. To proceed with his strategy, President Karzai established a Peace and Reconciliation Commission under ex-president of Afghanistan Mr. Sebghatullah Mojadeddi as part of a peace initiative called Program *Takhim-e-Solh* (PTS).[352] The commission commenced its functioning by offering amnesty to Taliban members who were ready to work with the new government.[353] The commission can be regarded as a positive effort with encouraging results in the beginning but could not achieve conspicuous success later. Due to its inability to garner a peace initiative, the United States, the U.K., and the Netherlands abandoned their support for the initiative.[354]

Reconciliation continued in one form or the other by engaging the dissident Taliban elements. In 2005, the Peace and Reconciliation Commission under ex-president of Afghanistan Mr. Sebghatullah Mojadeddi dramatically offered amnesty even to Mulla Omer, the Taliban chief.[355] The step was retracted after strong opposition by the non-Pashtun government leaders and the U.S.-led coalition.[356] President Karzai continued engagement of Taliban elements mostly for political advantages and to garner the support

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351 Robert I. Rotberg, *Building a New Afghanistan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007), 75.

352 Rotberg, 75.

353 Rotberg, 75.

354 Ashley J. Tellis, "Reconciling with the Taliban: Toward an Alternative Grand Strategy in Afghanistan," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (April 2009), https://carnegieendowment.org/files/reconciling_with_taliban.pdf.

355 Tellis, "Reconciling with the Taliban."

356 Tellis, "Reconciling with the Taliban."

of the Pashtun population. President Karzai was not serious about the success of the reconciliation beyond certain domestic advantages and was not supported by the non-Pashtun government leaders and the Coalition forces.

Reconciliation efforts continued under Karzai but could not yield substantial results. In 2010, President Karzai introduced an Afghan Peace and Reintegration Program (APRP) aimed at engaging the low and mid-level insurgent fighter for peace and reintegration.[357] The APRP could not yield substantial results despite heavy investment in terms of effort, time, and resources. The program was finally abandoned in 2016 and was considered a failure. It stretched over six years and cost $200 million.[358] The APRP could admit only 11,077 insurgents by laying down their weapons, with no assurance of their loyalty.[359]

3. Economic Development and Nation Building

Afghanistan showed tremendous improvement in economic and infrastructural development as totally depleted state institutions in the post-Taliban era were developed by the U.S.-led coalition at great expense. The United States and the coalition countries invested massively in Afghanistan to rebuild the economy of a failed state.[360] Due to heavy investments in Afghanistan, the country is all set to progress well if the security and political situation improves, which unfortunately is on a constant decline. The sad part is that Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world despite heavy

357 Zeng Xiangyu, Zhang Chunyan, Zhu Yufan, "Political Reconciliation in Afghanistan: Progress, Challenges and Prospects," Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, no. 32 (January 2012), http://issi.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/1379480196_47959077.pdf.

358 Tim Craig and Mohammad Sharif, "Afghanistan Paid 11000 Militants to Lay Down Their Arms. Now the Money has Run Out," *Washington Post*, May 17, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/a-us-afghan-plan-to-buy-off-militants-may-be-failing/2016/05/16/79ea22f8-1a65-11e6-aa55-670cabef46e0_story.html?utm_term=.5bc18f041620.

359 Craig and Sharif, "Afghanistan Paid 11000 Militants to Lay Down Their Arms. Now the Money has Run Out."

360 Nematullah Bizhan, "Aid and State-building, Part II: Afghanistan and Iraq," *Third World Quarterly*, 39, no. 5 (March 2018): 8787, https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2018.1447369.

investments by the donor countries.[361] Since the invasion of Afghanistan, its economy has been on a continuous rise with 9.1 percent GDP growth between 2003 to 2011.[362] The U.S.-led coalition provided extensive aid to Afghanistan. The foreign aid in 2002–2003 was $404 million, the sum of which rose to $15.7 billion in 2010–2011.[363] This foreign aid includes both military and civilian aid; however, it must be noted that expenditure *in* Afghanistan is much greater than expenditure *on* Afghanistan. Total U.S. spending in Afghanistan was estimated to be $444 billion in 2010/11.[364] Although the Afghan economy improved markedly, it was heavily dependent on foreign aid. Only Liberia and Gaza ranked higher than Afghanistan with regards to foreign aid dependency.[365] The bulk of the aid was security-related, but civilian aid still was estimated to be more than $6 billion a year.[366]

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was a leading civilian development organization in Afghanistan. The agency was managing development in Afghanistan even before the U.S.-led coalition's invasion of Afghanistan. Initially, USAID was slow in the development work but gained momentum after 2005.[367] USAID undertook many infrastructural development projects in the country like airport construction, electricity improvement, construction and upgrade of the Kajaki dam, and many agricultural projects in Helmand province.[368]

USAID's operations in Afghanistan, however, were greatly hampered by the pressures from the U.S. military to resort to "development suiting military operations."[369]

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361 Richard Hogg, Claudia Nassif, Camilo Gomez Osorio, William Byrd, and Andrew Beath, *Afghanistan in Transition: Looking beyond 2014* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2013), 47, http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/221481468189862358/pdf/758480PUB0EPI0001300PUBDATE02028013.pdf.

362 Hogg, Nassif, Osorio, Byrd, and Beath, 47.

363 Hogg, Nassif, Osorio, Byrd, and Beath, 48.

364 Hogg, Nassif, Osorio, Byrd, and Beath, 55.

365 Hogg, Nassif, Osorio, Byrd, and Beath, 2.

366 Hogg, Nassif, Osorio, Byrd, and Beath, 2.

367 Keane, 116.

368 Keane, 116–122.

369 Keane, 118.

Thus, USAID spent the majority of its budget in the southern provinces where the coalition forces were countering a serious insurgency by the Taliban.[370] It slowed down USAID projects as evident from the construction of the Kajaki dam, which was started in 2004 but could not be completed even after ten years.[371] USAID had been critiqued for many poorly managed development projects that proved be a total failure like poor progress in road construction, mismanaged projects like solar panel issues, outsourcing companies' problems, poorly managed agricultural projects, and staff management issues.[372] Most of the failures of the USAID can be attributed to the pressures of the U.S. military to dovetail development with counter-insurgency efforts.

Road improvement had been one of the first development projects started by the U.S.-led coalition but remains a failure. The coalition forces believed that the Taliban reigned in areas where the road ended, so road development was given due importance. In November 2002, the United States started rebuilding the famous ring road,[373] which is a 3,200 kilometers loop in Afghanistan, connecting Kabul to Kandahar to Herat to Mazar-i-Sharif. Only the Kabul to Kandahar section of the ring road could be completed by the end 2003 with an extremely high cost of $190 million for a 190-mile road.[374] The complete ring road project could not be completed despite serious efforts in terms of time and resources. At present, already constructed parts of the road are in deplorable condition and need major repairs.

The development was also affected seriously by the role played by the CIA, which wanted to link development with the combat operations.[375] Winning hearts and minds campaigns were directed only in areas where the coalition forces were facing resistance; thus, economic and infrastructural development aimed at overcoming the resistance rather than developing the areas. The U.S. military started the Commander's

370 Keane, 118.

371 Keane, 119.

372 Keane, 116–128.

373 Rashid, 186.

374 Rashid, 186.

375 Keane, 185.

Emergency Response Program (CERP) to use development as a tool to improve security.[376] Around $2 billion were allocated to CERP projects between 2004 and 2010. By 2011, around 16,000 quick impact projects were completed under the CERP ranging from $5,000 to $50,000[377]

Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), a lower tier of the U.S.-led coalition's development program in Afghanistan, could not deliver the desired results. The program was initially started by the United States as the Coalition Humanitarian Liaison Cells (CHLC) program and consisted of military soldiers engaged in development activity.[378] After initial success, the CHLC was expanded into PRTs with a more robust structure. First, PRT was established by the U.S. in the Gardez province in 2003.[379] By 2008, 26 PRTs were functioning in Afghanistan, out of which 12 were led by the U.S. and the remaining 14 were led by the coalition countries.[380] PRTs are military heavy organizations with very little civilian representation, a factor which leads to their criticism also. In 2008, there were 1,021 military personnel serving in PRTs against 35 civilians.[381] The PRTs undertook quick action ranging from the health sector to agricultural and infrastructural development. Their overall performance, however, cannot be described as encouraging.[382] Inter-agency issues and low civil and expert representation can be regarded as the constraining factors.[383]

In a nut shell, despite heavy investments by the U.S.-led coalition, Afghanistan is still not stable and continues a walk on a tightrope due to political and security-related issues. The economic growth is ideal, but the economy is heavily dependent on foreign

376 Keane, 113.

377 Keane, 113.

378 Keane, 193.

379 Joseph A. Christoff, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan and Iraq*, GAO-09-86R (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, 2008), 3.

380 Christoff, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 1.

381 Christoff, *Provincial Reconstruction Teams*, 9.

382 Keane, 203.

383 Keane, 203.

aid, which casts serious doubts on the ability of the government to sustain the development in the absence of such huge foreign aid.

IV. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The invasions of Afghanistan by the Soviets and the U.S.-led coalition of over 40 countries are 22 years apart but yet identical in many aspects. The state stabilization measures initiated by the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan are more or less the same as initiated by the Soviets in the 1980s. The sad fact is that the people of Afghanistan are still suffering the way they suffered in the decade of the 1980s. In this thesis, an effort was made to analyze the regime-stabilization efforts of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan. Against this backdrop, the thesis asked how the regime-stabilization efforts of the Soviet Union and the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan compare. The thesis examined the regime/state stabilization measures of both periods of foreign invasion of Afghanistan in detail to discern similarities and differences.

The regime/state stabilization efforts during both periods focused on the efforts to develop of institutions, such as building Afghanistan's security forces to include the ANA and the ANP, political development, economic and infrastructural development, and, above all, pacification efforts and national reconciliation. The first effort could not stabilize the country, while the current effort is also far from achieving peace in the region.

Security force assistance remained the hallmark of both periods of invasion. During the two eras, maximum importance was given to the development of the ANA followed by the ANP. The Afghan security forces were better placed at the time of the Soviets invasion and needed little assistance thereafter. Moreover, the Soviets were already supporting the Afghan security forces prior to their invasion of Afghanistan, a fact that assisted them greatly in continuing the reform process after the invasion. For the later effort of the SFA by the U.S.-led coalition, the situation was difficult as the security forces were almost nonexistent at the time of the invasion by the U.S.-led coalition. The Taliban forces that were in power and subsequently ousted by the U.S.-led coalition were not an option for incorporation into the Afghan security forces. Therefore, the solution was a long process of raising of new security forces.

Major Soviet efforts went in for the training and equipping of the ANA. Mostly, the Soviets relied on the existing strength and carried out further recruitment. Retention and attrition remained major drawbacks. The U.S.-led coalition's major focus remained on the development of the ANA, which was considered to be a centerpiece in the effort to establish peace in the country. The ANA was raised from the scratch, which was a monumental effort. The initial lukewarm approach towards building the ANA gained substantial momentum after 2008 when massive funding was dedicated for the task. Like the Soviet period, retention and attrition had been major issues concerning the ANA.

Development of the ANP is another highlight of the two periods. The Soviets raised a new police force named Sarandoy and developed it greatly for the purpose of maintaining law and order. The effort was enormous as the manpower of the ANP reached 100,000 personnel. The Soviets implemented an elaborate training mechanism for the ANP, but the force could not develop into a qualitative outfit. Retention and attrition remained major issues. The U.S.-led coalition delayed the development of the ANP due to the issues of involvement of diverse militaries of the coalition forces. The delay in the development of the ANP was later resolved by the United States allocating extensive funding for the effort. Despite extensive efforts by the coalition forces in terms of time and resources, the ANP is currently seen as a force that is still far from being designated as a professional police force. Retention and corruption remain major issues concerning the development of the ANP.

Advisory roles by the Soviets and the U.S.-led coalition is also an aspect similar in both efforts in Afghanistan. The Soviets initiated a system of advisors with each unit and a higher echelon of the ANP and the ANA. Kobalt teams were specifically devised for the advisory role. The U.S.-led coalition also adopted an elaborate system of advisors for training and guiding the efforts of the ANP and the ANA. ETTs and PMTs are elaborate U.S.-led coalition's mechanism to guide the ANA and the ANP, respectively, in the correct direction. Both the Soviet and the U.S.-led coalition could not achieve complete success through the advisory systems in place with the ANA and the ANP as these forces remained heavily dependent on their advisors and could not function independently.

Exhaustive efforts were initiated to stabilize the regimes of the time during both periods of the invasion of Afghanistan. The Soviets advocated a single-party system that was identical to their own political environment, while the U.S.-led coalition introduced the presidential form of democracy that was prevalent in the United States. Both systems of governance were alien to the people of Afghanistan. The Soviets endeavored to support the regime of the PDPA, while the U.S.-led coalition tried to support the hand-picked Northern alliance in one way or the other. The nomination of Hamid Karzai as head of the interim administration and his subsequent support by the U.S.-led coalition is testament to this fact. The U.S.-led coalition, however, introduced plurality into the political system, which brought more stakeholders to the front in the system, leaving fewer factions to oppose the state. The Soviets' effort was easy to implement as they supported an already established regime, though it was on decline. For the U.S.-led coalition, the task was daunting as a new presidential form of democracy was introduced after the toppling of a strong government of the authoritative Taliban.

Pacification measures initiated during both periods are also largely identical. The Soviets tried to bring all warring factions on the platform of the PDPA. The Soviets could not pacify the mujahedin groups who kept fighting against the Soviets and the Afghan government. For the U.S.-led coalition, the Taliban have remained a distant factor. Although efforts were made to engage many pro-Taliban warlords, and were successful on many occasions, the Taliban as a force remains a reality that could not be pacified. The same group is now challenging the sustenance of the state of Afghanistan as a formidable force. Overall, the pacification measures could not achieve ultimate success in both periods of Afghan history.

Infrastructural development is an aspect carried out largely by both the Soviets and the U.S.-led coalition to suit the military operations. The Soviets conducted developmental work to suit their military operations against the mujahedin. The U.S.-led coalition has been critiqued for dovetailing infrastructural development with combat operations. Nevertheless, it is evident that the infrastructural development carried out by the U.S.-led coalition is more elaborate and visible than the Soviets' effort in this field.

Despite the efforts of both the Soviet and the U.S.-led coalitions, they could not yield peace in Afghanistan.

This thesis ascertains that on a comparable battleground the stabilization strategies of the two rival superpowers are also identical with variation of time, duration, and resources. Thus, the outcome of the present effort is likely to be the same as that of the Soviets unless necessary remedial measures are undertaken by the U.S.-led coalition in Afghanistan. The thesis also concludes that the major concern in both efforts in Afghanistan is the failure to initiate proper pacification measures. The Soviets failed to pacify the mujahedin and could not reach an agreement acceptable to them, while the present coalition in Afghanistan has failed to pacify the Taliban and engage them in a mutually agreeable settlement.

Negotiation and settlement with Taliban have connected issues for the U.S.-led coalition as well as the sitting Afghan government. Reaching a workable arrangement with the Taliban under the present Afghan constitution is a questionable equation that merits detailed research. Analysis of the pros and cons of negotiation with the Taliban and details of various options available to the U.S.-led coalition and the Afghan government will be highly beneficial to the policy makers in Afghanistan. This is likely to help in the achievement of peace not only in Afghanistan but in the entire region, which has seen widespread suffering from prolonged conflicts.

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