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**THESIS**

**BADAL: A CULTURE OF REVENGE  
THE IMPACT OF COLLATERAL DAMAGE ON TALIBAN  
INSURGENCY**

by

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March 2008

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THE IMPACT OF COLLATERAL DAMAGE ON TALIBAN INSURGENCY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis examines the impact of collateral damage on the Taliban insurgency. It reveals the relationship between death of innocent civilians and the tribal concept of *badal* (revenge). Research also analyzes Taliban propaganda leaflets to illustrate the compromise of popular support caused by collateral damage stemming from the Coalition's tactics. Research probes into the historical Anglo-Afghan wars and the 1979 Soviet invasion to draw parallels to the current insurgency. In doing so, it highlights the rising role of religion and FATA, Pakistan. FATA is analyzed to show the effects of intrusions by outside actors as well as historical and recent events that have shaped the populace and structure of these tribal regions. Lastly, the research concludes by offering non-kinetic solutions to curbing the Taliban insurgency. The solutions focus on FATA and offer socio-economic and political remedies to hinder with the Taliban recruitment efforts and cross-border incursions. Thesis recognizes FATA and reduction in collateral damage as pivotal factors to fostering stability in the region.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the implications of kinetic and non-kinetic approaches to countering insurgency in Afghanistan. The conflict which began with the aim to destroy and capture the Al-Qaeda leadership has transformed into a battle against the Taliban. Thus far the U.S. military strategy has relied heavily on technology and troops to tame the asymmetrical tactics of the Taliban insurgents.<sup>1</sup> However, this approach has failed to produce the end result envisioned at the commencement of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). As the war approaches its seventh year, the Taliban operations continue to spark fear and concern for the stability of the entire region. In lieu of the growing insurgency, a renewed effort must be devoted to understanding the Taliban mindset and the drivers which promote and sustain the insurgency.<sup>2</sup>

As a consequence of the ongoing insurgency and terrorist activities, American and NATO forces are struggling to win the hearts and minds campaign, an element which has been compromised by collateral damage. Loss of civilian lives associated with military strikes has played into the hands of the Taliban, in turn boosting their legitimacy and image while lowering U.S. credibility. The unconventional methods of the Taliban have proven valuable in hindering with the stabilization of Afghanistan. With regards to implementing an effective strategy towards Afghanistan, this thesis will outline the implications of the current strategy as it pertains to information warfare, culture, and people as the center-of-gravity in reducing the level of insurgents.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, it will highlight the neglected social factors which have contributed to the success and recruitment of the insurgents. In answering the primary purpose, the thesis will be centered on the following questions:

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<sup>1</sup> See Hy S. Rothstein, *Afghanistan & the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare*, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> See Charles W. Kegley, Jr., *The New Global Terrorism: Characteristics, Causes, Controls*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> See Sonali Kolatkar and James Ingalls, *Bleeding Afghanistan*, New York: Seven Stories Press, 2006.

- How has Pashtunwali culture and tribal customs affected the insurgency?
- How has collateral damage contributed to the Taliban propaganda campaign?
- Where and how can the U.S. utilize non-kinetic approaches to address the underlying issues related to insurgency?

## **B. IMPORTANCE**

The United States faced a new enemy after the tragic events of September 11, 2001. With this new enemy also emerged the unconventional tactics of Improvised Explosives Devices (IED), suicide bombings, and a ruthless campaign of terrorist attacks against the public and military alike. Despite the altered battlefield, U.S. tactics and strategies have remained largely unchanged. As a military, United States continues to employ large scale conventional strikes, as well as air power, against an adversary that chooses to avoid a face-to-face battlefield environment. The enemy, however, relies on guerilla-style tactics while drawing the U.S. into situations that increase the likelihood of collateral damage to infrastructure and civilians. If the military does not alter its current strategy and tactics, the insurgents may not only emerge as the victors but the national security of the United States may be vulnerable to future terrorism.<sup>4</sup> A defeat in Afghanistan may expose the vulnerabilities of American forces, carrying with it the potential to elevate the terrorists' confidence and cause.

## **C. ANALYTICAL AND SUBSTANTIVE CONSIDERATIONS**

The Taliban have become a powerful adversary in Afghanistan. In order to understand the ideology of this enemy, one must peel back the Islamic and Taliban identities and delve into their Pashtunwali culture.<sup>5</sup> Embedded in the Pashtunwali culture are concepts of honor and revenge, the very drivers which mobilize them against a

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<sup>4</sup> Future terrorism trends are outlined in Akorlie A. Nyatepe-Coo and Dorothy Zeisler-Vralsted, *Understanding Terrorism: Threats in an Uncertain World*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> For a reference on culture, see Hafizullah Emadi, *Culture and Customs of Afghanistan*, London: Greenwood Press, 2005.

common foe.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, viewing the ancient landscape and tribal ways of Afghanistan, it is conceivable why these concepts have maintained their luster over time. Consequences of these tribal customs were not only suffered by Alexander the Great but also by the British during colonialism of India, and later by Soviet Union in the 1980s.<sup>7</sup> In each case the will of the people as a center-of-gravity was ignored by the invaders. Ironically, Pashtunwali culture continues to be disregarded due an overwhelming reliance on technology and force as a means to stabilize Afghanistan. Military confrontations “at opposite ends of the country signal a widening of the conflict and increasing confusion among western military officials over the enemy they are confronting.”<sup>8</sup>

Over six years after embarking on Operation Enduring Freedom, the NATO forces are continuing to fight a resilient insurgency. With Al-Qaeda leadership as elusive as ever, the Taliban have become the main enemy in Afghanistan. Despite the kinetic tactics and state-of-the art technology at the Allies’ disposal, the insurgency seems to show no signs of weakening. On the contrary, terrorist attacks are up “53 percent in Afghanistan, according to statistics compiled by the National Counterterrorism Center.”<sup>9</sup> Given these startling figures, growing criticism is being expressed at the national level with regards to failures in what began as the primary front on terrorism. As the Taliban insurgency continues to gain strength, the overwhelming response by the officials and military leadership has been articulated through the need to deploy more troops. Little emphasis has been devoted to the underlying causes that may be fueling the Taliban insurgency; cultural elements of the Pashtun tribes have been disregarded as they pertain to curbing the anti-U.S. sentiment and Taliban recruitment.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, hindering with the campaign of winning hearts and minds has been the ongoing collateral damage

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<sup>6</sup> Niloufer Qasim Mahdi, “Pukhtunwali: Ostracism and Honor Among the Pathan Hill Tribes,” *Ethology and Sociobiology* 7 (1986): 298.

<sup>7</sup> See Charles Allen, *Soldier Sahibs: The Men Who Made the North-west Frontier*, London: Abacus, 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Rachel Morarjee, “Anger as Afghan Clashes Spread Beyond Taliban Strongholds,” *Financial Times*, May 4, 2007, World News Section, London 1<sup>st</sup> Edition.

<sup>9</sup> Scott Shane, “Terrorist Attacks in Iraq and Afghanistan Rose Sharply Last Year, State Department Says,” *New York Times*, May 1, 2007, A Section, Late Edition.

<sup>10</sup> See Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980.

caused by the Allies. More specifically, there appears to be a correlation between collateral damage and the level of insurgency.

Current rhetoric and emphasis revolves around two areas of concern: Countering Taliban insurgency and the role of Pakistan. And “while Iraq continues to consume the administration's attention, U.S. officials are increasingly worried that the Taliban is making a comeback in Afghanistan, using parts of Pakistan to stage cross- border raids and undermine the authority of Afghan President Hamid Karzai.”<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, the first step has been to stabilize and secure the country by increasing the military forces in Afghanistan. “By most measures, there are still far fewer Afghan and foreign troops than are needed to secure the country. With the increase, the total number of U.S., NATO and other Allied troops will be around 45,000, while there are about 40,000 soldiers in the new Afghan army.”<sup>12</sup> Coupled with troop surge has been the necessity to bring the full effect of “kinetic weapons” to destroy the enemy while limiting the likelihood of collateral damage.<sup>13</sup> The premise of the kinetics approach is based on the assumption that technological superiority and mass are adequate to crush the opposition, even though “the insurgents have largely sought to avoid full-on battlefield confrontations and instead relied on guerrilla-style tactics, including suicide attacks, roadside bombings and kidnappings.”<sup>14</sup> Given the rugged terrain, lack of geographical familiarity, and lack of infrastructure, a troop surge will increase the scope of military operations while allowing for reconstruction efforts.

Contrary to the issues pertaining to troop surge, concerns over Pakistan are political rather than military in nature. Since the onset of war, blame has been expressed by both the Musharraf and Karzai regimes as to who can truly control the Taliban

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<sup>11</sup> Michael Abramowitz and Griff Witte, “Insurgent Activity Spurs Cheney Trip to Pakistan,” *The Washington Post*, February 27, 2007, A Section, Final Edition.

<sup>12</sup> “The Afghanistan Surge; Iraq is Not the Only Theater Where the Bush Administration is Belatedly Committing More Troops and Aid,” *The Washington Post*, February 1, 2007, Editorial Section, Final Edition.

<sup>13</sup> Benjamin C. Freakley, “Urban Counterinsurgency: Seizing the Opportunity,” *Infantry*, January/February, 2005, 1-2.

<sup>14</sup> Laura King, “The World; Karzai, Musharraf Agree to Share Intelligence; After Months of Trading Blame, the Afghan and Pakistani Leaders OK Plan to Fight Extremists,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 1, 2007, Foreign Desk Section, Home Edition.

insurgents along the border areas. “Afghanistan has accused Pakistan of sheltering Taliban leaders and fighters who cross the border to attack in Afghanistan. Pakistan has responded by saying it would fence and mine the border.”<sup>15</sup> Additionally, Pakistan claims that root of the insurgency lies within Afghanistan and the Karzai government itself.<sup>16</sup> Main criticism of the Karzai regime has been credited to its lack of authority within the state.<sup>17</sup> Whatever the true realities and political strategies of the two neighboring regimes, the current discourse is centered on mistrust and discredit of the other. With insurgents on the offensive, the border debates have taken on an international scope which not only affects the region but also the NATO forces involved in reshaping Afghanistan.

While both issues address practical concerns in securing Afghanistan, neither focuses on the underlying causes of insurgency. Additionally, the current approaches rely heavily on kinetic means, which in turn aid the Taliban propaganda and recruitment campaigns.<sup>18</sup> Thus far kinetic means have not come without a heavy death toll for the civilians. “The death of innocent civilians during operations - numbering more than 50 by some accounts - has damaged trust and fueled resentment, pushing some into the arms of terrorists, according to observers.”<sup>19</sup> According to Nader Nadery, vice president of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, “the casualties are an easy propaganda tool for the Taliban to use in the affected areas. People feel under attack by both sides. This does not win hearts and minds.”<sup>20</sup> With military tactics unchanged and collateral damage as an acceptable outcome, the Allied strategy has neglected the Afghan people as

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<sup>15</sup> Abdul-Waheed Wafa, “U.N. Deputy Urges Pakistan to Curb Taliban,” *New York Times*, January 9, 2007, A Section, Late Edition.

<sup>16</sup> Abul-Waheed Wafa, “U.S. Says Raids Killed Taliban; Afghans Say Civilians Died,” *New York Times*, May 1, 2007, A Section, Late Edition.

<sup>17</sup> Katrin Bennhold and Mark Landler, “Pakistani Premier Faults Afghans for Taliban Woes Along Border,” *New York Times*, January 25, 2007, A Section, Late Edition.

<sup>18</sup> See Thomas H. Johnson, “The Taliban Insurgency and an Analysis of *Shabnamah* (Night Letters),” *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 18, No. 3 (September, 2007).

<sup>19</sup> David Montero, “Pakistan's Tribal Strategy; Pakistan's Prime Minister Met with Bush Tuesday to Discuss the War on Terror,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 25, 2006, World Section, All Edition.

<sup>20</sup> Pamela Constable, “Karzai Says Civilian Toll is No Longer Acceptable,” *The Washington Post*, May 3, 2007, A Section, Final Edition.

a center-of-gravity in winning the war. The gap formed between the people and government continues to increase from the fear of becoming a casualty at the hands of the friendly forces and Taliban alike.<sup>21</sup> Exacerbating the situation are the madrassa teachers who motivate students to wage Jihad for the injustices committed against the innocent. Haqqani madrassa (in NWFP) alone produces over 3000 graduates each year, whose sole purpose, in absence of other opportunities, will be to fight Jihad.<sup>22</sup> In view of the Taliban propaganda campaigns and the negative public perception towards Allied forces, preventing collateral damage may be the critical node in diffusing the level of insurgency in Afghanistan.

#### **D. METHODOLOGY**

To evaluate the impact of collateral damage on insurgency, this thesis will pursue a three-pronged analytic strategy. First, the British (Anglo-Afghan wars) will serve as a case study to discover the compromises made by the Royal British military in the face of resistance. After the second Anglo-Afghan war, the British had changed their forward policy to accommodate the tribal customs of Pashtuns under their area of governance. Among the new British policy was the creation of Paladins. Paladins were experienced military officers who would adopt Pashtunwali culture as a means to govern their respective areas while allowing autonomy to the tribes. As part of this new policy, kinetic means were secondary and implemented only if a violation or a contract had been breached by the tribes. Second, the thesis will analyze the Taliban's information campaign vis-à-vis the U.S. campaign. Third, current infrastructure and social problems of the FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas), Pakistan, will be studied to offer

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<sup>21</sup> Sami Yousafzai and Ron Moreau, "Suicide Offensive; Face to Face with the Taliban's New Favorite Weapon in the Afghan War: Human Bomb," *Newsweek*, May 14, 2007, 6.

<sup>22</sup> Ziauddin Sardar, "Pakistan: The Taliban Takeover," *New Statesman*, April 30, 2007, 28.

non-kinetic approaches to reducing future insurgency. Quality-of-life issues such as the lack of education and opportunities often leave no outlet for the growing youth but the madrassa schooling and the call of Jihad. By shifting efforts to the neglected social aspects, the United States and Allies may win the campaign for hearts and minds while fostering long term stability in the region. And even though FATA is merely one factor in the GWOT, it is absolutely crucial and pivotal to the security of both Pakistan and Afghanistan. Without addressing this rugged and ungoverned area, the Coalition's efforts in Afghanistan may be subject to failure as the FATA offers an abundance of recruits and safe havens for the Taliban. By addressing the previously ignored socio-economic issues of FATA, the Coalition may drastically reduce the recruitment pool for future insurgents, thus curbing the Taliban insurgency and increasing the much-needed security to accomplish infrastructure building on both sides of the border.

#### **E. PASHTUNWALI (PASHTUN TRIBAL CODE)**

Even though subsequent chapters will explore Pashtun tribal code to address the research question, it is important to briefly discuss the Pashtunwali concept of *nang* and its significance to collateral damage. *Nang* means honor. It is the basic concept embedded in Pashtun tribal code. Its core elements include *badal* (revenge), *malmastia* (hospitality), and *nanawatey* (refuge). *Badal* is often considered at the hierarchy of *nang*. *Badal* revolves around *zan* (women), *zar* (wealth), and *zamin* (land). It may also be invoked to restore honor involving a loss of life. Failure to restore honor may categorize the individual, family, or clan as *beghairat* (shameless; dishonorable; opposite of *ghairat*) and reduce the status within the respective tribe.

#### **F. THESIS CONTENT**

Having introduced the research question, its nuances and importance, the next chapter will probe into the history of warfare in Afghanistan. The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were full of turmoil for the Afghans. Afghanistan experienced four major conflicts between the time-period of 1838 to 1989. More generally, the earlier three conflicts are known as the Anglo-Afghan wars while the last one involved a Soviet invasion in 1979.

Initial two Anglo-Afghan wars and the Soviet invasion will serve as the basis for study. In each conflict collateral damage was a common theme. By studying these three conflicts, the relationship between collateral damage and insurgency will be highlighted. By exposing the past mistakes or neglects towards the populace, valuable insights may be discovered to formulate future policies and strategies in Afghanistan.

The third chapter will assess the military tactics of the United States and its Coalition in Afghanistan. It will highlight the implications of collateral damage that stems from the aerial strikes. The chapter will examine the impact of collateral damage on the Taliban propaganda as well as the anti-Western sentiment, with a special emphasis on the Pashtun concept of revenge (*badal*) and its relationship to the loss of trust by the populace. American propaganda campaigns will also be compared vis-à-vis the Taliban in an effort to evaluate both information campaigns.

The fourth chapter will assess and evaluate non-kinetic solutions for curbing the Taliban insurgency. Instead of focusing on explicit policy prescriptions in Afghanistan, it will address the volatile region of FATA, Pakistan, since it has become a point of contention and blame between the two states. In deference to similar strategies in the FATA, reconstruction resources and finances have been dedicated to stabilize Afghanistan. The FATA, due to its structure and lawlessness, continues to be a source of support and recruitment for the Taliban and other extremists. It may also be the center-of-gravity for the overall stability of the region. The chapter will identify socio-economic and political issues to improve the quality-of-life for the locals, thus reducing the pool of current and future recruits.

The conclusion will summarize the implications of collateral damage on the Taliban insurgency. It will reiterate the historical mistakes and their similarities to current tactics and military strategy. It will sum up the necessity to approach the Afghanistan insurgency by stabilizing the FATA, a region which has traditionally supplied extremists with abundance of young recruits while playing an instrumental role in the creation of Taliban.

## II. HISTORY AND WARFARE IN AFGHANISTAN

### A. INTRODUCTION

The introductory chapter discussed the broader implications of collateral damage on the current Taliban insurgency. This chapter will explore the history of warfare in Afghanistan. It will analyze two of the three Anglo-Afghan wars as well as the Soviet invasion of 1979. In doing so, collateral damage and *nang* (honor) violations will be highlighted to show their relationship to the past insurgencies faced by the invading forces. Research will draw parallels to the present-day neglects of the Coalition, in that innocent civilian casualties and cultural violations lead to the creation of resistance movements that rally around the banner of Jihad (Holy War) in order to repel oppressive non-Muslim forces.

The purpose of studying the Anglo-Afghan wars is to analyze the British military's treatment and forward policies for addressing the locals. By the second Anglo-Afghan war, the British significantly modified their approach to governing the tribal areas and eventually abandoned their ruthless policies. They implemented the concept of Paladin, with an emphasis on employing military officers who were well-versed in the Pashtun language, culture and tribal codes.

After analyzing the British lessons and policies, the focus will turn to the Soviet invasion of 1979. In exposing the Soviet approach, the emphasis will be on indiscriminate tactics and the radicalization of religion. Unlike the British, the Soviet approach did not incorporate any diplomatic or cultural elements in addressing the insurgency that followed the invasion. The role of ungoverned spaces will also be studied when addressing the Soviet invasion. More specifically, the transformation of FATA (Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan) will come into view as it pertains to its strategic value for Afghanistan.

## B. RELEVANCE

In a place where landscape and culture have changed very little, American policy makers can learn important lessons from earlier historical Afghan conflicts. The 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries witnessed significant turmoil and foreign intervention in Afghanistan with the invading militaries suffering humiliating defeats despite having military superiority. The 19<sup>th</sup> century twice brought the British military to Afghanistan in order to exercise strategic depth stemming from fears of a Tsarist expansion. Despite suffering heavy losses in the first war, the British carried out yet another war in 1879. These two historical Anglo-Afghan conflicts are written as terrible times on part of the British. A third Anglo-Afghan war also followed in 1919 but resulted in a stalemate, though not free of collateral damage. Over sixty years later, in 1979, the Soviets invaded the countryside and discovered a similar fate. After ten years of bloody fighting the Soviet forces retreated after suffering greatly at the hands of guerilla-style tactics. Some call this bloody ordeal the Soviet Union's Vietnam War; the outcome resembled the American involvement in South-East Asia. In each of the three Afghan conflicts, one element was constant: The militaries were initially able to overwhelm the locals yet suffered at the hands of insurgents motivated through concept of Jihad. Moreover, in all three conflicts the insurgencies ensued following the indiscriminate collateral damage and *nang* violations caused by the invading forces.

The history of Afghan conflicts warrants a closer look to expose mistakes that may have been repeated earlier. This may shed some light on the eventual outcome of the present conflict in Afghanistan. Similar to the current involvement in Afghanistan, the past conflicts also sparked resilient insurgencies. Additionally, the conventional methods and military superiority of the invading forces could not yield success in reducing or eliminating the fierce insurgencies which ensued after the invaders had successfully entered Afghanistan. And likewise, people's role as the center-of-gravity was downplayed when contending with the resistance, ignoring the very nature of insurgencies. Whereas insurgencies have a political nature as well as a military wing, the past conflicts will reveal that sole reliance on kinetic means only addressed half of the problem and led to further cultural violations.

## C. ANGLO-AFGHAN WARS

### 1. First Anglo-Afghan War

The first Western military to clash with the culture and people of Afghanistan was the British army. Having brought the Mughal rule to an end, the British were a well-established colonial power in the region. Claiming India as its Crown Jewel, Britain was at the height of its empire in South Asia. Having territories in then Hindustan (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh), the fertile lands were of great importance to the economy of Great Britain. With America having gained independence, British India was perhaps its only rich colony worth holding onto. Fortunately the geography and environment of this area favored this hold since the rugged mountains of the Himalaya and Hindu Kush served as natural barriers to the North and West while thick jungles created a natural obstacle to the East. Despite the natural barriers and the vastness of British Raj, the region was not immune to landward invasions. Long before the British, the first wave of Mughal invasion marched into India from the Khyber Pass (current North West Frontier Province of Pakistan) and created an empire that lasted for over two centuries. During the 1800's, with Russian Tsarist expansion into the Central Asia, Afghanistan served as a crucial buffer between the two empires and became an area of concern for the British. Russia too realized the value of the buffer state. The Anglo-Russian competition to win-over the Afghan rulers through diplomacy and foreign policy became known as the "Great Game."<sup>23</sup> Each realized that having the Afghan favor would facilitate the preservation and possible expansion of the respective empire. However, it was the Russian envoy which proved successful in winning the diplomatic relations with the Afghan ruler.

Realizing the implications of the Afghan-Russian cooperation, British perceived an eventual thrust by the Russian military into the colonial area of influence and geography. However, many scholars believe there were no such plans on part of the Russians and that such fears were exaggerated by the British to serve as excuse for

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<sup>23</sup>M.A. Yapp, "British Perception of Russian Threat to India," *Modern Asian Studies* 2 (1987).

further expansion to the West.<sup>24</sup> Nonetheless, in 1838 British embarked on a military campaign to take Kabul. Not only did the British plans involve control of Kabul but they also intended to replace the political leader with a person who would prove friendly to the British government.<sup>25</sup> With an estimated 16,500 troops from the Indus area, the British were able to march into Kabul and erect a puppet leader (Shah Shuja) by 1839.

The march into Kabul proved to be an easy task for the British. However, in November 1841 a massive rebellion ensued in Kabul, resulting in the eventual death of Shah Shuja. Evidence credits this resistance to the harsh British treatment of the locals as well as ruthless tactics and *nang* violations. According to memoirs of General Harlan (an American living in Afghanistan until the British invasion), “the British settled in, importing foxhounds, cricket bats, amateur theatricals and all the appurtenances of empire. After an easy victory, it was assumed that the Afghans were docile. The invaders rode roughshod over the local culture, treating the Afghans with disdain, oblivious to the growing rumble of discontent.”<sup>26</sup> Additionally, the Afghans resented the deployment of Hindu troops to control a Muslim populace.<sup>27</sup> Due to inter-tribal fighting, anti-Islamic environment, and violations of tribal codes, “the Afghans resented the foreign conquerors and began guerilla warfare against the British. The remaining English forces withdrew at the end of 1842.”<sup>28</sup> The aftermath was a retreat which concluded in a bloody massacre as the army withdrew back into British controlled territories. On the narrow journey through the five-mile Khurd Kabul pass, the soldiers were picked off one-by-one by Gilzai snipers who had taken higher ground; the incidence was a massacre.<sup>29</sup> “According to the late Louis Dupree, the premier historian of Afghanistan, four factors contributed to the British disaster: the occupation of Afghan territory by foreign troops,

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<sup>24</sup> M.A. Yapp, “British Perception of Russian Threat to India,” *Modern Asian Studies* 2 (1987): 647.

<sup>25</sup> Victoria Schofield, *Afghan Frontier* (New York: St, Martin’s Press, 2003), 69.

<sup>26</sup> Ben Macintyre, “The Empire Strikes Out,” *New York Times*, May, 8, 2004, Section A, Late Edition.

<sup>27</sup> Bruce Collins, “Fighting the Afghans in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” *History Today*, December 2001, 12.

<sup>28</sup> Lester W. Grau and Michael A. Gress, *The Soviet Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 6.

<sup>29</sup> Victoria Schofield, *Afghan Frontier* (New York: St, Martin’s Press, 2003), 75.

the placing of an unpopular emir on the throne, the harsh acts of the British-supported Afghans against their local enemies, and the reduction of the subsidies paid to the tribal chiefs by British political agents.”<sup>30</sup>

The British did not take this shameful defeat lightly and returned to take vengeance on the Afghans. In 1842, following the incidents of first Anglo-Afghan war, “in every region where British or Indian troops had been killed or maltreated, the male inhabitants were shot, bayoneted or put to the sword in the name of ‘signal punishment’, and their houses fired...no males above fourteen years were spared, and some of the men (brutes except in form) wanted to wreak their vengeance on the women.”<sup>31</sup> Such mass punishment not only enraged the Afghans but it violated many deeply-held customs like *nang* (honor) and invoked *badal* (revenge or vendetta). This incident was hailed as a heroic effort on part of the British troops who, in one British Army officer’s words, carried out these courageous actions and formed “one of the most glorious pages in English history;” in the same 1879 article, this officer described revenge as a “virtue” for the Afghans.<sup>32</sup>

## 2. Second Anglo-Afghan War

No sooner had the lessons from first war faded that British carried out a second military campaign in 1879. With Anglo-Russian tensions as predominant as before, British hoped to gain the subordination of Afghanistan as well as strategic territories. “Initial successes were followed by the massacre of the British mission in Kabul in September 1879.”<sup>33</sup> Following the burnings and killings of British residents in Kabul, the British army sought retribution.<sup>34</sup> A British Corps of over 36,000 marched in and seized Kandahar and Kabul with the sole purpose of punishing the Afghans. Just as

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<sup>30</sup> Milton Bearden, “Afghanistan, Graveyard of Empires,” *Foreign Affairs*, November 2001, 17.

<sup>31</sup> Charles Allen, *Soldier Sahibs* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc, 2000), 50.

<sup>32</sup> A. G. Constable, “Afghanistan: The Present Seat of War, and the Relations of that Country to England and Russia,” *Journal of the American Geographical Society of New York* 11 (1879): 49.

<sup>33</sup> Anthony Hyman, “Nationalism in Afghanistan,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34 (2002): 304.

<sup>34</sup> Bruce Collins, “Fighting the Afghans in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” *History Today*, December 2001, 12.

before, marching in to Kabul proved an easy task. Again the invaders outlook was unchanged; the British viewed the Afghans as savages and inferiors while overlooking the local reactions which may stem out of *badal*. And despite having witnessed the culture and tribal codes of the Afghans 40 years earlier, the British engaged in similar behavior as it pertained to disregard for collateral damage and tribal codes. During the next four weeks following the arrival into Kabul, “the British executed about 100 Afghans with little regard as to whether or not they had been directly involved in the assault on the residency. One senior officer noticed that ‘we are thoroughly hated and not enough feared.’”<sup>35</sup>

The result, however, was no different than the previous war in that a rebellion erupted and led to an insurgency; British troops in Kabul were overtaken by over 100,000 Afghan rebels.<sup>36</sup> This embarrassing defeat, once again, led to the withdrawal of the British. In the end, British gained the geographic high-grounds to include the passes into Afghanistan. The foreign matters of Afghanistan also fell under the control of the British as a compromise to the initial desires. From the Afghan point of view, the incident was merely fuel for the already burning flames from the first Anglo-Afghan war; hatred only intensified. And even though a formal Afghan military was in disarray, the locals continued to resist the British in many regions. The extent of the Afghan hatred at the conclusion of the second Anglo-Afghan war can be summed up by Rudyard Kipling’s famous words regarding the role local women on the battlefields:<sup>37</sup>

When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains. And the women  
come out to cut up what remains. Jest roll to your rifle an' blow out your  
brains. An' go to your Gawd like a soldier.

### **3. British Lessons**

Early lessons of the British involvement in Afghanistan revolve around the delicate balance between culture, religion and politics. Islam, unlike Christianity, does

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<sup>35</sup> Bruce Collins, “Fighting the Afghans in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” *History Today*, December 2001, 12.

<sup>36</sup> Lester W. Grau and Michael A. Gress, *The Soviet Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 7.

not have a wide margin between the so-called “separation of church and state.” For a country that had suffered many waves of invasions throughout history, ranging from Alexander the Great to Mongols and Mughals, the people of Afghanistan maintained their ancient tribal ways, religious values, and remained in a state of turmoil with respect to political and economic development. And while Islam was a large part of the Afghan society, the type of Islam practiced was mainly Sufism (Mystic) and Hanafi school of thought; generally moderate and of open interpretation. The first Afghan war insulted tribal customs and gave the Afghan tribal warriors a justification for Jihad. Since the invaders were armed and had occupied Muslim territories, according to Islamic school of thought a military reaction was justified to end the oppressions of the invading army. This logic is embedded in Dar-ul-Salam (state of peace) and Dar-ul-Harb (state of war). According to this belief, a Muslim state remains in a state of peace unless conditions warrant a change to a state of war. A declaration of Dar-ul-Harb justifies the use of force and makes it incumbent upon the citizens to take up an armed struggle on the directive of the state.

By the second Anglo-Afghan war, British began to experience the infusion of religion and politics deeper than before. The insults of the two wars combined magnified the anti-British resentment. In the political void created through interferences by the British, clergy began to play an active role. Anyone catering to or aiding the mission of infidels/disbelievers would be viewed as no less than the perpetrators themselves. Traditionally, even the elected leaders (through succession and dynasty) required the blessings of the clergy to legitimize their power. To gain this legitimacy, rulers would seek the most influential religious figures to perform the religious blessing; a ritual conducting by tying a White turban on the leader followed by recital of Qur’an.<sup>38</sup> Clearly a puppet leader at the service of the British would have been an illegitimate ruler. In the case of British-friendly emirs in Kabul, the tribes treated them as lacking legitimacy.

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<sup>37</sup> Milton Bearden, “Afghanistan, Graveyard of Empires,” *Foreign Affairs*, November 2001, 17.

<sup>38</sup> Senzil Nawid, “The State, the Clergy, and the British Imperial Policy in Afghanistan During the 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997): 583.

The political vacuum pulled the religious figures into a broader role as they led the call to Jihad in the face of British atrocities and began to exercise leadership beyond the scope of clergy duties. The current century is not unique to the interference of clergy into politics and battlefields. The mosque leaders were among the first to voice the banner of Jihad, carry out recruitment campaigns, and even fight along side the military.<sup>39</sup> In essence, such acts resembled the early Islamic Caliphate period when the political and military power was vested in one person, a person who would not only lead men in prayers and battles but would also preside over political and judicial matters. Unintentionally, the British had started a religious revival where the populace longed to emulate the early years of Islam and reverted to a deepened Muslim identity, the kind that would unite the masses while rationalizing *badal* as justice. The colonial interference in other Muslim states may have also contributed to the belief that Islam was under attack.

While inciting religion held its share of the dangers during the first Anglo-Afghan war, the period after the second war managed to frustrate the British authorities even further. The British would call the perpetrators “Mad Mullahs” but to the locals these personalities were known as Hadda Sahib and Saidullah (Mad Fakir).<sup>40</sup> These figures were believed to have possessed miraculous, un-Earthly powers. Their legends and anti-colonial rhetoric spread throughout the country and served as a source of spiritual inspiration for many uprisings against the British. But none would take the British on a “wild-goose” chase as did the Fakir of Ippi (born Mirza Ali Khan), who declared Jihad in the mid 1930s, conducting raids and ambushes, and eluded scouts and authorities for over 24 years by hiding in the caves of Waziristan.<sup>41</sup> “More than 40,000 troops and £1.5 million in one year were expended on tracking the religious zealot.”<sup>42</sup> Resistance of the British, and later the Pakistani authorities (following the 1947 partition), validated his supernatural powers in the eyes of many who spread his legendary stories long after his

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<sup>39</sup> Senzil Nawid, “The State, the Clergy, and the British Imperial Policy in Afghanistan During the 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997): 588.

<sup>40</sup> David B. Edwards, *Heroes of the Age* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 179.

<sup>41</sup> Victoria Schofield, *Afghan Frontier* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 2003), 185.

<sup>42</sup> Telegraph Media Group Limited Website,  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2001/11/15/wipi15.xml>.

death as a free man in 1960. Exposing such incidents are very relevant to contemporary times: Danger exists that Osama bin Laden's defiance against America may boost him as a legend; challenges of terrain and Pashtunwali (*nanawatey*; refuge) also aggravate the situation.



Figure 1. Faqir of Ipi

#### 4. Concept of Paladin

Although the British were driven through conquest and inferior views of their subjects, not every one in the ranks shared these outlooks. After the bloody consequences of the two wars, the British forward policies began to shift. While the British continued to maintain military presence via forts in certain regions, the local tribes were allowed self-governance according to their tribal ways. Tribal leaders (*Khans/Maliks*) would be rewarded with monetary or valuable goods for their cooperation; lack of cooperation or resistance would bring about a military

involvement/interference.<sup>43</sup> Even though this policy was a positive step towards Afghanistan, the British continued to face resistance by the Pashtuns, the ethnic identity which was at the center of contention during the wars. Most of this resistance transpired in what is now the Northwest Frontier region of Pakistan (NWFP).

In light of these ongoing tensions, there were a select few who would uphold the forward policy undertakings of the British Raj by virtue of their personalities and experiences. These select few came to be known as the British Paladins. The role of a Paladin encompassed the control of the NWFP area under his jurisdiction. The Paladins not only went as far as to learn the local language but they also understood the tribal customs of Pashtunwali. Many even began to dress and look like the locals. This insight aided the Paladins in running their day-to-day affairs with some level of ease. For instance, it was imperative to get “cooperation of the tribal elders – the *Khans* who headed the various clans and the *Maliks* who were village chiefs” before any revenue was collected.<sup>44</sup> This practice preserved the dignity and role of the elders, in turn gaining respect for their British authorities while lowering the likelihood of conflict. It was also a step to eliminate further violations of *nang* and *badal*, reasons for the cause of conflict with the Pashtun tribes in the area.

Unfortunately the era of such personalities was short lived in comparison to the duration of British Raj, leaving behind a positive mark in a fickle region of warriors who could not otherwise be tamed. The Paladin model, though over one century old, has great relevance to contemporary issues of winning favor in Afghanistan. The Paladin’s modern-day equivalent may best be the military’s Foreign Area Officer program with one stark difference, in that a Paladin remained in country for an extended period of time to fully immerse into the local community, language, and cultural norms. Given the contact society of the Afghans, physical presence was an important necessity to form alliances and build a reputation among tribal leaders. Winning the respect of the locals amounted to cooperation and even assistance in civil/military matters that could not otherwise be

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<sup>43</sup> Paul Titus, “Honor the Baloch, Buy the Pushtun: Stereotypes, Social Organization and History in Western Pakistan,” *Modern Asian Studies* 32 (1998): 660.

<sup>44</sup> Charles Allen, *Soldier Sahibs* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc, 2000), 90.

agreed upon, in turn lowering the chances of military escalation. But most importantly, the presence formed trust between the locals and the foreign officers. Willingness of the tribes to fully accept Westerners was most profoundly achieved twice during the nineteenth century. First it was achieved by General Harlan, an American-born who had been living in Afghanistan for twelve years and was appointed “commander-in-chief of the Afghan Army by Dost Muhammad Khan, the mighty emir of Kabul.”<sup>45</sup> Second, it was achieved by the British Paladins who would come to be known as “the daring adventurers who tamed India’s Northwest Frontier.”<sup>46</sup> Both of these remarkable feats are credited to the knowledge and acceptance of tribal customs and codes of Pashtunwali.

## **D. SOVIET INVASION OF 1979**

### **1. Soviet Approach**

Sixty years after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Anglo-Afghan war, a new invader entered Afghanistan. According to British government earlier in the century, the Russians needed to be deterred from an invasion, but for the 1979 Soviet Union regime the rise of Islam may have presented a danger and a catalyst for their motives in Afghanistan; Islamic fundamentalism had penetrated many figures in politics. During 1978-79 Soviets attempted to promote moderate policies and showed a dislike towards radical figures in the government.<sup>47</sup> As history reveals, 1979 was a period when Khomeini’s religious revolution overthrew the secular government of Shah. To the East of Afghanistan a devout General, Muhammed Zia-ul-Haq, executed the secular Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and gave leverage to religious groups like the Jamat-e-Islami, whose founder Maulana Abu'l a'la Maududi (1903-1979) was instrumental in the concept of forming a model Muslim State (Pakistan).

As with the British scenarios, marching into Afghanistan was easy but controlling the insurgency that ensued proved to be a challenging task. Soviets intended to foster and

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<sup>45</sup> Ben Macintyre, “The Empire Strikes Out,” *New York Times*, May, 8, 2004, Section A, Late Edition.

<sup>46</sup> Charles Allen, *Soldier Sahibs* (New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, Inc, 2000).

<sup>47</sup> David Gibbs, “Does the USSR have a ‘Grand Strategy’? Reinterpreting the Invasion of Afghanistan,” *Journal of Peace Research* 24 (1987): 373.

promote an environment that would be conducive to communism. Like the British, Soviet role extended not only to crushing the opposition but to forming a puppet government. Soviets brought to bear over 85,000 troops and some of the best technology to carry out a mission of what many characterize as an occupation from the very beginning.<sup>48</sup> Men of the communist government of Afghanistan also joined the efforts of the Soviet military. Given the scale of invasion, Cold War alliances in the region, and the era of Islamization, rag-tag forces quickly formulated to repel the aggressors; neighboring Pakistan grew cautious with the presence of a superpower next door. Pakistan's premier intelligence agency, ISI, began to implement plans concerning strategic depth and security as the Soviet war machines rolled into the countryside and wreaked havoc.

For the next 10 years Soviets would inflict a ruthless campaign of aerial and ground attacks on the countryside in order to control the growing insurgency. The Soviet invasion encompassed a level of brutality and collateral damage that the Afghans had not seen before. They displayed a total disregard for the tribal codes and religion. Wiping out entire villages with indiscriminate killings of women and children became a norm for the communist invaders as they chased the retreating guerillas into populated areas. According to one Soviet soldier's testimony, killing innocent women, children, elderly, and even animals was a common practice in reprisal for a slain soviet soldier.<sup>49</sup> In 1985 alone, "Soviet troops in Afghanistan killed about 35,000 civilians...in a campaign of 'systematic brutality' that included bombing villages and planting explosives in children's toys, a report prepared for the U.N. Human Rights Commission said."<sup>50</sup> The massive collateral damage and injustices against innocent civilians only reinforced the concept of Jihad and *badal*. A call to Holy War once again fueled the anti-occupation resentments and summoned the men to wage battle against the Infidels.

America also took an active role in providing covert financial and arms assistance via the Saudi and Pakistan channels. However, it was the will of the Mujahideen (plural

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<sup>48</sup> Joseph Collins, "Soviet Policy toward Afghanistan," *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science* 36 (1987): 210.

<sup>49</sup> Nake M. Kamrany and David T. Killian, "Effects of Afghanistan War on Soviet Society and Policy," *International Journal of Social Economics* 19 (1992): 129

<sup>50</sup> "The World," *Los Angeles Times*, February, 27, 1986, Home Edition.

for *Mujahid*; one who wages Jihad) that decided the fate of the invading army. Foreign fighters also began to pour in and take part in what they deemed as religious duty for all Muslims. Not only did the Soviet atrocities win support for the Mujahideen but the war hardened and radicalized local and foreign Muslims alike. “In 1981 to 1983, the number of armed combatants who were members of Afghan Mujahideen groups estimated at some 45,000 personnel. By 1985, this number grew to 150,000.”<sup>51</sup> “The Mujahideen understood that guerilla war is a contest of endurance and national will. Battlefield victory is almost irrelevant, provided that the guerilla survives to fight the next of a thousand battles before passing the torch to his children.”<sup>52</sup> Indeed the torch had been passed since the first Anglo-Afghan war.

By 1986, Soviet Union decided to withdraw due to their inability to control the situation. Economically and militarily, Afghanistan had consumed many resources without producing the envisioned goals. Total Soviet casualties numbered 26000 with over 2900 Officer deaths.<sup>53</sup> The Afghan casualties numbered over 1.3 million while 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the population became refugees,<sup>54</sup> many of whom found a sanctuary in the already volatile regions of the FATA. The defeat of the Soviet Union also lifted the spirits of Jihadis worldwide. “Rather than disband and go home, thousands of Afghan veterans felt so empowered by having defeated one of the world’s superpowers that they embarked on new militant adventures.”<sup>55</sup> The weaknesses of the superpowers had been captured in their reliance on conventional warfare whereas insurgencies relied on guerilla tactics to avoid full battle confrontations. The abandonment of the Mujahideen after the Soviet withdrawal may have also exacerbated the radicals’ views towards America as yet another manipulator of the Afghan scenario.

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<sup>51</sup> Lester W. Grau and Michael A. Gress, *The Soviet Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 24.

<sup>52</sup> Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, *Afghan Guerilla Warfare; In the Words of the Mujahideen Fighters* (St. Paul: MBI Publishing Company, 2001), 398.

<sup>53</sup> Lester W. Grau and Michael A. Gress, *The Soviet Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 44.

<sup>54</sup> Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, *Afghan Guerilla Warfare; In the Words of the Mujahideen Fighters* (St. Paul: MBI Publishing Company, 2001), IX.

<sup>55</sup> Fawaz A. Gerges, *Journey of the Jihadist* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2007), 113.

## **2. Role of FATA**

The discussions on Soviet invasion could not be complete without addressing the role of ungoverned spaces with broken socio-economical conditions, more specifically Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). The Afghanistan-Pakistan border (Durand Line) created by the British divided the Pashtun population on both sides of the border. From the surrounding Pashtun residents' (on both side of the border) point of view, Durand Line is a virtual border and is trespassed across freely, without any legal document or passport. However, from the Pakistani perspective it is an official border which must be guarded by military presence, if necessary. This precise mentality of the Pashtun residents made this area an oasis for retreat and re-supply during the Soviet invasion. In conjunction with the Pakistani support, this was an ideal location to man, train, and equip the Mujahideen; an area which the Soviets could not cross without sparking official involvement of the international community. The proximity of Kabul to the surrounding rugged mountains at the Durand Line made entry into Afghanistan inconspicuous and tactically efficient. When applying the hit-and-run tactics, the geography and local familiarity proved beneficial with friendly provisions not far from many scenes of fighting. Making the area further suitable to the cause was the Pashtun loyalty to their tribes and families to the West, who were then engaged in a bloody war with a non-Muslim aggressor.



Figure 2. Ethnicity Map

During the period of 1980s, FATA became the gateway for many Jihadis' entry into Afghanistan. It not only facilitated an influx of religious madrassas to generate new recruits but also incorporated guest houses to prepare and indoctrinate new militants. Osama bin Laden too contributed to a guest house, known as the Services Bureau, which became instrumental in the early phases of Al-Qaeda.<sup>56</sup> Presence of Arab fighters coupled with Saudi funding paved the way for induction of Wahabi ideology into key madrassas; the region previously followed moderate school of thought and jurisprudence. As with any movement, funding and logistics support were sufficient to transform and mold a new generation of fighters who would later take on a life of their own by aspiring for political positions in Afghanistan. After the Soviet retreat, Mujahideen groups turned on each other to gain a role in governance, a reward for many years of sacrifice and bloody fighting. Unfortunately, the fundamentalists, due to massive support during war years, would have the upper hand while the moderates would prove to be no match for the new wave of atrocities in the name of religion.

<sup>56</sup>Fawaz A. Gerges, *Journey of the Jihadist* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2007), 119.

### 3. Mujahideen

Soviet-Afghan war served as the final blow to moderate religious groups. Even though many Mujahideen groups and tribes had taken up arms against the Soviet, the selection process of foreign supporters eliminated the moderates by favoring the extremists and fanatics. After all, they could best get the job done due to their belief in militant Islam. All three aiding states (America, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan) had a hand in making this possible.<sup>57</sup> From a realist perspective an able group needed to be selected to receive the aid. For inflicting damage to America through support of North Vietnamese, it was a strategy to create a Vietnam War for the Soviets. From the Saudi perspective, the group had to fit the Wahabi brand of Islam. Due to Saudi Wahabism/Salafi practices, receiving group had to have a similar belief system; literal belief in the Qur'an with no room for speculation or deviation. Shias and Sufis, especially, did not fit these criteria since these groups are often termed as *Kafirs* (non-believers) by Wahabis. As for Pakistan's role, the reasons were more practical since it had much to lose through a possible Soviet aggression or another round of tensions over Pashtunistan (a separate land for the Pashtuns, to be carved out of FATA). These fears may have been compounded since USSR was a Cold War ally of India; the strategic encirclement carried the potential of a two-front conflict for Pakistan. As events would unfold, General Muhammed Zia-ul-Haq assumed power through a military coup and rapidly began to implement Islam into the Pakistani society. With the coincidental timing of the Iran revolution and Soviet invasion, Zia felt "destiny had called him to serve Pakistan, to bind up its wounds, and to prepare for the nation for the struggle that lay ahead."<sup>58</sup> Advocated by Zia, bulk of the aid went to Hikmetyar and some to Masud, both of whom had "participated in an unsuccessful uprising against President Mohammed Daud in 1975. These figures had then fled to Pakistan where they were patronized by Islamabad as a means to pressurize future Afghan governments. Consequently when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan already had effective Islamic radicals

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<sup>57</sup> Brahma Chellaney, "Fighting Terrorism in Southern Asia: The Lessons of History," *International Security* 26 (2001): 96.

<sup>58</sup> Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003), 175.

under its control which could lead to Jihad.”<sup>59</sup> The task had begun earlier during Bhutto’s reign and intensified under Zia.

#### **4. Wahabi Influence**

Zia’s emphasis on religion led to the decline of the moderation promoted by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, changing the dynamics of Pakistani politics as well as attitudes of the society. This transformation also facilitated the alliance with Saudi Arabia. During Zia’s 11-year reign, Saudi financing and projects boosted the efforts against the Soviets while introducing the Wahabi Islam to a region that had primarily followed a moderate school of thought. It was a consequence Pakistan was willing to accept. In addition to providing finances, Riyadh also agreed to provide cheap fuel, assistance for the influx of refugees, and numerous social and educational (madrassa) programs along the border areas as “gifts to the Afghan people from Saudi Arabia.”<sup>60</sup> Though self-serving, the Saudi gestures were seen as noble acts and were welcomed by other religious actors in the FATA and NWFP who were then engaged in rallying for Jihad. The type of education offered by the Saudi-sponsored madrassas also mirrored their religious ideology thus transforming an entire generation of youth who were distinct from the madrassa-attending generation before. The overall effect resulted in transforming the ethos of FATA. To the warriors, outside support legitimized what they believed to be a state of Dar-ul-Harb. Simultaneously it also fueled the Pashtun warrior culture through arms supplies. This ultimate call to Jihad, with even the non-Muslim powers advocating the struggle, was a moment of triumph both from the ideological point of view as well as from the perspective of tribal customs.

Resources were not the only goods delivered to impress the populace. The Saudi government also encouraged its citizens to participate in repelling the Soviet Army from Afghanistan. The wealthy Osama bin Laden was among the many who wished to offer his money for the cause. In addition to supporting a guest house in Peshawar, Osama

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<sup>59</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* (London: Yale Nota Bene, 2000), 85.

<sup>60</sup> Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003), 180.

also formed an Arab Army following his limited experience among the Mujahideen.<sup>61</sup> This band of Arabs would later be combined with the Egyptian hard-line ideology of Zawahiri to become Al-Qaeda. Together, Osama and Zawahiri enjoyed the kind of freedom which was not possible under the Royal Family or the Mubarak regime in North Africa.

## **5. Role of Jamat-e-Islami**

Under Zia's reign, Jamat-e-Islami managed to gain a significant role in the Pakistani government. During its early days in India, the group created a separation based on devout believers of the religion and those who were nominal in their faith. The devout Muslims felt it was their duty to advocate a Muslim state and revert to a period of the Rashidun (the rightful leaders).<sup>62</sup> In the 1980's, the Jamat enjoyed a considerable status due to Zia's own religious convictions and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. As a consequence, it strengthened the organization's role and image as a political party. However, the fundamentalist teachings of the Brotherhood and Jamat, as they pertain to Afghanistan and FATA, can be traced back to the 1950s, inspiring Sibghatullah Mujaddedi, Burhanuddin Rabbani, and Maulvi Yunus Khalis.<sup>63</sup>

Over the course of Soviet invasion, the Jamat would become a suitable tool of the ISI and an umbrella organization for other religious groups since it offered an extension into Afghanistan.<sup>64</sup> This would set the stage for subsequent Islamization of the FATA and NWFP as well as the increase in madrassas, giving birth to the frustrated Taliban who would utilize the Islamic concept of Shari'a (Islamic law) and state as their ultimate visions. The consequences of the over-reliance on religion would surface in the success of the Taliban and the Jamat's growing role in the Pakistani politics. The dangers of Islamization would also be experienced through foreign entities craving to push their ideology into FATA areas. The greatest lesson of this era, however, is in realizing the

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<sup>61</sup> Fawaz A. Gerges, *Journey of the Jihadist* (Orlando: Harcourt, 2007), 119.

<sup>62</sup> Memorial Institute for Preventing Terrorism Website, <http://www.tkb.org>

<sup>63</sup> Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: At the Crosscurrent of History* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2003), 177.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.

adverse consequences of thrusting religious actors into political and strategic roles; religion is not well-versed in modern governance, economy, or foreign policy.

## **6. Rise of Mullahs**

During 1980s, the area suffered a rise in Islamization, thus reducing the authority of the *Maliks* and *Khans* (tribal leaders with political roles) who had traditionally governed over their respective tribes. The increase in religious madrassas and emphasis on Shari'a gave rise to the *Mullahs* (religious clerics) who began to infuse the clergy and political authority under themselves. Over the last few decades their role only grew stronger. The Jihad in Afghanistan and the resulting Taliban only strengthened their position in the FATA. Enjoying autonomy and foreign aid from Wahabi donors, the madrassas were instrumental in the creation of militants who often served at the service of many Pakistani policies in the region, be it Kashmir or Afghanistan. However, the events of 9/11 drove General Musharraf to change his domestic policies and implement actions that were geared to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). It has not been easy to reverse decades of policies which promoted asymmetrical warfare as a means for strategic depth against its neighbors.

## **7. Creation of Taliban**

After the 1989 withdrawal of Soviet forces, Afghanistan was in a state of disarray with no economic and political stability. The communist leader, Najibullah, remained in power until 1992, mostly due to the animosity and lack of organization between the Mujahideen groups, warlords, and factions. Even though an attempt was made to unite the various ethnic tribes and control Kabul collectively, this too had failed by 1996. Two years before this (in 1994), a group was organizing to become the next regime to change the dynamics of Afghanistan. This group would come to be known as the Taliban (from the word *Talib*; Student). Taliban members and leaders shared key ethnic and social factors which contributed to their cohesion and success. The students traced their origins to Afghan refugee camps in the FATA and received their education and training in the religious madrassas which preached hard-line teachings of Islam. Additionally, and most

importantly, they comprised of Pashtun identity, the dominant group in Afghanistan. The fact that these students knew little of their Afghan history or culture did not matter since they aimed to create a state in the traditions of early Islamic period, a type of Caliphate which would be free of corrupt groups who had now turned on each other to gain power.<sup>65</sup>

With new forms of instability and widespread chaos in Afghanistan, Pakistan again grew concerned over its neighbor. Pakistan's then Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, had envisioned a trade route to Central Asia to improve the troubling economy of the country, a task which required a reliable ally to ensure the safety of its convoys.<sup>66</sup> With no other credible group, and given the growing fervor and rhetoric as the liberators of society, Taliban proved to be the only worthwhile partner. This strategic alliance eventually led to the Taliban's hold on Kabul two years later (in 1996). "Politically, the Taliban gained small but significant status of international legitimacy through Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.<sup>67</sup> Unfortunately, the irony quickly set in as these liberators turned into the most oppressive regime to rule Afghanistan. Initially, the Taliban were welcomed for countering the thugs and criminals but their reliance on strict Shari'a practices and atrocities against females sent shockwaves throughout Afghanistan and the international community. With alienation from the general international community and the United Nations, this isolated regime was ripe for the infiltration of Al-Qaeda, a new alliance that would give way to a host of global problems.

## **E. SUMMARY**

This chapter probed the historical Afghan conflicts of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Past Afghan intrusions of a colonial power and a superpower showed that a weak state can win wars against a superior, more advanced military. Furthermore, when widespread collateral damage violated the dearly-held concepts of *nang*, the locals resorted to insurgencies under the banner of Jihad. Over the course of history, Afghanistan also

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<sup>65</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* (London: Yale Nota Bene, 2000), 23.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>67</sup> Ralph H. Magnus, "Afghanistan in 1997: The War Moves North," *Asian Survey* 38 (1998): 110.

experienced the growing role of religious leaders during times of political turmoil. This provided opportunity for outside actors to inject their own brand of Islam, as seen through the support of Saudi Arabia and FATA madrassas. With Islam and *badal* as the motivating factors for the masses, the longer an invader fights, the stronger the insurgency, and more dangerous the resulting generation becomes.

Lastly, the present and future solutions for the Afghan crisis are embedded in cultural understanding. As shown by the examples of General Harlan and British Paladins, understanding Pashtunwali can mean the difference between cooperation and resistance. The more an invading military educates itself about cultural elements such as *badal* and *nang*, the less likely it is to enrage the populace. To ensure victories, the current and future battles must be fought across the spectrum of political, economic, social, and military spheres.<sup>68</sup> Continuing to rely solely on military strategies while ignoring the effects of collateral damage is likely to repeat history.

The next chapter will discuss the implications of Coalition's military tactics. The analysis will suggest that over-reliance on kinetic means has led to widespread collateral damage and has fueled anti-Western sentiment. As a consequence, it has also heightened the effectiveness of Taliban's propaganda campaigns, possibly increasing recruitment for their cause.

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<sup>68</sup> Thomas X. Hammes, *Sling and the Stone* (St. Paul: Zenith Press, 2004), 231.

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### III. COLLATERAL DAMAGE AND BADAL

#### A. INTRODUCTION

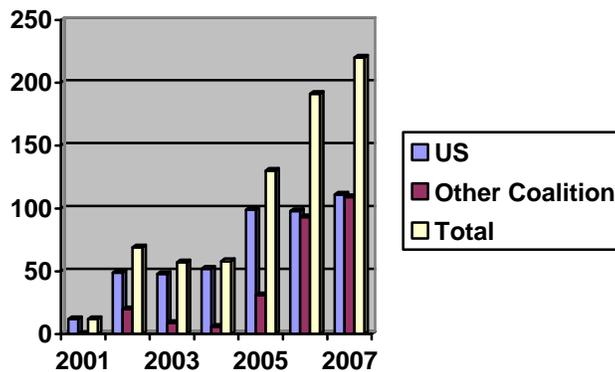
This chapter will examine the impact of collateral damage on the insurgency and counterinsurgency in Afghanistan. It will analyze how over-reliance on aerial strikes and lack of cultural knowledge by the United States and the NATO/ISAF Coalition have damaged the popular support, thus hindering with Coalition's efforts to stabilize and reconstruct the countryside as well as implement a lasting solution where the elected government is able to survive. Unfortunately, as the research will suggest, the current approach pursued by the Coalition has done more harm than good; ramifications of which may transpire in a long term involvement in the region while contending with a populace that sees the Coalition's presence as an oppressive rather than a liberating force.

Six years after embarking on Operation Enduring Freedom, the NATO forces are continuing to fight a resilient insurgency. With Al-Qaeda leadership as elusive as ever, the Taliban have become the main adversary in Afghanistan. Despite the kinetic tactics and state-of-the art technology at the Allies' disposal, the insurgency seems to show no signs of weakening. On the contrary, terrorist attacks are up "53 percent in Afghanistan, according to statistics compiled by the National Counterterrorism Center."<sup>69</sup> Given these startling figures, growing criticism is being expressed at the national level with regards to failures in what began as the primary front on terrorism. As the Taliban insurgency continues to gain strength, the overwhelming response by the U.S. officials and military leadership has been articulated through the need to deploy more troops. Little emphasis has been devoted to the underlying causes that may be fueling the Taliban insurgency; cultural elements of the Afghan people have been disregarded as they pertain to curbing the anti-U.S. sentiment and Taliban recruitment. Furthermore, hindering the campaign of winning hearts and minds has been the ongoing collateral damage caused by the allies.

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<sup>69</sup> Scott Shane, "Terrorist Attacks in Iraq and Afghanistan Rose Sharply Last Year, State Department Says," *New York Times*, May 1, 2007, A Section, Late Edition.

In order to discover the negative effects of the current military strategy, Taliban propaganda campaign will be studied to outline the anti-U.S. sentiment as it stems from the occurrences of innocent civilian deaths caused by Coalition strikes. Additionally, propaganda will reveal that Pashtun culture (Pashtunwali) and Jihad (Holy War) have played a vital role in compromising the popular support; reactions to collateral damage. Violations of tribal customs and religion have led to shaping the Coalition forces' image as occupiers, no different from the invaders who marched into Afghanistan before. Moreover, Taliban tactics have evolved to create further cultural and religious violations by the Coalition, pulling the friendly forces into creating additional collateral damage and dilemma in the very tasks the Coalition set out to accomplish. In lieu of the growing insurgency and the ongoing civilian deaths, there may be grave implications for the future of United States national security and interests in South-Asia. If the current military strategy in Afghanistan doesn't change, the center-of-gravity (people) may favor the Taliban, in turn prolonging the conflict and depleting the American influence and economy through a war of attrition. The following chart depicts the rising Coalition casualties since the onset of Operation Enduring Freedom.<sup>70</sup> It includes hostile, training, and medical related deaths in the country.



**U.S. Total= 469; Other Coalition Total=268; Grand Total=737**

Figure 3. Number of Casualties

<sup>70</sup> Iraq Coalition Casualty Website, <http://www.icasualties.org/oef/default.aspx>.

While the low number of casualties may appear to be an indicator of success given the scope of operations and years in the country, the rising pattern of casualties represents possible challenges from the insurgency. Despite dedicating costly resources and over six years of military presence in the country, the insurgency seems to show no end. As of November 2006, the cost of Afghanistan conflict was estimated to be \$88 billion dollars, not including the aid given to neighboring Pakistan for their assistance in the GWOT.<sup>71</sup>

## **B. CONCEPT OF BADAL**

In any society the cause of collateral damage to human life carries the potential of creating resistance movements by invoking morality. However, in a society like Pashtuns the effect is three-fold. Not only is morality invoked through mere human emotion but tribal custom of *nang* (honor) and Jihad are also invoked. These three factors combined not only motivate and create a Jihadi force unlike any other, but they also render the Coalition's efforts useless in the face of very people it is trying to protect. To best explain this loss of hearts and minds campaign, Pashtun tribal code must be studied; more specifically the concept of *badal*. The word *badal* means revenge-killing or vendetta. "*Badal* is an action taken to avenge death, or when the honor of a woman has been involved. When it is a matter to be resolved by *badal*, the right to avenge by death is the prerogative of the individual immediately concerned, but that right also resides in the family, section, clan, or tribe. Further, *badal* need not be restricted to action against the culprit, but can be taken against any member of his kinship group."<sup>72</sup> It is a tribal custom held high in Pashtunwali (Pashtun tribal culture). Pashtunwali is unique to the Pashtu-speaking tribes in Afghanistan who comprise of over 42 percent of the population; a separate percentage lives in the adjacent Federally Administered Tribal Area of Pakistan (FATA). Moreover, Taliban are Pashtu-speaking and adhere to these tribal customs in

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<sup>71</sup> Peter Grier, "Rising Price of the War on Terror ; With the Iraq War and Clashes in Afghanistan Grinding on, the Cost to the US Budget is \$500 Billion and Still Mounting," *The Christian Science Monitor*, November 21, 2006, All Edition.

<sup>72</sup> Niloufer Qasim Mahdi, "Pukhtunwali: Ostracism and Honor Among the Pathan Hill Tribes," *Ethology and Sociobiology* 7 (1986): 298.

addition to the religious guidance of Islam. Generally speaking, offending the honor code of any majority, and especially that of a group which happens to be the opposing force and part of the most dominant tribe in Afghanistan, the issue is worth delving into and warrants closer attention. The map depicts the areas occupied by Pashtuns.

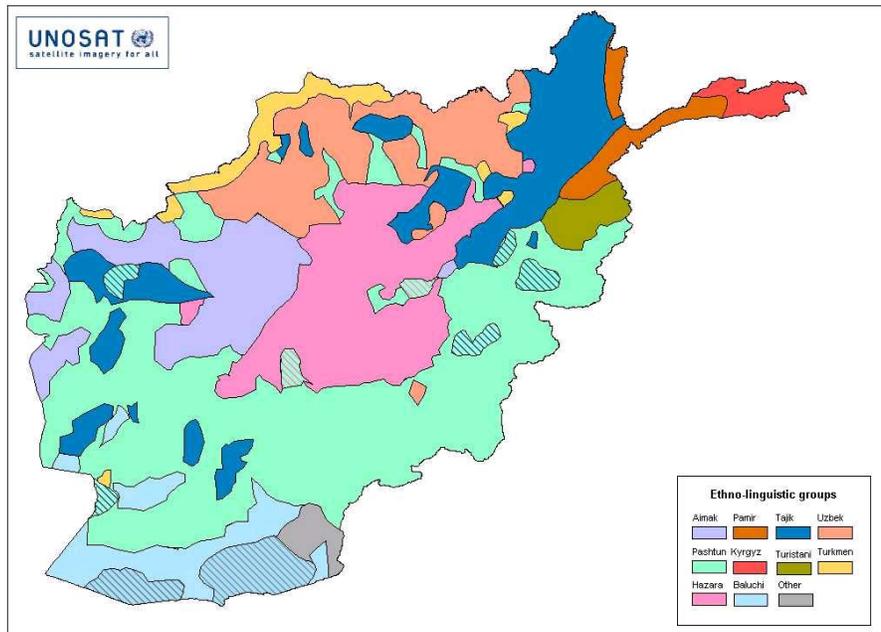


Figure 4. Afghan Ethnic Map

In comparison, the following map outlines the affected areas of military operations against the Taliban.<sup>73</sup> The areas of struggle correlate to the Pashtun populace.

<sup>73</sup> Global Security Organization Website, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/afghanistan/maps.htm> .

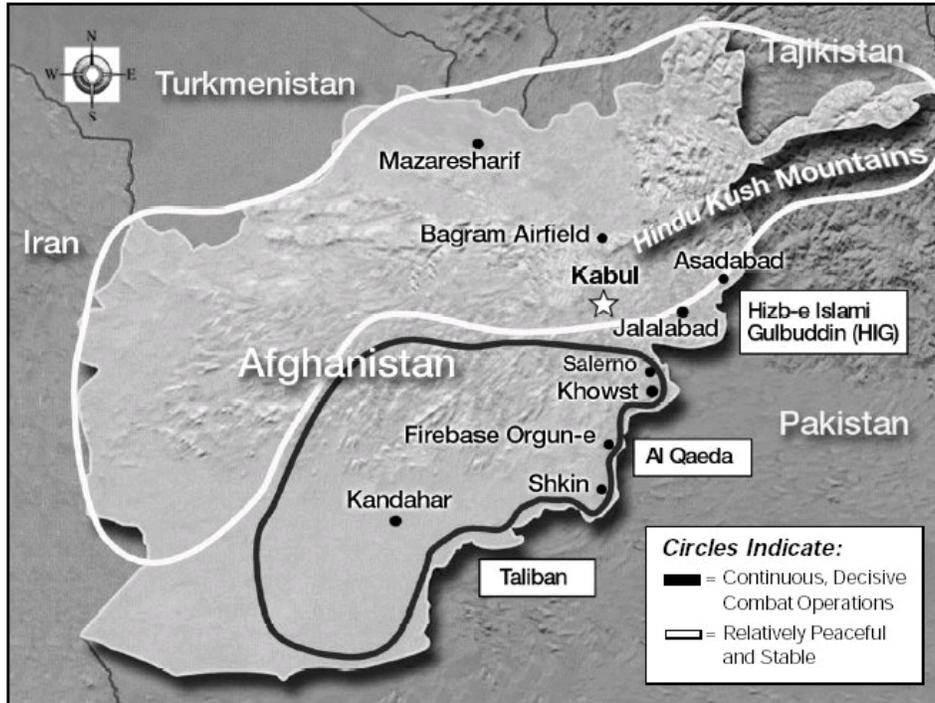


Figure 5. Afghan Areas of Combat

Pashtuns belong to a contact society where extended relationships and tribal interactions take precedence over the individual. As such the honor of one affects the honor of the collective unit of family and tribe. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon the individual to restore the honor of the family or tribe if insult should occur. Among many factors in Pashtunwali, loss of life is at the hierarchy of *nang* violations and demands vendetta or some type of reconciliation to restore that honor, even if the loss of life was accidental. Reconciliations are done through a Jirga (group of elders) to come to a mutual agreement, be it monetary or some other arrangement that satisfies the victim's family. In view of this very concept, it is apparent that Pashtuns are a society unlike any in the Western world and that closure is a very important concept which cannot be overlooked by the offender. Even as a Muslim society, *nang* seems to take priority over the Islamic elements of mercy and forgiveness, often creating a contradiction between the two value systems.

## C. COLLATERAL DAMAGE

### 1. U.S. Tactics

Having discussed the implications of *badal*, it is crucial to focus on the Coalition's tactics with respect to how they have become counterproductive in the face of culture and insurgency. Overall, the military tactics have depended primarily on technology to oppose the enemy. As such the aerial assets have been the modes operates following a contact or skirmish with the Taliban forces. A host of Close-Air-Support (CAS) aircrafts and bombers have been utilized in reaction to intelligence reports and ground support. In one published case, the aircrafts have even been used interchangeably despite their intended roles. For instance, according to the November 2007 Navy Times report, B-1B Lancer Bombers flew forty-one CAS missions in one day alone following the discovery of mechanical failures in the F-15 aircrafts.<sup>74</sup> While this incident was hailed as a success story in terms of adaptability and reinforcement for the ground forces, the broader strategy alludes to a continued reliance on aerial bombers to provide roles that were traditionally accomplished with lighter payloads and closer proximity to the targets. To qualify the previous statement, "the Air Force is bolstering this immediate strike capability" of "combining the payload, long-loiter, and high-altitude capacity of bombers with precision munitions, improved command and control, and precise targeting...to conduct CAS."<sup>75</sup> However, the precision capabilities of high-altitude munitions are negligible in the face of faulty intelligence and poor decision-making on the ground. Even during the occasion of apologizing and handing out blood-money of \$2000 per family for a ground-related episode of collateral damage (in March), an air strike killed at least 21 civilians in the southern province of Helmand later that day.<sup>76</sup> One month earlier in April "at least 57 civilians are said to have been slain in American

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<sup>74</sup> Navy Times Website,  
[http://www.navytimes.com/news/2007/11/airforce\\_f15\\_afghanistan\\_071107n/](http://www.navytimes.com/news/2007/11/airforce_f15_afghanistan_071107n/).

<sup>75</sup> General T. Michael Moseley, "Fiscal Year 2006 Air Force Readiness Statement," *Presentation to the Armed Services Committee, United States House of Representatives*, 3 March 2005.

<sup>76</sup> The Economist Magazine Website,  
[http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=9141410&top\\_story=1](http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9141410&top_story=1).

air-strikes at Shindand, in Western Afghanistan.”<sup>77</sup> Unfortunately, even one death of a civilian is one too many given the cultural aspects of the affected tribes.

## **2. Taliban Strategy**

Knowing the Coalition’s technological might and superiority, Taliban have maintained their unconventional tactics to lure the friendly forces into situations that promote collateral damage and reduce their ability to protect the civilian population. The insurgents have largely sought to avoid full-on battlefield confrontations and instead relied on guerrilla-style tactics, including suicide attacks, roadside bombings and kidnappings.”<sup>78</sup> These techniques may also be driven by the Coalition’s predictability of using air strikes and lack of cultural familiarity. This is not to say the Taliban are free from collateral damage. As of June 2007, the death toll for the period of 2006 and 2007 amounted to 6,000 people with over 1,500 civilian casualties, bulk of which were attributed to suicide bombings and other insurgent activities.<sup>79</sup> Nonetheless, it is the friendly forces that are held to the standards of international law and rules of engagement while Taliban are known to carry out human rights violations. Additionally, the Taliban’s goal may not be to win hearts and minds for their own cause but to ensure that friendly forces are not able to do get the trust of the people. In this regard, and knowing the nature and wrath of the aerial strikes, Taliban may intentionally be taking the fight into inhabited villages and residential dwellings. Running into a village after an encounter with the Coalition forces has become routine activity for many Taliban fighters, knowing that an aerial attack will most likely follow the incident. Sacrificing fighters may be a price worth paying for their political aspirations in comparison to the damage afflicted on the image of friendly forces. “The death of innocent civilians during operations — numbering more than fifty by some accounts — has damaged trust and

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<sup>77</sup> General T. Michael Moseley, “Fiscal Year 2006 Air Force Readiness Statement,” *Presentation to the Armed Services Committee, United States House of Representatives*, March 3, 2005.

<sup>78</sup> Laura King, “The World; Karzai, Musharraf Agree to Share Intelligence; After Months of Trading Blame, the Afghan and Pakistani Leaders OK Plan to Fight Extremists,” *Los Angeles Times*, May 1, 2007, Foreign Desk Section, Home Edition.

<sup>79</sup> Time Magazine Website,  
<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1636551,00.html?xid=feed-cnn-topics>.

fueled resentment, pushing some into the arms of terrorists, according to observers.”<sup>80</sup> According to Nader Nadery, vice president of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission, “the casualties are an easy propaganda tool for the Taliban to use in the affected areas. People feel under attack by both sides. This does not win hearts and minds.”<sup>81</sup>

### **3. Perception**

The commencement of Operation Enduring Freedom began with the aims to free the oppressed Afghan people from a ruthless Taliban regime and to promote stability in order to disrupt the safe havens of Al-Qaeda. In doing so, the American policy makers promised safety, security, and an improved quality-of-life for the people. Six years later, the situation is anything but ideal. More so than its inability to protect the people from Taliban atrocities, the innocent deaths caused by the Coalition forces are beginning to turn away the popular support initially enjoyed upon entry into the Afghan conflict. The Coalition forces are no longer viewed as liberators but as a military that makes indiscriminate decisions in which people are acceptable losses. Compounding the issue are the meager compensations and the rare apologies to the affected families, if any. These cultural violations, if not reduced and mediated appropriately through tribal customs, can only complicate matters. As explored through the concept of *badal*, the honor of the entire family or clan is at stake and without reconciliation from both sides the only outlet for the insulted member(s) is to take revenge. The lack of reconciliation not only paints the Coalition as an arrogant force but it also feeds the perception of an occupation where people feel victim to the oppression and injustices of the invading force.

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<sup>80</sup> David Montero, “Pakistan's Tribal Strategy; Pakistan's Prime Minister Met with Bush Tuesday to Discuss the War on Terror,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 25, 2006, World Section, All Edition.

<sup>81</sup> Pamela Constable, “Karzai Says Civilian Toll is No Longer Acceptable,” *The Washington Post*, May 3, 2007, A Section, Final Edition.

#### D. JIHAD AND MADRASSAS

Having perceived the Coalition's presence as an environment of oppression and injustice, the concept of Jihad begins to surface in combination with *badal*, further aggravating the public's resentment. According to Islam, oppression and injustice are sufficient criteria to justify a Holy War against an invading non-Muslim force. Unfortunately, Jihad is being advocated at a lesser level than that declared by the state itself (Dar-ul-Harb). This is a consequence of the fact that Afghans view Karzai as an extension of the West, similar to the historical events surrounding Shah Shuja and the first Anglo-Afghan war. The following Quranic verses highlight the basic criteria as it pertains to an armed struggle.

Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you but do not transgress limits and slay them wherever ye catch them. And turn them out from where they have turned you out; for **persecution is worse than slaughter**; but fight them not at the sacred Mosque unless they first fight you there; but if they fight you, slay them. Such is the reward of those who reject faith. But if they cease, Allah is oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. And fight them on until there is no more **persecution**. And the religion becomes Allah's. But if they cease, let there be no hostility except to those who practice **oppression**.<sup>82</sup>

According to the above verses, there are elements of forgiveness and rules of engagement as to the termination of an armed struggle. Whereas perception is reality, termination is dependent upon creation of an environment where the people no longer feel oppressed. Until such circumstances exist, the struggle remains a mandatory act upon all Muslims, hence attracting support from outside actors who may wish to fulfill their obligations; bringing participants from all parts of the globe.

After the context of Jihad is established, madrassas often carry out the duties of rallying the youth for the religious cause. In the case of Afghanistan, the recruitment pool of Jihadis is abundant because of its proximity to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. Due to influx of refugees from the Soviet invasion and the present conflict, thousands have settled in the FATA despite its broken socio-economic

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<sup>82</sup> The Holy Quran, Chapter 2, Verses 190-193.

conditions. It is also due to this poor quality-of-life that madrassas (schools) have become the primary mode of education system. The type of education offered in most of these madrassas centers on religion alone. Upon graduation from these religious centers the students become ripe for recruitment by the Taliban. When probing deeper into this phenomena, the problem is large enough to sustain an insurgency for years to come. Haqqani madrassa (in NWFP) alone produces over 3,000 graduates each year, whose sole purpose, in absence of other opportunities, will be to fight Jihad.<sup>83</sup> Regrettably this issue is not limited to the FATA alone. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) 2002 report, there were an approximate 28,000 madrassas in Pakistan with only 8000 of them registered. By March 2002, there were around 600,000 students in 6000 registered madrassas. Compared to the 4000 Taliban killed in 2006,<sup>84</sup> even 1 percent of the student population is ample to sustain the resistance in Afghanistan.

#### **E. INFORMATION WARFARE**

In an effort to restore the Coalition's tarnished image, it is pertinent that collateral damage is reduced considerably while instituting an effective propaganda campaign to win back the hearts and minds of the people. The current propaganda campaign lacks the depth required to change the resentment and perception of the people; it is not rooted in concepts of Pashtun culture and Islam. The leaflets distributed throughout the region are often too simplistic and lack the moral fiber in comparison to the propaganda campaigns of the Taliban. Following leaflets represent the typical format and content of many of the Coalition's propaganda.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Ziauddin Sardar, "Pakistan: The Taliban Takeover," *New Statesman*, April 30, 2007, 28.

<sup>84</sup> Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *CRS Report for Congress*, January 11, 2007.

<sup>85</sup> Psychological Operations Website, <http://www.psywarrior.com/Herbafghan.html>.



Figure 6. U.S. Propaganda Leaflet

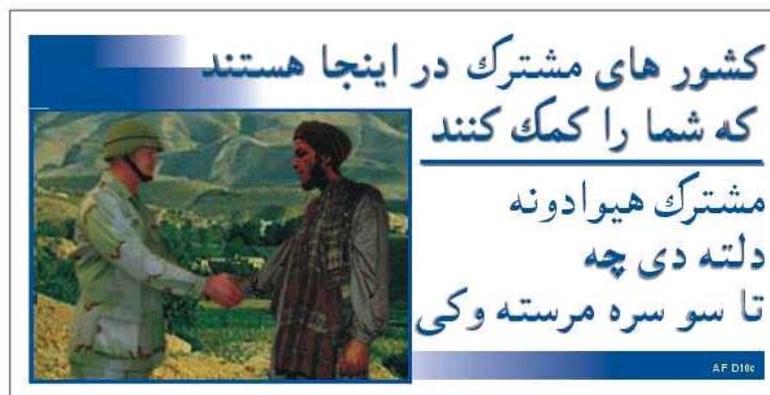


Figure 7. U.S. Propaganda Leaflet

In the portrayed leaflets, the common theme is that of friendship between the Coalition forces and the people. However, with continued collateral damage such propaganda may appear as a contradiction on part of the Coalition's efforts. Secondly, the honor and privacy of women (*zan*) are deeply-held values for the Pashtuns; concepts ignored by the propaganda. To show Pashtun women's faces, coupled with a comparison to the unveiled Western women, is a degradation of *nang*. It is critical that future campaigns consider the culture and values of the people who are to be the intended targets of such leaflets.

While the two portrayed leaflets offer gestures of friendship, there are numerous others that place their emphasis on monetary issues and wrath of the Coalition military. They either offer rewards (pictures of U.S. dollars) for the capture of targeted individuals

or show images such as an AC130 gunship approaching to eliminate human targets.<sup>86</sup> In view of the collateral damage caused by the aerial strikes, it may be worthwhile to omit images which many may view as the vehicles of indiscriminate death. As seen through the Soviet invasion, technology did not deter the resistance, especially when that technology served as the tools for what the locals perceived as ruthless and brutal tactics.

Whereas Coalition propaganda falls short on its emphasis on cultural and religious elements, the Taliban propaganda more than makes up for its reliance on local values. The following Taliban leaflets, known as “Night Letters,” reveal the power and effectiveness gained from Pashtunwali, Islam, and collateral damage caused by the Coalition.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Psychological Operations Website, <http://www.psywarrior.com/Herbafghan.html>.

<sup>87</sup> Thomas H. Johnson, “The Taliban Insurgency and an Analysis of Shabnamah (Night Letters),” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 18 (2007): 322-329.

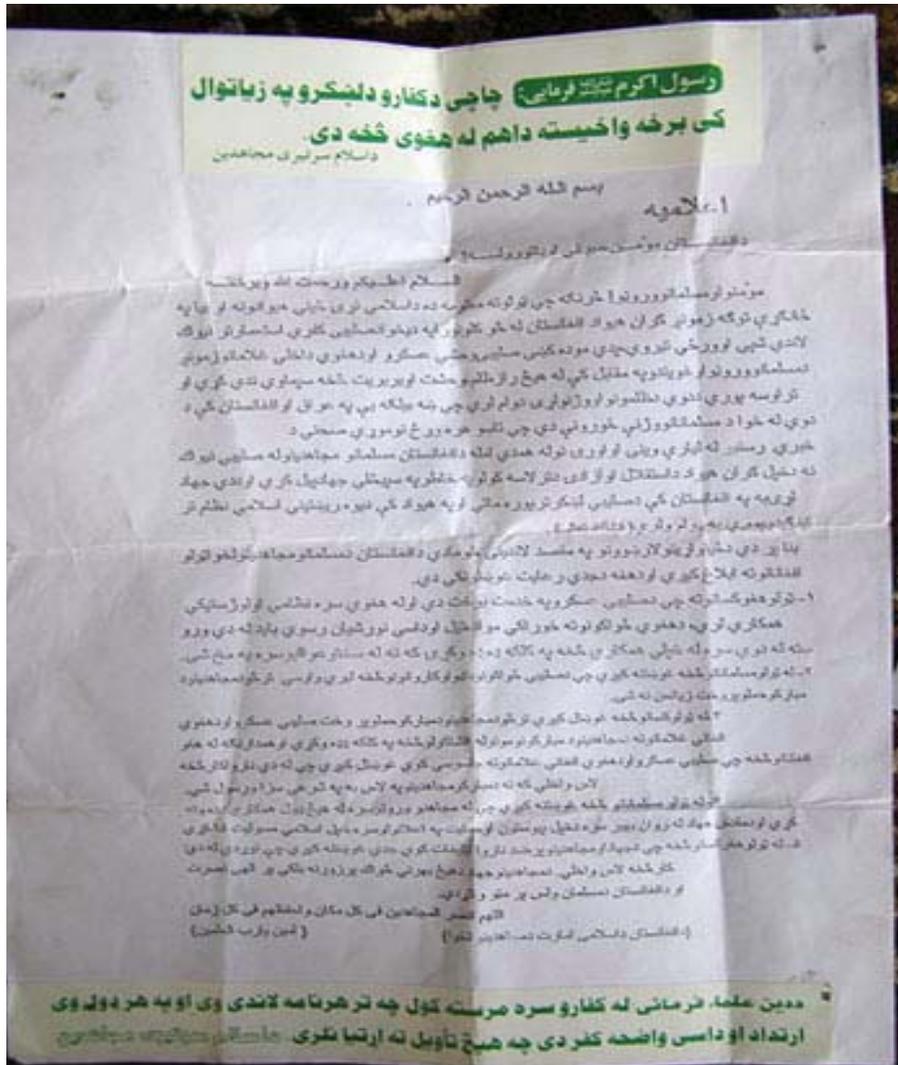


Figure 8. Taliban Propaganda Leaflet

**Translation:** “Pious Afghans, Brave and Courageous People! Accept our greetings; Dear Muslim and devout brother! As you all know some countries in the Islamic world and specifically our dear country-Afghanistan-are spending day and night under the grip of the crusaders in the last few years. During this time the cruel crusaders' army and their domestic servants have committed grave **atrocities, barbarity and savagery against our innocent brothers and sisters**. Their cruelties have not ceased. You have watched and heard of their ongoing savagery in Afghanistan and Iraq, the two best examples that have been exposed by the international media...”

## د افغانستان مجاهد اوله ناسوپه تاريخ كيني داسلا لپاره بي مثال خدمت كړيدى . اود نړى

د افغانستان مجاهد اوله ناسوپه تاريخ كيني داسلا لپاره بي مثال خدمت كړيدى . اود نړى  
كهاروت ه موبه واورواشككت وركړيدى . اوسنا سونيكه كافرلكه احمد شاه ابدالى ، محمد  
غفورى ، شهاب الدين غورى ، اوفوروقهر وانا فود كماروسره په جهاد كولو كيني د پرينه تاريخ كيني  
دى . خوفوسون ورځ يوڅو د امريكا روزلى غلامان دروښان فكرانوپه نامه د افغانستان  
د غيرت دك تاريخ له خاورسره خاوره كړيڅو ن بيهاهم ستاسو پيچيان علماء طلباء اود پنداره خلكه  
په دغه شرائط كيني خپلى ويني داسلا د خدمت لپاره د كفاروپه مقابل كيني تى ندى  
زباید تاسى چه نوره څو ويكړي خپل د زره محبت د مجاهد وپچيا نوسره وساتي . اود نړى د  
كناورد غلطوا ودر و غچنو تبليغاتوپه كته سره د مجاهد و خلاف تبليغاتو كولو با ندى  
د خپلو پښو خاورى ونه كانى خدا نكړه په درڅو اخيرت به يونم مليون دروسا نوسره  
د جهاد شهيدان اود اسلامى امارت بولك شهيدان اومون به تاسى ترخامه نيسو د انور  
دنپه له دنده اوزوده هيله لرو چه تاسى نومين دا انور پنده كړي هېكله طلبان د افغانانو قتلوا  
شخړاى خوله پده مرفه شتى د امريكا روزلى نش به نامه افغانان د هغه محافظين گنبدلى دى  
اقتدار اغزي چه افغانان به افغانانو قتل كړي اوتاسى كړي چه امريكا يان افغانستان د دولت غټه  
كېڅي صلاح سوي اغزي چه افغانان - تاسو پښو سلطانان په شاهي وسه كړي اوتاسى كړي  
چه د افغانستان تولى مدسى چه اسلامى تعليمات پكښي كيدل نن هغو كيني پچيا نوسره د عيساي  
دوس وركول كيني . يول بيان مون د لغزاسه دى چه د كمانوله همكارى لاس واخلي وونه  
پسولمن به مهه د نسا ان اخيرت كته به خواره وى ، لا شلام - نسا د ۲۰۰۱ او ۲۰۰۲

روت ه موبه واورواشككت وركړيدى . اوسنا سونيكه كافرلكه احمد شاه ابدالى ، محمد  
غفورى ، شهاب الدين غورى ، اوفوروقهر وانا فود كماروسره په جهاد كولو كيني د پرينه تاريخ كيني  
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د غيرت دك تاريخ له خاورسره خاوره كړيڅو ن بيهاهم ستاسو پيچيان علماء طلباء اود پنداره خلكه  
دغه شرائط كيني خپلى ويني داسلا د خدمت لپاره د كفاروپه مقابل كيني تى ندى  
ايد تاسى چه نوره څو ويكړي خپل د زره محبت د مجاهد وپچيا نوسره وساتي . اود نړى د  
ارود غلطوا ودر و غچنو تبليغاتوپه كته سره د مجاهد و خلاف تبليغاتو كولو با ندى  
د خپلو پښو خاورى ونه كانى خدا نكړه په درڅو اخيرت به يونم مليون دروسا نوسره  
د جهاد شهيدان اود اسلامى امارت بولك شهيدان اومون به تاسى ترخامه نيسو د انور

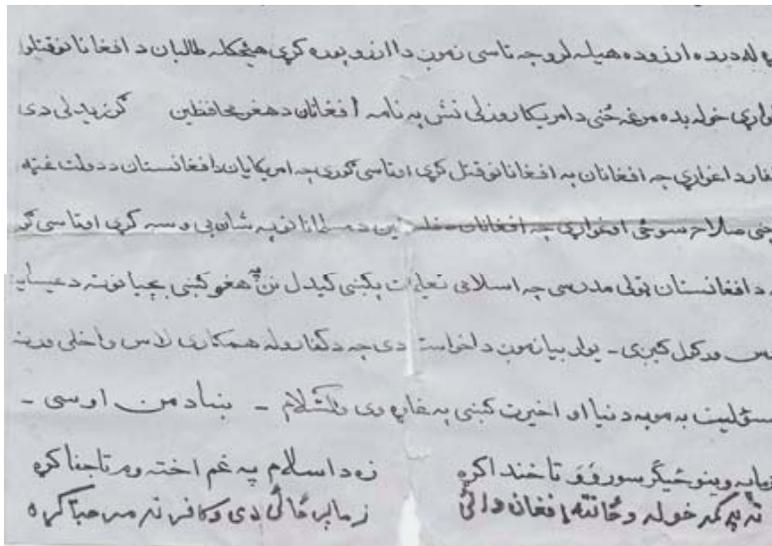


Figure 9. Taliban Propaganda Leaflet

**Translation:** Message to the “Mujahed” (freedom fighter) Afghan Nation! You have served Islam a great deal throughout history and have defeated the non-Moslems of the world. Your ancestors such as Ahmad Shah Abdaali, Mahmood Ghaznawi, Shahaabuddin Ghorī and other heroes have recorded a great history in fight against non-Moslems, but it is a pity that today some of America-trained servants under the name of bright-minded have destroyed the honored history of Afghanistan. Today once again your sons, clerics and Taliban and the faithful people, in these circumstances are fighting against non-Moslems and are serving Islam. If you don’t do any thing else, at least support your Mujahed sons and do not be impressed by the false propaganda of non-Moslem enemies. God forbid one and half millions of martyrs of Jihad (religious Islamic fight) against Russians and one hundred thousand of martyrs of Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan (martyr Taliban) will ask you for the cost of their martyrdom, so we hope that you meet our expectations. They’re stopping the Islamic education and instead are teaching Christianity to your children. Taliban never want to kill common civilians, but unfortunately some so-called Afghanis have become the supporters of our enemies. Non-Moslems want to kill and pit Afghan against Afghan and in the name of Talib they are attacking everybody and they are killing Afghans and destroying your houses and they are destroying Islamic madrassahs in Afghanistan. They burn their Afghan arms and ammunitions. They want to make Afghanistan as helpless as Palestine. You have seen

*that in all “Madrassas” (Islamic schools) nowadays they teach Christianity to your children. Once again, we request you not to support non-Moslems, otherwise you will have the whole responsibility here and hereafter.*

*Be happy Poem*

*I was so sad you laughed*

*I was caring for Islam and you betrayed*

*How do you call yourself an Afghan*

*Instead of me you supported a non-Moslem*

Based on the above leaflets it is apparent that Taliban information campaigns revolve around perceptions and sentiments of those affected by the actions of the Coalition. Not only are the Taliban campaigns more thorough but they incorporate aspects of honor, history, and tradition to summon the support of the people. With the Soviet invasion not far from the memories of the Afghan people, they compare the atrocities of this conflict to the indiscriminate actions of the previous war, trying to draw parallels that may undermine the Coalition’s efforts. Nonetheless, it is the Coalition who finds itself in a defensive stance, not only to counter the Taliban propaganda but to gain legitimacy from a populace that has begun to lose confidence in its efforts. In the end it is the people who will determine victory or defeat; Taliban seem to know this fact while the “liberators” often appear to overlook the power of such information.

#### **F. STELLA MODEL**

This STELLA model takes key factual data and couples it with speculations to forecast the Taliban insurgency for the next 72 months. It links collateral damage to the Taliban’s ability to affect public opinion and recruit fighters via madrassa population. The model only takes into account factors pertaining to civilian deaths, Taliban propaganda, recruitment, and Coalition’s kill rate. Following facts were used to formulate the simulation.

- Coalition **Kill Rate** of 333 per month, based on 4,000 Taliban killed in 2006.<sup>88</sup>
- Civilian **Death Rate** of 52 per month, based on 314 civilian killed in the first six months of 2007.<sup>89</sup>
- **Madrassa Population** of 600,000 based on the 6,000 of 8,000 registered madrassas in Pakistan; additional 22,000 madrassas' population remains unaccounted for.<sup>90</sup>
- **Graduation Rate** of 1 percent of 600,000 per year. **Recruitment Rate** of less than 6000 Students per year due to possible attrition (less than 1 percent of **Madrassa Population**). In 2001, Pakistan's official figures report that "only one percent of madrassas sent their students for military training in Afghanistan."<sup>91</sup>
- **Positive Perception of Coalition Behavior** determined to be an important factor in countering **Taliban Propaganda Effectiveness**. "According to a countrywide poll by the BBC, the number of Afghans who believe that their country is headed in the right direction dropped a precipitous 22 percentage points between 2005 and 2006, from 77 percent to 55 percent, while the number of Afghans who approve of the U.S. presence in their country eroded from 68 percent to 57 percent. Meanwhile, Afghan President Hamid Karzai has repeatedly urged NATO and the U.S. military to act with greater restraint."<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy," *CRS Report for Congress*, January 11, 2007.

<sup>89</sup> Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, "Losing Afghanistan, One Civilian at a Time," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 2007, Outlook Section, Final Edition.

<sup>90</sup> Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies Website, <http://www.ipcs.org/printIssueBrief.jsp?status=publications&status1=issue&mod=d&check=15&try=true>.

<sup>91</sup> Nadeem Yaqub, "Pakistan: Better Education Key to Fighting Extremism," *Global Information Network*, March 29, 2002, 1.

<sup>92</sup> Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, "Losing Afghanistan, One Civilian at a Time," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 2007, Outlook Section, Final Edition.

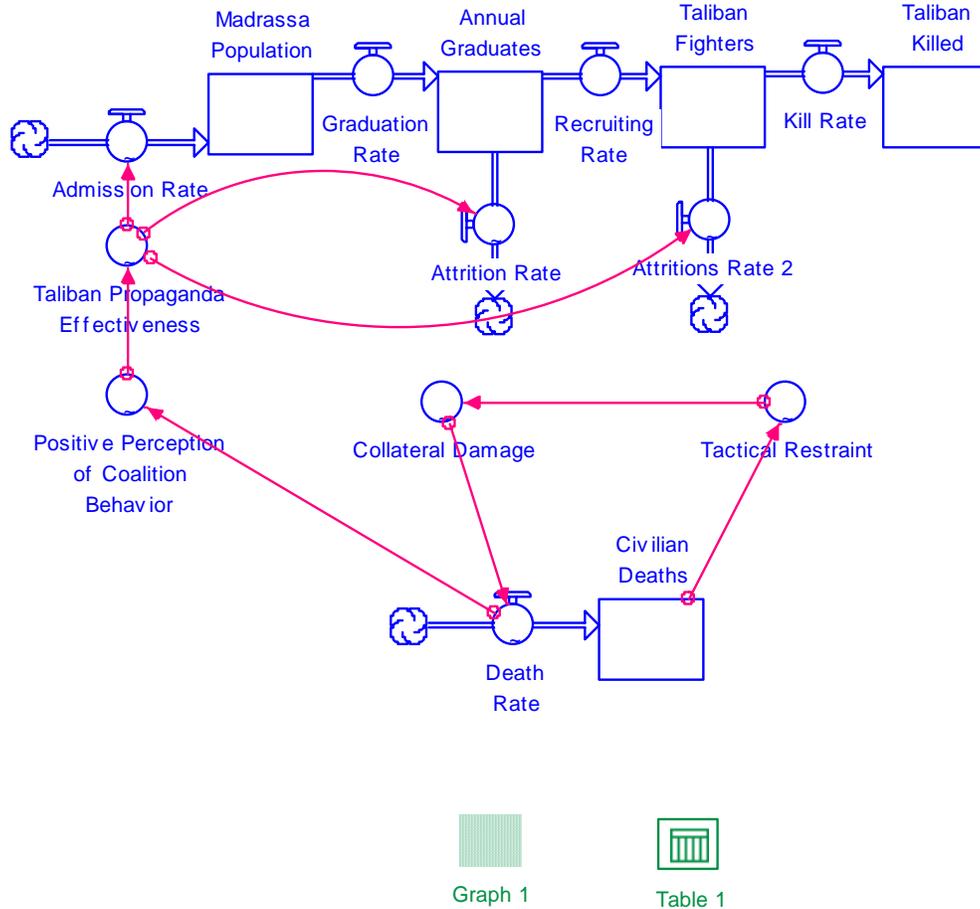


Figure 10. STELLA Model

### 1. Key Assumptions

A). Information Operations campaigns are critical to hindering with the Taliban propaganda.

B). Collateral damage boosts the Taliban propaganda campaigns while lowering the Coalition’s credibility. Reduction in collateral damage and disruption of Taliban propaganda will improve the public opinion to a level of above 90 percent.C). Collateral Damage cannot be completely eliminated.

C). Tactical restraint can reduce collateral damage. Improvements are immediate (six months to accomplish; in reality it will take longer to change tactical operations and incorporate decision-making tools and/or resources).

D). Actual stock of Taliban fighters and recruitment pool are larger than the STELLA figures. STELLA figures are based on probable lower limits.

## 2. Findings

Though a simple simulation, exclusive of other contributing factors, it produced startling results as to the duration of the insurgency. Based on the current Coalition's **Kill Rate** and Taliban **Recruitment Rate** (stemming from the madrassas), the numbers favored the insurgency. Despite assuming the **Taliban Fighters** to be at a low stock of 5,000, the stock was not reduced to half until a period of six years; 23, 654 Taliban were Killed in 72 months. The model also revealed another dilemma: While **Tactical Restraint** is needed to reduce **Collateral Damage**, it may also reduce the **Kill Rate** needed to reduce the number of fighters. In view of this, the only way to improve the Coalition's perception while curbing the insurgency is to interfere with the Taliban's recruitment. However, interfering with the recruitment pool requires non-kinetic solutions. There are no military solutions for reducing an enormous madrassa population in the borderlands between Pakistan and Afghanistan. To accomplish the task of curbing the Taliban insurgency, solutions must appear in the broader policy and strategy towards Afghanistan.

## 3. Applications

The implications of these findings cannot be understated. With a renewed emphasis on reducing collateral damage, restraint and improved decision-making at the operational level are instrumental to offsetting the factors which promote and sustain recruitment through propaganda stemming from the loss of innocent lives. Without drastic improvements at the tactical level, the kinetic methods will continue to produce innocent civilian casualties, thus playing into the hands of Taliban. It must be noted that improvements at the tactical level must not be limited to technology alone; they must extend down to the actual trigger-pullers in the battlefield environment. Whereas culture and language are the overlooked factors in understanding the enemy, more is needed in terms of educating the fighting men and women as well as those in the upper echelons of

the tactical decisions. It should be no surprise that Taliban guerilla tactics lure the Coalition forces into creating collateral damage, however, enhancements at the tactical level can provide increased situational awareness to the soldiers and the Combatant Commanders as to possible consequences of a strike on a fleeing or hidden Taliban target. This added piece in the decision-making process can provide dividends to the overall strategy of counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, especially since the military continues to desire the full effect of “kinetic weapons” to destroy the enemy while limiting the likelihood of collateral damage.<sup>93</sup>

With regard to Information Operations (IO) campaigns, the efforts must incorporate culture, religion, and concerns of the locals. The amount of information, when compared to Taliban leaflets, pales in comparison to a typical Coalition leaflet. Additionally, Coalition must take into account the unintended consequences that may stem from overlooked details such as Pashtu language or tribal dominance in Afghanistan. Not only do such matters highlight the need for cultural experts, be it in the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) or in country, but revamping of the current Information Operations is also needed to counter and compete with the Taliban campaigns.

## **G. SUMMARY**

This chapter discussed the implications of collateral damage and its impact on the Taliban insurgency. It explored the links between insurgency and violations of Pashtunwali and Islam. It also emphasized Pashtun people as the center-of-gravity through which victory may be attainable. In order to achieve a positive outcome that is conducive to future stability of Afghanistan, Coalition forces must revamp their military strategy and adopt tactics that exercise restraint and are backed by cultural expertise to avoid creating resentment by the people. In doing so the Coalition must avoid an over-reliance on aerial strikes and turn its attention to building trust on the ground, be it through tribal elders or avoidance of unnecessary use of force. Additionally, it must

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<sup>93</sup> Benjamin C. Freakley, “Urban Counterinsurgency: Seizing the Opportunity,” *Infantry*, January/February 2005, 1-2.

develop an information campaign which is capable of defeating the Taliban propaganda. Finally, it must foster an environment which hinders with the concepts of *badal* and Jihad, tasks dependent on a rapid reduction in collateral damage and appropriate reconciliatory efforts. And while collateral damage may not be reduced to zero, there must be drastic improvement to win back the hearts and minds of the people.

The next chapter will concentrate on the socio-economic issues in FATA. Even though it is but one arena in lowering the Taliban insurgency, it is a crucial factor for the present and future stability of Afghanistan as well as Pakistan. The United States and the international community cannot afford to ignore the consequences stemming from ungoverned spaces, as seen through the recent assassination of Benazir Bhutto and the widespread domestic unrest in Pakistan. By offering a mixture of socio-economic and political strategy to FATA, future recruitment pool of insurgents may be lowered as the quality-of-life increases. In turn, a similar approach may be used to address the Taliban strongholds in Afghanistan.

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## **IV. NON-KINETIC APPROACH TO AFGHANISTAN: ADDRESSING ISSUES IN THE FATA**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Having discussed the damaging effects of collateral damage, this chapter will outline a host of socio-economic and political factors to approach the Taliban insurgency. While the focus of previous chapters was on collateral damage stemming from the military campaigns in Afghanistan, this chapter will attempt to delineate an indirect approach to insurgency. More specifically, it will address the turbulent Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan as catalysts to stabilizing Afghanistan. Since FATA serves as a critical component for the Taliban recruitment, it may be the center-of-gravity for stability in the region. Also, it is important to note that possible solutions or policies must coincide with a drastic reduction in collateral damage on both sides of the border. Without a reduction in collateral damage, any attempts to stabilize FATA may only result in costly failures and additional loss of lives.

In order to forge possible solutions for FATA, research will explore its broken socio-economic and political systems. It will highlight the fundamental problems that have plagued the inhabitants and led to its current role as a haven for many extremists. Neglected infrastructure as well as a poor quality-of-life will be exposed to show why this region has been an attractive hub for extremism and illicit activities. Research will also answer why FATA serves as a recruiting pool for current and future insurgents.

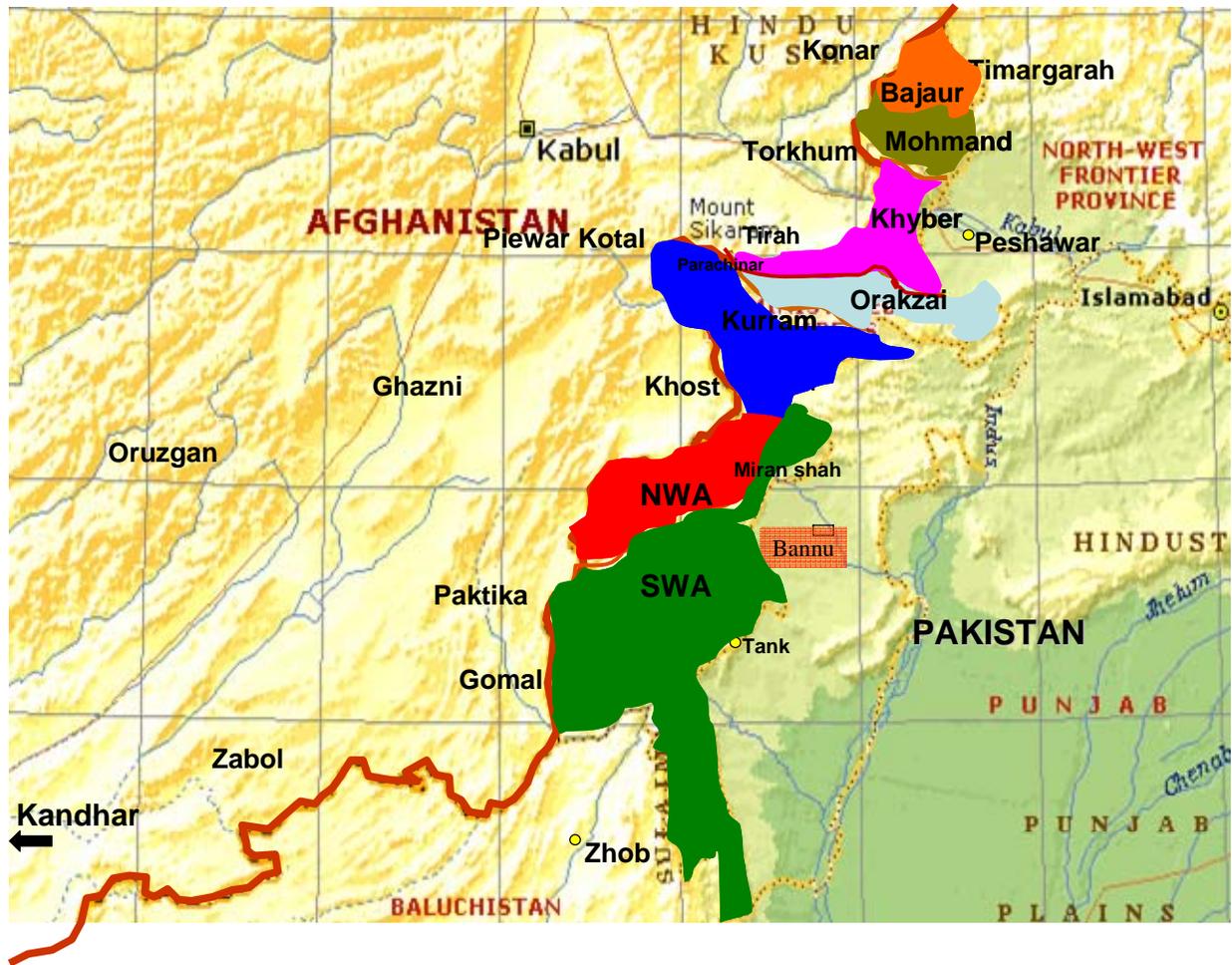


Figure 11. FATA Map

## B. GOVERNMENT NEGLECTS

### 1. Poor Quality-of-Life

The 10,510 square miles area is home to over six million, along with significant number of refugees who have settled there since the onset of Soviet invasion in 1979. When probing deeper into the dynamics of FATA, it can be concluded that extremism offered the only attractive outlet for many youth who otherwise could not be gainfully employed elsewhere. Due to large number of youth and a broken education system, madrassas have become the only institutions of education, taking in children from ages

five to their teens.<sup>94</sup> For many parents' point of view, madrassas offer a valuable service since the students are able to learn while receiving three meals a day; eliminating the burden on part of the parents in a region where poverty is abundant and job opportunities scarce, if any. Unfortunately, since the 1980's most madrassas have taught a religious curriculum with no emphasis on modern, more applicable education. An attempt to modernize madrassa education and to incorporate females into the student populace has been challenging, often resulting in rocketing or bombing of the particular madrassa.<sup>95</sup> Graduating with a strict emphasis on Islam, the students are mentally prepared to take up arms in Jihad, making them susceptible to the exploits of the Taliban and other Jihadi groups. "The Child Soldiers Global Report 2001 said that around 20,000 children below eighteen were recruited by madrassas in Pakistan to fight in Afghanistan. The report quoted Pakistan's official figures as saying that only one percent of madrassas sent their students for military training in Afghanistan."<sup>96</sup> This figure may have risen in the wake of growing insurgency in Afghanistan but even 20,000 is significant number, more than sufficient to sustain the Taliban recruitment efforts.

Infrastructure of FATA is also a reflection of its neglects by the broader domestic politics and policies in Pakistan. The area is stricken with lack of basic social services, resembling more an Afghan region than a territory of Pakistan. Adequate health and security systems do not exist to maintain any quality-of-life. Naturally, the inhabitants find themselves sympathizing with their tribes and families to the West rather than the country they reside in. The lack of security also makes fertile grounds for the influence of local and foreign militants. "Government officials who have spent time in the tribal areas say there may be as many as 1,000 foreign militants there, but because many have intermarried and raised families, their status as foreigners is somewhat blurred."<sup>97</sup> These very reasons lead many to believe that Al-Qaeda leadership may have blended into

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<sup>94</sup> Adnan R. Khan, "Defending Ourselves," *Maclean's*, August 8, 2005, 20.

<sup>95</sup> Michael Petrou, "Barbarians at the Gate," *Maclean's*, August 13, 2007, 36.

<sup>96</sup> Nadeem Yaqub, "Pakistan: Better Education Key to Fighting Extremism," *Global Information Network*, March 29, 2002, 1.

<sup>97</sup> Carlotta Gall and Mohammad Khan, "Pakistan's Push in Border Areas is said to Falter," *New York Times*, January 22, 2006, Section 1, Late Edition.

lawless regions of the FATA. “The Federally Administered Tribal Agency has 7,000 ‘Khasadar’ (local police) for about four million people. These forces are considered inadequate, although the North West Frontier Province can also call on the services of the 17,000 members of the Frontier Constabulary.”<sup>98</sup> For Pakistani forces to gain any positive influence and credibility, basic human services must be provided in order to give locals an incentive to oust the radical elements from their society. For now, the FATA is a place plagued with the kind of issues that are practically unheard of from the perspective of a citizen in the West. As of December 2006, “135 out of every 1,000 children under the age of five died early, often due to chest infections, diarrhea, or other treatable ailments. For every 1,000 child births, six mothers died, often because quality medical assistance was not available.”<sup>99</sup> Clearly, there is much room for progress in winning the support from a region that gave birth to the Taliban and may be continuing to support its endeavors.

Insurgency and terrorism are not the only outlets in FATA. “In the absence of viable options to earn a living, the lure of illicit activities such as smuggling (consumer goods, weapons) and drug trafficking is as difficult to resist as the call of extremist Islamist elements.”<sup>100</sup> Such occupations are driven out of necessity as well as consumer demand. Unemployment, in combination with lack of security and education, make a dangerous recipe for illegal activities. Refugees have also contributed to these issues. Despite having repatriated over 2.5 million refugees, over one million still remain in the area.<sup>101</sup> Until the basic day-to-day issues are addressed, all efforts towards the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) may render themselves useless. Without restoring stability and basic human necessities, the hearts and minds may be difficult to win at best.

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<sup>98</sup> Ashfaq Yusufzai, “Pakistan: Suicide Bombings Leave Police Vulnerable and Afraid,” *Global Information Network*, July 20, 2007, 1.

<sup>99</sup> “Ambassador Crocker Launches \$11.5 Million Health Program for Children in Federally Administered Tribal Areas,” *US Federal News Service, including US State News*, December 18, 2006.

<sup>100</sup> Government of Pakistan Website on FATA, <http://www.fata.gov.pk>.

<sup>101</sup> Central Intelligence Agency World Fact Book, <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>.

## 2. Drugs

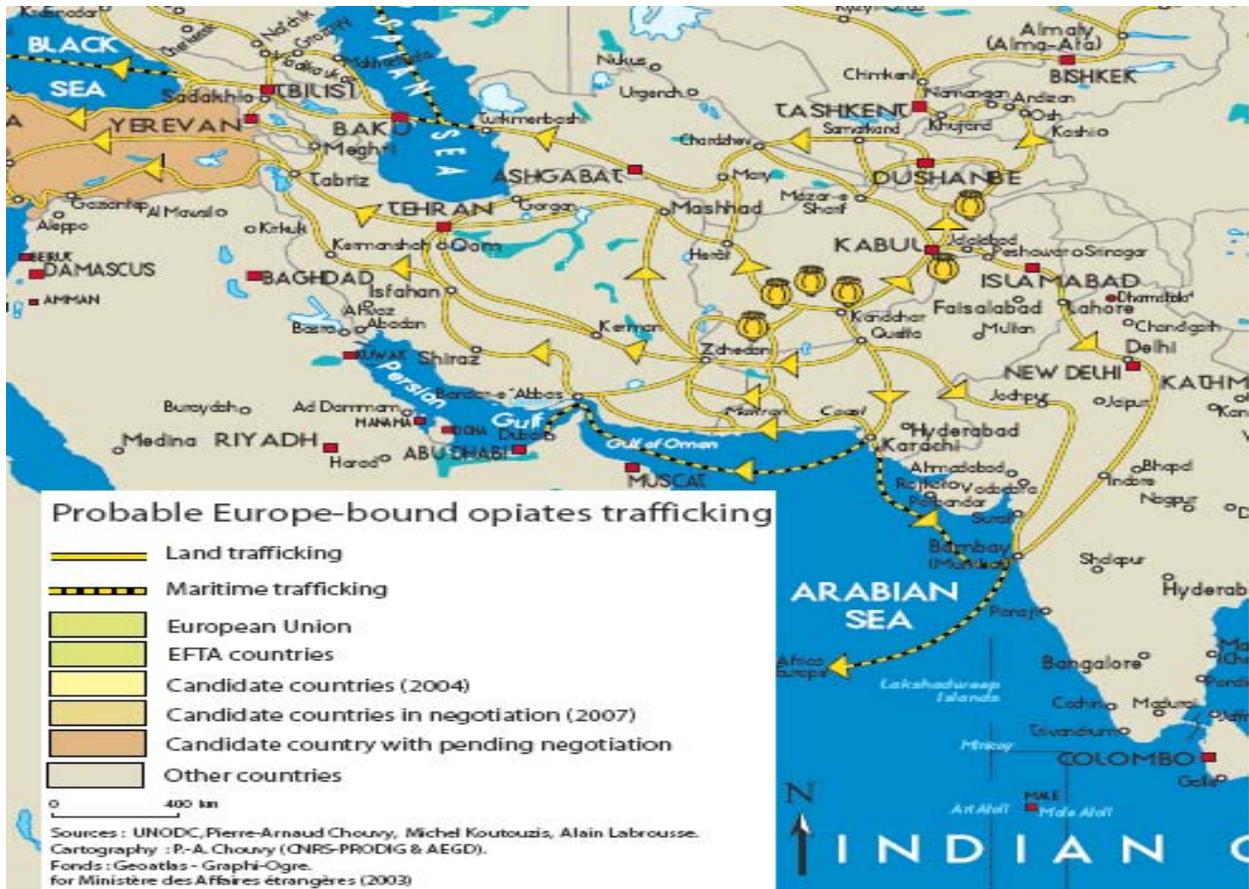
The border areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan serve as critical drug routes for smugglers. The network of drug mafia enjoys a multi-billion dollar industry which disrupts the state's ability to control and enforce laws in the already unstable area.<sup>102</sup> The instability works in the favor of the drug smugglers by providing outlets for labs and clients. It is estimated that over half of Afghanistan's Opium is smuggled through Pakistan.<sup>103</sup> And while the entire state of Pakistan cannot be summed up as a "narco state," the FATA and the adjacent North West Frontier Province (NWFP) can be labeled as such due to their breakdown of law and order amidst being of critical value for the drug network. With drugs making an already bad area non-conducive to the Coalition's efforts to root out radical forces, the war on terrorism must have another and equal front – a war on drugs. In 2004 alone, there were an estimated 3.5 to 5 million drug users within Pakistan, in many ways creating the kind of demand that attracts suppliers to the West of the border.<sup>104</sup> Drugs not only hinder with Pakistani efforts to reform the area but they offer motives to keep the chaos alive for the survival of illegal industry. This indirectly contributes to the extremists who may discover new alliances with the drug smugglers by virtue of a common enemy. Unlike Afghanistan, Pakistan has a capable government and the revenue to offer viable options in place of the drug business; it's a matter of acknowledging the severity of the problem and then addressing it with feasible options.

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<sup>102</sup> Louis I. Shelley, "Transnational Organized Crime: The New Authoritarianism," in *The Illicit Global Economy and State Power*, ed. H. Richard Friman and Peter Andreas, 32-33 (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999).

<sup>103</sup> *Afghanistan Opium Survey 2006*, (Vienna: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, October 2006), 134.

<sup>104</sup> Peter Chalk and C. Christine Fair, "Pakistan Tackles Impact of Afghan Opium Trade," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, March 01, 2005, 2, <http://search.janes.com>.



Map from Geopium Website: <http://www.pa-chouvy.org/indexcartes.html>

Figure 12. Drug Smuggling Routes (Map)

### C. CURRENT APPROACH

In an effort to enforce its domestic policies, assist the Coalition forces, and reform the FATA system of governance, Pakistan has deployed over 100,000 troops to the areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The task has not proved easy since the military has met armed attacks from the local tribes. Bulk of the resistance has materialized in the Waziristan area (the most volatile regions in the FATA). Fierce clashes coupled with suicide attacks have killed 250 people in the month of July (2007) alone.<sup>105</sup> As of December 2006, Pakistani military has lost over 750 troops while trying to hunt for

<sup>105</sup> Laura King, "Battles Raging in Remotest Pakistan; Rearmed Militants are Spreading through Tribal Areas, Often Seizing the Offensive," *Los Angeles Times*, August 13, 2007, Section A, Home Edition.

terrorists.<sup>106</sup> The question then arises, has this strategy produced any results in the quest to revive the *Maliks* or will a different method yield a better outcome? Many feel that the current approach has further radicalized the area, resulting in a scenario where the military is in constant confrontation with the clerics while the traditional leaders and civil servants have become even weaker.<sup>107</sup>

The costly ordeal, which has been bloodier than the loss of American troops in Afghanistan, suggests that the present Pakistani policy will continue to encounter resistance from the locals. Even the 100,000 troops in FATA have fell inferior in the face of locals. According to Pajhwok Afghan News (September 3, 2007), the latest ambush of a Pakistani military convoy in Waziristan resulted in the capture of over 300 security personnel, making it one the most embarrassing incidents thus far. This not only highlights the difficulty of conducting operations in the FATA but shows the resilience of the extremists who have managed to capture the assets and weaponry of a formal army unit.

### **1. Death of Innocent**

The broader implications of the struggle in FATA, however, are also attributed to collateral damage. In an already alienated region, innocent civilian deaths have invoked Jihad even against a Muslim state. The implications of citizens rising against their government may have far greater dangers since theology has come in confrontation with secularism, thus dividing the populace of Pakistan while creating civil unrest in a country that enjoyed a fair amount of domestic peace prior to the tragic events of September 11, 2001. Given this tension between the religious and secular forces, two radical ideals come into view. First ideal is the religious groups' quest to overtake and run the state, as was the case with Khomeini's Islamic revolution in Iran. Second, Syed Qutb's philosophies surface amidst the struggle in Pakistan, in that use of force and Jihad are sanctioned against one's own Muslim state. Combined, the two create a recipe for disaster for the long term stability of Pakistan. In view of these implications, the kinetic

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<sup>106</sup> "Asia: The Frontier Spirit; Pakistan's Tribal Areas," *The Economist*, December 16, 2006, 68.

<sup>107</sup> "Asia: The other Taliban; Pakistan," *The Economist*, March 18, 2006, 62.

means must halt in order to diffuse the two radical ideologies. The following excerpts from a 2004 propaganda video filmed in Waziristan, lend credibility to the issues pertaining to collateral damage and Jihad:<sup>108</sup>

*Parvez's army, instead of removing their burnt vehicles and collecting the dead, brought more artillery. They used thousands of rounds against true Muslims and made thousands of innocent children cry, and made many holes in the beautiful mud houses. This ignited the Muslims of the area who rushed to the streets and attacked all military convoys who were entering the area, as a result of which 8 big vehicles were burnt and tens of soldiers killed; others fled.*

*Finally Parvez's army warned people of the area to abandon their houses or else be bombed. When these Muslims were taken out of their houses, they bombed all these convoys of departing people.*

*Hey military soldiers, how did your dignity allow you to bomb Muslim houses? Who do you believe in? Almighty Allah, Bush, Blair, or Parvez? These are traitors who eliminated your history. You were those who people used to salute but now they fight you. Why? Think a little about what you are doing. Muslims of the world were proud of your power. People expected that you would free the Holy Land Jerusalem. They expected you would protect the Holy Land (Mecca & Medina). You obtained atomic power to protect Muslims but now you kill Muslims in order to protect atomic bombs. You make a reverse history. What would historians write about you? As Islamic military or Crusader military?*

*O Believers, do not make friendships with Jews and Christians. Amongst you some make friends with them and they will be counted as one of them. O killers of Muslims, come and repent for your actions. Allah is forgiving; otherwise He will destroy you, or you will be killed at the hands of Muslims and Almighty will send you to hell, a very bad place.*

*Come and make Jihad.*

## **2. Dilemma of the Pakistani Army**

By all practical purposes, the Pakistani army is in confrontation with religious extremists who view themselves as fighting Jihad against the near enemy. Coupled with

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<sup>108</sup> Parvez's *Dear Guest*, VCD, 2004; Waziristan, Pakistan: Ummat Studio, 2004.

*badal* and Holy War, the resulting domestic instability has created unique challenges for the army and its role in a counterinsurgency. The Pakistani army was not designed to fight internal insurgencies, but rather focus on outside threats such as its rival India. The events of 9/11, however, have not only brought a Muslim military in confrontation with its own citizens it once supported for Jihad during the Soviet invasion (which may in itself carry psychological affects on the fighting men as well as a reversal of role for the army), but it has also tested the very capabilities and training of the army. According to Lieutenant General Mohammed Hamid Khan, President of Pakistan's National Defense University and a former Combatant Commander for the Frontier Corps, the long term policy in the FATA must involve non-kinetic solutions; the incidents of collateral damage and poor quality-of-life alone have aggravated the anti-government sentiment in the FATA.<sup>109</sup> Such acknowledgments, while giving credence to non-kinetic solutions, may also reveal rifts amongst commanders on the ground and broader government policies pertaining to the GWOT and support of the Coalition. Continuing on the current kinetic path is likely to create further animosity towards the Pakistani army and the government.

### **3. Repercussions of Kinetic Methods**

There seems to be an assumption that uniformity of kinetic strategy is needed to counter the Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Further, ongoing debates within the American political arena assert that Pakistan has not dedicated sufficient resources and efforts to root out terrorism from the FATA, thus blaming many of the failures in Afghanistan on the actions of the Pakistani military. However, when comparing the domestic issues of the two states, there is little room to employ the strategy in Afghanistan to the rugged areas of FATA. Additionally, the resulting instability must also be compared since two different consequences are likely to occur from the kinetic means. From the Afghan perspective, outside forces (U.S. and NATO) are engaged with an enemy that played a role in the events leading up to 9/11. From the Pakistani perspective, the government has revamped policies that once used the very populace it must now contend with. The repercussions also differ due the immediacy of

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<sup>109</sup> Mohammed Hamid Khan, "FATA," Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, January 25, 2008.

the problem. When *badal* and collateral damage are the underlying issues, the concept of revenge is more relevant for Pakistan than it is for the outside forces in Afghanistan. Though an angry generation may be left behind in the wake of a future withdrawal from Afghanistan, should the conflict subside, the U.S. and NATO forces will enjoy the safety afforded by a physical geographic separation. Pakistan, on the other hand, will be left to police an angry populace it must govern for the sake of creating domestic harmony. With suicide bombings on the rise and Pashtun nationalism more vocal than ever, the Pakistani military must be afforded to carve its own strategy; one that balances military objectives as well as their aftermath. Pressuring the Pakistani regime to employ tactics used by the U.S. and NATO forces may jeopardize the legitimacy of the newly elected government.

#### **D. THE WAY FORWARD**

##### **1. Promoting Pakistani Nationalism**

In light of the broken socio-economic systems, alienation of the Pashtuns, and extremism, Pakistan can no longer afford to keep FATA separated from the mainstream politics and national economy. Be it drug mafias or terrorists, too much control has been lost due to history of the region and the trends in criminality. A separate system of governance is no longer feasible for FATA, as the *Malik* system too will keep the region alienated as it had before the rise of Mullahs. Two extreme forms of government are not conducive to the functions of any state. The FATA Frontier Crimes Regulations (FCR) may have been useful under the British, where a master-subject relationship existed, but the same cannot be true for a state trying to reform its populace and bring it into the mainstream society. The mere nature of FCR stems from mass punishment of an entire tribe, possibly leading to further aggravation if enforced by the Pakistani government. Maintaining this outdated system of governance will only keep the classic ethnic stereotypes alive, specifically the Punjabi-Pashtun tensions that have lasted since the British and Ranjit Singh's rule over Punjab. A divided system will confirm the Punjabi domination of national politics and economy in the eyes of the Pashtuns. This same belief led to East Pakistan revolts, the 1971 War and the secession of Bangladesh.

Besides, failures to absorb the Pashtuns into mainstream society, politics, and economy may also keep the concept of a separate *Pashtunistan* alive (a separate state carved out of the FATA areas), a prospect which the Pakistani government cannot afford to consider as it would cripple the state, reducing it to half the territory it holds today.

## 2. Modern Education

Clearly many of the FATA problems have stemmed from maddrassas and heavy emphasis on religion. The lack of practical education has led to lowered prospects of opportunities for the overwhelming number of youth, in turn leading them to the luster of illegal activities. The literacy rates are also indicative of the overall social-ills of the region. Female literacy rates are especially alarming. There is a great disparity between the FATA literacy rates and the remainder of Pakistan.

In addition to instituting a modern education, government must also monitor and register the maddrassas to track their curriculums and agenda. Madrassas initially sprouted to offer education in remote areas where government influence, resources, or transportation were unreachable. However, since 1979 the madrassas may have far exceeded the scope of necessity. “There are an approximate 28,000 madrassas in Pakistan with only 8000 of them registered. According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) 2002 report, by March 2002, there were around 600,000 students in 6000 registered madrassas with more than 250,000 students in Punjab alone. The proliferation of madrassas began in the 1980s and continued in the 1990s. Compared to their number in 1979, when there were less than 2000 madrassas, their growth has been tremendous. They are now seen and portrayed as fundamentalist institutions and breeding grounds for militants to wage a Jihad all over the world. From being established centers of learning in the middle-ages, they have traveled a long way.”<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies Website, <http://www.ipcs.org/printIssueBrief.jsp?status=publications&status1=issue&mod=d&check=15&try=true>.

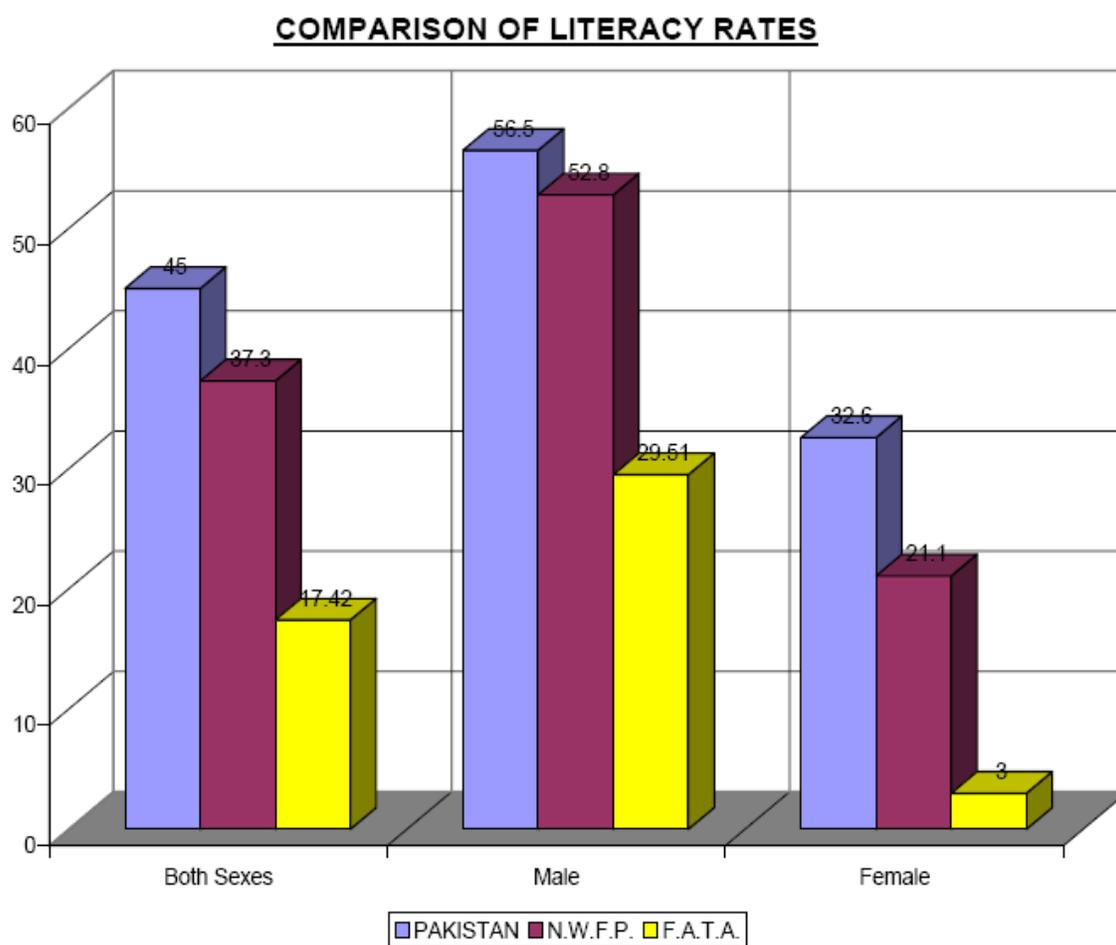


Figure 13. Literacy Rates

### 3. Agriculture

When dealing with issues related to Opium, the war on drugs must accompany agricultural developments to be of success. For now the drug markets and smuggling may offer lucrative incentives for many who may not have any other source of income. With only 8 percent of land cultivated and 3 percent irrigated, providing feasible crops and irrigation must occur before the issue of drugs is fully enforced. Taking away the illicit market without providing reasonable substitution will only aggravate those who are entrenched in this occupation, be it for profit or basic livelihood..

Though agricultural projects will require time to institute various crops based on harvests and seasons, they are the best solutions for gradually reducing the Opium market. Also, the projects will require tremendous monetary resources to erect the infrastructure needed to bring about a positive change. Some may argue that Pakistan does not have the financial resources or allocations to carry out such projects due their reliance on United States as it pertains to the War on Terrorism. However, research suggests otherwise. According to the U.S. State Department, “Pakistan has publicly expressed its support to Afghanistan's President Karzai and has pledged \$100 million toward Afghanistan's reconstruction.”<sup>111</sup> Despite this generous offer, the large sum of money may best be spent on the broken and turbulent regions of the FATA. As evident through the various socio-economic systems and poor quality-of-life, the most immediate concern for the Pakistani regime should be the FATA regions that have compounded the insurgency on both side of the border.

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<sup>111</sup> U.S. State Department Website, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3453.htm>.

**SUMMARY OF LAND UTILIZATION IN FATA**

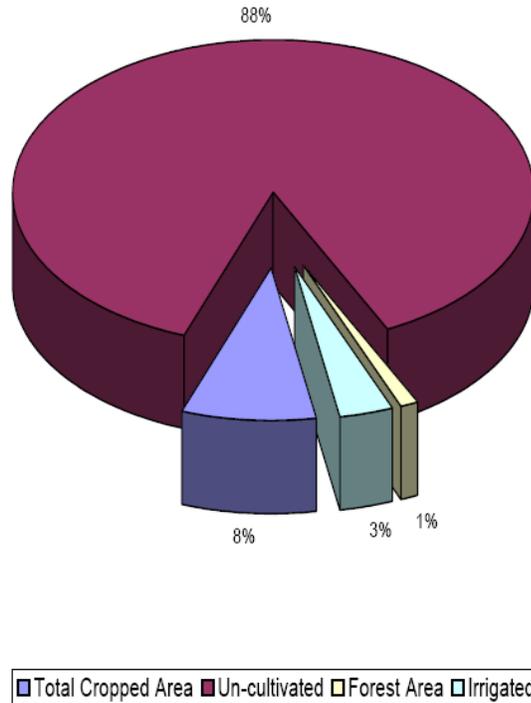


Figure 14. FATA Land Utilization

**4. Reconciliation**

Lastly, none of these measures can be achieved without certain level of diplomacy and cooperation from the locals in FATA. As seen through the Pakistani military’s experience, the kinetic methods have only widened the gap between FATA and mainstream Pakistan. They have also led to domestic instability for the country, creating challenges associated with fighting an internal insurgency, a mission which the Pakistani forces were not designed to carry out. To reduce future instability, Pakistani government must pursue reconciliatory efforts within FATA. Based on previous chapters, the damage caused by the Pakistani forces must be addressed through tribal code of Pashtunwali, be it in terms of forming alliances with moderate elders in the tribes or payments of blood-

money to the families of collateral damage victims; Pakistani forces, too, are guilty of collateral damage. Like the Taliban organization, the resisting forces in FATA are not monolithic and may be susceptible to agreements for the broader good of the region and country. An entire society or region must not stay isolated from the remainder of the state based on the actions of radical element within them. Winning the trust of the locals may prove to be the best aid in ousting extremism from FATA. Like the British Paladins earlier in the century, local cooperation will go a long way for the stability of the region. Even backdoor diplomacy must not be ruled out.

#### **E. SUMMARY**

This chapter recognized FATA as the pivotal factor in curbing the Taliban insurgency in not only Afghanistan but also in Pakistan. Over time, the neglected regions had become ripe for the intrusions of outside actors and served as conduits for illegal activities and terrorism. The affects of alienation and the subsequent induction of radical religion transformed FATA into a recruitment pool for the Taliban and other extremists. The cross-border incursions continue to disrupt the security of Afghanistan since the collateral damage from military strikes allows the Taliban propaganda to flourish among the youth and non-gainfully employed populace of the FATA.

The research also identified the broken systems which can be repaired to increase the quality-of-life and offer alternatives to the thousands of youth who may otherwise become targets of the Taliban recruitment efforts. By nationalizing the FATA region and offering socio-economic opportunities, the Pakistani government may win the favor of the locals. Since the military strategy has done more harm than good and mirrors the Coalition's failures to the West, the real solution may be imbedded in reconciliation with the moderate forces as well as bringing the region into modernity similar to the mainstream Pakistan. Whereas the *Malik* system is already destroyed by the *Mullahs*, only the authority of the state can transform the region, without which FATA will continue to be a volatile point of contention between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Not only do the Taliban trace their origins to FATA but they also have supporters within these lawless regions; Coalition forces cannot cross into this area due to sovereignty factors.

Saving FATA may pay dividends to the security in Afghanistan, granted the collateral damage is dramatically reduced to hinder with the credibility and recruitment campaigns of the Taliban on both sides of the border.

## V. CONCLUSION

The Coalition has entered its seventh year in Afghanistan since the events of September 11, 2001. The initial aims of the military intervention in Afghanistan were to capture the Al-Qaida leadership, topple a tyrannical Taliban regime, and liberate an oppressed populace. Until now the Al-Qaida leadership remains elusive while the Coalition is engaged in countering a resilient Taliban insurgency. As the stability of the region continues to deteriorate, the situation warrants a closer examination of the Coalition's actions to discover where mistakes might have been made; certain military actions have hindered with the Coalition's goals and have aggravated the insurgency.

By studying the culture of the Pashtuns, research concluded that the current military tactics have done more harm than good. Contrary to the Coalition's premise, technological superiority and mass didn't prove useful in the face of tribal customs. More specifically, the issue of collateral damage provided the fuel for many Taliban propaganda campaigns, worsening the anti-Western sentiment. The death of innocent civilians have led to mistrust of the Coalition while creating a perception of oppression and injustice, key requirements for invoking *badal* and Jihad. Concept of revenge, coupled with Holy War, has been the underlying theme behind the loss of hearts and minds campaign in Afghanistan. Simply put, neglects in Pashtunwali (tribal customs of Pashtuns) have led to compounding the insurgency. Additionally, people's role as the key center-of-gravity has been ignored, further damaging the Coalition's image and hindering with objectives for stabilizing and securing Afghanistan.

To prove the relationship between the Pashtun concept of revenge and insurgency, research analyzed the past Afghan wars. Two Anglo-Afghan wars and the Soviet invasion set the basis for discovering similar trends in the past. All three wars revealed that invading Afghanistan proved easy but controlling the insurgencies that ensued became the ultimate challenges for the British as well as the Soviet militaries. While the Soviet invasion was the most ruthless in terms of weaponry and tactics, collateral damage and poor treatment of the Afghans was a common trend in all the past conflicts. Each

conflict managed to spark an insurgency once the invaders marched in and settled into the country. In addition to reviving the concept of *badal*, the banner of Jihad was also erected to fight a common enemy.

The past also revealed a gradual reversion to mainstream Islam. Whereas many Afghans practiced Sufiism and a moderate school of thought, the outside invasions invoked Jihad and increased the role of the clergy, especially during times of political vacuums and puppet regimes. After the Soviets invaded, a radical type of Islam found its way into the Afghan society since an outside actor, Saudi Arabia, brought financial assistance as well as their brand of fundamentalist religion. The widespread collateral damage also managed to temporarily unite the tribes in a common fight against the oppressor. Colonial and Soviet interferences showed that a puppet regime could only survive as long as the invader was in the country to protect him. Puppet leaders were killed after the invading militaries' withdrawal, as the populace viewed them as extensions of the invaders. Past invasions also revealed that a society which views revenge and Holy War as dearly-held value systems can become a force to reckon with if diplomacy or alternative means do not exist to foster reconciliation based on those values.

Another consequence of the Soviet invasion emerged in the form of instability in FATA, Pakistan. FATA became the gateway into Afghanistan for many outside militants during the Soviet invasion. By American definition, FATA could easily be comparable to the "Wild-Wild West" of the 1800's. The area's breakdown of law and order, alienation from mainstream Pakistan, broken social systems, drug smugglers, and the abundance of firearms made it ripe for illegal activities. The flood of radical *Mullahs* added a new dimension to its volatility. The resulting religious maddrassas produced the kind of fanatic students who would not only take up arms for Jihad but also serve as the recruits for extremists like Taliban and Al-Qaida. The tribal affiliations and Pashtunwali concepts of *malmastia* (hospitality) and *nanawatay* (refuge) made FATA a haven for cross-border incursion during and after the Soviet war, including the insurgency faced by the Coalition today. In short, FATA has long become a source of new recruits and an oasis for those wanting to elude authorities, especially since any formal military in Afghanistan cannot cross into Pakistan without violating international rules.

Much like the Soviets in Afghanistan, the Coalition too is frustrated by the role of FATA and its significance for the Taliban. This very significance has not only sparked blame between the neighboring countries but has also disrupted the domestic stability in Pakistan. In FATA, much like in Afghanistan, a battle is raging to weed out the extremists. And similar to the collateral damage issues in Afghanistan, Pakistani military is also facing the brunt of the people's rage due Pashtunwali violations. In practicality, FATA has acted more like a part of Afghanistan than Pakistan due to its tribal affiliations with the Pashtuns to the West. Consequently a home-grown Pakistani Taliban has also surfaced in the wake of Musharraf's support towards the GWOT.

Unraveling the current and past Afghan conflicts consistently revealed the contention over the border areas between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Hence, the solution to curbing the Taliban insurgency is two-fold. First and foremost, the Coalition must drastically reduce collateral damage since it boasters the Taliban's propaganda and recruitment campaigns while hindering with the very goals that prompted Operation Enduring Freedom. Secondly, the FATA's contributions to the Taliban must be addressed. Any efforts of the U.S. and its allies are futile as long as an ungoverned space with radical madrassas continues to produce abundance of students, many of whom will have no outlet in life but to join the ranks of militancy due to lack of opportunities, employment, and modern education.

In light of the problems plaguing the region, the solution must come in non-kinetic means. It must also be consistent with the goals of the Coalition and recognize people as the critical factors in defeating the insurgency. As the Coalition takes measures to reduce the loss of innocent lives, it must support a non-kinetic solution in FATA. The military opposition to FATA has further angered the locals and has resulted in domestic disturbances in the country. The 2007 Red Mosque incident showed how real the danger is. The security of both nations is in jeopardy as long as FATA follows the model of separate government system and suffers neglects from the Pakistani government. Evidence suggests there are far too many ailments in the tribal areas; military intervention doesn't bring about those fixes but rather promotes resistance. For the Pakistani military, the border is too vast and rugged to be patrolled; waging battle against

a society where practically every male carries the equivalent of an AK-47 rifle is merely fanning the flames of instability and making an already dangerous area attractive for future terrorists. For the sake of the maintaining a key ally for the GWOT and fostering success in Afghanistan, the long-term security in FATA must revolve around quality-of-life, instead of loss of life.

Having acknowledged the FATA as pivotal to the security on both sides of the border, research pointed to a number of broken systems that contributed to the anarchy and illicit lifestyles of the locals in those regions. At the hierarchy of needs were the basic systems like security, irrigation, health care, and education. These pitfalls not only encouraged illegal activities like terrorism and Opium smuggling but they also alienated the tribes from the remainder of Pakistan. Given the elements of Pashtunwali and tribal affiliations, the locals naturally felt closer to Afghanistan. The tribal ties and the link between smuggling and terrorism cannot be overlooked in the dynamics of security in South-Asia.

With the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) now a freely elected government, the era of American-Musharraf alliance has come to an end. In the new scheme of politics, there are new challenges that must be addressed to counter the issues of FATA and insurgency. The new regime is not likely to repeat the patterns which made Musharraf a steadfast opponent of the *Mullahs* while creating unpopularity in the country. The PPP may embrace an approach which aims to diffuse the tensions created by the last regime as it pertains to the army's role in patrolling the FATA. In doing so it may also fuel the historic strains between the PPP and the army leadership. As such, new strategies and obstacles may come to view in order to ensure the survival of a democratically elected party. In turn this may cause apprehensions for the United States and NATO since the future solutions may border on measures which place the Coalition's objectives as secondary to the survival of the regime.

The path to stability in Afghanistan depends on the principles that include a spectrum of solutions. Whereas insurgencies have a political and a military element, the solutions too must address those factors. Thus far the solutions have been heavily reliant on military tactics, results of which have appeared in the form of collateral damage and

loss of trust from the locals. To ensure a lasting success, Coalition must explore the political and social aspects of winning the hearts and minds from the populace it claims to have liberated from the clutches of the Taliban. It must not underestimate the power of diplomacy, be it a backdoor diplomacy channels to seek out the moderates within the Taliban or other groups in the FATA. Coalition's success is critical to curbing future terrorism. Being the primary front in the War on Terrorism, a defeat in Afghanistan or Pakistan may not only compromise the security of South-Asia but it may have deadly consequences for the broader international community as well, possibly encouraging the terrorists' cause and confidence.

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