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The Afghan Conflict, Foreign Intervention and the Regional Balance of Power

Degree for a Doctor of Philosophy

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Date (15 October 1999)



Tr D608

## Abstract

This thesis examines the origins and causes for the continuation of one of the longest conflicts in the post World War era. The basic argument of this study is that in an anarchical system of international relations, the states are forced to pursue their self-interests in order to safeguard their security and to enhance their power. The changing nature of the Afghan conflict from being caught up in an ideological battle between the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, to one in which the regional states are pursuing their divergent interests in the post Cold-War period, testifies to the validity of this approach. During the Cold War the main determinant of the superpower involvement in Afghanistan was the pursuit of their own self-interests. After the disengagement of the superpowers the differences in the objectives of the regional states, which were submerged in the overlay of the superpower competition for hegemony have re-emerged. The conflict of interests among the major powers and the regional powers surrounding Afghanistan have thus complicated the process of the peaceful resolution of the conflict under the auspices of the UN.

The pursuit of power is also evident in the behaviour of various factions within Afghanistan. The Realist concepts of balance of power and security dilemma can be usefully applied to both the study of interstate relations and to the relations among substate actors involved in the civil conflict in Afghanistan. The fragmentation of the power centres in Afghanistan has made the task of reaching a consensus on the political future of Afghanistan almost impossible. The collapse of the central government in Afghanistan is analogous to the absence of a sovereign authority in international relations. Under such conditions the various substate actors in Afghanistan have found it increasingly difficult to cooperate to resolve the conflict. The study of the Afghan conflict thus supports the applicability of the Realist approach of international relations to both the Cold War and the post-Cold War period.

In the post-Cold War period the realist and the neo-realist theories can be used to take into account the increasing incidence of failed states in the Third World. This is undertaken by the structural realists who argue that neo-realist theory has an embryonic theory of state which needs to be modified to incorporate the functional differentiation among the states. In this thesis this is achieved by including the account of political and social history of Afghanistan from 1747-1973 to illustrate the reasons for the slow rate of political development in

Afghanistan. The slow political development is one of very important reasons for the collapse of the state in Afghanistan in the post-Cold War period.

The analysis can help in formulating a more workable and realistic peace initiative to resolve the conflict. It also suggests a useful and realistic appraisal of the conduct of international relations in an increasingly uncertain post-cold war period.

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## Glossary

AAD	Air Assault Division.
AWACS	Advanced Air Borne Warning Control System
BHsB	Air Assault Troops.
CARE	The Committee of American Relief Everywhere.
CENTO	Central Treaty Organisation.
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States.
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency.
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
CRS	Church Relief Services.
CWS	Church World Services.
EU	European Union.
FLNA	National Front for the Liberation of Angola.
IIGA	Interim Islamic Government of Afghanistan.
IFO	International Food Organisation.
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence.
ICBM	Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles.
INF	Intermediate Nuclear Forces.
IRC	International Rescue Committee.
Khad	Khadamat-i-ittilaati-dawlati.
LCSFA	Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan.
LIC	Low Intensity Conflict.
MAD	Mutual Assured Destruction.
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MRB	Motor Rifle Brigades.
MRD	Motor Rifle Divisions.
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations.

NLC	National Logistic Cell
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive.
NSC	National Security Council.
NAM	Non Aligned Movement.
MIRV	Multiple Independently Retargetable Vehicles.
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Countries.
OSGAP	Office of the Secretary General in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
PDPA	Peoples Democratic Party.
RDF	Rapid Deployment Force.
SAFRON	State and Frontier Regions Ministry.
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organisation.
SDI	Strategic Defence Initiative.
SCC	Supreme Co-ordination Council.
SCN	Supervisory Council of the North.
SLBM	Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles.
UN	United Nations.
UNGOMAP	United Nations Good Offices Mission to Afghanistan and Pakistan.
UNITA	National Union for the Total independence of Angola.
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority on Cambodia.
US	United States
VDV	Air Borne Troops.
WAD	Afghan Ministry of State Security.
WATAN Party	Homeland Party

## **The Afghan Resistance Parties.**

### The Fundamentalists.

- 1) Hizb-i-Islami: The Islamic Party.
- 2) Hizb-i-Islami: The Islamic Party.
- 3) Jamiat-i-Islami-yi Afghanistan: The Islamic Society.
- 4) Ittihad-i-Islami-Barayi-Azad-yi-Afghanistan: The Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan.

### The Traditionalists.

- 1) Harkat-i-Inqilabi-Islami-yi-Afghanistan: The Islamic Revolutionary Party.
- 2) Mahaz-i-Milli-yi-Afghanistan: The National Islamic Front for Afghanistan.
- 3) Jabaha-yi-nijat-i-milli-yi-Afghanistan: The Afghanistan National Liberation Front.

### Shi'ite Parties.

- 1) Harkat-i-Inqilabi.
- 2) Pasdaran-i-Islam.
- 3) Nasr.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Aims of the Thesis, the Sources and Methods used, and the Order and Subject of the Chapters**

#### **1.1 Aims of the Thesis**

The primary aim of this thesis is to examine the origins and causes of the conflict in Afghanistan from 1979-88 and to uncover the reasons for the continuation of the civil war in Afghanistan even after Soviet disengagement in 1988. It studies the role played by foreign intervention during the period 1979-98 by examining the motives of both the global and the regional states involved in the conflict. An analysis of the role played by prolonged outside intervention in Afghanistan helps to understand, both the reasons for the fragmentation of power centres in Afghanistan, and the development of conflicting and divergent aims of the indigenous actors involved in the conflict which has led to the continuation of the conflict in the post-Cold War period.

The research examines the role played by United Nations mediation efforts during the Cold War period. It evaluates the prospects for a peaceful settlement to a post-Cold War conflict, in an environment where there is little consensus about the future of Afghanistan among the contending parties and the outside states involved in the conflict. There is lack of commitment on the part of the member states of the United Nations Security Council to deploy vast material and financial resources necessary to bring the conflict to an end. In the post-Cold War period other areas of conflict in the world have become the focus of the international community's attention, in addition to contenders for the resources at its disposal .

This research is worthwhile on the basis that even though Afghanistan is no longer of any strategic importance to the major powers in the post-Cold War period, it is

an important determinant of future stability for the balance of power in South Asia. Furthermore, it is an attempt to help understand the dynamics of the Afghan civil war which can help channel the conflict resolution efforts of the international and regional community in the right direction. Moreover, its usefulness is based on the belief that despite the proliferation of civil wars and the incidence of state collapse in the Third World in the post-Cold War period, states are still the primary actors in the international system. This derives from the uniform security related tasks they have to perform in an anarchic international system. The preservation of the territorial integrity and an understanding of the security concerns of the Third World states is necessary for the security of the entire international system. Most of these conflicts are a legacy of the Cold War period which, if unresolved, can have negative consequences for the stability of both the regional subsystem and possibly the international system.

## **1.2 The Theoretical Approach.**

The theoretical approach applied in the analysis of the conflict in Afghanistan is the traditional 'Realist' approach in international relations. The Realist theory takes a pessimistic view of the ability of human beings to overcome conflict in their mutual relations. Nonetheless realism contains some of the most important core concepts of the International Relations discipline. The realist theory's versatility is evident from the fact that, despite having gone through many changes and modifications it still occupies a dominant position in the discipline. The writings of Thucydides, Hobbes, Morgenthau, J. Herz and K.Waltz are considered to be as classics in the field. The realist theory has made a major contribution in understanding international relations. The key concepts of realism serve as foundations on which to build upon that can help the analysts to develop better theories of International Relations.

Despite its value in helping to understand the complexities of international relations, realism has also been strongly criticised by theorists belonging to other traditions in the field of international relations. One of the criticisms of the realist theory relates to the fact that its core assumptions are too deterministic, too simple and axiomatic. Realists are charged with employing circular arguments in order to justify their core propositions- for example, by imposing the logic of military competitiveness or power maximisation on diverse historical events. The realists explain historical events by bringing out similarities among the states, and in doing so tend to ignore important differences among the historical events. They also fail to take into account failed states, domestic issues or co-operative transactions which can affect a state's external behaviour. Thus, the realists are criticised for distorting reality and generating self- fulfilling prophecies.<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult not to criticise a theory which has been around for such a long time and which occupies such an important position in the discipline. Some of its assumptions are the target of genuine criticism. But at the same time, some of its concepts have retained a timeless quality, and recur again and again in different times and places.<sup>2</sup>

I have used the Realist theory because the core assumptions of the realist approach adequately explain the various aspects of interstate relations and the role of the substate actors discussed in this case study. The main tenet of political realism,

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<sup>1</sup>J. Rosenberg, "What's the Matter with Realism?" Review of International Studies (Vol.16, 1990) pp. 285-303, R. Speegle, "Three Forms of Political Realism", Political Studies (Vol.35, 1987) pp. 189-210, R. Rothstein, "On the Costs of Realism", in R. Little & M. Smith, Perspectives on World Politics (London: Routledge,1991) pp. 409-418, H. Milner, "The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A Critique", Review of International Studies (Vol. 17, 199 ) pp. 67-85.

<sup>2</sup>B. Buzan, "The Timeless Wisdom of Realism?" in S. Smith, K. Booth & M. Zalewski, International Theory: Positivism and Beyond (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)pp. 47-65, K. Waltz, "Realist thought and Neorealist theory" Journal of International Affairs (Vol. 44, No. 1, 1990) pp. 21-37, S.Burchill, " Realism & Neo Realism", in S. Burchill & A. Linklater, Theories Of International Relations (London: Macmillan Press, 1996) pp. 67-91.

that is the concept of 'interest defined in terms of power,'<sup>3</sup> not only explains the reality of international politics but also helps in meaningfully organising and analysing the vast amount of material available on the subject. The roots of political realism lie in human nature and are repeated throughout the history of interstate relations. The realist emphasis on concepts like power, national interest and military security, also provide a fairly accurate interpretation of the role of the various actors involved in the conflict in Afghanistan. In the multipolar international system of the post-Cold War period, the realist perspective applies to the behaviour and motives of regional states, foreign policy towards Afghanistan.

According to Kenneth Waltz, the founder of neo-realist theory, the structure of international politics is an important determinant in the behaviour of the states. In sharp contrast to domestic politics, the structure of International politics can be best described as anarchic, that is, there is no central government. In such an environment, states primarily rely on the mechanism of self help for their security. These self help mechanisms can be both internal and external. In contrast to classical realist's attempts to uncover the causes of power politics in human nature or at the state level, the neo-realists stress the importance of the structure of the international system, in order to explain state behaviour. Waltz regarded the unit level or the reductionist theories as insufficient to understand the operation of international system. By developing a systemic theory of International Relations towards the end of 1970's, he provided a defence of the realist theory against criticisms that realism was unable to explain the increasing phenomena of global interdependence and the emergence of multinational corporations. Moreover, the onset of the second Cold War during the 1980's not only demonstrated the

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<sup>3</sup> H. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations: Their Struggle for Power and Peace (London: McGraw Hill Inc., 1993), A. James, "The realism of Realism: the State and the Study of International Relations" in Review of International Studies (Vol.15, No., 1989), C. Kegley & E. R. Wittkopf, World Politics :Trends and Transformations (New York: St. Martins Press, 1977) pp.442-477

primacy of the realist's state centric approach, but also highlighted the implications of the Cold War bipolar structure of the international system for world politics.<sup>4</sup>

According to the neo-realist theory, the structure of the international system (structural forces), exercises a major, though not an absolute, influence on states behaviour. However, this qualification is later blurred by Waltz's rigid definition of the international political structure.<sup>5</sup> In developing his theory, Waltz first drew a sharp boundary between the structure of the international system and the unit level of analysis. He then located the main cause of some of the recurrent features of international politics such as war, conflict, and balance of power, in the structure of the international system. According to Waltz, the effects of the 'deep structure' (anarchy) of the international system, are so powerful as to blur any major differences between different types of units in the system. For Waltz, the units in the international system can be differentiated only according to their respective power capabilities, but not according to the functions they perform. The reason for this is that once the units start to coact in an anarchic environment, increasing homogenisation occurs and sovereign units become functionally undifferentiated.<sup>6</sup>

According to neo-realists the anarchic structure of international system also provides a repetition in the methods states use to protect their security, despite differences in their capabilities. One of the results of these methods of self help is the emergence of balance of power policies. The balance of power policies are neither intentional nor consciously motivated by the states, but rather they "depict results of uncoordinated actions by the states."<sup>7</sup> The conflict in Afghanistan which spans both the bipolar and multipolar period can be analysed by the application of

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<sup>4</sup>*Op.Cit.* Morgenthau, pp. 23-34.

<sup>5</sup>B. Buzan, C. Jones & R. Little, The Logic of Anarchy, Neorealism to Structural Realism (New York, Columbia University Press, 1993) pp. 22-28.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 118-119.

<sup>7</sup>R. O. Keohane, Neorealism and its Critics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986) pp.70-130, K. Waltz, "Realpolitik and Balance of Power" in International Politics Vol. 8, Ed. Greenstein and N. W. Palsby (London: Addison Wesley Publishing Company, 1975) pp.33-65 & K. Waltz, Theory of International Politics (London: Mc Graw Hill Inc. 1979)

the balance of power approach to explain the role of the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War period, as far as both the Superpowers were involved in the pursuit of their own national interests during the conflict in Afghanistan. It can also be applied to the behaviour of the regional states in the post-Cold War period.

In selecting the realist approach for this study, I have used this realist theory of 'balance of power' as it is a fairly appropriate way to explain the behaviour of the states during both the bipolar (Cold War) and the multipolar (post-Cold War) period. Balance of power is an historical approach for the study of international politics. It came into disrepute after the outbreak of the World War I, but in the interim period between the two world wars, which witnessed the failure of collective security mechanisms for maintaining international peace and preventing the outbreak of World War II, balance of power again became a subject for discussion among international relations scholars.

The term balance of power in international politics has been ascribed with several meanings: in fact the ambiguity over its meaning defies a single definition of the term. The important variable in the balance of power is the concept of power for the study of state behaviour. As power is not static, states are constantly involved in its manipulation. Balance of power is sometimes used to denote a situation where there is a stable equilibrium in the distribution of power among several states, and sometimes it is used to imply a process by which several states are engaged in a competitive manipulation of power among themselves.<sup>8</sup> It is important to remember this distinction for a proper understanding of the theory of balance of power. According to the proponents of the theory, the aim of balance

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<sup>8</sup>M. Sheehan, The Balance of Power, History and Theory (London: Routledge, 1996), M. Wright, "The Balance of Power - Controversial but Indispensable?" in Review of International Studies (Vol.15. No. 1989) & R. Little, "Deconstructing the Balance of Power" in Review of International Studies (Vol.15. No. 1989)

of power is not to promote peace through the avoidance of war, but to maintain the system's overall security. Its focus is on how states can survive in a competitive international environment where there are conflict of interests, rivalries and a hunger for power. By relying on their own capabilities and self help, no one state emerges as the dominant power in the world.<sup>9</sup>

In a multipolar international system the question about a return to the practice of balance of power by states has again become relevant. In the post-Cold War period where there are several states of unequal power and resources, the operation of balance of power mechanism is seen as one possible way to promote stability in interstate relations. However, the dominant view among the scholars is that 'polarity' does not guarantee global stability. It depends on other variables, the size of the multipolar system, the international norms, and the nature of the alliances. During the Cold War period two kinds of alliances were formed: alliances of position and movement. Alliances of movement which involved the Third World states on the periphery of the Soviet Union failed to preserve peace.<sup>10</sup> However, in the post-Cold War period the practice of balance of power by the Third World states is more likely. There are several reasons for this. For example, in contrast to the developed states in the west, there are no shared norms of cooperation in the Third World, wide differences in the forms of government and levels of development, a variety of prevailing territorial disputes, and reliance on the use of military power is still regarded as an effective deterrent by most of the states.<sup>11</sup> Thus, the realist theory is still useful in analysing the Third World politics.

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<sup>9</sup>I. Claude, "The Balance of Power Revisited" in Review of International Studies (Vol.15, No...,1989)

<sup>10</sup>C.W. Kegley & R.A. Gregory, A Multi Lateral Peace? Great Power Politics in the Twenty First Century (New York: St. Martins Press, 1994), C.W. Kegley & R.A. Gregory, "Must We Fear Post Cold War Multi Polar System?" in The Journal of Conflict Resolution, (Vol.36, No. 3, 1992)

<sup>11</sup> J. M. Goldgeier & M. McFaul, "A Tale of two Worlds: Core and Periphery in the Post Cold War Era" in International Organisation (Vol.46, No. 2, 1992), A.L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for peace in a Multi polar Asia" in International Security (Vol.18, No.3, 1993)

In South Asia the prospects for the emergence of a stable regional balance of power are not encouraging. The five powers, the US, the Soviet Union, China, India, and Japan will be involved in the emerging regional balance of power. There is uncertainty about the nature of various coalitions which can emerge in response to different issues. One method to deal with the uncertainty of the regional balance of power in a multipolar world is to supplement it with arms control or disarmament agreements, or with the emergence of a 'balancer' or regional institutions to promote co-operation. However, in the South Asian region, with diversity in the ranks and power of the regional states, deep seated territorial and ethnic disputes, and religious and cultural animosities the chances of such mechanisms working are fairly circumscribed. By contrast, in a major crisis the intervention by the one of the great powers to act as a 'balancer' will be welcomed by the middle power states.

As such, in view of the above factors the realist theory can be usefully employed to understand the origins and causes of conflict in Afghanistan. During the bipolar Cold War period the security dilemma was acute and the balance of power between the United States and the Soviet Union was seen as a zero sum game in which there was little room for compromise.<sup>12</sup> After the Cold War and with the collapse of the Soviet Union, both the United States and the Soviet Union have disengaged from Afghanistan, but the conflict in Afghanistan has not ended as it has become a battleground of the regional states shifting interests. The emergence of the Central Asian States in 1992 has added an economic dimension to the traditional geopolitical struggle among the regional powers, and has important implications for peace returning to the region.

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<sup>12</sup>R. Jervis, "Co-operation under the Security Dilemma" in World Politics (Vol.30, No.2, 1978)

In applying the realist theory in the post Cold War period it is essential to mention two important criticisms and which deal with the changed international environment of the post-Cold War period. This requires some modifications in the realist theory. At first it is essential to discuss these criticisms. Firstly, Waltz's narrow definition of the international political structure has provoked criticism. He defines the international political structure as having three features: the ordering principle of the system, the functional differentiation among the units and the distribution of capabilities among the units. The first two features in Waltz's definition of the political structure, deal with governments or states with a strong emphasis on sovereignty.<sup>13</sup> The ordering principle in his definition of international political structure, divides the system into two categories: system with only one sovereignty and system with multiple sovereignties or in other words between hierarchy and anarchy. The second feature of functional differentiation does not apply or is irrelevant because, according to Waltz, the units of the international system are functionally similar. The third feature, dealing with the distribution of capabilities, relates to power dimension in interstate relations.<sup>14</sup>

In summary, Waltz's definition of the international political structure consists of two core components, namely, the ordering principle of anarchy and the distribution of capabilities. Waltz applies the metaphor of 'deep structure' to these two core components. He then extrapolates very broad generalisations from his definition of the deep structure of the international system. According to K. Waltz, in each component, two structural options are available, options in the ordering principle of the international system, including either, anarchy or hierarchy; and options in the component of functional differentiation imply that the units are either similar or different.<sup>15</sup> In the absence of an absolute sovereign, anarchy is the fundamental feature of international politics. Thus, in a way, Waltz's deep

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<sup>13</sup>I bid, p.36.

<sup>14</sup>I bid, p.36.

<sup>15</sup>I bid, p.38.

structure is further narrowed down to the principle of anarchy. In an anarchic world states are forced to resort to the principle of self help in order to survive. For Waltz, this condition of anarchy accounts for major functional similarities in state behaviour throughout history. System transformation can occur only when anarchy gives way to hierarchy or if international politics moves from decentralised to centralised politics. Since this kind of change is not likely to occur, the deep structure of anarchy prevails whether the units in the system are tribes, nation states or states. For the neo-realists this basic pattern of international politics has remained unchanged throughout history.<sup>16</sup>

This assumption, however, has provoked a strong criticism of the neo-realist theory in recent years. As the first two features of Waltz's definition of the international political structure remain unchanged, it leaves the observer with a narrow conception of the international structure as being the distribution of capabilities among the agents. According to critics, in order to prove his theory, Waltz has placed too much emphasis on systems continuity, and completely ignored the possibility of structural change and system transformation. History does provide an example of major structural change which goes beyond the change in the distribution of capabilities (power) of the units, or the change from a bipolar to a multipolar system, which is the only change permissible in neo-realist framework. Thus, the neo-realist theory is criticised for being static. According to Ruggie, "Waltz's framework encompasses a reproductive logic but no transformational logic"<sup>17</sup> as a result of which, "the shift from the medieval to the modern international system that is one of the most fundamental historical transformations in international politics passes unnoticed by the neo-realists."<sup>18</sup> The reason for stressing systems continuity is attributed to Waltz's exclusive focus on the contemporary international system. However, critics argue that by adopting

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<sup>16</sup>*Ibid*, p.87.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid*, p.26.

<sup>18</sup>J. Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Toward a Neorealist Synthesis", *World Politics* (Vol. 35, No. 2, 1983) pp. 261-85.

an historical perspective it is possible to show the possibility of system transformation or change. For example, in the medieval era units were autonomous without being sovereign.<sup>19</sup>

A second criticism of neo-realism which has particular significance in the post-Cold War period relates to its definition of units in the international system. Neo-realism has been criticised for being "statist" or adopting a state centric approach.<sup>20</sup> In the neo-realist analysis the state is considered as an unproblematic, fully formed, unitary and coherent whole, pre-existing the structure of the international system.<sup>21</sup> This criticism has two implications: firstly, it means that neo-realism is incapable of recognising or analysing concepts which are not in some way related to the interests of the state. A second and more important implication of the neo-realist state centric view, relates to the definition of the systemic structure itself. By treating states as fully developed and prior to the state system, neo-realism is unable to provide a definition of the structure independent of its parts. It views systemic structure as a product of state interaction. Thus, according to his critics, Waltz's systemic theory is designed to provide an 'outside in' view of international politics but ends up by delivering a 'inside out' view.<sup>22</sup>

The reason for neo-realism treating the states as unitary actors is related to Waltz's omission of the second feature, "the differentiation of units" from his definition of political structure. It also leads to neo-realists inability to recognise the dimension of change in their model. Ruggie argues that by ignoring the feature of differentiation of units, neo-realism is unable "to tell us on what basis acting units

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<sup>19</sup>*Op. Cit.* Buzan, p.89.

<sup>20</sup>R. Ashley, "Poverty of Neorealism", in R. Keohane (ed.) Neorealism and its Critics (New York, Columbia University Press, 1986)pp. 268-273.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid*, p. 269.

<sup>22</sup>R. Devetak, "Incomplete States: Theories and Practices of Statecraft", in J. Macmillan & A. Linklater (ed.) Boundaries in Question New Directions in International Relations (London: Pinter, 1995)pp. 19-33, A. Linklater, "Neorealism in Theory and Practice" in K. Booth & S. Smith (ed.)International Relations Theory Today (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995) pp. 241-259, R. B. J Walker, Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) pp. 104-124.

are differentiated." He reflects on why Waltz had not dealt with this problem, and comes up with a simple answer, "that neo-realism is statist before it is structuralist."<sup>23</sup> In response, the neo-realists argue that in their definition of structure of the international system, the differentiation of units principle will apply only if states are seen to be functionally differentiated. They see no reason to differentiate between sovereign states in the international system. For the neo-realists the states are functionally undifferentiated on the basis of the principle of sovereignty.<sup>24</sup>

The issue of system transformation, or change, has been further analysed by the critics of neo-realism by drawing on the debate dealing with the 'agent structure problem' in social science literature. The advocates of the agent structure debate view both the agent and structure as interdependent and "mutually implicating entities" in understanding social behaviour, and therefore favour giving both the agent and the structure an equal status in theory building.<sup>25</sup> A. E. Wendt, wants to treat both the state and the system as problematic or dependent variables. Because neo-realism does not view the state as problematic its main weakness lies in the fact that it fails to provide a basis on which to develop a theory of the state.

As mentioned before Waltz's main aim in formulating a systemic theory of international relations was to avoid a theory which explains behaviour strictly in terms of unit level properties or are reductionist. However, according to Wendt, "in the neo realist's desire to avoid micro level reductionism, it is ironic that their solution to the agent structure problem is, in a different and deeper sense, reductionist."<sup>26</sup> The issue is not how international structure is defined, which according to Waltz's definition, is defined in terms of units (state) capabilities. The

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<sup>23</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Ashley, p.272.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 273.

<sup>25</sup>A. E. Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory", International Organisation (Vol. 41, No.3, 1987) pp. 338.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 341.

problem arises when neo-realism's explanation of international structure is bounded by the state centric view and is derived exclusively from the properties of its agents. By treating the state as ontologically prior to the systemic structure, it is unable to give the structure an identity independent of its parts. Thus, neo-realism's definition of systemic structure becomes ontologically reductionist. One consequence of treating the state as ontologically prior to the system structure is that the structure can only exert a constraining influence on pre-existing states. By reducing system structures to the properties of agents, the structure cannot perform its generative or causal role, that is, the structure is unable either to generate agents or provide conditions of possibility for state action.<sup>27</sup>

By treating the states as existing prior to the structure, neo-realism fails to provide a generative image the systems structure. In order for the systems structure to be generative, states have to be seen as not fully formed and like units. Thus, as long as the states are treated as like units or similar, neo-realism is unable to provide a comprehensive theory of the state. According to structural realists, it is wrong to presume that neo-realism does not have a theory of the state. K. Waltz does have a theory of the state but it is underdeveloped and embryonic.<sup>28</sup> It can be further developed by introducing the principle of functional differentiation to prove that states can be different across time and space. The principle of functional differentiation is ignored by neo-realists because, according to them, systems structure generates functionally similar units. A deeper study of history shows that the units can be functionally differentiated and structurally unlike and yet operate in an anarchic environment. Structural realists maintain that by accepting the possibility that the state is confronted by two sets of structural constraints, that is, domestic and international, it is possible to show that anarchic structure does not produce homogeneous units.<sup>29</sup> According to neo-realism, balance of power will

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<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, p.342.

<sup>28</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Buzan, p. 116.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 121.

continue to produce like units. In structural realism, the logic of balance of power is reversed. Structural realists argue that balance of power can also make it possible "for the states to be reproduced in different ways."<sup>30</sup> "Anarchy does not eliminate functional differentiation, functional differentiation can be eliminated only when it cannot be accommodated within the balance of power."<sup>31</sup> Thus neo-realism needs to be modified to take account of both "the differentiation and non differentiation of units in an anarchic arena."<sup>32</sup> According to realism and neo-realism, states are treated as like units with only one main difference among them, that is, in their level of capabilities (power). One consequence of the realist theory is that the main threat to the security of states arises from external not internal sources.

However, through deeper analysis, it is possible to illustrate that there are very different types of states in the international system. The differences among the states become obvious once we go beyond the level of juridical sovereignty. The realists take the modern Westphalian state as a model for theory building. However, it can be argued that the modern Westphalian state is not a universal phenomenon.<sup>33</sup> There are vast differences in the formation of Europe and the Third World states. A cursory examination of variations in state building can help understand the security threats facing many Third World states in the post-Cold War period. Most of the post colonial states were not fully developed before independence. Their survival was assured through the 'negative' or legal sovereignty conferred on them by the UN, not through 'positive' or empirical

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<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, p.131.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p.131.

<sup>33</sup>G. Sorsen, "An Analysis of Contemporary Statehood: Consequences for Conflict and Cooperation," Review of International Studies (Vol. 23 , 1991) pp. 253-269, A. James, The Equality of States: Contemporary Manifestations of an Ancient Doctrine", Review Of International Studies (Vol. 18,1992) pp. 377-391.

sovereignty. Such states are often called quasi states and have become precursors to the failed states of the post-Cold War period.<sup>34</sup>

In order to fully understand the reasons for the collapse and the failure of the Afghan state, I have examined the process of state building and nation building in Afghanistan from 1747-1979. This will help in a more comprehensive understanding of the difficulties involved in the resolution of the Afghanistan conflict. The states may not be fully formed or like units but they are still the major actors. It is a plausible objection that in the Cold War environment differences between the strong and weak states were ignored by the neo-realists. But the historical context of the origins of neo-realism was the Cold War period in which the bipolar structure of the International system exercised a major constraint on states behaviour. And because the conflict in Afghanistan originated in 1979 at the height of the Cold War neo-realist theory adequately explains the ... It is only in the post Cold War period and the increasing incidence of failed states in the Third World that the issue of functional differentiation among the states has suddenly become so important. As mentioned above Structural realists have tried to address the problem of inadequate analysis of the state in neo-realist theory .

Apart from this some of the other major realist concepts can be usefully employed in the analysis of the Afghan conflict. Afghanistan presents a classic example of a state whose fate throughout its existence has been affected by the conflicting interests of outside forces. The realist approach can be applied to the conduct of the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War period. During this time, the threat of nuclear confrontation shifted the Superpower competition to the Third World states. The de-colonisation process after the Second World War brought new states into existence which soon became caught up in the Superpower ideological struggle. During the 1960's the Soviet Union under the rubric of

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<sup>34</sup>R. Jackson, Quasi States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) pp

peaceful coexistence provided economic and military aid to the Third World states. The massive amounts of military aid given by both the Superpowers to their clients has had an adverse impact on the course of political development and the evolution of indigenous political institutions in these states, which has become a major source of instability in the developing states in the post-Cold War period. On several occasions the US also intervened to support military dictatorships in the Third World states as long as these military leaders prevented the opposition forces supported by the Soviet Union coming to power.

In the mid 1970s, Third World states were hit by a wave of communist revolutions in which regimes supported by the Soviet Union gained power. The Soviet Union under Brezhnev doctrine attributed these revolutions to the favourable co-relation of forces which was not dependent on the improvement of bilateral US-Soviet relations. However, in the US these revolutions were perceived as a signal of the Soviet Union's growing power and influence in the Third World. The conservative and hard-line groups in the US regarded it as a symbol of the decline of US power, brought about by a growing public mood against deployment of US military forces in the aftermath of the Vietnam war. The US foreign policy during Reagan's presidency tried to reverse this trend by providing both military and economic aid to the insurgent movements in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Nicaragua and Mozambique, in their efforts to overthrow the communist regimes in their states. The aim was to reverse the trend of Soviet expansion by raising Soviet Union costs to consolidate these regimes. The 1980s presented the most bitter phase of confrontation between the Soviet Union and the US, and the US support of the Afghan Resistance was part of a strategy to defeat communism which posed a major threat to US interests.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> S. Galster (ed.), Afghanistan: The Making of US Foreign Policy 1973-1990, Vol. 1, (Alexandria: Chadwyck-Healy, Inc. 1990) pp.39-48, J. Scott, Deciding to Intervene. The Reagan Doctrine and the American Foreign Policy (London: Duke University Press, 1996), F. Halliday, Cold War, Third World: An Essay on Soviet US Relations (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989), P. Schweizer, Victory: The Reagan Administration Secret Struggle that Hastened the Decline of

The United Nation's role in Afghanistan throughout the Cold War also testifies to the validity of realist assumptions concerning dominance of power and national interest. During this time there was a clash of national interests between the superpowers in seeking a negotiated settlement of the regional conflicts through the UN. The implementation of the UN's Security Council Resolutions is dependent on consensus among the five permanent member states. During the Cold War period the UN's effectiveness was handicapped by the right of both the US and the Soviet Union to veto the resolutions passed by the Security Council.<sup>36</sup> In 1980 the Soviet Union effectively vetoed the Security Council resolution demanding the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The UN-sponsored indirect negotiations to find a political settlement of the conflict were nominally between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The principle of sovereignty implied that the Communist regime of Afghanistan continued to be a member of the UN throughout the negotiations. The Afghan Resistance which was funded by the US to fight the Soviet forces was not accorded status as a legitimate representative of the Afghan people in the UN. Progress on the negotiations was heavily depended on the nature of bilateral relations between the US and the Soviet Union. In the end an agreement was reached mainly due to an improvement in relations between the US and the Soviet Union without providing any safeguard for the interests of people of Afghanistan. With the dissolution of the Soviet empire, Afghanistan has lost its geo-strategic value to the United States. As a result there is lack of will on the part of the permanent member states of the Security Council to provide enough

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the Soviet Union (New York: Atlantic University Press, 1994), P.W. Rodman, More Precious than Peace: The Cold War and the Struggle for the Third World (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1994), R.W. Copson & R.P. Cronin, "The Reagan Doctrine and its Prospects" in Survival (Vol. XXIX, No. 1, 1987) & E. Luard, "Superpowers and Regional Conflicts" in Foreign Affairs (No.5, 1986)

<sup>36</sup>I. Clark, The Hierarchy of States: Reform and Resistance in International order (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), N.D. White, Keeping the Peace: The UN and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), D. Bourantonis & J. Wiener (ed.), The United Nations in the New World Order (London: Macmillan Press, 1994), T.G. Weiss, Collective Security in a Changing World (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), & S. Touval, "Why the UN fails" in Foreign Affairs (1994)

resources and force to bring the civil war to a conclusion. The UN Secretary General has appointed a special representative to find a solution, but without the authority to impose his decisions on the belligerents. The work of various UN mediators in Afghanistan has been seriously hampered by a number of factors, for example, the UN's adherence to the policy of neutrality in conducting its peacekeeping operations and by the UN's reluctance to address the underlying problem afflicting many of the failed states in the post Cold War period namely, the nature of the State in these conflicts.

Realism also explains the regional state policies towards Afghanistan. During the Cold War Pakistan's primary interest in supporting the Afghan Mujahideen was linked to her own security interests. During 1979-88 Saudi Arabia also played an important role in the Afghan conflict. In alliance with the US and Saudi Arabia strongly supported the Afghan resistance movement. Saudi foreign policy was influenced by two considerations; firstly, to counter any threat the Soviet invasion posed to Saudi security interests in the Persian Gulf and secondly, to consolidate its role as the leader of the Muslim World. During this period Saudi foreign policy was motivated by its rivalry with Iran for a predominant position in the Islamic World. The Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 not only threatened the domestic legitimacy of the Saudi Royal family but Tehran also openly criticised Riyadh's close alliance with the US. As a consequence Saudi Arabia aid was given mainly to the Sunni fundamentalist groups within the Afghan resistance. During 1979-88 Iranian foreign policy was confined merely to the condemnation of the Soviet invasion in the UN. With the outbreak of the Iran Iraq war in 1979 Iran was cautious not to upset the Soviet Union and to push it towards supporting Iraq. However, the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1989 coincided with the ending of the Iran Iraq War and change of leadership in Iran. Thereafter, Iran adopted a more pragmatic foreign policy and increased its involvement in Afghanistan. Ideological considerations in the Iranian foreign policy were replaced by national

interest. To increase its influence Iran forged closer links with the Persian speaking Sunni groups in the Afghan Resistance. To deny both the Saudi and Pakistani supported factions a predominant position in the Afghan interim government in 1989, Iran based Shiite resistance groups demanded increased representation of twenty five percent in any future government in Afghanistan. Furthermore the Shiite groups refused to accept the legitimacy of Peshawar based Interim Government of Afghanistan. Iranian diplomatic efforts to increase its influence in Afghanistan met with success with the formation of Northern Alliance (a coalition of anti Pathan ethnic minority groups) in 1992. The Northern Alliance captured Kabul after the fall of Najibullah in April 1992. The capture of Kabul by predominantly Tajik alliance marked the beginning of a period of bitter struggle for power among the various Afghan factions. The outbreak of Civil War in 1992 combined with increased destruction and regional interference has completely transformed the nature of the Afghan conflict from an ideological struggle to an ethnic conflict.<sup>37</sup>

In the post-Cold War period the independence of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) has added the new dimension of economic competition in relations between the regional states of Iran, Saudi Arabia, India, Russia and Pakistan. Correspondingly, the regional states interference in Afghan domestic politics in order to gain access to the natural resources of the CIS has diminished the prospects of peaceful settlement of the Afghan conflict.

Realism can be applied to the motives of the factions or the substate actors engaged in fighting inside Afghanistan. The vast amount of foreign aid and weapons poured into Afghanistan by both the Superpowers and their regional allies during the Cold War, and the regional states competition for power in the post Cold War period has completely destroyed the already fragile basis of legitimacy based on

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<sup>37</sup>Anwar ul Haq Ahady, "Saudi Arabia, Iran and the Conflict in Afghanistan", in W. Maley,(ed.) Fundamentalism Reborn? (London: Hurst & Company, 1998) pp.117-134.

traditional authority in Afghanistan. In a state with a political tradition of a weak state and strong society, outside interference and military aid has led to the complete collapse of the central government and the emergence of new and antagonistic centres of power. After the disengagement of the Superpowers, these factions were left to fight among themselves. In their domestic power struggles they are now supported by rival regional powers. In the absence of a legitimate central government with sufficient authority to impose law and order and hold elections, the chances of peace returning to Afghanistan remain slim. Thus, Afghanistan has become a showcase of conflicting interests, alliance formation and dissolution, struggle for power, and Hobbesian state of nature.

### **1.3 The Sources Used**

For my research I have used both primary and secondary sources. The Primary sources include official documents; US Department of State Bureau and Public affairs Special reports on Afghanistan, Congressional Research Services (CRS) Reports for Congress, United Nations documents, the draft texts of the Geneva negotiations published by the UN, press releases issued by the governments of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the United States Information Centres in Lahore and Islamabad (Pakistan). I have also used a variety of newspapers and periodicals published in the US, the UK and Pakistan. Secondary sources include academic literature including books and articles published in different international journals. All these sources are listed in more detail in the bibliography.

### **1.4 The Order and Subject of the Chapters**

In order to analyse the application of the realist approach to the vast amount of material available on the conflict in Afghanistan, I have divided the organisation of the thesis into the following sections. Part 1 deals with Afghanistan's political and

social history in order to extrapolate the factors which influenced the state and nation building process in Afghanistan. Part 2 covers the period from the Soviet intervention till the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1988. This would be accomplished by using various sections to describe the important role played by the US, the USSR, Pakistan and the UN in the conflict. The same structure will apply in Part 3 which is related to the post Cold- War period. The Conclusion summarises the main points of the thesis, which supports the argument about the validity of the application of the realist approach in the analysing the motives of the various actors involved in the Afghan conflict.

## Part I

### CHAPTER ONE

#### Afghanistan's Political and Social History

"How can a small power like Afghanistan which is like a goat between these lions (British India and Czarist Russia) or a grain of wheat between the strong millstones of the grinding mill, stand midway of the stones without being ground to dust?" Amir Abdur Rahman. (1880-1901)

##### 1.1.1 Introduction

Before proceeding to analyse Afghanistan's political and social history I will undertake a brief overview of the differences between the state and nation building process in the West and the Third World states. This is done in order to bring out some of the reasons for the slow rate of political development in many Third World states, including Afghanistan.

In Europe, the process of state building was spread over several centuries. It was a brutal process which caused much destruction and suffering to the people. According to Charles Tilly, state building in Europe was mainly a consequence of war making undertaken by the powerful lords to defeat their rivals. In order to acquire the resources to wage war, the power holders resorted to the task of accumulating capital and also extracting resources from the population either through taxation or coercion and colonial expansion. The early state builders did not undertake these tasks with the intention of creating "centralised, differentiated and autonomous political organisations". Instead, western state building was largely an unintentional and evolutionary process. However, with the passage of time, the various competitors for power developed a vested interest in promoting the accumulation of capital and in securing monopoly over the means of violence and coercion.<sup>1</sup>

In the early stages of state building the government did not possess adequate

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<sup>1</sup>C. Tilly, "War Making & State Making as Organised Crime" in, P. Evans (ed.) Bringing the State Back In (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) pp. 169-187.

resources to reach out to the local population and was thus forced to rely on the method of indirect rule. However, the monarchy gradually adopted the method of direct rule by creating a bureaucracy and powerful armies which owed loyalty to the centre and not to the local leaders. The increase in the capacity to wage war led to increased need to extract resources. An expansion of civilian and military organisations such as tax collection agencies, courts, exchequers and war industries, facilitated state building. Also, in the process of war, extraction and state building, the government leaders formed alliances with the members of various social classes. These classes often provided resources to the centre and ensured the compliance of the local population in return for protection from the state against their enemies. <sup>2</sup>

In most of the Third World states the resources for centralisation of power came from abroad and were not generated domestically. The external sources included foreign aid from the Superpowers, loans or aid from international organisations and revenues from the sale of natural resources including oil. As a result, the political elites in the Third World states were able to hold on to power either unconstitutionally or without being accountable to the population. There were no reciprocal obligations or constraints between the ruler and the ruled in the Third World. Another major difference between the states in Europe and the Third World include the difference in political institutions and modes of social organisations. Other differences in the process of state building in the west and in the Third World states, include, the limited amount of time available to the Third World states to complete the tasks associated with state building, the colonial legacy, the difficulties associated with meeting the challenges of the modernisation process, increase in demands for political participation, and constraints imposed by international norms.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.* p. 175-187.

<sup>3</sup> M .Ayub, Third World Security Predicament (Boulder: Lynne Rienner,1995)pp. 21-43, B. Rubin, The Fragmentation of Afghanistan (Yale: Yale University Press, 1995) pp. 1-15 & K. J.

In view of the recent upsurge in ethnic conflicts throughout the world, including Afghanistan, the study of the nation-building and nationalism has also assumed growing importance. Here too there are vast differences between the Third World and the Western states. To understand the outbreak of ethnic conflicts it is essential to trace the origins of the modern nations. There are several theories on the origins of nations and nationalism. They can be grouped into two broad categories: the modernist or the instrumentalist theories and the primordial or perennialist theories. However, it is important to remember that no theory of nationalism fully explains the causes of its chameleon character. Then there is the question of the various forms nationalism can take. According to the modernists, nationalism and nation formation are a relatively modern phenomena. It is the result of the nationalist ideology which emerged in France in the late eighteenth century. The modernists argue that the nationalist ideology emerged in close conjunction with the formation of the modern centralised state. Nationalism's primary aim was to legitimate and serve the interests of the modern industrial society. It was supposed to unite the society and provide it with a common culture. In a feudal society, people owed their allegiances to several authorities and not to the state. The conditions which are the essence of a nation state, including: the concept of equal legal rights and citizenship, common mass culture and public education system were all absent in the middle ages.<sup>4</sup> However, the critics of the modernist theory caution against according too much importance to the role of the centralised state in the emergence of nationalism- for example, the strenuous efforts of many newly independent Third World states to create national identity have failed. The presence of ethnic cleavages in several of these states not only presents a serious challenge to their legitimacy but also threatens their very survival. Conversely the advocates of the primordial

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Holsti, *The State, War & the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) pp.41-119.

<sup>4</sup>T. I. Knutsen, *A History of International Relations Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997) pp. 179-184.

theory argue that there is nothing new about the emergence of nations, nations and their ethnic basis have existed throughout history. This theory ignores certain important features which are the basis of modern nation states.<sup>5</sup>

In between these two extreme views lies the theory advocated by Anthony Smith which stresses the continuity between ethnic identity and nationalism.<sup>6</sup> An ethnic community (*ethnie*) can be distinguished from an ethnic group by several attributes including the role of common ancestry, common myths, values and memories, association with a specific territory and, most importantly, a sense of solidarity.<sup>7</sup> State making, war, and religion are the processes which can form and give rise to ethnic communities. These processes can also serve to disintegrate ethnic communities. The presence of such core ethnic communities usually determines the nature of subsequent states. Although most of the states are multi-ethnic the first western states were formed around a core ethnic community.<sup>8</sup>

However, according to Anthony Smith, there is a certain overlap between an ethnic community (*ethnie*) and the formation of nations. Nations require ethnic elements but differ from an ethnic community in one important respect: a nation requires territory. During the middle ages there were only ethnic states but no nation states. Moreover, the core attributes of an ethnic community, such as: a myth of shared ancestry, historical memories, links with a specific territory and sense of solidarity, are highly subjective. Ethnic awareness is not constant, it can increase or decrease according to changing economic and political circumstances. Ethnic boundaries are not fixed but are subject to change and flux. Ethnicity can also be used by the political elites in order to serve their own political interests.<sup>9</sup> For example, in order to suppress the Pan Islamist nationalist

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<sup>5</sup> A. Smith, *Nation & Nationalism in a Global Era*, ( Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995) pp. 54-58.

<sup>6</sup> J. K. Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism & Ethnicity* (London: Macmillan, 1991) pp. 48-50.

<sup>7</sup> A. Smith, *National Identity* ( London: Penguin Books, 1991) pp. 20-21.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 24-28.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 23-26

sentiment, Stalin used ethnic identity to redraw the boundaries of Central Asia. Also the Turkish identity was invented by Kemal Attaturk in 1939. Thus, a nation is a combination of primordial ethnic ties and its relative modernity. It this duality which makes the nation-building such a complex process.

In summary, modern nations are based on two types of national identity: legal-political and cultural-historical. National identity means a political community sharing common legal institutions, legal equality, common values, laws, public culture and traditions, within a given historical territory.<sup>10</sup> This is essentially the civic, or the territorial model, which requires the presence of important ethnic elements.

The political aspect of national identity is further complicated by two common methods of creating a national community, the civic or the territorial type and the ethnic type of political nation. The civic model is most common and is adopted by the new states. The first western nations were formed around a dominant ethnic community which shaped the character and the boundaries of the nation. In the west the state largely created the nation in conjunction with industrial revolution and revolution in education. In the Third World states the nation-building process has confronted problems because many of the post-colonial states lacked both political and cultural identity. The nationalist ideology in the Third World states was aimed at securing independence from the colonial rule. The boundaries of many Third World states were defined by the colonial powers in total disregard of the ethnic communities residing within these areas. After independence the political elites in the new states used two methods to create political communities where none had existed before. In the post independence period two methods were used to create a new political identity. The first method was to use the culture of the dominant ethnic community to form the political

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<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.* p. 15.

identity or community. Secondly, and in cases where there was no dominant ethnic community, a supra ethnic political culture was invented sometimes based on religion to transcend ethnic differences.<sup>11</sup> However, in many Third World states this attempt by the state to create a nation met with strong resistance from the minority ethnic communities which the new states lacking in resources have sometimes been unable to resolve. Also in many Third World states territorial, religious, ethnic and communal identities are much stronger than loyalty to the state. As a result of these several identities the idea of a nation-state is not clearly defined. These overlapping identities present the main obstacle to the creation of a strong national identity in many of the Third World states.<sup>12</sup>

Although Afghanistan has never been directly colonised, a survey of its political history shows that the process of nation-building has been extremely frustrating. Periodic attempts by various Afghan rulers towards nation-building have met with only limited success. The main obstacle to Afghan national unity has been the resistance by the tribes to attempts to force them to give up their autonomy or to forgo their independence. As a result, the relations between the tribes and the central government in Afghanistan have been characterised by tension and the uncertain balance of power, sometimes favouring the tribes and sometimes favouring the central government. In such an environment the success of nation building efforts have depended on the personal qualities and skill of the ruler. A ruler who had the support of his tribe, could make good use of his military strength, was generous in distributing financial rewards, and could skilfully exploit the disunity of the tribes, succeeded in extending the authority of the central government. Conversely in the case of a weak ruler tribes successfully reasserted their independence and the authority of the central government was considerably reduced. Amir Abdur Rahman was able to crush the tribal

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<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 111-122.

<sup>12</sup>*Op. Cit.* Kellas, The Politics of Nationalism & Ethnicity, pp. 117-134.

resistance through the use of force and repression, whereas King Amanullah's disregard of the tribal politics and sensibilities cost him his throne. Whenever the fragile balance of power between the tribes and the state was undermined it led to brutal civil war.

A careful analysis of the Afghan Civil War will reveal that it is an oversimplification to label the war in Afghanistan as being based on ethnic nationalism. Ethnicity is only one of the several sources of identity prevalent in Afghanistan. A second important source of political identity are the tribes, and the third is Islam. During the civil war the behaviour of the main ethnic groups has been motivated primarily by their self interests rather than merely on the basis of their ethnic divisions. Thus, there is not enough ethnic solidarity among the various ethnic groups to create separate independent nation states. Moreover, "the ethnic groups are not organised properly or sufficiently institutionalised, both politically and militarily, to express the will of the whole ethnic group."<sup>13</sup> Also, there is not enough strong external support for ethnic groups to secede and be amalgamated into neighbouring states. Rather it is a conflict in which ethnicity has been recently employed, that is, after 1992, by the antagonists to promote their self interests and to fuel hostility. Ethnic mobilisation is the consequence of war, state collapse, and the changed regional context in which ethnicity has become the basis of political alignments. It is also a testimony to the fact that ideology that is, religious identity, is sometimes not sufficient to transcend ethnic or regional differences. The present ethnic violence is the result of power competition in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan there is a core ethnic group which can consolidate the state and serve to provide a basis for its national identity. The arduous task of building national identity by a weak Afghan state was interrupted by the war. To achieve peace a sense of nationalist ideology can help in the nation-building in Afghanistan-which is a long and difficult process.

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<sup>13</sup> B. Glatzer, "Is Afghanistan on the Brink of Tribal & Ethnic Disintegration" in W. Maley (ed.) *Fundamentalism Reborn* (London: Hurst & Company, 1998) pp. 167-181.

### **1. 1. 2 Political Development in Afghanistan**

Having briefly described some of the differences in state building and nation building between the Western states and the Third World states I will now trace the course of political development in Afghanistan from 1747-1973.

A unique feature of many Third World states in the period following de colonisation was their increased ability to set up new state structures such as a large bureaucracy, army, judicial courts and revenue collection offices. However, these extensive state-building measures were not accompanied by an effective control by the state to influence or regulate peoples' social behaviour. One explanation of this phenomena lies in the fact that most of the states in the Third World operate in an environment of conflict in which they have to compete with other domestic social organisations in the society in order to increase the total amount of social control exercised by the state. The Third World states are capable of penetrating their societies, but their capability to mobilise their populations is frequently low because social control is distributed among several autonomous organisations in the society.<sup>14</sup> As a consequence, the total amount of social control exercised by these Third World states is usually very low.

Effective political mobilisation is an important indicator of a state capability. Internally, it enables the state leaders to make and implement rules, and to make people behave according to these official rules and not according to the dictates of local magnates or strongmen. Thus, it is important to study the sources of resistance encountered by the state leaders in their attempts to achieve centralisation of power in the Third World states. According to J. Migdal, "Third

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<sup>14</sup> J. Migdal, Strong states Weak Societies, State Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) pp. 32.

World societies host a melange of fairly autonomous social organisations. In such societies no single social organisation is totally integral to the existence of the whole. In such a society people are governed but the allocation of values is not centralised and numerous systems of justice operate simultaneously.”<sup>15</sup> Various social organisations within a state compete with the state authorities in prescribing strategies of survival for the population. Furthermore, in the absence of multiple channels of support, most of the leaders in the Third World states end up adopting strategies of survival or accommodation. One way to assess or measure a state’s capabilities is to study the social structure of its society.<sup>16</sup>

Afghanistan presents an interesting case study of the difficulties encountered by its successive rulers in their attempts to transform a traditional society into a modern and strong state. Several factors, both internal and external, have constrained the process of creating a strong state in Afghanistan. The most important reason lies in the structure of the Afghan society which is segmented or divided into various ethnic groups and tribes. The endemic tribal rivalries in Afghan society limit the amount of social control the state has in a society. Other factors constraining the process of creating a strong central state in Afghanistan include: the feudal structure of its society,<sup>17</sup> dynastic disputes over succession, ethnic heterogeneity, religious or sectarian differences, geographical location, lack of adequate financial resources, foreign invasions and the adoption of an isolationist attitude by the Afghan rulers towards the developments in the western world. All these factors have left a deep impact on the course of Afghanistan's political history. During the twentieth century, the process of

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<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.* p. 28.

<sup>16</sup>J. Migdal, "Strong States Weak States: Power and Accommodation" in M. Weiner and S. Huntington (ed.) Understanding Political Development (Illinois: Waveland Press, 1987) pp. 391-406, J. Migdal, "The State in Society: An Approach to Struggle for Domination", in J. Migdal & A. Kohli (ed.) State Power and Social forces, Domination and Transformation in the Third World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) pp. 7-30.

<sup>17</sup>"Feudalism", in D. Shils (ed.) International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences Vol. . 5 (London: Macmillan Free Press, 1968)pp. 393-402, M. Sharani, "Afghanistan: State and Society in Retrospect", in, E. Anderson & N. Dupree (ed.) (ed.) The Cultural Basis of Afghan Nationalism (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990) pp. 41-49.

political development in Afghanistan has been hampered by the inability of the central government to achieve a successful assimilation of the various social forces in the society. In responding to the increased demands for wider public participation in politics, the monarchy faced the classic dilemma of encountering a threat to its own legitimacy. The process of political institutionalisation and the formation of strong political parties has been slow. For example, the principle of popular sovereignty was not exercised until 1964 when the first national elections were held. However, in the absence of legal political parties, this experiment in Constitutional democracy failed. During the Cold War period Afghanistan became a battleground for the ideological conflict between the two Superpowers. In the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 it's fragile state structure collapsed completely. However, in such an environment, regional powers continued to pursue their conflicting interests by providing aid to various rival groups. These groups are coalesced mainly on the basis of ethnic or regional divisions and operate in the absence of a formal state structure.<sup>18</sup>

The main feature of Afghanistan's political history from 1747-1880 has been the persistence of weak central governments and independent political power enjoyed by the peripheral social forces -that is, the tribal and religious leaders in the civil society. As a corollary of this, the central government has encountered strong opposition from the traditional forces in Afghan society, the tribes and the clergy, towards its' efforts to centralise power at the top. During the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries the tribes, and particularly the Pathan (Afghan) tribes, played an important role in Afghan domestic politics. Only after achieving a buffer status between the Indian and the Russian empire in 1880, and with the flow of foreign subsidies, were the Afghan rulers able to act independently and decrease their reliance on the tribes. The relationship between the central authority and the various tribes in Afghanistan can best be described as one

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<sup>18</sup>*Op. Cit.* B. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, pp. 1-15.

based on a paradox, that is, in order to achieve centralisation of political power and to implement various reforms, it's rulers needed to eliminate the power of the tribes and of the religious establishment. However, due to the lack of adequate financial and military resources, the government was forced to rely on tribal support (levies) in order to maintain the territorial integrity of the state against internal and external threats.<sup>19</sup> Thus, in order to implement the various social or economic reforms, the Afghan rulers were faced with the difficult task of achieving progress without challenging the authority and the privileged position of the tribal and religious leaders in the society. Whenever the delicate balance of power between the state and the tribal society was undermined it resulted in anarchy or chaos. As a result, Afghanistan's journey on the road to political development has been very difficult and gradual.

Another important political force in Afghan society is that of the religious and the spiritual leaders or the Sufis. There are several reasons for the prominence of the religious forces. In an ethnically heterogeneous society religion is a major source of unity. In the absence of structural differentiation or specialised political institutions, religious and spiritual leaders (*Sufis*) played an important role in the lives of the rural population by performing such diverse functions as: acting as mediators in the settlement of disputes, educating the rural population, serving as centres of communication, implementing Islamic laws and administering justice. Before 1880, the ability of the religious leaders to unilaterally proclaim Jihad against the ruler also made them an important force in domestic politics. In the absence of public consent, the Afghan rulers courted the religious leaders to sanction the legitimacy of their political authority. The coronation ceremony, or Dastar-bandi, was usually performed by prominent religious leaders in Afghanistan. The rulers usually preferred the ceremony to be performed by

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<sup>19</sup> V. Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan: Politics of Reform and Modernisation 1880-1946 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969)p. 49.

influential religious leaders in order to boast the level of political support for their rule.<sup>20</sup> During the period of two Anglo-Afghan Wars religious leaders played an active role in the mobilising of the rural population against foreign occupation. With the rise of Afghan nationalism, and the emergence of the pan-Islamist movement throughout the Muslim world at the beginning of the twentieth century, religious leaders again became active in Afghan domestic politics. The Afghan 'ulama' (priests) pressurised King Habibullah to abandon Afghanistan's neutrality, to proclaim Jihad against the British and to enter the World War I on the side of Germany and Turkey.<sup>21</sup>

Another variable in the process of political development in Afghanistan derives from its unique geographical location, which has brought both advantages and disadvantages. Throughout history, the area has been invaded by various empires leading to ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity, and arbitrary demarcation of its boundaries. During the nineteenth century, it was engulfed in the Anglo-Russian Imperial rivalry in Central Asia with important implications for its domestic politics. The British invaded Afghanistan twice: in 1838-42 and 1879-80, respectively. These British invasions and the consequent Anglo-Afghan wars had both negative and positive consequences for Afghanistan. On the negative side: it lost important provinces to the Sikhs and, eventually, to the British; the control of its foreign relations came under the jurisdiction of the British; the main urban centres were destroyed and its rural economy suffered badly; The success of the religious leaders in mobilising the population against foreign invasion increased their political power in domestic affairs; and, in order to avoid further external interference, the Afghan monarchy adopted a deliberate policy of political isolation and economic backwardness. On the positive side: the British-

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<sup>20</sup> S. Navid, "The State, the Clergy, and the British Imperial Policy in Afghanistan During the 19th and early 20th Centuries" *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (Vol. 29,1997) pp. 581-605 & B. Toprak, *Islam and Political Development in Turkey* (Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1982) pp. 5-14.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 597-601.

Russian Imperial rivalry gave rise to Afghan nationalism; Afghanistan retained its independence; and after becoming a buffer state between Russia and British India, it received the much needed revenue in the form of British subsidies which were used towards the end of the nineteenth century in expanding administrative institutions.<sup>22</sup>

Before proceeding to examine the turbulent history of Afghanistan, in order to uncover the reasons for the slow rate of political development, it would be appropriate to pause and reflect on some of the main features of the Afghan tribal society. The social structure of a society often determines the state's capabilities, including the capability to penetrate the society, regulate social relations, and the capability to extract and appropriate material resources in a society. One of the most important capabilities of the state is the capability to mobilise the population in order to achieve important common goals like defence. The mobilisation capability of the state is related to, and dependent on, increased amount of 'social control' in a society. The importance of increased social control at the centre is essential as weak social control often invites external aggression. Thus, the mobilisation capability of the state is one of the crucial elements in the process of political development.<sup>23</sup>

The amount of social control in a weak state or in a tribal society is usually low because it is distributed among autonomous social organisations like the family, the tribe or ethnic groups. Underlying the tension between the tribes and the state is the difference between their mode of social organisation. In the Afghan tribe individual loyalties are usually parochial based on kinship, family and common descent which is mostly based on patrimonial lines. Individual interactions in a tribe are determined vertically rather than horizontally. Individual loyalties are

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<sup>22</sup>*Op.Cit.* Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 124-128.

<sup>23</sup>*Op.Cit.* Migdal, Strong States Weak Societies: State Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World pp.20-33

based on hereditary ties rather than on institutional links. Individual interactions are arranged in concentric circles, consisting of family, clan, ethnic group and tribe.<sup>24</sup> Another element defying centralisation of power is the tribal code and Jirga. The Afghan tribes have their own methods of settling disputes through consultation and in accordance with the tribal or religious laws. This clashes with the ideal model of a state whose jurisdiction is based on the control of a specific segment of territory, obedience to a single sovereign and monopoly or exclusive control over the use of force.<sup>25</sup>

The Afghan tribes are notorious for their independence and lack unity. The scarcity of fertile agricultural land, water resources, lack of means of transportation and existence under harsh climatic conditions generates an intense competition for survival. Under such circumstances tribal conflicts are common. Each Afghan tribe is further divided into various sub tribes. For example, the largest tribe is the Abdali (Durrani) tribe which is divided into several branches such as the Popalzai, Barakzai, Alizai, Nurzai, Ishakzai and Achakzai. The second largest Afghan tribe is the Ghilzai which is divided into Hotaki, Sueliman Khel, Tokhi, Andar, Ali khel, Nasser and Taraki. Other important Afghan tribes include the Wazirs, the Khattaks, the Afridis, the Mohammed, the Yosufzais and the Shinwaris.<sup>26</sup> These tribes are further subdivided into various branches. There are at least five sources of conflict in the Afghan tribal society. These include interpersonal rivalry among the members of the same tribe, intra tribal rivalries, for example, between the Abdali's and the Ghilzai, rivalry between the subunits of the same tribe as between the Sadozai and the Barakzai branch of the Abdali tribe, rivalries between the tribes belonging to different ethnic groups who

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<sup>24</sup> L. Poullada, "Problems of Social Development in Afghanistan" in Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society (Vol. XLIX, 1962) pp. 33-39, R. Tapper, The Conflict of Tribe and State in Afghanistan and Iran (London: Groom Helm, 1983) pp. 83-118.

<sup>25</sup> M. Fried, "The State: The Institution", F. Watkins, "The State: The Concept" in D. Shils (ed.) Int. Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences (Vol. 15, 1968) pp. 143-156.

<sup>26</sup> *Op. Cit.* Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 30-31.

resented Afghan dominant position, and finally the tension between the tribes and the central government. As a result of frequent dynastic disputes over succession and foreign interferences in Afghanistan, the tribes frequently switched their allegiances. This lack of unity among the tribes has been a major reason for lack of unity and the failure of national integration efforts in Afghanistan.<sup>27</sup>

Before the independence of Afghanistan as a separate nation the area was part of several empires including the Ghaznavids (999-1186), the Seljuks (1038-1157), the Ghurids (1150-1217), the Mongols (1220-1258), the Turks (1336-1447), the Safawid and the Moghuls.<sup>28</sup> These outside influences added to the Afghan culture but made it very difficult to achieve either economic or political unity. The Mongol and the Turkic invasions were extremely brutal and left a devastating impact on the economy and cultural life of the region. In order to subdue and conquer the local population the Mongols executed thousands of people, destroyed important urban centres and laid waste fertile valleys and agricultural land. During the sixteenth century the northern areas of Afghanistan came under the rule of the Sunni Uzbeks the Shaybanids. The Uzbeks drove Zahuruddin Babur, the last descendant of Timur i Lang, from Central Asia to Kabul and to India where, in 1526, he founded the Mogul dynasty.<sup>29</sup>

In the sixteenth century Afghanistan became an object of rivalry between its two neighbours: the Persian Safawid empire to the West and the Indian Moghul empire to the East. Both the Persian and the Moghul empires adopted different policies towards the Afghan tribes. In order to pacify the border tribes the Moghul emperors paid subsidies to the tribal leaders and undertook military

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<sup>27</sup> L. Poullada, Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan 1919-1929; King Amanullah's Failure to Modernise A Tribal Society (London: Cornell University Press, 1973) pp. 19-34.

<sup>28</sup> *Op. Cit.* Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp.17-21.

<sup>29</sup> D. Wilber, Afghanistan its People, its Society, its Culture (New Haven, Hraf Press, 1962) pp.11-23.

expeditions against them. Some of the sedentary tribes in the east of Afghanistan flourished economically. On the other hand, the Persian Safawids adopted the policy of divide and rule and employed military means to control the various Afghan tribes. The Persian army was stationed in the Khandahar and Herat region and some of the important Afghan tribes were either recruited in the Persian army or transported to other regions. For example, the Abdali tribe of the Khandahar region was relocated to Herat in Persia.<sup>30</sup> An important legacy of this era is the emergence of political consciousness among the various Afghan tribes which manifested itself in periodic attempts made by these Afghan tribes to unify and achieve independence from the Persian rule. For example, in 1721 the Ghilzais, under the leadership of Mir Ways of the Hoktai branch of the Ghilzai, asserted their authority by occupying Isphahan the capital of Persia. However, due to their disunity and adherence to the Sunni sect of Islam, they were unable to consolidate their hold over the Persian *Shiite's*. The Persian emperor, Nadir Shah Asfhar, crushed the rebellious tribes and recaptured Afghanistan. The policy of divide and rule by the Safawid rulers aggravated the rivalry between the Abdali and the Ghilzai tribes. Despite the efforts to incorporate them into the Persian and the Moghul empires most of the Afghan tribes maintained their independent status.<sup>31</sup>

In 1747, after the assassination of Nadir Shah Asfshar, Ahmed Shah Abdali, an Afghan cavalry commander in his army fled back to Khandahar (the Abdalis former habitat) along with other members of the Ghilzai and the Uzbek tribes. They took most of the King's treasure with them. In Khandahar a tribal jirga was held, in which the leaders of various tribes unanimously elected Ahmed Shah as their sovereign. The election of Ahmed Shah, at the age of twenty-three,

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<sup>30</sup> M. Nazif Shahrani, "State Building and Social Fragmentation in Afghanistan. A Historical Perspective", in A. Banuazizi & M. Weiner(ed.) The State, Religion and Ethnic Politics, Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986) pp. 23-65.

<sup>31</sup> N. Richard The Politics of Afghanistan (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1972) pp. 34-69, H. Kakar, "Trends in Modern Afghan History" in Dupree (ed.) Afghanistan in the 1970's (New York: Praeger, 1974) pp. 13-31.

was mainly due to the fact that he was a member of a relatively weak branch of the Abdali tribe, the Sadozais, and the tribal elders felt that they would be able to preserve their independence under his rule. The real political power lay with another powerful branch of the Abdali tribe, the Barakzais, who were numerically stronger than the Sadozais. After the election of Ahmed Shah, the Abdali tribe adopted the title of "Durrani" meaning 'pearl', in view of the pearl ear-rings worn by the Abdali soldiers in Nadir Shah Afshar's army. The Durrani empire founded by Ahmed Shah can best be described as a confederation of various tribes and Khanates rather than an absolute monarchy. It resembled a tribal-feudal state. The feudal characteristics of the empire meant that the total amount of power in the political system was low. Ahmed Shah was not an absolute sovereign but ruled indirectly in accordance with the wishes of a tribal council composed of nine tribal leaders.<sup>32</sup>

In order to overcome the many ethnic, linguistic and religious differences the Afghan rulers have relied on the support of various Afghan tribes. This has especially been true in the case of the Durrani tribe in Afghanistan which, historically, has been regarded as the strongest force for maintaining the stability of the regime. This dependency of the state on various tribes inadvertently fostered a tendency of tribal resistance towards attempts at political centralisation. The tribes jealously guarded their authority and privileged position in the society. In order to gain tribal allegiance Ahmed Shah Durrani granted special privileges to his own tribe, the Durrani, in the form of vast land holdings and in certain cases exemption from taxes. In return for the ownership of the land, the tribes were obliged to provide a certain number of troops to the monarch. Ahmed Shah Durrani also allocated important offices of the state to the Durrani sub tribes and made some of these positions permanent or hereditary. In the absence of a national army, each tribe was expected to provide a certain

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<sup>32</sup> Sir. P. Sykes, A History of Afghanistan, Vol. 1 & 11 (London: Macmillan & Company, 1940) pp. 351-367.

number of men to the central government. However, this system was not uniform and varied according to the strength and the privileged position of the various tribes. As a result of this indirect method of rule and the pluralistic centres of power mainly the feudal and the tribal leaders, no central ruler had the authority to maintain an effective rule of law in Afghanistan.<sup>33</sup>

Ahmed Shah attempted to consolidate his Kingdom by extending his empire via the conquest of foreign lands. These successful military campaigns not only added vast territories to Afghanistan, but also increased the royal revenue which Ahmed Shah judiciously distributed among the tribes in return for their political support. The foreign military expeditions also united the Afghan tribes. The Durrani empire stretched from Khorassan to Kashmir including: Baluchistan, Multan, Peshawar, Punjab and Sind.<sup>34</sup> To gain the political support of important tribes Ahmed Shah particularly took wives for himself and his sons from them. This practice of polygamy by the Afghan monarchs had a particularly negative affect on the politics of Afghanistan. In the absence of an established law of succession (the practice of primogeniture), the death of a monarch was often followed by prolonged and bloody disputes among the several contenders to the throne. In these intrigues to gain dynastic control, the various contenders usually found the tribal chiefs to be willing allies in the overthrowing of the central government. As a result, the history of Afghanistan is marred by prolonged periods of court intrigues, treachery, civil wars, and internal unrest.<sup>35</sup> The civil wars destroyed the already fragile urban infrastructure and disrupted the flow of revenue from the provinces to the central government. Often during these prolonged periods of civil war the Sirdars (governors) of distant regions declared their independence from the central authority.

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<sup>33</sup>A. Oleson, Islam and Politics in Afghanistan (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1995) pp. 29-36.

<sup>34</sup>*Op. Cit.* Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, p.49.

<sup>35</sup> P. Macrory, Signal Catastrophe. The Story of Disastrous Defeat from Kabul 1842 (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1966) pp. 17-39.

After the death of Ahmed Shah Durrani in 1773, Afghanistan was engulfed in a series of fratricidal quarrels, as a result of which the throne eventually passed from the Sadozai to the Mohammedzai (Barakzai) branch of the Abdali tribe. After Ahmed Shah's death his fifth son, Timur Shah, ascended the throne. Timur Shah transferred the Afghan capital from Khandahar to Kabul- which was inhabited mainly by the Tajiks.<sup>36</sup> During Timur Shah's reign the Sikhs began to pose a threat to the security of Afghanistan and the Afghan empire began to disintegrate. After twenty years in power Timur Shah died in 1793. He left behind twenty three sons. His fifth son, Zaman Shah, who at that time was the governor of Kabul, ascended the throne. Zaman Shah (1793-1802) came to power with the support of Sirdar Piyanda Khan, the leader of the Barakzai tribe. During Zaman Shah's rule there were constant revolts against him. In order to save the empire from bankruptcy he undertook numerous invasions of India but they were cut short as he was forced to return to Afghanistan to crush internal rebellions against him.<sup>37</sup> After assuming power and contrary to the custom of giving the office of Wazir (Prime Minister) to the Barakzais, Zaman Shah tried to gain absolute power and executed Sirdar Piyanda Khan on charges of conspiracy. Sirdar Piyanda Khan left behind twenty- one sons who swore to take revenge against Zaman Shah. The eldest son of Piyinda Khan, Sirdar Fateh Ali Khan, conspired with a Saddozai prince, Mahmud Shah, the governor of Herat, to overthrow Zaman Shah. The plan was a success and Zaman Shah was captured and blinded by Mahmud Shah. In 1803 Zaman Shah's brother Shuja al Mulk, defeated Mahmud Shah and proclaimed himself the King. However his rule lasted only six years from 1803-1809. In 1809 Mahmud Shah, with the help of Fateh Ali, once again came back to power. Mahmud Shah was only a puppet- the real power was with the Barakzai brothers who divided the Kingdom among

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<sup>36</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, p.49.

<sup>37</sup> *Op. Cit.* P. Macrory, Signal Catastrophe, The Story of Disastrous Defeat from Kabul 1842 , p. 23.

themselves.<sup>38</sup>

As the throne passed from the Saddozai to the Mohammedzai (Barakzai) brothers they also indulged in dynastic disputes and Afghanistan was again embroiled in a prolonged period of civil wars. The end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century were periods of political, economic and urban decline. Important urban centres including Herat, Khandahar, Ghazni, Jalallabad and Kabul suffered a serious decline. Due to this internal unrest, the volume of regional and international overland trade passing through Afghanistan declined and it lost its position as an important centre for trade en route to Bokhara, Persia and India. Various tribes like the Ghilzai's declared their independence and imposed heavy taxes on the caravans passing through their territory. The tribes in the Khyber Pass also levied taxes on trade caravans coming from India. Instead of paying taxes to the centre the Afghan government paid tribute to some of the tribes on the eastern border to ensure the safety of the trade routes. The trade declined due to the chaotic system of revenue collection. Trade caravans were stopped and taxed by the independent tribes several times before they reached their final destination. There was no guarantee of the safety of the roads.<sup>39</sup>

The youngest of the Barakzai brothers, Dost Mohammed, who was the ruler of Ghazni, came to power in 1826. However, the kingdom he inherited was geographically very limited and included only Kabul, Ghazni, Charikar and Jalallabad. Dost Mohammed faced two major problems: firstly, internal unrest and secondly, external threats from the Sikhs in the East and the Persians in the West of Afghanistan, and the Uzbeks in the north. After coming to power Dost Mohammed initiated limited reforms. His main priority was to implement a

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<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 36-43.

<sup>39</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 53-60.

uniform system of taxation throughout Afghanistan and force the tribes to pay their outstanding taxes. During his reign taxes were mostly paid in kind. In order to regulate the domestic economy more efficiently, Dost Mohammed introduced hard currency by minting gold and silver coins but its circulation was limited only to the Kabul region. He also used religious support to consolidate his rule. For example, when the Sikhs attacked Peshawar in 1836 he proclaimed Jihad against them. The Afghan 'ulama' conferred the title of Amir al Muminin (leader of the faithful) on Dost Mohammed. This united the Afghans and brought him tremendous support throughout Afghanistan.<sup>40</sup> Another of the reforms undertaken by Dost Mohammed was the beginning and limited modernisation of the Afghan army but the lack of adequate resources undermined this project.

While Afghanistan was engulfed in internal unrest events outside were gathering momentum. These events were the beginning of an era in which Afghanistan faced constant interference in its internal affairs and threats to its territorial integrity. Between 1837-1880 it became the object of Anglo- Russian rivalry in Central Asia. Under the treaty of Tehran in 1814, between Britain and Persia, Britain had agreed to extend both diplomatic and military support to Persia against a Russian attack. In return, Persia agreed to attack Afghanistan in the case of an Afghan invasion of India. However, the growing dynastic struggles and the slow disintegration of Afghanistan during the first two decades of the nineteenth century diminished the possibility of an Afghan invasion of India. By 1820 Russian expansion into northern Persia was causing extreme concern among the British authorities in India. The Russian advance southwards was perceived as directed against India. As a result, the British policy makers embarked on an active diplomatic campaign to protect their commercial and political interests in the region. One important objective of British foreign policy was to cultivate friendship with both Persia and Afghanistan to counter the

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<sup>40</sup> S. Navid, "The State, the clergy and British Imperial Policy in Afghanistan during the 19 and Early 20 Centuries", *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (Vol. 29, 1997) pp. 589.

Russian threat. The stability of Persia and Afghanistan became essential to British national interests. However, to achieve this objective the British authorities faced two dilemmas: how to normalise relations with two hostile Muslim states; and how to strike a balance between Afghanistan which is strong enough to resist Russian and Persian encroachments but not too strong as to pose a threat to India. The British leaders feared that a strong Afghanistan would not only antagonise the Persians, but also the Sikhs, who were British allies in India and a bulwark against threats from the Afghans and the Amirs of Sind. Eventually it was decided not to let Afghanistan become too powerful.<sup>41</sup>

In 1836, the new ruler of Persia, Mahomed Shah, was planning an attack on Herat in Afghanistan with Russian support. The British intelligence officer in Persia reported that Persia had grand designs to capture Herat, Khandahar and Kabul. Herat occupied an important strategic position in Central Asia and was regarded as the "gate of India". It was considered especially vulnerable as it was ruled by the unpopular and cruel Kamran Shah, the son of the Saddozai Sirdar, Mahmud Shah. However, the real authority was with the Prime Minister, Yar Mohammed.<sup>42</sup>

Meanwhile in Britain Lord Palmerston, the British Secretary of State, in order to counter the Russian threat to India (through Persia and Afghanistan), embarked on a policy to put diplomatic pressure on Russia by increasing British influence in the region. Secret instructions were issued by the Directors of the East India Company to Lord Auckland, the Governor General of India, instructing him to, "Judge as to what steps it may be proper and desirable for you to take to watch more closely than has hitherto been attempted the progress of events in Afghanistan; and to counteract the progress of Russian influence in that quarter

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<sup>41</sup>*Op. Cit.* Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 95-97.

<sup>42</sup>*Op. Cit.* Macrory, Signal Catastrophe, pp. 39-43.

which, from its proximity to our Indian possessions, could not fail, if it were once established, to act, injuriously on the system of our Indian alliances, and possibly to interfere even with the tranquillity of our own territory".<sup>43</sup> The means to achieve this objective were left to the discretion of Lord Auckland to conclude either a political or a commercial agreement with the Afghan ruler, Dost Mohammed. In pursuit of this policy, Lord Auckland sent Alexander Burnes to Afghanistan. Dost Mohammed, faced with both internal unrest and the Sikh menace on Afghanistan's eastern frontier, welcomed the British mission and anticipated concluding a military alliance with the British. The mission, however, proved a failure. While willing to seek a British alliance, Dost Mohammed made it conditional on receiving the British aid in order to build and preserve a politically unified Afghanistan and an Anglo-Afghan commercial treaty to demarcate their respective territories. He also requested British aid to recover Peshawar from the Sikhs. The British envoy was unable to meet these Afghan demands. The British authorities in India were unwilling to sacrifice their alliance with the Sikhs in Punjab (whose army was much better organised and equipped), for an uncertain friendship with Dost Mohammed. The British feared that military aid given to Dost Mohammed and his brothers ruling Khandahar might actually be used against the Sikhs. In the end the British policy makers failed to reconcile these conflicting objectives, that is, to enlist Afghan support against the Russian threat without jeopardising their friendship with the Sikhs. The arrival of a Russian envoy to Kabul fuelled British suspicions of Dost Mohammed intentions. In 1837, after the Persian attack on Herat, the British stationed a military mission in Herat. With British help and successful Afghan resistance, the siege of Herat was lifted and the Persian forces withdrew. However, the issue of formulating a long-term policy towards Afghanistan remained.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.* p.46.

<sup>44</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 50-80.

In the aftermath of the crisis Lord Auckland embarked on a policy to install a ruler who would be sympathetic to British interests in Afghanistan. In order to remove Dost Mohammed a military alliance was concluded between the British, the Sikh leader, Ranjit Singh, and the deposed Afghan ruler, Shah Shuja, who was living in exile in India under British protection. Shah Shuja was promised the Afghan throne in return for permission to allow a permanent British mission to stay in Kabul. Ranjit Singh was promised the regions on the Northwest frontier of India including Peshawar. To achieve this goal, a huge force called the Army of Indus was assembled under the nominal control of Shah Shuja, but trained by British officers. The Army invaded and captured Afghanistan in 1840. Dost Mohammed was forced to flee to Bukhara and then to India. The British occupation of Afghanistan proved a policy disaster. Shah Shuja was reinstated to the Afghan throne by the British but he did not enjoy any domestic support among the Afghans. He negotiated a treaty with the Sikhs renouncing the Afghan claim on Peshawar, which further added to his unpopularity. After an initial period of calm, resistance against the British occupation spread throughout Afghanistan. The urban population and the tribes resented British interference in their domestic affairs. The arbitrary measures adopted by the British mission to collect taxes and introduce reforms antagonised the Afghan tribes who perceived them as a threat to their power. Afghanistan's meagre economy was unable to cope with the large influx of foreign troops. Inflation increased and basic commodities became in short supply.<sup>45</sup> Faced with constant tribal attacks the British mission decided to retreat from Afghanistan. In the January of 1842 the British mission, consisting of 4,500 members and 12,000 camp followers, was attacked by the tribes in the hostile mountain passes on their retreat to Jalallabad. There was only one British survivor- a medical practitioner called Dr. Bryden. In the aftermath of this crisis the forward policy was abandoned, a peace settlement

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<sup>45</sup>*Op. Cit.* Macrory, Signal Catastrophe, pp.119-124 & *Op. Cit.* Gregorian, Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 122-123.

was concluded, and the British forces withdrew to India.

Dost Mohammed ascended the Afghan throne once again in 1842 and ruled until 1863. His main priority this time was the political unification of his kingdom. He appointed strong provincial governors, mostly his sons, who were given authority to collect taxes and rule their provinces separately. Due to the British occupation of Afghanistan the role of the religious leaders in domestic politics increased. In 1857 an Anglo- Afghan treaty was concluded according to which Britain agreed to, "respect the Amir's possession in Afghanistan and never interfere with them, while the Amir engaged similarly to respect British territory and to be a friend of British friends and enemy of British enemies."<sup>46</sup>The treaty also provided British protection for Afghan independence against Russian aggression. Persia was forced to relinquish claims against Herat in Afghanistan.

During the 1870s British foreign policy was once again dictated by the fear of Russian advances in Central Asia. In Britain the leaders of the 1874-80 Conservative government advocated the adoption of a forward policy in Afghanistan. The issue was over the scientific demarcation of the frontier for India. The proponents of a closed door policy advocated non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs and the conversion of Afghanistan into a buffer state between the Indian and Russian empires. On the other hand, the proponents of a forward policy advocated complete control over Afghanistan's foreign relations and the occupation of the Afghan territory beyond the Hindu Kush mountains. Several factors compounded the British fear of a Russian threat. The Anglo-Russian agreement of 1873, which had declared Afghanistan outside the sphere of the British and Russian competition, was repeatedly ignored by the Russians. Throughout the 1870s the Russians gradually moved closer to the borders of northern Afghanistan. The aim of the Russian foreign policy was to

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<sup>46</sup>*Op. Cit.* Gregorian, Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 103-104.

use Afghanistan as a diplomatic leverage in order to put pressure on Britain in case of a conflict with Britain in Europe. The Russians also publicised plans for extending the transcaspiian railway to Afghanistan. Under the Anglo-Afghan treaty of 1857 the British government was barred from interference in Afghan internal affairs. Under the new circumstances, such a policy was not considered feasible. The British policy makers wanted to station a permanent diplomatic mission in Afghanistan to oversee Russian activities in Central Asia. When Amir Sher Ali received a Russian mission in Kabul he provided the pretext for the second invasion of Afghanistan by the British. Yaqub Khan, Amir Sher Ali's successor, signed the treaty of Gandomak with the British- according to which, the control of the Afghan foreign relations came under the British authority. After the second occupation of Afghanistan in 1879, the British policy makers seriously considered dividing Afghanistan and moving their Indian frontier to Herat. However, the fear of arousing Afghan hostility and the heavy financial expenditure involved deterred them from undertaking such a move. Perhaps a more important reason was the change of the government in Britain in 1880, as a result of which the plan for the division of Afghanistan was finally abandoned. In the end, the British placed Amir Abdur Rahman on the Afghan throne, but the control of Afghan foreign relations was retained by the British.<sup>47</sup>

### **1. 1. 3 Amir Abdur Rahman 1880-1901. An Absolute Monarch.**

During the reign of Amir (leader) Abdur Rahman Khan, 1880-1901, a concentrated and successful attempt was made to impose a strong central rule in Afghanistan. In this respect Abdur Rahman coped successfully with the first challenge of political modernisation that is the centralisation of political power, and for this reason Abdur Rahman is called the founder of modern Afghanistan.

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<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 114-118.

The dire political conditions prevailing in Afghanistan in 1880 can be assessed from the following remarks made by Abdur Rahman after his accession to the throne, "Every priest, mullah and chief of every tribe and village considered himself an independent King, and for about 200 years past, the freedom and independence of many of these priests were never broken by their sovereigns. The Amir of Turkestan, the Mirs of Hazara, the chiefs of Ghilzai were all stronger than their Amirs."<sup>48</sup>

On coming to power Abdur Rahman undertook to eliminate the secular powers enjoyed by these chiefs. The traditional functions which they used to perform in their communities such as the collection of revenue, maintenance of tribal militias and the receiving of allowances from the government, were taken over by the government appointed officials, and the chiefs were expected to cooperate with them in administering the country. Those chiefs who defied the central authority were brutally crushed by the army. Their forts were destroyed, their land and property was confiscated or given to other tribes, they were made to pay their outstanding taxes, and army garrisons were built on their land. Some of the chiefs were even brought to Kabul so that their activities could be monitored, or their sons were held as hostages. In undertaking these measures, Abdur Rahman's objective was not to completely destroy the chiefs but to make them dependent on the central government. Finally, the chiefs were made to pledge to be loyal to their king and work only for the welfare of the state, religion and the nation. In return they were given government allowances and retained their positions of authority.<sup>49</sup>

In his autobiography Abdur Rahman describes the difficulties which confronted

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<sup>48</sup>*Op. Cit.* Shahrani, "State building and Social Fragmentation in Afghanistan: A Historical Perspective" p. 37.

<sup>49</sup> H. K. Kakar, Government and Society in Afghanistan: The Reign of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan (London: University of Texas Press, 1979) pp. 58-64.

him on his accession to the Afghan throne by quoting the following verses by Sir Alferd Lyall.

"But all His ways are warnings; and I, God's slave, must lead,  
How I Bargain for help with the Kafir, or on a venomous reed;  
Than the man who would reign in this country, and tame Afghans for a  
day.

I look from a fort half ruined on Kabul spreading below,  
On the near hills crowned with cannon, and the far hills piled with snow;  
Fair are the vales well watered, and the vines on the uplands swell,  
You might think you were reigning in Heaven- I know I am ruling in  
Hell." <sup>50</sup>

In his autobiography Abdur Rahman also describes the state of his kingdom on his accession to the throne. Murders were common throughout Afghanistan as only a minimal fine of fifty rupees was imposed on the offenders as a punishment. Unable to eliminate his rivals, Abdur Rahman's predecessor, Amir Sher Ali, had adopted a method by which the rival chiefs were encouraged to fight with each other, and enacted a law that any one wanting to kill an enemy only had to deposit three hundred rupees per person with the treasury and could then kill as many enemies as he wished. For Sher Ali this was an easy way to both get rid of his opponents and to bring money to the state.<sup>51</sup> Abdur Rahman also mentions the fact that in 1880 there were so many claimants to the Afghan throne that it was impossible to make a list of them. Before Abdur Rahman, the weakness of the ruler was such that if the King left the capital even for few days he would find somebody else as King on his return. Most of Abdur Rahman's family was still in Russia; and due to the shortage of qualified persons he had to send his most trusted advisers to distant places and consequently was left on his own to deal with the problems and anxieties of running the state. There was a shortage of ammunition to either defend or pacify the state. The Afghan treasury was without adequate funds to pay the army and new taxes could not be levied as

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<sup>50</sup>M. Munshi (ed.) The Life of Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan Vol.1 (London: John Murray, 1900) pp. 241-

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.* p. 224.

most of the taxes had already been collected in advance by his predecessors.<sup>52</sup>

The difficulties of ruling Afghanistan can be judged from the fact that during his reign, Abdur Rahman encountered forty major armed rebellions against his rule-four of which were serious enough to be labelled as civil wars. Two of them were caused by his own cousins. They included the rebellion by Sirdar Mohammed Ayub in 1881 and that of Sirdar Muhammed Ishaq in Turkestan in 1889. Mohammed Ayub was the son of the late Amir Sher Ali and had the support of the Durrani of Kandahar. He was also supported by the Afghan ulema who declared Abdur Rahman as an infidel for being an ally of the British and distrusted him for having lived in exile in Russian Turkestan for almost ten years. Moreover, Sirdar Mohammed Ayub was held in prestige for having defeated the British in a battle at Maiwand in 1880. Sirdar Ishaq rebelled against Abdur Rahman in 1896. He was Abdur Rahman's most trusted ally. The two other rebellions were mostly tribal in nature. The first occurred in 1896 when the Ghilzai tribe revolted against the taxes levied and the attempts made by the government to impose central rule upon them. The Hazara rebellion was also a consequence of the Amir's attempt to break their tribal independence.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the difficulties confronting Amir Abdur Rahman, he soon undertook extensive administrative, religious, economic and military reforms. The principal aim of these was to create a strong central government. The dilemma facing the Amir was how to reconcile the conflicting aims of creating a strong centralised state when his political legitimacy was based on Islam, which implied strengthening the position of the religious groups in the society. Amir Abdur Rahman's relations with the ulema were strained from the beginning. Several influential religious leaders had refused to endorse his accession to the throne on

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<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.* p. 220-232.

<sup>53</sup>*Op. Cit.* Kakar, Government and Society in Afghanistan, pp. 20-24.

the grounds that he had come to power with British support.<sup>54</sup> In the end he adopted three methods which became the basis of his relations with the religious leaders in Afghanistan: firstly, he increased their economic dependence on the state; secondly, he Islamicised the state and thirdly; he co-opted the ulema into the state structure.<sup>55</sup> The following paragraph will illustrate how these policy goals were implemented.

The most important political achievement of Amir Abdur Rahman as a ruler was his clever and skilful manipulation of religion (Islam) to serve the interests of the state. Firstly, he employed religious justification for his rule by invoking the principle of the 'divine right of kings' and regarded himself as God's vice-regent or the shadow of God (Zil-i-Allah) on earth to safeguard the people of Afghanistan from internal and external aggression and to promote their welfare. To command the obedience of his people, he invoked several injunctions from the holy Koran to the effect that it was the duty of every Muslim to obey their ruler and disobedience to the ruler was considered an anti religious act. The ruler, on the other hand, was answerable only to God. Secondly, he Islamicised the legal system in Afghanistan. Before Amir Abdur Rahman there were no state appointed judges in the rural areas and cases were settled by anyone well informed about religion. He ordained that in future, all the criminal cases were to be decided by qualified judges, called qazis or muftis, appointed by the state. These qazis could administer justice only according to Islamic law or Sharia and not according to local customs or tribal laws. However the Amir reserved for himself the right to select appoint these judges (qazis) to interpret religious laws, and the right to issue the final verdict in crimes punishable by death. Thirdly, Amir Abdur Rahman curtailed the power and influence of the ulema and subjected them to state control. He had a contemptuous view of the religious

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<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.* p. 153.

<sup>55</sup>*Op. Cit.* A. Oleson, Islam and Politics in Afghanistan pp. 61-80.

leader's interference in politics. His own bitter experience in dealing with the mullahs was also responsible for much of his policies, for example, the mullahs of Khandahar had opposed his coming to power and instead supported his rival Sardar Mohammed Ayub. Often the ulema refused to lend their support to Amir Abdur Rahman in suppressing internal rebellions which greatly angered the Amir. In order to put a check on the influence of the ulema among the local people he put an end to religious endowments or waqf, which the ulema traditionally received from the state. Moreover, examination commissions were formed to test the qualifications of the ulama and those who could not pass these tests were deprived of their stipends. The object of these examinations was to make the ulema dependent on state salaries. Finally, Amir Abdur Rahman promoted the propagation and implementation of selective doctrines of Islam which were beneficial to him, such as the concept of Jihad and obligation to pay Zakat. He proclaimed that only the ruler had the authority to declare Jihad for the defence of the nation and it was the duty of all his subjects to join in. This universal way of conscription was different from the reliance of former Afghan rulers on tribal levies. He also undertook to achieve uniformity in religious education and supervised the publication of religious textbooks and selected the curriculum.<sup>56</sup>

The methods used by Amir Abdur Rahman to consolidate the central government were often cruel and he frequently used extreme terror, repression and force to overcome his opponents. The conditions prevailing in Afghan prisons were appalling: they were usually overcrowded, there was no proper sanitation, as a result of which the death rate among the prisoners was very high. The punishments inflicted on the prisoners were barbarous and sometimes they were even poisoned. In addition to the main prisons there were also several 'Siah Chahs', or black wells, into which the prisoners were thrown. The most serious

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<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 68-76

offenders were sometimes put in an iron cage which was then left hanging in a public place till the offender perished.<sup>57</sup> Amir Abdur Rahman justified the harsh treatment of his subjects as a necessary means to introduce reforms and to unify the nation. For this reason he is referred to as the 'iron Amir'. Thus it can be said that Abdur Rahman was the most autocratic ruler in Afghan history. He also attached great importance to national unity. He criticised his people for lack of unity and urged them to be united in order to defend their nation.

Amir Abdur Rahman also experimented with the establishment of a constitutional government in Afghanistan. The central government consisted of two branches, the Court or the cabinet (Khilwat), also known as darbar-i-khas, and the Council (Parliament), also called the durbar-i-aam, which was further divided into two houses, the Durbar-i-Shahi (upper house) and Khawanin Mulki (the lower house). The Court consisted of the Amir, the heads of various departments and some officials and elders. Admission to the court was based on the Amir's approval and not all heads of the departments were allowed to attend the court proceedings. The heads of various departments attending the Court had no real authority and merely carried out the orders of the Amir. The heads of various departments were his former pageboys or peshkhidmats. The Amir occasionally consulted important officials, including the Chief of the Army and the chief judge on state matters, but he considered himself to be under no obligation to act on the advice he received. Abdur Rahman's refusal to delegate authority to others can be seen from the fact that there was no office of Prime Minister.

The Upper House of the Parliament, or the durbar-i-shahi, was composed of the Sirdars (aristocrats). Under the previous rulers, the title Sirdar was a military title usually given to individuals who distinguished themselves during their military

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<sup>57</sup>*Op. Cit.* Kakar, Government and Society in Afghanistan, pp. 38-40.

career. Afterwards, especially during the reign of Dost Mohammed Khan, the power of these Sirdars was further increased when he appointed Sirdars (who were mostly his sons) as provincial governors. Amir Abdur Rahman, in an attempt to centralise authority in his own hands, had the most ambitious Sirdars killed, exiled or permanently moved to Kabul. In the election of the Sirdars to the *darbar-i-shahi*, Abdur Rahman had the final say and he made sure that only those Sirdars would get elected who were not only themselves loyal to the state but their fathers had also been loyal to the state. *Khawanin Mulki* (the commons) were usually elected representatives of the people. The people elected important officials as *Maliks* who then elected *Khans*. Again, the final authority rested with the Amir. *Khan Alum*, or the various types of religious leaders, represented the third category of representatives in the Parliament.<sup>58</sup>

Abdur Rahman also attempted to improve the administration of his kingdom by creating a vast bureaucracy which was divided into two sections, *Nizami* (military) and *Mulki* (civilian). Previously, all the administrative functions were undertaken by a single official called the '*Maustafi*' who had only a team of ten clerks working under him. This group was responsible for the administration of the whole kingdom. As there were no public offices in Afghanistan before Abdur Rahman, the *Maustafi* and his officials worked from their homes and as a consequence the work of various departments was often mixed up.<sup>59</sup> Amir Abdur Rahman established separate departments (*daftars*). Most of the newly created departments dealt mainly with financial matters. Some of the other important departments included the treasury, the Court of justice, public works, health, minerals, education, commerce and trade, and post office. An important feature of the new bureaucracy was the large number of *Mirzas* or junior bureaucrats. Their pay was low but because of their vast number they were the real backbone

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<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 22-25.

<sup>59</sup>*Op. Cit.* Munshi, *The Life of Abdur Rahman*, Vol. II, pp. 49-51.

of the bureaucracy. Although the Amir used anti British propaganda to justify his rule he was dependent on British subsidy.

The attempt to create a strong central government was also undertaken at the provincial level. Abdur Rahman reduced the size of various provinces in Afghanistan; only the province of Kabul was enlarged and was kept under the jurisdiction of the king himself. The provinces were further divided into several districts called 'tapas' whose boundaries were demarcated according to ethnic or tribal basis. He appointed mostly insignificant and unambitious persons as governors, they were not allowed to exercise both civil and military powers and had to rely on the central army based in their province. Under Amir Abdur Rahman the duties and the functions of the provincial governors were redefined. Their functions included imprisoning criminals, to ensure the security of the roads and travellers, to settle the criminal cases brought to them and to imprison suspected rebels or criminals. At the district level lower rank administrators were appointed (called the 'hakims') who were entrusted with similar duties as the governors.<sup>60</sup>

The most notable achievement of Amir Abdur Ahman was the formation of the regular Afghan army. Before the first Anglo-Afghan war the army was primarily feudal. Amir Dost Mohammed and Amir Sher Ali were the first rulers who attempted to create a modern and efficient Afghan army. The army created by Dost Mohammed included only the cavalry and the infantry units, conscription was by force and soldiers were paid a regular pay of five rupees per month. However, the army created by Dost Mohammed disintegrated with the civil war which followed his death. The army created by Amir Sher Ali included an artillery branch, was trained and commanded by qualified men, both Afghan and Indian, and the soldiers were made to wear European style uniforms. After the

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<sup>60</sup>*Op. Cit.* Kakar, Government and Society in Afghanistan, pp. 48-53.

British invasion of Afghanistan in 1878 Sher Ali's army disintegrated. During the reign of Abdur Rahman the Afghan army was equipped with modern weapons and for this purpose of which several workshops were set up in Afghanistan. To train the army, Abdur Rahman relied only on those Afghan commanders who were recruited from among the Afghan nobility. In contrast to the old practice of soldiers getting paid just once a year, soldiers were paid regularly from the government treasury. Storehouses were built in important towns where adequate supplies of arms and food were held for the army in case of an emergency. Several experiments were made with the method of conscription until the 'hastnafari' system was adopted, according to which, one man out of every eighth man in the village was selected for service. Amir Abdur Rahman used the army both for suppressing internal rebellions and defending the country. His aim was to set up a regular army of one million soldiers out of which 300,000 would be regulars and 700,000 would be reserves.<sup>61</sup>

Another important feature of this period is that the boundaries of Afghanistan were demarcated for the first time. But these frontiers were not natural or ethnic but political in nature. In undertaking reforms, Amir Abdur Rahman adopted a cautious policy. He attached great importance to the preservation of Afghan independence. According to him, the only way to preserve independence and to check the threat of foreign interferences was to keep Afghanistan backward and isolated. This also explains why he opposed the extension of a railway system in the country. He understood the economic drawback of this policy but advised his countrymen that, in the absence of adequate military force to resist foreign threats, the best guarantee of independence was to remain isolated and underdeveloped.<sup>62</sup> The extent to which Amir Abdur Rahman succeeded in his reforms can be judged from the fact that he died a natural death and his son

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<sup>61</sup>*Op. Cit.* Munshi, The Life of Abdur Rahman, Vol. II, pp. 52-60.

<sup>62</sup>*Op. Cit.* Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 160-162.

succeeded him peacefully, which was quite an achievement in Afghanistan's turbulent history.

#### **1.1. 4 The Reign of Amir Habibullah 1901-1919. The Emergence of Afghan Nationalism and Modernism**

The period of Amir Habibullah's rule was dominated by important political events outside Afghanistan. Several events at the beginning of the twentieth century including, the Japanese victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, the Anglo- Russian Convention of 1907, the Young Turks Revolution in 1908, the Balkan Wars in 1912, World War I, and the Russian Revolution in 1917, provided an impetus to the emergence of Afghan nationalism. The threat to the integrity of the Ottoman empire also served to temporarily coalesce the traditionalist and the modernist groups in a short lived alliance.<sup>63</sup> On the domestic front the period 1901-19 was relatively peaceful, mainly as a result of the skilful rule of Amir Abdur Rahman. However, as a consequence of the extension of the state role under Abdur Rahman, a small group of intelligentsia emerged which demanded increased participation in politics. This group was against the isolationist policy adopted by previous Afghan rulers.

Under Amir Habibullah the state structure remained unchanged. He relied on tribal and religious support to maintain his political legitimacy. The Young Afghans campaigned for the establishment of a Constitutional Assembly which would be composed of national and elected representatives and not just tribal or aristocratic leaders. However, Amir Habibullah was not convinced that Afghanistan was yet ready for such an Assembly. Thus, under Habibullah, the government still consisted of a selected Council whose role was basically confined to offering advice and consultation to the Amir. Political power was

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<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 210-226.

concentrated in the institution of the monarchy and Amir Habibullah ruled as an absolute monarch. He formed a religious body called Mizan-al-Tahqiqat-shariat to oversee that the official policy was in accordance with the principles of Islam. Thus, during his reign, government policy towards the religious establishment was characterised by polity expansion whereas, under his father, it was polity dominance. Another of Amir Habibullah's notable achievements was his educational reforms. In Afghanistan education was still under the control of the religious authorities. Amir Habibullah did not challenge this but stressed the importance of acquiring secular education. In initiating educational reforms, he was influenced by the teachings of such modernisers as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan in India who saw the importance of education for the Muslims if they were to successfully face the challenges of the modern age. The first secondary school for boys the Habibiya college, was founded by Amir Habibullah in 1904. During his reign many political exiles were allowed back into Afghanistan including the Tarzi, the Mushabian and the Charki families, who subsequently played an important role in Afghan politics.<sup>64</sup>

An important role in the emergence of Afghan nationalism and modernism was played by the newspaper Siraj-al-Akbar, the first Afghan newspaper, edited by the journalist and intellectual Mahmud Tarzi. Tarzi had spent several years as an exile in Turkey and was strongly influenced by the Young Turks. He became a champion of the cause of Afghan nationalism, modernisation and Pan-Islamism. Published between 1911-1918, Siraj-al-Akbar provided a channel for the liberal and educated Afghans to establish the basic principles and aims of the Afghan nationalism and modernisation programme. They faced a difficult task. According to Mahmud Tarzi and the Young Afghans, the main reason for Afghanistan's backwardness was neglect of Western education and its cultural isolation. The Afghans were too concerned with the defence of their homeland

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<sup>64</sup>*Op. Cit.* Oleson, *Islam and Politics in Afghanistan*, pp. 94-108.

and placed excessive reliance on the use of military force. However, Tarzi stressed that in order to face the European challenge and achieve genuine progress, the Afghans must undertake educational, institutional reforms and adopt modern scientific techniques so that learning could flourish in Afghanistan for the good of the people. The influence of Siraj-al-Akbar was limited to a small circle of educated Afghans. The Young Afghans also attempted to demonstrate that modernisation was compatible with Afghan nationalism. They stressed that love of the fatherland was a religious obligation, and by acquiring Western scientific and technological education the Afghans would be better able to defend Afghanistan.<sup>65</sup>

Afghanistan, at the beginning of the twentieth century, could not be labelled as a nation. It lacked many of the attributes of a strong nation. The state control over the society was still weak and it had not experienced the revolutions in economy, education and culture, (a process spread over several centuries), which had served as a unifying force in the development of important Western nations.<sup>66</sup> The only homogenising force in Afghanistan was Islam. Afghanistan was not an independent state and the citizens did not enjoy uniform legal and civic rights. There was no public culture to bind the various groups together mainly due to the lack of educational and communication facilities. Although there was a strong element of Afghan ethnicity it was not yet politically mobilised by the intelligentsia or the aristocratic elites in an effort to create a cohesive nation. In the formation of Afghanistan nationalism the Young Afghans stressed only its religious, linguistic and geographical features. They were astute enough to realise that too much stress on the ethnic or the Afghan factor would provoke resistance from the non Afghan ethnic groups in Afghanistan and it would be

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<sup>65</sup>*Op. Cit.* Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 163-180.

<sup>66</sup>*Op. Cit.* , A. Smith, National Identity, pp.9-141, A . Smith, "The Origins of Nations", Ethnic and Racial Studies (Vol.12, No. 3, July 1989)pp. 340-363 & *Op. Cit.*, A. Smith, Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era, pp. 89-90.

perceived as an attempt by the Afghans to assert their hold over these non ethnic groups.<sup>67</sup> However, the modernisation programme promoted by the Young Afghans was too ambitious to be implemented. The traditional leaders saw these reforms as a threat to their privileges.

In the beginning the Afghan nationalists were sympathetic to the cause of Pan-Islamism. The Pan-Islamic movement led by the Young Turks stressed the need for Islamic unity to defend the Ottoman empire and the institution of the Caliphate from an attack from European imperialism. The Afghan nationalists perceived this as a perfect opportunity to show solidarity with the Ottoman empire and to liberate Muslims throughout the world from the imperialist yoke. The aim of Afghan nationalists became complete independence for Afghanistan from the British. Due to these political developments, the religious leaders in Afghanistan once again reasserted their influence in Afghan politics. Amir Habibullah came under increasing pressure to give up Afghan neutrality during World War I and side with the Central powers against the Allies. One plan was to unite the Muslims of India and Central Asia along the Indian border to rise against the British. These sentiments were particularly strong after the German Neidermayer Mission visit to Afghanistan in 1915. It carried a letter from the Turkish Caliph urging the Muslims to join in a Jihad against the Allies. However, Amir Habibullah, realising the vulnerable position of Afghanistan and fearful of a joint Anglo-Russian attack continued to adhere to the old policy of neutrality during the War. He realised that Afghanistan defences were weak and entry into the War would jeopardise Afghanistan's trade with India and Russia. The Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and its support for the principle of national self determination further galvanised the Afghan nationalists. Russian denunciation of the Allied war time agreements provoked further outrage in Afghanistan. Amir Habibullah's decision to remain neutral alienated many of his

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<sup>67</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Gregorian. The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 174-176.

supporters and led to his assassination during a hunting trip in Laghman in 1919. The Ottoman defeat in the War and the Arab revolt against the Caliph shattered the dream of ethnic unity among the Muslims.<sup>68</sup>

Despite these setbacks, Afghanistan under Amir Habibullah did achieve modest progress in modernisation. He did not have unlimited resources at his disposal to fund both the government machinery including the army and the bureaucracy, and at the same time to undertake expensive modernisation projects. The revenue system in Afghanistan was still chaotic, corruption was widespread and, most importantly, the fear of losing Afghan independence meant that there were no foreign investments or trade agreements with the outside states. The tribes were against the extension of a railway through their areas. Amir Habibullah's modest contributions to modern Afghanistan included the construction of the first state hospital, a clock tower, Western sports, photography, a modest telephone service and a postal service. Afghan industry also made slow progress as there was a shortage of skilled labour, the wages were low and the shortage of fuel. The restrictions imposed on the employment of foreign engineers or technicians implied that Afghanistan could not fully exploit its natural resources.<sup>69</sup>

### **1. 1. 5 King Amanullah's Failed Attempt to Modernise The Afghan Society. 1919-1929 :**

The most radical social, political and economic reforms in Afghanistan's history were introduced by King Amanullah (1919-1929). His aim was to completely transform the Afghan society. Although he failed to achieve his objectives, several of the reforms proposed by him were later successfully introduced by his successors. King Amanullah's biggest mistake was that, instead of introducing various reforms gradually and taking a step by step approach, he attempted to

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<sup>68</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 213-226.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 198-205.

bulldoze the reforms through the Afghan society. This mobilised the traditional social forces (tribes and religious leaders) threatened by the reforms into a united opposition against him. Thus he lacked the political skill required to carefully calculate the timing and the appropriate methods for introducing reforms. He attempted to achieve too much too quickly. It was mainly King Amanullah's social and economic reforms which provoked so much hostility against him.

King Amanullah ascended the Afghan throne in 1919. He belonged to the coalition of the traditionalist-modernist group which were dissatisfied with Amir Habibullah's neutrality during the World War 1. Besides Amanullah, other members of this group included Amanullah's brother, Sirdar Nasrullah, Mahmud Tarzi and General Nadir Khan.<sup>70</sup> Amanullah's ascendancy to the throne was facilitated due to several factors. Amanullah was in Kabul at the time of assassination of Amir Habibullah and was not seen to be linked with the assassination in any way. He enjoyed the support of the powerful Barakzai clan and also the Afghan army to whom he promised a pay rise. Due to his pursuit of a strong pro-nationalist and Pan-Islamist policy, he enjoyed the support of the traditionalist groups. Amanullah was in the forefront to champion the cause of the Muslims in Central Asia and had links with the leaders of the anti Russian Basmachi movement in Soviet Turkestan. He provided material support and established diplomatic relations with the Amir of Bokhara. His support for the Caliphate and the Turkish cause also won him many supporters. In 1919 he won complete independence for Afghanistan from the British. However, for economic and security reasons, he was soon forced to curb his militant anti British attitude and interference in Central Asia.

King Amanullah's reform programme can be divided into three phases. This distinction is important as the political climate in which the various socio-

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<sup>70</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Oleson, Islam and Politics in Afghanistan pp. 11-112.

economic reforms were introduced is crucial to understanding the nature of the rebellion against him. The first period ranges from 1919-1923. During this period King Amanullah enjoyed considerable domestic support from the traditional and nationalist groups in Afghanistan. His first step towards modernisation was to provide Afghanistan with a new Constitution in 1923. The Constitution, or the 'Nizamnamah', consisted of seventy- three Articles and was prepared under the supervision of French and Turkish advisers. As a document the Constitution proposed important political changes in Afghanistan. For example, one of its features was the granting of equal civil rights to all the Afghans, including freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free education and the right to government employment. Other Articles dealt with such issues as the proclamation of Afghanistan's complete independence, Islam was designated as the national religion, a provision for the establishment of a Cabinet responsible for state administration, the establishment of State and Provincial Councils, an independent jury, an annual budget and provisions for dealing with the imposition of taxes. However, at the time, these legal rights were little appreciated by the population- for example, the idea of citizenship and equal civil rights were incomprehensible to ordinary people. In order to implement various changes previous Afghan rulers had always appealed to communal or tribal loyalties and not to individual citizens. <sup>71</sup>Also, in order to rule, the previous rulers had practised the policies of divide and rule and ethnic segregation. King Amanullah was soon made to realise the difficulties of implementing Constitutional reforms in a tribal society. In the aftermath of the Khost rebellion in 1924 (which was basically a minor revolt by the Mangal tribe against government intrusion in their area), Amanullah was pressurised by the religious leaders that religious minorities could not be treated as equal citizens in a Muslim society. Consequently, the Constitution had to be amended and the Hindus and Jews were made to wear distinct clothing and were taxed at different

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<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.123 -124.

rates. He was also obliged to introduce the Sunni (hanafite) principles, which further divided the Sunni and the Shia sects in Afghanistan. This was a setback to the ideal of national unity which he had hoped to achieve.<sup>72</sup> After the Khost rebellion in 1924, King Amanullah came to realise that in order to succeed, he had to change the underlying political culture of Afghanistan. To achieve this objective he accelerated the pace of his social and economic reforms.

King Amanullah also experienced problems in his attempts to create a loyal and cohesive military force free from tribal loyalties. He employed Turkish advisers to reform the Afghan army. In order to achieve complete reorganisation the Turkish advisers emphasised the importance of recruiting young men and argued that the senior officers should be discharged as they were either too old or too set in their ways to change. As an interim measure, the pay was lowered from twenty rupees to fourteen rupees which was to be substituted by a package of fringe benefits including food for the recruits, but which in theory was designed to encourage the soldiers to leave the army. When this did not happen the pay was further lowered to five rupees. At the same time, the promise of fringe benefits did not materialise due to administrative delays. Old army barracks were demolished to be replaced by new ones but the construction of new barracks was delayed, and when the winter approached the soldiers were forced to live in tents.<sup>73</sup> Amanullah's Minister of War, General Nadir Shah, was against many of the reforms advocated by the Turkish advisers. Nadir Shah favoured a more gradual approach and opposed dismissing the officers without any regard for their loyalty and seniority. This caused a split in the cabinet between the pro-Tarzi and pro-Nadir Shah groups, and Nadir Shah's refusal to command the army during the Khost rebellion in 1924. As a result the newly created modern army failed to perform satisfactorily in the Khost rebellion. Another factor causing

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<sup>72</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Poullada, Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan 1919-1929 P. 123.

<sup>73</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Poullada, Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, pp.116-119.

resentment against Amanullah's military reforms was the introduction of a lottery system (*Pishk*) for conscription. Under Habibullah, every eighth man in a village was called up for service. The selection procedure was under the control of village elders and chiefs. Those selected were often village rejects, but under the new system draft boards were set-up which completely took over the selection of conscripts. This loss of control was resented by the local chiefs and was aggravated when sons of influential chiefs were called up for service.<sup>74</sup>

The religious leaders were also alienated by Amanullah's reforms. In the absence of institutions capable of performing complex government functions, religious leaders had played an important role in Afghan politics. In traditional societies religion performs many functions such as education, justice and social integration.<sup>75</sup> Amanullah was against religious leaders interference in politics. The religious authorities opposed the reforms related to improving the status of women including the abolition of child marriages, setting a minimum age for marriage, compulsory education for girls, granting widows a share in their husbands property, and equal rights in matters relating to the custody of children. The sending of Afghan girls to Turkey, France and Switzerland for education was also frowned upon by the religious leaders.<sup>76</sup> The most controversial reforms included his campaign to abolish the veil, changing public holiday from Friday to Thursday, and prohibition against wearing the *karakuli* (fur hat) and *Kulah* (turban).<sup>77</sup>

King Amanullah attached great importance to educational reforms. In undertaking educational reforms his aim was to create an educated class to support his modernisation programme and also to provide the monarchy with

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<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

<sup>75</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Toprak, Islam and Political Development in Turkey, pp. 11-14.

<sup>76</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, p. 243.

<sup>77</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Poullada, Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, p. 125.

well trained administrators. His main priority was to introduce secular education in Afghanistan, disassociated from the religious education. In this Amanullah offended the religious authorities who, till then, had considered the task of educating the students to be their prerogative. Amanullah was also faced with the problem of a shortage of qualified teachers and funding. Nevertheless he founded three important schools in Afghanistan which used three different languages for educating the students. The first school was established in 1922 and was called the Amaniyeh. This school taught in the French language. The second school, called the Amani, was established in 1923 and taught in the German language. Lastly, in 1927, the Ghazi was established which taught in English. Amanullah also encouraged Women's education and founded the first school for girls in Afghanistan. He also undertook to send students, both male and female, abroad for higher education. These graduates later held important government positions under his successors.<sup>78</sup>

The second phase covers the period 1923-24 period. During this period no major reforms were introduced. The third period ranges from 1927-28. This period coincided with King Amanullah's extensive European tour abroad, from which he returned strongly convinced that in order to catch up with the development in the outside world, radical reforms needed to be introduced in Afghanistan. Soon after his return he summoned a Loya Jirga in August 1928 and outlined his new programme for modernisation. The outstanding feature of this gathering was that all the members were made to wear Western dress. Amanullah described in detail the progress and achievements he had witnessed abroad and criticised the conservative forces in Afghanistan whom he blamed for keeping the country backward and ignorant. At this meeting he introduced several reforms but three in particular provoked strong public opposition. They were: his criticism of the practice of polygamy, freedom for women to discard their veils, and his order

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<sup>78</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 239-242.

that anyone residing or visiting Kabul was to wear western dress.<sup>79</sup>

The rebellion which finally overthrew Amanullah was the outcome of a minor revolt, in November 1928, by a group of the Shinwari tribe in the east of Afghanistan. The conflict arose because of the rivalry between the Shinwari tribe and the Mohmand tribe over the collection of 'badraga' or tax on trade caravans passing through the Khyber pass. To resolve the conflict, Amanullah instructed the governor of Jalalabad to impose law and order and also sent an extra army division to Jalalabad. The governor mishandled the crisis. He ordered the abolition of the system of badraga and also made it mandatory on the tribes to carry identity cards. Initially, he exempted the Mohmand tribe from these regulations. This was done in view of their strategic position of residing in both Afghanistan and across the frontier in India. The governor felt that the Mohmands should be dealt with more carefully. This policy backfired and the Shinwari tribe revolted against what they perceived as an intrusion by the central authority into their area.<sup>80</sup> The army was unable to put down the revolt and surrendered. The religious leaders, whose relations with Amanullah were already strained, provided the religious sanction to the Shinwari uprising on the basis that they were fighting against an infidel King who had launched an attack to destroy the honour and values of their traditional society. Pictures of the Queen, in western dress and without a veil, appeared in the newspaper and were used for propaganda purposes against Amanullah.

At the time of the Shinwar revolt in November 1928, Amanullah had just returned from his extensive trip to Europe. In a loya Jirga of important religious and tribal leaders, he announced his plans to introduce extensive reforms to completely change the Afghan society. In response the Hazrat of Shor Bazar,

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<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, p.261.

<sup>80</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Poullada, Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, pp.160-65.

who belonged to one of the most important religious families in Afghanistan, the so called Mujadidi family, gathered a petition from four hundred religious leaders in opposition to Amanullah's reforms. The Mujadidi family had supported Amanullah in his war against the British in 1919 and in his Pan Islamist campaign. Most importantly, the family had close links with the Ghilzai tribe- particularly the Sueliman Khel subtribe. In order to punish the Hazrat of Shor Bazar (the leader of the Mujadidi family) Amanullah put him and his nephew in jail. This act further antagonised the religious leaders against Amanullah.<sup>81</sup>

In view of the Afghan army's poor performance against the Shinwari tribe in November 1928, Amanullah sent two of his trusted advisers to put an end to the rebellion. These two officials were old enemies and therefore their mission was doomed from the start. The decision to launch an aerial attack using Russian planes on the tribal areas was another ill conceived gesture which further turned the tribal leaders against Amanullah. The Shinwari tribe laid siege to the Jalallabad garrison. At the same time Bacha-i-Saqao, a Tajik bandit, launched an attack from the north against the government in Kabul. In an attempt to gain his support to put down the Shinwari revolt, Amanullah send his trusted advisor, Ali Ahmed Jan, to negotiate a deal and an agreement was reached between the two parties. In order to test Amanullah's intentions, Bacha-i- Saqa phoned Amanullah, pretending to be Ali Ahmed Jan, and told him that he had Bacha-i-Saqao surrounded. Amanullah made a serious error of judgement and issued an order to have Bacha-i-Saqao executed. This error of judgement not only served to antagonise Bacha-i-Saqao, but also all the Tajiks against Amanullah. <sup>82</sup>

In view of the diminishing tribal support and the unsatisfactory performance of the Afghan army to quell the revolt, Amanullah adopted the traditional policy of

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<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 169-70.

<sup>82</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 172-175.

divide and rule. Unfortunately, the chain of events between November 1928 and April 1929 proved that tribal politics, if not handled carefully, can be extremely dangerous. Amanullah could have asked for support from the powerful Durrani tribe, but by now his reform policies had lost him their support and alienated the local Khans and Maliks who could have served as intermediaries or power brokers between the government and the tribes. <sup>83</sup>

The dramatic appeal, made by Amanullah in February 1929 to the Barakzais, to rise against the Tajik ruler in Kabul did bring some results. He made an emotional appeal to the religious leaders and promised to rescind most of the reforms. The decisive factor in Amanullah's ability to overcome the tribal uprising was the attitude of the powerful Ghilzai tribe, who were in India on their winter migration. In the spring of 1929 Nadir Khan, with his two brothers Wali Khan and Hashem Khan, returned to Afghanistan from his self imposed exile in France. In order to restore law and order in Afghanistan, Nadir Khan and his brothers attempted to unite the tribes along the tribal belt in the east of Afghanistan to rise against the rule of the Tajik leader, Bacha- i- Saqa, who was now in control of Kabul. The task of uniting the various tribes in the midst of a tribal anarchy proved to be extremely frustrating. Several times, carefully formed tribal coalitions fell apart over minor disagreements.

At this critical point, Amanullah made another big mistake. In a desperate measure he appealed for help to the Hazaras tribe who not only belonged to the shiite branch of Islam, but were also non pathans and bitter enemies of the Ghilzais tribe. The powerful Suelim Khel branch of the Ghilzai tribe launched an attack and inflicted a final defeat on Amanullah's forces at Ghazni. Amanullah, realising that his cause was lost, fled with his family to India and from there to Europe in exile. <sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 185-186.

In analysing the reasons for Amanullah's downfall it is important to remember that external events also did not work in his favour. The disintegration of the Ottoman empire after World War I and the subsequent abolition of the institution of the Caliphate in 1923, the failure of the Khilafat movement in India, the Russian suppression of the nationalist movement in Central Asia, and the occupation and incorporation of Bokhara into Russia reduced the political support for Amanullah. Moreover, the tribes were dissatisfied with what they perceived as weak his response to counter the renewed aggressive British forward policy in the frontier areas. Amanullah had also alienated the British and after achieving independence he was deprived of the British subsidies upon which the previous Afghan rulers had relied heavily to put down tribal uprisings. The reforms did not directly provoke the rebellion against Amanullah- in fact, their impact was still quite limited- but they did provide propaganda tool for his enemies.<sup>85</sup>

The radical reforms proposed by Amanullah can be compared with social economic reforms introduced by Kemal Attaturk in Turkey after 1923. There were some similarities between the Turkish and Afghan cases. In both the states, the influence of the conservative and religious forces on politics was quite strong, and in order to achieve modernisation, both the societies were faced with the difficult task of secularisation. Moreover, both Turkey and Afghanistan were multi ethnic states but there were also significant differences between the two cultures: Turkey was a bureaucratic empire, whereas Afghanistan was still a feudal society. The reform programme in Turkey had a long history, first under the Young Ottomans in the nineteenth century and later under the Young Turks from 1908-1923. Turkey had also undergone a brief experiment in Constitutional government before it was abolished by Sultan Abdul Hamid in 1878. However in

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<sup>85</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Gregorian, The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan, pp. 227-274.

1908, the Constitution was reintroduced and the revolution was carried forward by the Young Turks .<sup>86</sup>

After the World War 1 Turkey came under the leadership of a charismatic leader, Kemal Attaturk, who used the nationalist ideology, based on the principle of Turkish separate identity, to unite the Turks. In Turkey there was not a complete break with Islam. In fact, under previous reform movements, religion had been used to introduce important political changes. For example, after 1908 the religious and conservative forces had supported the Young Turks attempts aimed at decentralisation of the central authority. During World War 1 religion was used to forge national unity. Thus in Turkey the religious forces were not challenged directly and their role changed at various stages of political development. The Young Turks attempted to create secular institutions side by side with the religious ones and did not displace them completely. In Turkey the political role played by religion was first diminished and then eradicated. Consequently, in the process of political development, religion and national identity were manipulated skilfully by the ruling elites. Moreover, external events favoured the nationalists under Kemal Attaturk. Turkey had a well trained, strong and experienced army which had proved it's worth during World War 1. There was the tradition of political parties and a weak political opposition. During the nineteenth century ,the Young Turks had experimented with the concept of liberal economy in order to create a bourgeoisie class as a social base for the new state against the conservative forces. There were no powerful tribes in Turkey.<sup>87</sup>

On the other hand, in Afghanistan during the reign of King Amanullah there was no dominant ideology to bind the separate groups together. This was especially

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<sup>86</sup> F. Ahmed, The Making of Modern Turkey (London: Routledge, 1993) pp. 31-51.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.* pp.15-51.

so after the demise of Pan Islamism and nationalism. By 1922 Amanullah was forced to normalise relations with both the British and Russia for economic and security reasons. There was no political party in Afghanistan and the Young Afghans were a small group of inexperienced idealists, not trained as party cadres. Therefore, they were unable to gather popular support for Amanullah. King Amanullah also did not have the support of a loyal and efficient army. In the absence of a financial base to support his grandiose plans he imposed heavy taxes on the peasants. Many of his reform programmes were either extremely expensive such as building new palaces or just symbolic. Although most of the plans were never implemented but the meagre foreign exchange spent on buying expensive machinery from abroad was a huge drain on Afghanistan's limited financial reserves. The most important weakness of King Amanullah's reforms was the fact that they aimed at totally transforming the social and economic structure of the Afghan society without an alternative basis of popular support (among the urban middle class or peasants) for the institution of the state. King Amanullah was trying to abolish the tribal and religious forces at a time when he needed their support to retain his legitimacy and in order to make his reform programme work. For example, during the Khost rebellion in 1924 the Afghan army was unable to put down the tribal rebellion and Amanullah had to enlist the support of the tribal levies to suppress the revolt. This act reaffirmed the strong political power the tribal forces still held in Afghanistan. <sup>88</sup>

### **1.1. 6 The Musahiban Dynasty: 1929 -1973.**

As Nadir Shah's consolidation of power was made possible due to the substantial aid provided by the British and by a coalition of diverse frontier tribes to overthrow the regime of Bacha Saqqao, he adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the tribes in Afghanistan. Furthermore, in order to appease the tribal and

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<sup>88</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Gregorian, pp. 269-274.

religious forces, he granted significant concessions to them which were reflected in the new constitution, or the *Usulnama-i-Asasi*, promulgated in 1931. The unique feature of the new constitution was the preservation of the status quo. The monarch retained the ultimate authority in the affairs of the government. The constitution provided for a parliamentary form of government, but it was just a facade, as the real power was retained by a small oligarchic group within the Musahiban family. The upper house of the Parliament, or the *Majlis-i-Ayan*, was directly appointed by the King and the lower house, or the National Council, was to be part elected and part appointed. However, the Constitution did not specify the procedure for the election of the members of the National Council. In reality, both houses of the Parliament were occupied by tribal and rural aristocrats who acted merely as an advisory council and rubber stamped most of the King's directives.<sup>89</sup>

Nadir Shah was not a traditionalist and this was reflected in the Constitution of 1931 which attempted to accommodate the interests of the three main groups in the Afghan society- i.e. the tribes, the religious leaders and the modernists or Young Afghans. In doing so, the constitution manifested certain inconsistencies relating to the sources of legitimacy. Despite strong emphasis in the constitution on religion and on making the judiciary subservient to the sharia law, the constitution defined the Afghan nation as the source of political legitimacy. It also defined the tribal *Jirga* as a source of legitimacy.

Nadir Shah downplayed the ideological content of his reforms. The rationale for the reforms was located in the interests of the nation rather than in religious discourse. This was a result of the recognition by Nadir Shah of the strong influence of the religious leaders in domestic politics and his attempt to avert their interference in politics. A religious body called the *Jamiyat-i-Ulama* was

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<sup>89</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Oleson, pp. 176-183.

formed in an effort to co-opt the religious leaders into the structure. The task of this body was to ensure that government laws were not against Islam. The constitution specified that civil laws were to be in conformity with the sharia and subject to final approval by the monarch. The success of the policy of co-opting the religious leaders into the state structure can be judged by the fact that during the reign of Nadir Shah, they did not lend support to any of the tribal revolts against him. The tribes were pacified by abandoning the policy of universal conscription, followed by the policy of exempting certain frontier tribes from paying taxes. In order to elicit tribal support the government also adopted a policy of limited interference in tribal affairs. The importance of the tribes was recognised by the provision in the constitution to hold a tribal Jirga after every three years and no new taxes could be levied without the approval of the Jirga. The success of these constitutional policies can be judged from the fact that peace was preserved for the next thirty years.<sup>90</sup>

Opposition to Nadir Shah's rule came from the nationalists who objected to his pro- British attitude in both domestic and foreign affairs. Another source of opposition came from pro- Amanullah groups led by the powerful Charkhi family. These groups criticised the slow pace of reforms under Nadir Shah and instigated several rebellions against him. In the aftermath of the execution of an important member of the Charkhi family, Ghulam Nabi Charki, on orders from Nadir Shah, the rivalry between the Musahiban and the Charki family intensified and led to the assassination of Nadir Shah himself on 8th November 1933. <sup>91</sup>

After the assassination of Nadir Shah, his son Zahir Shah ascended the Afghan throne, but for the next thirty years the real political power remained with his

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<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.182-183 & R. Newell, "The Prospects of State building in Afghanistan" in *Op. Cit.*, A. Banuazi & M. Weiner (ed.) The state Religion and Ethnic Politics: Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan, p. 113 & *Op. Cit.*, Shahrani, "State building and Social Fragmentation in Afghanistan: A historical Perspective" p. 52.

<sup>91</sup>*Ibid.*, Shahrani, p. 53.

uncles, Shah Mahmud and Hashim Khan. During the 1930's and 1940's the Musahiban dynasty adopted a new economic policy to reduce the government's exclusive dependence on the taxation of rural lands and livestock. To diversify the sources of income, the government encouraged private enterprises. One such venture was the establishment of the first commercial bank in Afghanistan called the bank-i-milli or the national bank, which was led by an entrepreneur from Khandahar, Abdul Majid Zabuli. During the 1930's the government also encouraged the use of private capital for commercial purposes. However, this policy was mainly restricted to the export of agricultural products to foreign markets. Although this economic policy was initially successful and generated substantial revenue for the Afghan government, in the long term it proved to be a failure. This was the result of sharp decline in the demand for primary agricultural products in the world market after World War II. Another feature of this era was lack of investment by the state in domestic industries or development projects and lack of foreign investment. In view of the deteriorating economic conditions after World War II, the Musahiban policy of "limited guided modernisation" came under increasing attack from the proponents of speedy modernisation and led to the resignation of Prime Minister Hashim Khan in 1946.<sup>92</sup>

With the onset of the Cold War during the 1950's, the Afghan government, under the leadership of a nationalist Prime Minister Daoud, embarked on a determined policy to achieve rapid socio-economic modernisation. After being rebuffed by the US, Prime Minister Daoud turned to the Soviet Union for economic aid and by doing so abandoned Afghanistan's traditional policy of neutrality in foreign affairs. In the early days of the Cold War the Soviet leadership was using the economic instrument of foreign policy to achieve Soviet political objectives in the newly independent states of Asia and Africa. In doing so, the Soviets were

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<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 54-58.

following the example of the US which was similarly trying to rebuild the economic infrastructure of Western Europe by providing economic aid through the Marshall plan. However, the Soviet leadership failed to realise the importance of entrenched traditional and cultural values which can present serious obstacles to the smooth political transition from traditionalism to socialism in these states. According to B. Rubin, "Afghanistan derived over 40 per cent of its revenue in every year since 1957 from abroad." Foreign aid gave the Afghan ruling elite relative autonomy from domestic sources of support. The ruling elite was able to undertake the expansion of the state apparatus, "without bargaining or being accountable to its citizens".<sup>93</sup> The majority of the citizens were not involved in the functioning of the state and there were no representative institutions to integrate the state and the society. During the Cold War the modest amount of US aid was used to expand Afghanistan's educational and agricultural sector, while the modernisation of the Afghan army was undertaken with the help of the Soviet aid. The Musahiban dynasty was also able to enlist Soviet diplomatic support with regard to the Pashtunistan dispute.

The foreign sponsored economic expansion and educational opportunities created a small proportion of educated urban middle class in Afghanistan, which demanded a share in the affairs of the state and some form of representative government. The middle class was further alienated because the public sector was unable to absorb increasing numbers of educated people. As the royal establishment was becoming increasingly unpopular among the emergent middle class, Prime Minister Daoud submitted a number of proposals to the King suggesting to liberalise the political system. As a result of these proposals a new constitution was enacted in 1964 which provided for a Constitutional Democracy. It consisted of a Senate and the National Assembly. The Senate was partly selected and partly appointed by the King. The King retained the final

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<sup>93</sup> B. Rubin, "Political elites in Afghanistan: Rentier State Building, Rentier State Wrecking", International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies (Vol. . 24, 1992) pp. 77-99.

authority to dissolve the Parliament.

During the ten year period of Constitutional Democracy, from 1964-73, Afghanistan encountered a major challenge in the process of its political development, namely, political participation. This stage involves the assimilation of the new social forces produced by the modernisation process into the political system. The failure of the government to cope successfully with this critical challenge created the crisis of political legitimacy, which eventually led to the overthrow of the monarchy in the Revolution of 1973.

Increased political participation is a crucial stage in the process of political development as it increases the total amount of power in the political system. In a complex or a developed society political institutions usually perform this function. In traditional societies there is no need for modern political institutions. According to Sir Henry Maine, in a traditional society men are not treated as individuals but as members of a group or family.<sup>94</sup> According to sociologist Emily Durkheim traditional society can be characterised as based on mechanical solidarity in which conformity is enforced through repressive law. On the other hand modern society is based on organic solidarity which is much more positive as it involves functional interdependence and division of labour in the society.<sup>95</sup> These divisions although creating differences among various groups, also create a need for mutual dependence among different groups. As a society becomes more complex and heterogeneous as a result of the modernisation process new roles and new social forces emerge. These various groups differ in their respective powers and influence and there is a potential for conflict. In such an environment there is a need for some mechanism in order to modify or redirect the powers of different groups and devise ways for resolving

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<sup>94</sup> D. Apter, The Politics of Modernisation (Chicago: Chicago press, 1965) p. 58.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

disagreements and disputes among them. In a modern society political institutions usually perform this function.

The historical experience of the Western democracies shows that the ideal course of political development involves the satisfactory resolution of firstly; the authority crisis, and secondly, the identity crisis; before the political system can successfully cope with the challenge of increased political participation.<sup>96</sup> Whereas in many Third World states, the demand for political participation emerged before the crises of authority or identity were satisfactorily resolved. Indeed, according to Professor Huntington, in a complex society political stability is dependent on the relationship between the level of political participation and political institutionalisation. He defines political institutionalisation as the process by which political institutions acquire stability. In transitional societies, the rate of political mobilisation is much higher than the evolution of political institutions and this imbalance is the root cause of much of the political instability, or 'political decay', prevalent in these societies.<sup>97</sup> However, it should be added that Professor Huntington's emphasis on the importance of political institutions ignores the fact that institutions are only one determinant of political development. Other factors conducive to democracy include: economic development, political attitudes, inter elite relations, social structures, and external influences.<sup>98</sup> All these factors affect the prospects for achieving democracy but the question of which factor is more important than the others is yet unresolved. A common criticism against the advocates of political development theory is their strong emphasis on the course adopted by the western states in achieving democracy, and an assumption that the Third World

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<sup>96</sup> C. H. Dood , Political Development (London: Macmillan Press, 1972) pp. 41-43, Also See, G. A. Almond, G. B. Powell, J r. Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1966)

<sup>97</sup> S. P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (London: Yale University Press, 1968)

<sup>98</sup> R. Pinkney, Democracy in the Third World (Buckingham: OUP, 1993) pp. 22-23.

states also have to follow the western model while ignoring the deep cultural, social and economic differences between the two.

In the opinion of Lucian Pye, political development is a complex and multi-faceted process and the transition from one stage to another can challenge the political stability of a society. Moreover, the developing state is often confronted with several crises at once, with no opportunity to consolidate its position before dealing with the next crisis.<sup>99</sup> Afghan society during the 1960's was in a stage of transition. For a long time Afghanistan had remained isolated from world events and also escaped any experience of political transformation under the colonial rule. Also, it can be argued that the main objective of the colonial rule was the development of administrative and legal institutions rather than developing political processes. The problem facing the Afghan government was to facilitate the smooth transfer of individual or group kinship and ethnic loyalties (traditional basis of organisation) to loyalties based on economic or class structures (modern basis of organisation).<sup>100</sup> The task before the government was to win the loyalties of the newly emerging classes by satisfying their demands for economic progress and political reform. The Afghan government failed to meet this challenge of rising demands. The reason for this was partly due to the lack of economic resources and partly because the political power was too centralised in the institution of the monarchy. Also, social mobility was still largely based on ascriptive values rather than on achievement, and there was no precedent of broad based participation of the people in the economic and political affairs of the kingdom.

The principal political institutions which can facilitate the assimilation of new social forces into the political system include: political parties, interest groups

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<sup>99</sup> L. Pye, *Aspects of Political Development* (Boston: Little Brown & Company, 1966) pp. 49-67.

<sup>100</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Poullada, "Problems of Social Development in Afghanistan" pp. 38-39 .

and pressure groups. Among these institutions, the role of a strong political party is especially significant. Strong political parties perform several functions, but their most important function is to mobilise the population and to organise conflicting public demands into a set of policy goals and transmit them to the government. However, political parties are also dependent on the society and its level of modernisation including role diversity for its membership.<sup>101</sup> A traditional society which has experienced, "limited modernisation, has a static class structure in which loyalties are parochial mainly confined to kinship ties, and where there are no associations with broad membership", <sup>102</sup> can present several obstacles to the formation of broad based political parties. This was the case of Afghanistan where the modernisation process, due to strategic, geographical, economic and religious reasons, had not only been slow but was mainly confined to the urban centres.

During the experiment with constitutional democracy King Zahir Shah did not allow the formation of political parties in Afghanistan. However, a number of illegal political organisations emerged, out of which only five could be labelled as political parties on the basis of their ideology and organisation. This was a time when the popularity of both the monarchy and the tribal leadership in politics was declining and there was an urgent need for strong national leaders. Unfortunately the new elites were unable to fill this vacuum. There were two types of middle class in Afghanistan: firstly, western educated officials belonging to the upper middle class; and secondly, graduates from the Kabul university and low ranking government officials, including members of urban minority groups. Although these two groups opposed each other they shared the need to be recognised as national leaders.<sup>103</sup> But in a status conscious society

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<sup>101</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Apter, "The Political Party as a Modernising Instrument" in The Politics of Modernisation, pp.179- 222.

<sup>102</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Dood, Political Development, pp. 34.

<sup>103</sup> H. Kakar, "The Fall of The Afghan Monarchy in 1973" International Journal of Middle East Studies (Vol. 9, 1978) p. 207.

like Afghanistan, this was a difficult task- made worse by factional disputes among the leaders of various political organisations. Another problem was the fact that the members of the upper middle class, who firmly believed in parliamentary democracy, lacked party organisation and were thus unable to play a constructive role in politics.<sup>104</sup> In the absence of government control on election expenses, those elected to the parliament were mostly influential candidates who could afford large campaign expenses and whose main concern, after getting elected, was to promote their own self interests rather than to deliberate on national issues. Only a small proportion of elected members were genuinely interested in making the constitutional experiment work. Another small proportion of members were elected on the basis of their ideological affiliations, that is, the Islamists and the Marxists. These members used the freedom of speech to propagate their ideas and to put pressure on the government in the parliament. The behaviour of these extreme groups in the parliament disrupted its proceedings and violent clashes between the religious and the leftist groups became a common feature of university and school life.

Another feature of this period was the emerging conflict between the state and society. The Afghan society is mainly agricultural and there are no sharp inequalities of income. Lack of industrialisation means that class conflict is not a common feature of the society. However, the gradual expansion of the state apparatus in the 1950's led to the corruption and the exploitation of the masses by government officials including: the tax collectors, provincial and district governors, and the police; creating a situation in which the main conflict was no longer between the landlords and the peasants but between the government officials and the local population. During the election campaigns of 1964 and 1969 attacks against the state or the monarchy were more common than against the feudal lords or tribal leaders. By adopting repressive measures the

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<sup>104</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 207.

government further aggravated the political crisis. A second explanation of rising discontent among the population was linked to the growing economic problems of the period. A gradual decline in foreign aid and the failure of government economic reforms led to widespread economic discontent throughout Afghanistan. In this environment of frustration and unfulfilled expectations among the urban middle class and intelligentsia political debates revolved around radical solutions on how to change the government, curb the exploitation of the masses by the monarchy, and how to create a more equitable and just society. <sup>105</sup>

During the constitutional period the nature of political conflict changed. Historically, a wide gulf had separated the state from the tribal society in Afghanistan and the state was not the immediate focus of people's loyalties. At the centre power was a kin based system of patrimonial rule. On the periphery the prevalence of independent structures of local authority constrained the authority of the state. Traditional blood and kinship ties also served to reinforce the authority of these local elites.<sup>106</sup> During the constitutional period these historical sources of conflict were pushed to the background. Beginning in the 1950s the growing amount of Soviet aid to Afghanistan meant that the state was no longer dependent on domestic sources of economic or military support. Under these circumstances the tenuous link between the rural population and the government was reduced even further. The extension of state sponsored educational and development projects created a class of young educated Afghans who, when faced with unemployment and the crisis of unfulfilled expectations, soon turned against the government. Thus, during the constitutional period, political conflict revolved around two issues: firstly, ideological and secondly, on class and generational differences.<sup>107</sup> During this period two conflicting ideologies emerged, that is, Marxism and Islamists. These groups were not

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* p. 205.

<sup>106</sup> R. B. Rais, *War Without Winners* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1992) p. 3.

<sup>107</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Sharani, "State Building and Social Fragmentation in Afghanistan, A Historical Perspective" p. 61.

homogeneous. They had a narrow support base and the only common ground between them was their attack on the state.

King Zahir Shah was confident that he could rely upon the support of the Afghan army to ensure political stability. However, most of the army officers were pro Daoud and their training in the Soviet Union had alienated them from the institution of the monarchy. They resented class differences and poor prospects of promotion. Also, Shah Wali, the Commander in Chief of the armed forces and the King's son in law, though dedicated and loyal to the monarch, was not popular with the middle class as he had ordered the army to suppress the demonstrations. Afghanistan's foreign policy changed and became more pro Western and aligned with the Islamic states. Daoud was watching all this. Eventually a military coup on the 27 April 1973 overthrew the monarchy and proclaimed Afghanistan as a Republic.

This chapter has traced the course of Afghanistan's political development from 1747-1973. It has shown the reasons for the persistence of weak state in Afghanistan and the difficulties encountered by the Afghan rulers in centralisation of power. The process of political development was cut short by the overthrow of the Afghan monarchy in 1973. The course of political development in traditional societies is difficult due to the persistence of traditional sources of authority and the remoteness of the central state from the society. Moreover, the difficulties in the process of political development differ from state to state and the above discussion has attempted to bring out the particular difficulties faced by Afghanistan.



# **Part I**

## **Chapter Two**

### **Afghanistan's External Relations With Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union Uptil 1979.**

#### **1: 2. 1 Introduction.**

Before discussing Afghanistan's external relations with Pakistan, the US and the Soviet Union I will give a brief over view of the major determinants in the formulation of Afghanistan's foreign policy. There are two major determinants in the formulation of Afghanistan's foreign policy since its foundation as a nation state by Ahmed Shah Abdali in 1747. Firstly, during the nineteenth century, its geographical position was one of being sandwiched between the two expanding empires, that is Russia to its north and to the South and South east the British empire in India. Secondly, after World War II, and following the British withdrawal from India, the Afghan rulers encountered difficulties in their attempts to attract foreign military and economic aid, mainly western aid, for the purpose of modernisation and for the promotion of social, economic and military progress in a predominantly traditional, tribal and ethnically divergent society.

Throughout the nineteenth century the predominant external influence affecting Afghanistan was the imperial rivalry between the British in India and Czarist Russia in Central Asia. The genesis of this rivalry, or the "Great Game" as it was dubbed by historians, lay primarily in the "Anglo Russian quarrel about the fate of Asia."<sup>1</sup> It also encompassed British apprehensions over any prospective Russian threat to the security of India. This threat was considered to be implicit in the gradual southward expansionism of Czarist Russia through the incessant conquest and annexation of Central Asian Khanates, located on the northern

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<sup>1</sup> D. Fromkin, "The Great Game in Asia" in Foreign Affairs (Vol. 58, No.4, 1980) p. 936.

periphery of Afghanistan, and encroachments on the territories of the Ottoman and the Persian empires throughout the nineteenth century.

Russian moves against Herat in Persia in 1838, and the subsequent annexation of the Khanates of Tashkent (1865), Bukhara (1868), Samarqand (1868), Khiva (1873), and Kokhand (1877), gradually pushed the Russian frontiers towards Sri Darya and then onto the Oxus river (Amu Darya) on the northern border of Afghanistan. These Russian activities were viewed with alarm by the British policy makers in India and opened up the whole debate over which policy to adopt to protect the north west frontier of India. There was a strong impetus to forestall a Russian conquest of the great frontier barrier of India, the mountains of the Hindu Kush, and thus to preserve the territorial integrity of India.<sup>2</sup>

There were a multitude of reasons for Russian expansionism in Central Asia. Firstly, there was an economic reason for Russia to forestall a British conquest of the Central Asian commercial markets. Secondly there was a political and military dimension to the issue as the Soviets claimed that their activities were undertaken to secure Russian frontiers from the aggression of its hostile neighbours. But the territories, once secured in order to protect the Russian frontiers, were annexed to the Empire and had themselves to be protected in turn against any further encroachments of more distant neighbours. Thus, a cycle of continuing conquest and annexation was set in motion and this caused alarm amongst the British policy makers in India. Thirdly, there was the lure of diplomatic leverage against the British as Russia attempted to use its position of strength in Central Asia as a diplomatic leverage in any confrontation with the British in Europe and elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> Lastly, the Russians viewed their

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<sup>2</sup>W. K. Fraser Tytler, Afghanistan: A Study of political developments in Central and Southern Asia, (London: Oxford University Press, 1953) p. 139.

<sup>3</sup>A. Z. Rubinstein, "Russia and Afghanistan in Historical Perspective" in Soviet Policy towards Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan: The Dynamics of Influence, (New York: Praeger, 1980) pp. 122-124.

expansionism as a defensive measure against the British drive northwards by way of both the British annexation of Punjab and Peshawar in 1849, and two invasions of Afghanistan in 1838-42 and 1878-80. These were viewed by Russia as being directed principally against them. The rationale for the Russian annexation of central Asian republics was embodied in a memorandum prepared by the Russian imperial chancellor, Prince Corchachov, in 1864. It states that:

"The position of Russia in central Asia is that of all civilised states which come into contact with half savage, wandering tribes possessing no fixed social organisation. It invariably happens in such cases that the interests of security on the frontier and of commercial relations compel the more civilised state to exercise a certain ascendancy over neighbours whose turbulence and nomadic instincts render them difficult to live with. In order to stop these we are compelled to reduce the tribes on our frontier to more or less complete submission. Once this result is attained they become less troublesome, but in turn they are exposed to the aggression of more distant tribes. The state is obliged to defend them against these depredations and chastise those who commit them. Hence the necessity of distant and costly expeditions repeated at regular intervals. One is inevitably drawn into a course wherein ambition plays a smaller part than imperious necessity and where the greatest difficulty is knowing where to stop."<sup>4</sup>

The memorandum laid down that the limit of Soviet expansionism was Kokhand, but in 1877 the Russians moved in and captured it.

During the nineteenth century British policy towards Afghanistan alternated between three schools of thought, namely the closed border policy (1857-69), the forward policy (1874-1880) and the buffer state formula (1880-1919).<sup>5</sup> In each case British moves towards Afghanistan were precipitated in recognition of, and in response to, the anticipated Russian threat. The underlying aim was to find a suitable strategy to prevent Russian annexation of Afghanistan. Between Russia and the Indian subcontinent lay the central Afghan mountains of Hindu Kush

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<sup>4</sup>*Op. Cit.* F. Tytler, Afghanistan: A study of Political Developments in Central and South Asia, pp. 319-323.

<sup>5</sup> K. Bahadur, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy towards Afghanistan" in , K.P. Mirsa (ed.) Afghanistan in Crisis (London: Groom Helm, 1985)

which formed a barrier against Russian expansion to the South and the Indian Ocean.

The closed door policy was advocated by Lord Lawrence in 1856 in the aftermath of the forced retreat of the British forces in the first Anglo-Afghan war (1838-1842). The British had invaded Afghanistan to prevent Russia (supported by Persia) from seizing Herat on the western flank of Afghanistan, but the Afghans had reacted violently to the presence of a British mission, and they were forced to retreat. The basic premise of the closed door policy was non-interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs, retreat of the British forces to the river Indus, and a future policy of not sending any military expedition against Russia into Afghanistan, except with the consent of the Afghans themselves. However, by 1874 several factors coalesced to lead to a reversal of this policy. In 1874 there was a change of administration in Britain (from Liberal to Conservative) and Lord Lytton, who was a strong advocate of the forward policy school of thought, was appointed as the new Viceroy of India. Meanwhile, the Russians were not observing the rules laid down in the 1873 Anglo-Russian Convention which defined Afghanistan as being outside their sphere of influence. In 1868, Russia captured Bukhara and moved closer to the border of Afghanistan. In 1876 the outbreak of war between Turkey and Russia added to the tension in Anglo-Russian relations in South Asia. The dispatch of a Russian diplomatic mission to the Afghan ruler Sher Ali provided the British with a pretext to invade and capture Afghanistan for a second time in 1878-80. The British concluded the treaty of Gandamak with the new Afghan ruler. Under the terms of the treaty Sher Ali accepted the stationing of a permanent British mission in Afghanistan. Sher Ali also agreed under the terms of the treaty to surrender to the British the right to conduct Afghanistan foreign policy.

The Afghans reacted violently to the stationing of British troops on their soil, and by 1880 the British were forced to adopt the buffer state policy towards Afghanistan, under which they entrusted the control of Afghanistan's internal affairs to the new ruler, Amir Abdur Rahman, while retaining the right to conduct Afghan foreign relations. The "Great Game" ended in 1907 with the signing of the Convention of St. Petersburg between the Russians and the British, in which they agreed, in view of the rise of Germany in Europe, that Afghanistan was outside their sphere of interest.<sup>6</sup>

This outside interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs had important implications both for Afghanistan foreign policy and for the outlook of its people. In terms of foreign policy, it led to the adoption of an attitude of "neutrality", "isolationism", and the policy of maintaining a strict "balance" or "equidistance" in relations with both its neighbours. This was considered to be imperative in order to safeguard Afghanistan's independence and to ensure its continued survival. However, one negative outcome of this policy was that Afghanistan was kept economically backward and underdeveloped.<sup>7</sup> The importance of this policy was demonstrated when after World War II, in the absence of a British countervailing check against the Russians, Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud (1953-1963) leaned too heavily towards the Soviet Union. This provided the groundwork for the gradual absorption of Afghanistan into the Soviet sphere of influence and eventually threatened to undermine Afghanistan's very independence in 1979.

In addition to the above mentioned factors, there are two additional features related to Afghan culture which also exercise an important influence on both its internal politics and its foreign policy. Firstly, Afghan society was tribal in

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<sup>6</sup>*Op. Cit.* F. Tytler, Afghanistan: A study of Political Developments in Central and South Asia pp.137-150.

<sup>7</sup>A. Arnold, Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective, (California: Hoover Institution Press, 1981) p. 2.

nature, and secondly, it had a heterogeneous character with its people composed of various ethnic groups, namely the Pathans, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Turkomen, Baluchi, Hazaravi, and Nuristani. The Pathans are the dominant ethnic group in Afghanistan and inhabit the south and south eastern parts of Afghanistan. Tajiks, Uzbeks and Turkoman are predominantly clustered to the north of Afghanistan and have ethnic links with the Central Asian Republics of the former Soviet Union. Lastly, Baluchis live on the western side of Afghanistan and are related to similar groups in Iran. In this tribal structure the first loyalty of every member is to his clan and family, and there is a comparatively low degree of compulsion to conform to the demands of the central government. Some of the tribes, especially the Pathans, are famous for their independence and resistance to outside interference or control.

Owing to the heterogeneity of its population, there is a general lack of unity or national cohesion among the various ethnic groups. There is a famous saying that, "Afghans are at peace among themselves only when they are at war."<sup>8</sup> Their society's emphasis is on self reliance, courage, freedom, autonomy, honour and equality. Some of these characteristics are born out of the geo-political features of Afghanistan, such as its rugged terrain, rocky mountains and extremes of climate, and together with great poverty, the Afghan's survival depends upon the endurance of these harsh living conditions. The buffer state formula enabled Afghanistan to escape from foreign domination, but its rulers have always been aware of the precarious nature of their hold over a disparate group of people. To overcome this they have emphasised unity among the people, but throughout its existence Afghanistan had never experienced the rule of a rigid centralised government. "Instead, even though under a monarchy, the society was decentralised and a cautious balance was maintained between the central

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<sup>8</sup>L. B. Poullada, Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan : King Amanullah Failure to Modernise a Tribal Society (London: Cornell University Press, 1973) pp. 1-34.

government and the provinces, between the state and the tribes."<sup>9</sup> These are some of the features which also explain why the communist rule in 1978, with its emphasis on rigid control and introduction of radical reforms, failed to generate any widespread support among the masses in Afghanistan.

### **1. 2 : 2 Relations With Pakistan.**

After World War II, the most important determinant in the relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan was the dispute with Pakistan over the "Pushtunistan" issue. The Afghan claim on the Pathans living on the eastern side of the Durand line has both nationalistic and historical connotations. Throughout the period of its independent existence from 1747 to 1978, the majority of Afghan rulers from Ahmed Shah Durrani to King Zahir Shah had been of Pathan origin. Historically, though only for a brief period, the land between the Durand line and the river Indus formed an integral part of Afghanistan. In 1823, however, it was reoccupied by the Sikhs (including the city of Peshawar) and in 1849, the British took it over from the Sikhs and incorporated it into India.<sup>10</sup> Thereafter, the Afghans, first under the 1879 "treaty of Gandomak," and later under the "Durand agreement" of 1893, were forced to rescind their territorial claims over the regions of the Kyhber pass, Kuram Valley, Sibi, Pichin and Peshawar.<sup>11</sup> In the twentieth century, successive Afghan rulers reaffirmed the legality of the Durand line in the various Anglo-Afghan agreements of 1905, 1919 and 1921. After the British withdrawal from India in 1947, the Afghans, in the vain hope of recovering their lost territories, directed their irredentism against the newly created state of Pakistan. On June 3, 1947 a plebiscite was held in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan to ascertain the wishes of the people to join

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<sup>9</sup>*Op. Cit.* R. Klass, pp. 199-201.

<sup>10</sup>S. M Burke, Pakistan's Foreign Policy : An Historical Analysis (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1990) pp. 78-79.

<sup>11</sup>A. S. Ghaus, The Fall of Afghanistan (London: Pergamon -Brassey's Defence Publishers,1992) p. 6

either India or Pakistan. According to the results of the plebiscite, 289,244 people voted in favour of joining Pakistan and 2,074 in favour of India.<sup>12</sup> The Afghans refused to accept the election results and demanded instead that a third choice, that is 'independence' should be granted to the people of the North West Frontier Province. To further show their displeasure, in September 1947 Afghanistan voted against Pakistan's entry into the United Nations.<sup>13</sup> In July 1949, a Loya Jirga was held in which the Afghans formally abrogated all the Anglo-Afghan treaties relating to the border. As a result of the strained relations and hostile propaganda emanating from Afghanistan, in 1950, 1955 and 1960 Pakistan imposed a blockade on the transit of Afghan imports and exports through Pakistan's territory. This provided an opportunity for the Soviet Union to offer land-locked Afghanistan alternative transit routes through Soviet territory. Thus, the Pushtunistan dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan laid the basis for the gradual economic dependence of Afghanistan on the Soviet Union.

### **1. 2 :3 Relations With the US.**

During the period 1944-53 Afghanistan's relations with the United States were negatively affected by the US repeated rejection of Afghan overtures for economic and military assistance. After World War II, the American response to repeated Afghan requests for economic and military assistance were evasive, causing annoyance to the Afghan people and injuring their pride. This was particularly galling to Afghans in view of generous assistance extended to Pakistan after it agreed to join the US sponsored anti-communist defence alliances, the South East Asian Treaty Organisation in 1954, and the Baghdad Pact in 1955. One reason for this American response was based upon inadequate assessment of Afghanistan's strategic importance. After gaining independence in 1919, Afghanistan sought US diplomatic recognition, but this was held in

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<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.* p. 67.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.* p. 69.

abeyance until 1934, and the first American diplomatic mission was not established until 1942.<sup>14</sup> This was in sharp contrast to the Soviet Union which was the first state to accord diplomatic recognition to Afghanistan.

This refusal of the US administration to repeated Afghan requests for the US aid coincided with an important change in Afghanistan's domestic politics. In 1953 the leadership in Afghanistan passed from the hands of the older, cautious and pro-western Prime Minister Shah Mahmud to Mohammed Daoud, a younger, more confident, and zealous leader. Daoud, aged 44, and former minister for defence, was a staunch nationalist (Pathan) strongly committed to the economic progress and modernisation of Afghanistan. Rebuffed by the United States, he felt confident that instead he could use Soviet offers of economic and military assistance with impunity, and without endangering Afghanistan's independence. Thus, he set aside two centuries of caution in Afghanistan's foreign policy and fostered Soviet-American competition in Afghanistan. In this process, the Soviet Union had the advantage of geographical proximity to Afghanistan. Moreover, after the death of Stalin, the Soviet Union was entering the Cold War era with a more ambitious foreign policy towards the Third World states. Afghanistan presented a perfect opportunity, which could be exploited through offers of diplomatic support over the Pushtunistan dispute, and by way of generous economic assistance for various development projects in Afghanistan.

As a result of the American ambiguity towards Afghanistan in the period following World War II, the State Department was hampered by its inability to recruit trained staff to serve in Afghanistan. "From 1947 to 1953, the US ambassadors to Afghanistan were without exception senior career officers serving their last term prior to retirement."<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, from 1953-56

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<sup>14</sup> L. B. Poullada, "Afghanistan and the United States: The Crucial Years" in The Middle East Journal (Vol. XXXV, Spring 1981) pp. 179-181.

<sup>15</sup>A. Fletcher, Afghanistan: Highway of Conquest (New York: Cornell University Press, 1965) p. 264.

American diplomats in Afghanistan did not have sufficient understanding of the culture, the language or the various economic or political problems of remote and backward Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup> The American ambassador to Afghanistan, Angus Ward, was not on very friendly terms with Prime Minister Daoud and under such circumstances the embassy reports led to an inadequate appreciation of Afghanistan's geo-political significance.

After World War II, the US acceded to Afghan requests for economic assistance in a way that caused annoyance among the Afghan people rather than winning their gratitude. In 1949, the Afghan government requested an \$118 million loan from the US to launch an integrated national economic development programme. This request was turned down by the U.S. Import Export bank after which the case was referred to the State Department. Instead, the bank agreed to provide only \$36 million, and restricted its use to the Helmand Valley project, an unsuccessful irrigation and land reclamation project in the south of Afghanistan. This was under the supervision of the Morrison-Knudsen Company, a private American firm. In 1953, the Afghans requested a further \$36 million from the Import Export Bank for the purpose of paving the streets of Kabul. The bank refused the loan and again agreed to provide \$18 million for the Helmand Valley project.<sup>17</sup> This was in sharp contrast to the Soviet aid projects which bore quick results, were highly efficient, and oriented to serve a wide variety of purposes, thus winning the gratitude of Afghan people. Examples of some of these projects during the 1950s and the early 1960s included two large grain silos in Kabul, a flour mill, construction of a gasoline pipeline from the Soviet Union to Afghanistan, large gasoline storage tanks, a fertiliser factory, cement plants, dams, irrigation canals, highways, Salang Pass tunnel, hydroelectric stations, airports, military air bases at Bagram and Shindand, auto repair workshops, and air agreement that provided for regular flights between Kabul and Tashkent. The

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<sup>16</sup>*Op. Cit.* Poullada, "Afghanistan and the United States: The Crucial Years" p. 183.

<sup>17</sup>*Op. Cit.* S. Ghaus, The Fall of Afghanistan pp. 75-80.

Soviet Union provided \$3.5 million in January 1954, \$1.5 million in July 1954, \$3.2 million in August 1954, and \$100 million in December 1955, which included the offer to finance the whole of Afghanistan's five year development plan.<sup>18</sup> According to one source, by "1978 the Soviet Union had completed seventy one separate projects in Afghanistan, of which fifty two were operated by the Soviet technicians, and by 1978 the Soviets had invested about \$3 billion in Afghanistan." In comparison, the U.S projects were few and limited to road building, education, the Helmand valley project and the building of two airports.<sup>19</sup>

#### **1. 2 : 4 Relations with The Soviet Union.**

As mentioned earlier, the foundations for the emergence of Soviet influence in Afghanistan were laid down in the 1950s, with the extension of generous economic and military assistance. Beginning in the 1960s, and more specifically after the resignation of Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud in 1963, Soviet influence in Afghanistan shifted towards providing ideological and political support to the embryonic left-wing political groups which emerged during the brief period of King Zahir Shah's (1933-73) unsuccessful political experiment in "Constitutional Monarchy" from 1965-1973. As left-wing influence in Afghanistan gradually became entrenched, the nature of Soviet involvement was changed from indirect political manipulation (1965-1969) to playing a more active political role in Afghan politics, through their proxy, the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

These clandestine manoeuvrings began in 1969, with the indirect support provided to Mohammed Daoud by the moderate faction (Parcham) of the PDPA, in order to abolish the monarchy of King Zahir Shah in 1973 and establish

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<sup>18</sup>*Op. Cit.* A. Arnold, Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective pp, 34-37.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* p. 38.

Afghanistan as a Republic. This opportunistic PDPA-Daoud collaboration undermined Afghanistan's moderate attempt towards democracy.

However, in a bid to consolidate his power, Mohammed Daoud began to distance himself from his left-wing (Parchamis) supporters in domestic politics, and took a U-turn in foreign policy by reasserting Afghanistan's non-alignment through adopting the traditional policy of "bi-tarafi" (without sides). As he did this, the Soviets, once again acting in fear of losing their political foothold in Afghanistan, became instrumental in forging a temporary reconciliation between the two split factions of the PDPA in July 1977, for the purpose of overthrowing Daoud in the aftermath of the Saur (April) revolution of 1978. This event catapulted the nascent PDPA (Khalq) faction to power, although the party lacked a firm organisational base, and its membership was confined largely to urban centres (mainly Kabul), and to a narrow segment of the Afghan population. Under the leadership of Nur Mohammed Taraki and Hafiz ullah Amin, the Khalq regime quickly embarked upon a radical and abrasive program of reforms enshrined in the "Basic lines of Revolutionary duties of the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan."<sup>20</sup> This not only de-stabilised the traditional and religious structures of Afghan society, but also provoked widespread resistance against the Marxist PDPA regime, undermining its capacity for survival. Thus, within two years of the PDPA coming to power, Soviet ambitions in Afghanistan met their Waterloo. In violation of the international norms of non-violation of the sovereignty and independence of a small state through the use of force, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 in order to bolster the unpopular Marxist regime (PDPA), and to save it from utter annihilation at the hands of right-wing nationalist and religious opposition groups. The invasion not only shifted the Soviet frontiers from the Amu Darya (Oxus) river to the Khyber pass, but also marked a watershed event

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<sup>20</sup> O. Roy, "The Communist Reform and Repression" in Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) pp. 84-97.

in US-Soviet relations. Afghanistan became the first non-aligned, Third World Muslim state (after Hungary and Czechoslovakia in 1956 and 1968 respectively) to be invaded by the Soviets after World War II.

The tradition of Marxism and Leninism in Afghanistan has a short history. Before World War II, two symbiotic movements, "Young Afghans" and "Wakhi-i-Zalmayan" (Awakened Youth), came the closest to Marxist-Leninist in terms of their revolutionary and radical approach to politics. Young Afghans was formed in the 1930s as an organisation for fervent nationalists who aspired to reclaim lost Afghan territories on the eastern side of the Durand line. Most of their indignation was directed towards the British and the British installed King Nader Shah. After the assassination of King Nader Shah in 1933, which implicated the Young Afghans, the movement died out. The second liberal reform oriented political coalition, "Wakhi-i-Zalmayan", emerged in 1947 in response to Prime Minister Shah Mahmud's (1946-53) liberalisation of politics. In 1949, around fifty members of the movement were elected to the lower house of the seventh National Assembly (1949-52) where they voiced their indignation over various aspects of the government's domestic policy. In foreign affairs, this movement was the pioneer of the cause of "Pushtunistan", which won it more adherents, including a young army officer from the royal family, Prince Mohammed Daoud, than its platform of domestic reforms had done. During this period, a number of newspapers critical of the Mohammadzai family and of religious elements in Afghan society also emerged. They included Watan (homeland), Angar (the flame), Naday-i-Khalq (voice of the masses) and Wolus. The ensuing opposition made the government so apprehensive about the stability of its status quo, that towards the end of the 1952 Parliamentary term several

members of Wakhi-i-Zalmayan were either imprisoned or sent into exile. Further to this, the freedom of the press was withdrawn.<sup>21</sup>

The ten years of Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud (1953-63), Shah Mahmud's successor, were characterised by an emphasis on economic progress, educational advancement and increasing the strength of the Afghan armed forces to the neglect of political development. Daoud's royal status, his, overbearing personality, his military background and ruthless and dogmatic style of rule meant that the chances of opposition developing were kept to a minimum. However, with the expansion of the economy and educational facilities there was a growing need for the absorption of the newly educated stratum of Afghan society, the so called "Tabaqai-i-Munawar" (intelligentsia), into the apparatus of the state administration, and for a diversification of the decision making process.<sup>22</sup> This was a difficult state of affairs to achieve in a society where status was largely ascribed, and where the degree of social advancement was determined by ethnic, family and tribal divisions. Nevertheless, aware of the changing political mood of the populace, in a series of letters to the king, Daoud suggested various proposals for political reforms in Afghanistan. The basic purpose of these proposals was to downgrade the royal's family predominance in politics and to introduce "the system of Parliamentary Democracy with King Zahir Shah serving only as a Constitutional monarch. The government was to be formed by the majority party in the parliament and would alone be responsible for running the affairs of the state."<sup>23</sup> The more immediate and pertinent cause of Daoud's demise did not, however, arise over his domestic policies, but rather a foreign policy issue. This was his excessive emotional attachment to the Pushtunistan dispute with Pakistan which was making Afghanistan overly

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<sup>21</sup>A. Arnold, Afghanistan's Two Party Communism, Parcham and Khalq (California: Hoover Institution Press, 1983) pp.1-11 & H. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union (Durham: Duke Press Policy studies, 1983) p. 34-35.

<sup>22</sup> L. Dupree, Afghanistan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973) pp. 554-558.

<sup>23</sup>H. Kakar, "The Fall of the Afghan Monarchy in 1973" International Journal of Middle East Studies (Volume 9, 1978) p. 199.

dependent on the Soviet Union for economic and military aid. He resigned in 1963.

Daoud's proposed series of political reforms were embodied in a new Constitution of 1964, which was approved by a specially summoned Loya Jirga or grand assembly in October 1964. Two elections in 1965 and 1969 were held under this constitution, while the third, scheduled for September 1973, failed to materialise owing to a coup against the King. Article 24 of the Constitution stated that, "the members of the royal household shall not hold the following offices, Prime Ministers, or Ministers, members of Parliament, Justice of the Supreme Court." <sup>24</sup> But in reality, dynastic control over politics was perpetuated under the Constitution which stated that the king was not accountable to anyone. Article 15 gave the King the power to nominate the Prime minister, other ministers and top civil and military official and judicial personal," <sup>25</sup> and he retained a significant degree of political authority vis-a-vis the executive (government). This not only hindered the growth of strong government against either the monarch or the Parliament (Wolesi Jirga), but also undermined the ability for successive Afghan governments between 1965-73 to take political initiatives and to act independently in meeting the challenges of the state's political instability. To ensure their survival, the governments were subservient to King Zahir Shah, but he was reluctant to intervene decisively on their behalf in a time of crisis. Another example of the king's vacillation was his reluctance to implement fully the constitutional reforms. In 1965, he refused to ratify three important bills passed by the parliament (Wolesi Jirga), namely the political parties bill, the municipalities bill, and the provincial council bill. The consequent prohibition on the legalisation of political parties not only hindered the evolution and development of a spectrum of moderate and diverse political

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<sup>24</sup> A. Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (California: Hoover International Studies, 1985) p. 46.

<sup>25</sup> L. Dupree, *Afghanistan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973) pp. 499-600.

groupings, but also smacked of King Zahir Shah's reluctance to give up his jurisdiction over politics in view of the strengthening of the anti-monarchy forces in Afghanistan.

As with the case of the 1951 Press law, and as a consequence of the Press Freedom enshrined in the Constitution passed in 1965, thirty newspapers in both Dari and Pushto languages emerged. Soon the newspapers were closed down by the government due to apprehension over excesses committed by these various weeklies. These newspaperers propagated anti-Islamic, anti-constitutional, and anti-monarchical views. The most outspoken weeklies were affiliated with the left-wing political groups and their names were synonymous with the names of the different political factions that they represented. They included, "Khalq", published between April and May 1966. Its publisher was Nur Mohammed Taraki and it was edited by Bareq Shafiyee and was banned after six issues. "Parcham", edited by Suleiman Layek and Mir Akbar Khyber, was published between March 1968-July 1969. "Shula-i-Javed" (eternal flame) represented a pro-Peking Maoist splinter group of the PDPA and was published and edited by Dr. Rahim Mahmudi before being closed by the 1969 elections. Other influential newspapers included: "Afghan Millat" (Afghan nation), a nationalist newspaper published between 1966-73 advocating the cause of "Pathans"; "Masawat" (Equality), published by the People's Democratic Party of Prime Minister Mohammed Hashim Maiwandwal; and lastly, "Gahiz" (Morning), which was a right wing conservative religious weekly, published between 1968 to 1972 by Menhaj-uddin Gahiz.<sup>26</sup>

Another important feature of the Constitutional period in which left-wing political influence was mobilised, was the fact that the Afghan monarchy,

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<sup>26</sup>A. Hayman, Afghanistan under Soviet Domination, 1964-91 (London: Macmillan limited, 1982) pp.58-62 & Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan under the Khalq" in Problems of Communism (Vol. 28, No. 4, 1979) pp. 35-38.

traditionally accustomed to an authoritarian and repressive approach to politics, was increasingly unable to deal effectively with the multiple challenges arising out of the process of political liberalisation. There were a variety of sources of unrest in Afghan society during the constitutional period. Firstly, the first parliament (1965) was characterised by the adoption of disruptive political practices against the government of Prime Minister Mohammed Yosuf by the four elected left-wing supporters, Babrak Karmal, Anahita Retabzad, Nur Ahmed Nur, and Fezan ul Haq. On 25 October, 1965, they led to violent clashes between demonstrators and the police which resulted in the deaths of three students. This event not only led to the resignation of the Prime Minister, but also set a precedent for open agitation against the government. Secondly, the period was marred by frequent political clashes between the right-wing conservative and religious political groups and the left-wing groups. Historically, religious opposition against government reforms in Afghanistan was led by the Mujadidi family, and in 1967, influenced by the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimin or the Muslim brotherhood in Egypt and Jamait-i-Islami of Maulana Abdullah Maudoodi in Pakistan, "the educated urban elements the Afghan religious groups organised themselves into various factions." <sup>27</sup> During the constitutional period (1965-73), their effectiveness was limited, but their agitation against the liberation of women and leftist influence in Afghanistan, besides causing frequent law and order problems, led to extreme polarisation of politics by the early 1970s. Thirdly, there was a prevailing general dissatisfaction among university students, teaching staff, the members of the newly emergent middle class, and the armed forces. In addition, there were a number of factors intrinsic to the Afghan political culture which also inadvertently contributed to the failure of the democratic experiment in Afghanistan. These included divisions and political squabbling among the leaders of nascent political groups, and the inadequacy of popular national leaders outside the mainstream of the

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<sup>27</sup> *Op. Cit.* H. Kakar, "The Fall of the Afghan Monarchy in 1973" p. 203.

Afghan ruling oligarchy. All the above mentioned factors heightened the feelings of public discontent and, combined with the cumulative effect of eight years of political stasis, economic problems, and administrative inefficiencies in handling the famine of 1969-72, led to the downfall of the Afghan monarchy in 1973.

The inception of the Peoples' Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) on 1 January 1965 marked the beginning of an era of organised left-wing political activity in Afghanistan. It came into existence in response to King Zahir Shah's avowed intent to abolish the royal family's exclusive preserve on politics, and instead to entrust the responsibility of running the state to the elected representatives of the people. The birth place of the PDPA was the house of Nur Mohammed Taraki, a left-wing poet and writer who, in 1978, became the first communist leader in Afghanistan. Twenty seven members (in some sources twenty nine) gathered in Taraki's house near Kabul for the official inauguration of the party, and elected Nur Mohammed Taraki as the Secretary General of the party and Babrak Karmal as the Deputy Secretary General. The congregation also elected five additional candidates as full members, and four as alternate members of the Central Committee.<sup>28</sup> In its structure and aims, the PDPA closely resembled the CPSU. For example, Article 1 of the PDPA constitution stated that, "the PDPA is the highest political organ and the vanguard of the working class and labourers in Afghanistan. The PDPA, whose ideology is the practical experience of Marxism and Leninism is founded on the voluntary union of the progressive and informed people of Afghanistan; the workers, peasants, artisans and intellectuals of the state."<sup>29</sup> Its goals were classified as, "building a socialist society in Afghanistan based on adopting the morals, general truths and

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<sup>28</sup> The full members were, "Taraki, Karmal, Ghulam Dastagir Panjshiri, Dr. Saleh Mohammed Ziray, Shahrollah Shahpur, Sultan Ali Keshtmand, and Tahir Badakshi. Alternate members included, Dr. Shah Wali, Karim Misaq, Dr. Mohammed Tahir and Abdul Wahab Safi." *Op. Cit.* H. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union p.43.

<sup>29</sup>B. S. Gupta, Afghanistan, Politics, Economics and Society, (London: Francis Pinter Publishers, 1984) p. 46.

revolutionary principles of Marxism and Leninism to conditions in Afghanistan."<sup>30</sup>

As with the analysis of any other organised political activity, certain factors, like the PDPA recruitment policy, nature of its membership, the methods of its political practice, and the general political milieu in which it had to operate, are important variables for determining its true colours. An additional factor to be considered is the splitting of the PDPA into two factions in 1967, namely Khalq (masses), led by Nur Mohammed Taraki, and Parcham (banner) led by Babrak Karmal. This division, which was based upon both the socio-economic background of its leadership and the controversy over the methods and tactics to be adopted in the pursuit of the PDPA's political objectives, had important repercussions for the subsequent course of Afghan political history and this will be shown later. The Parcham faction was oriented towards the educated urban elites from diverse ethnic backgrounds, but mostly Tajik's. Khalq, on the other hand, was mostly composed of rural middle class Pathans. As regards tactics, Khalq advocated a radical revolutionary approach to politics to gain power, whereas Parcham was more moderate in its approach and inclined to work within the democratic framework to win adherents. During its formative years the PDPA mobilised its strength amongst a modest proportion of students, teachers, older intellectuals and the representatives of the media.<sup>31</sup> A significant feature of its formative stage is the fact that the military was not represented in any significant degree among its adherents.

In 1973, Daoud and the PDPA found common ground in opposition to the pseudo- democracy of King Zahir Shah. There were several reasons for Daoud-Parcham collaboration. They had motive and the timing was right. The political

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<sup>30</sup>*Op. Cit.* Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union p. 44.

<sup>31</sup>*Op. Cit.* A. Arnold, Afghanistan : The Soviet Invasion in Perspective p. 58-60.

climate in Afghanistan in 1973 was unstable and the parliament was incapacitated. A good illustration of this is the fact that between 1965 and 1973 there was a succession of five Prime Ministers, namely Mohammed Yusuf, Mohammed Hashim Miawandwal, Dr. Abdul Zahir, Mosa Shafiq Kamawi and Nur Ahmad Etemadi. The authority of the king was vacillating, corruption and inefficiency were prevalent and Prime Minister Mosa Shafiq's government was imperceptibly adopting a pro-western attitude. Furthermore, there were reports that former Prime Minister Miawandwal and his anti-communist party, the Peoples' Democratic Party, were planning a coup against the government of Mosa Shafiq.<sup>32</sup>

As mentioned earlier, because Daoud was the member of the royal family (cousin and brother in law of the King), he was barred from politics under Article 24 of the 1964 Constitution. In order to regain power he moved closer to the left-wing military officers belonging to the Parcham faction of the PDPA. His elite background was more in keeping with the Parcham faction, than with Khalq, which, true to its membership, was still advocating the formation of a workers party. It was only in the mid 1970s that Khalq, acting in fear of being eclipsed by the Daoud-Parcham coalition, embarked upon its own military recruitment policy. For the PDPA, the prospect of co-operation with Daoud in an attempted revolutionary take-over of the government was an attractive option. The PDPA's combined strength had greatly waned following the split of 1967, and the 1969 elections had further decreased their representation in the Parliament. This was the result of both Mosa Shafiq's government interfering in the elections and the government's repressive measures against the party because of its increasing identification with riots and demonstrations. Only two PDPA candidates, Babrak Karmal and Hafiz ullah Amin, were elected in the 1969 elections. Thereafter the PDPA (Parcham) went underground and broadened its

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<sup>32</sup>*Op. Cit.* A. Arnold, Afghanistan : The Soviet invasion in perspective p. 58-60.

recruitment policy to include the dissatisfied and pro left-wing members of the Afghan military.

Afghanistan's subservience to Soviet military aid began in 1956, under the premiership of Mohammed Daoud. It was a time when Afghanistan faced with the US intransigent attitude towards granting military aid. The reason for this was Afghanistan's territorial dispute with Pakistan, who was the principal U.S ally in the region at that time. Daoud turned to the Soviet Union for arms, in order to modernise and build-up the ill-equipped Afghan armed forces. The Soviet military aid programme was quite extensive, and an average of 200 Afghan officers were sent to the Soviet Union every year.<sup>33</sup> By the 1970s, the Afghan infantry force of approximately 78,000 personnel was equipped with Soviet T-34 and T-54 tanks, and an airforce of 6,000 personnel had 120 combat aircraft, Ilyushin bombers, Mig fighters and Antonov transport planes of Soviet origin.<sup>34</sup> Thus, by, "1970 approximately 7,000 military officers were trained in Russia and Czechoslovakia."<sup>35</sup> These Soviet trained officers harboured resentment towards various aspects of the establishment, most notably the domination by the Pushtun and Tajik groups in the army, low wages, slow promotions, and suspicion of the Soviet trained officers by their senior western trained counterparts. Owing to the greater awareness of social inequality by the young officers trained in the Soviet Union, there was a high degree of resentment against the privileged status of the Mohammadzai dynasty. Moreover, the commander-in-chief of the Afghan armed forces, General Abdul Wali Khan, son in law of the King, was unpopular as a result of his excessive power and overbearing control of the army. Daoud still had the loyalty of a significant proportion of army officers.

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<sup>33</sup>H. Negaran, "The Afghan Coup of April 1978: Revolution and International Security" *Orbis*, (Vol. 23, No.9, 1979) p. 98.

<sup>34</sup>*Op. Cit.* F. Halliday, p. 27.

<sup>35</sup>*Op. Cit.* H. Kakar, "The Fall of the Afghan Monarchy in 1973" p. 212.

The Saur Revolution in 1978, marked the beginning of substantial increase in direct Soviet role in Afghanistan. In the aftermath of this revolution Daoud lost power to the Afghan Communist Party (PDPA). His diplomatic efforts to play off both the Superpowers against each other, while still be able to retain Afghanistan independence and non-alignment proved unsuccessful. The aftermath of the Saur Revolution in April 1978 and the reasons for the Soviet decision to invade are the subject of part 11 of the thesis.

Part I of the thesis has addressed the issue of the slow rate of political development in Afghanistan. It has extrapolated the reasons for the difficulties encountered by the successive Afghan governments in achieving the twin goals of state building and nation building in Afghanistan. An analysis of the Afghan political and social history from 1747-1979 puts into better perspective the reasons for the disintegration and collapse of the Afghan state in the Post-Cold War period. The decentralised state structure and the political culture of Afghanistan played an important role in the failure of the Afghan state in the post 1992 period. But the causes for the failure of the Afghan state go deeper than the structure of it's society or the fragile basis of legitimacy based on traditional sources of authority. States differ in their capabilities and not all modern states are strong states. In fact majority of the Third World states can be categorised as weak states. State collapse is a gradual process and a culmination of several variables. After World War II the process of political development in Afghanistan was affected by the Cold War politics between the Superpowers at the global level. Thus, the sections in Chapter two trace the course of Afghan foreign relations with Pakistan, the US and the Soviet Union from 1948-1979 in order show the important influence the bipolar structure of international relations had on Afghan domestic politics. The analysis in chapter two of part one

supports the neo-realists argument that the structure of the international relations exerts a strong influence on state behaviour.

## PART II

### CHAPTER ONE

Part II of the thesis will discuss the role of Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union and the UN in the Afghan conflict during the Cold War period 1979-1988. At the end of part II a brief conclusion will summarise some of the issues discussed in these four chapters, and relate them to some of core assumptions of the theoretical framework adopted.

#### **2.1.1 Pakistan's Foreign Policy Towards the Conflict in Afghanistan, 1979-1988.**

The distinctive feature of the study of foreign policy is that it consists of an area of research which bridges the boundary between the nation state and its international environment.<sup>1</sup> For the student of international politics traditionally the domestic political processes of various states have been of secondary importance, and likewise the students of political science will relegate to secondary status the importance of the international processes taking place beyond the legitimate boundaries of a nation state. But the study of foreign policy involves not only the examination of the actions or stimuli of states which they initiate to modify the behaviour of external actors, but also the results of such stimuli assessed in terms of variations in the behaviour patterns of the objects of modification attempts i.e. reaction. It can be further argued that the characteristics of foreign policy are embedded neither solely in the sources of behaviour, nor solely displayed in the external reactions of other states, though tracing causation among a vast array of sources of behaviour can be a difficult task in itself but involves the study of an intervening stage of how the stimuli for external behaviour are converted into external behaviour. This stage impinges on the study of the biases, perceptions and attitudes of the policy makers, the capabilities, values and goals of a society, the organisational structure of the policy making machinery, the amount of information available, competition

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<sup>1</sup>W. Wallace, Foreign Policy and the Political Process (London: Macmillan Press, 1971)p.7.

among the different government departments, the nature of the issue and the readiness of the policy makers to commit resources. These are examples of some of the intervening factors affecting the formulation of decisions in the field of foreign policy. This overlap in the demarcation of the boundaries of the field, and in the delineation of the sources of foreign policy has not only rendered difficult the definition of the various characteristics of the field but is also reflected in the area of research primarily in the formulation of theoretical approaches for the study of foreign policy.

According to Rosenau two basic problems seem to be hindering the theoretical development in the field of foreign policy, one conceptual and the other philosophical. Discussion here will focus on the philosophical problem. Lack of theoretical development in foreign policy is attributable chiefly to the non availability of relevant data which has been similarly processed for the purpose of comparison. Research in the field of foreign policy has been exhausted as far as the identification of the different variables which affect the behaviour of the states is concerned but is neglected when it comes to linking these variables in a chain of causal sequences.<sup>2</sup> Two reasons account for this neglect: firstly each event and each state is considered unique thus foreclosing the option for comparison, secondly, since it is difficult to locate causation in international affairs researchers are not obliged to be consistent in ascribing causation to different variables; rather flexibility and avoidance of deterministic approaches are considered to be the hallmarks of research. Rosenau argues, however, that through the application of a pre theory of foreign policy these problems can be minimised. A pre theory of foreign policy involves analysing the external behaviour of states under five categories, Individual, Role, Governmental, Societal and Systemic variables.<sup>3</sup> This categorisation serves not only as a useful

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<sup>2</sup> "Pre theories and theories of Foreign Policy," in J. M. Rosenau, The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy (London: Francis Pinter Publishers Ltd., 1980)p.119.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.* p.128.

framework under which data can be organised, but researchers can also then proceed to attempt to measure the relative strength of the identified variables in any case study. The task of attaching rankings to the identified variables is not an easy one, for variables can be categorised differently by different observers even when studying the same event. But this should not be taken to mean that the application of the pre theory of foreign policy is obsolete. Rather allowance can be made for the avoidance of fixed rankings, and for the procurement of a guide to the weight of different sources or variables of external behaviour which must always be flexible. This can serve as a useful first step for the formulation of a theory of foreign policy. The purpose of this exercise would be that the researchers would be using the same tools or variables of analysis in extrapolating causation out of an infinite variety of data, and also would be under the same compulsion to attach priorities to different variables which they would then back up with sufficient evidence and explanations.<sup>4</sup>

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, besides posing a serious threat to Pakistan's security, also served to increase its strategic importance. With the loss of Afghanistan as a buffer state between the Soviet Union and South Asia, Pakistan overnight became a "front-line state,"<sup>5</sup> a "linchpin" of defence against any further Soviet encroachments in the region. The ambivalent attitude of President Carter's administration towards Pakistan was replaced by renewed attempts to enlist Pakistan's co-operation to pre-empt any further Soviet moves southwards in the direction of the Persian Gulf. But Pakistan reacted to the Soviet invasion with a much more cautious policy. It diversified its options and adopted a multifaceted policy of "limited liability."<sup>6</sup> This caution was derived from the following considerations: firstly, the nature of the security

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<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.* p.129-136.

<sup>5</sup> William I. Richter, "Pakistan: A New Front-line State?", *Current History*, Vol. 81, No. 175, May 1982, p., 205.

<sup>6</sup> W. Howard Wriggins, "Pakistan's Search For a Foreign Policy after the Invasion of Afghanistan", *Pacific Affairs*, Summer 1984, p., 302.

threat posed by the Soviet invasion and Pakistan's assessments of the implications of the Soviet action for its own security; secondly, the constraints posed by the geopolitical regional environment as well as by the domestic political and economic problems faced by the military regime of President Zia ul Haq and thirdly, the impact of the nature of United States-Pakistan relations during President Carter's administration and the divergence of the threat perception of both states. A brief elaboration of these factors will serve to clarify the nature and motives of the diplomatic aspect of Pakistan's Afghan policy and also bring to the surface the discussion of another interrelated but covert aspect of Pakistan's Afghan policy, the military aspect, which involved providing material assistance to the Afghan Mujahideen through the Inter Services Intelligence Agency (ISI).

On 28<sup>th</sup> December, 1979, the Soviet ambassador to Pakistan Mr. S. Azimov called on President Zia-al-Haq to deliver an urgent message from the Soviet leaders. The message implied that a limited Soviet contingent had been sent into Afghanistan at her request to put down foreign military interference from across Pakistan's border. When the ambassador was asked on whose request the Soviet forces had been sent into Afghanistan, his prompt reply was "Barbark Karmal."<sup>7</sup> When it was inquired in what legal capacity Babrak Karmal had requested aid, when he held no position of authority in Kabul, the ambassador hesitated in his reply and failed to provide a satisfactory answer. Later Moscow announced that the Soviet forces had been sent into Afghanistan on a request made by Afghanistan under the Soviet-Afghan treaty of friendship of 1978. But this answer was seen in Pakistan as an excuse by the Soviets to legitimise their aggression.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>General (ret'd) Khalid Mahmud Arif, "Success of Afghan policy," Dawn, Karachi, 19 May, 1992.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

Given the already present danger of the Indian threat on Pakistan's eastern border, the presence of 100,000 Soviet troops along the 1500 mile long frontier with Afghanistan on its western border was a nightmare for Pakistan's policy makers. In evaluating a response to the Soviet invasion, Pakistan's foremost concern was the negative implications of the Soviet action for Pakistan's own security. Pakistan's policy makers felt that if unopposed the Soviet action would set a dangerous precedent in the region for a super power to violate the sovereignty and independence of a small state through the use of force.<sup>9</sup> Given Pakistan's own experience of the 1971 war with India, in which Indian Soviet Collaboration resulted in the dismemberment of East Pakistan, such a concern was not merely an exaggerated scenario but a grim prospect.

On the other hand Pakistan was fully aware of the consequences of adopting a confrontational stance towards the Soviet Union. This sensitivity arose from the fact that Pakistan's own relations with Afghanistan had always been tense over the issue of Pushtunistan and over the disputed legality of the Durand line, i.e. Pakistan's western border with Afghanistan. This line was drawn in 1893 after negotiations between the Afghan King Amir Abdur Rahman and from the British side, Sir Henry M. Durand. But successive Afghan governments had refused to accept the legality of the Durand line on the pretext that it was imposed by the British on Afghanistan and signed under duress.<sup>10</sup> After the British withdrawal from the subcontinent in 1947 Pakistan inherited the disputed border with Afghanistan. With the coming to power of Mohammed Daoud in Afghanistan in 1955, relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan deteriorated on several occasions. After Pakistan joined the western sponsored defence alliances viz., South East treaty Organisation in September 1954 and the Baghdad Pact in

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<sup>9</sup> Agha Shahi, Pakistan's Security and Foreign Policy (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1988)p.7-8.

<sup>10</sup>S.M .Burke, Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An historical Analysis (Karachi : Oxford University Press, 1990) pp. 68-90.

September 1955 against communism in the mid 1950's, the Soviet Union came out openly in favour of the Afghan position on the Pushtunistan issue. The Baghdad Pact was renamed as Central Treaty Organisation following the defection of Iraq in 1958 after a coup d'état in Iraq. It was only in 1975-76, in view of the mounting domestic political opposition to his rule, that Daoud toned down his hostile propaganda against Pakistan. With the Shah of Iran's mediation, negotiations were underway to seek an amicable settlement of the border problem.<sup>11</sup>

This trend was reversed with the communist coup of 1978 in Afghanistan, which overthrew the government of Mohammed Daoud and brought to power the Marxist government of Nur Mohammed Taraki. The Marxist regimes of both Taraki and his successor Hafizullah Amin reverted back to hostile propaganda against Pakistan, and accused Pakistan of meddling in the internal affairs of Afghanistan by providing assistance to the Afghan resistance against the government in Kabul.

Under such prevailing circumstances the Soviet invasion rendered Pakistan apprehensive lest its confrontational posture towards the Soviet Union could provide the Soviet union with a pretext either to fuel ethnic unrest within Pakistan, or to provide support to the dissident elements within Pakistan to revolt against the government. Pakistan was thus not only confronted with a two front threat scenario, i.e. the threat from India on its eastern border, and the threat arising from the presence of Soviet troops on its western border but also faced with the possibility of an implicit threat of externally aided subversion within Pakistan.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Abdul Samad Ghaus, The Fall of Afghanistan (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's Int. Defence Publishers, 1980) p.130-140.

<sup>12</sup> P. I. Cheema, "The Afghanistan Crisis and Pakistan's Security dilemma," in Asian Survey (Vol. XXIII, No. 3, 1983) pp.240-241.

Based on these considerations a high level meeting was held in Islamabad, soon after the Soviet invasion to evaluate the policy options (shown below) available to Pakistan at that time.

1) "To confront the Soviet Union directly by participating in the Afghan resistance."

2) "To acquiesce in the "fait accompli" imposed by the Soviet Union with all its attendant security and political implications."

3) "To protest about the Soviet action; its violation of accepted international norms in the international forums of the United Nations, the Islamic conference, the non aligned movement short of a confrontation with the Soviet Union, while seeking to strengthen Pakistan's security politically and its defensive capability but without aligning itself with one side or the other in super power confrontation."<sup>13</sup>

Pakistan decided to adopt the third option. It was a prudent move by which Pakistan, through its efforts to mobilise world opinion against the Soviet Union, not only gained international prestige, but also gained greater leverage to negotiate with the United States, from a position of strength, the terms and conditions of a military and economic aid package in 1981. It also made it possible for Pakistan to set the modality of its involvement in providing support to the Afghan resistance.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan gave a renewed prominence to the military government of President Zia-ul-Haq. The regime, after overthrowing the democratically elected leader Prime Minister Zulifquar Ali Bhutto in July 1977, was domestically unpopular, due to its broken promises to hold elections. The regime also suffered a severe further setback, in April 1979, with regard to

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<sup>13</sup>*op. cit.*, Shahi, Pakistan's Security and Foreign Policy, p.50.

international prestige, among the western and Islamic states, after the execution of Prime Minister Bhutto. Economically it faced an acute crisis when the IMF and the World Bank refused to reschedule the repayments of its outstanding debt.<sup>14</sup> At the regional level profound political changes were taking place. The Islamic revolution in Iran in February 1980, ousted the Shah of Iran and in Afghanistan the overthrow of the government of Mohammed Daoud in April 1978, was followed by the elimination of the governments of Taraki and Hafizullah Amin in quick succession. In India the pro Moscow government of Indira Gandhi returned to power in January 1980. These internal and external regional political developments had important negative repercussions for Pakistan in terms of undermining its security, and rendering it vulnerable to outside interference in its domestic politics.

Another factor impinging on the evolution of Pakistan's policy on Afghanistan during the initial period was the fact that United States-Pakistan relations during the Carter administration lacked mutual credibility. The major irritant in U-S Pakistan relations was Pakistan's nuclear programme, which led to the suspension of United States economic and military aid to Pakistan in August 1978 and April 1979, under the Glenn and Symington amendments.<sup>15</sup> Strategically, too, Pakistan was of less significance to the United States, whose foreign policy during the Carter administration was based on the concept of 'regional influentials' and relied on Iran as the basic pillar to promote United States interests in the region.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Bhabani Sen Gupta, The Afghan Syndrome (London: Groom Helm Publishers, 1982)pp.141-159.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Perry Thornton, "Between the Stools? U.S policy towards Pakistan during the Carter Administration", Asian Survey, Vol. XXII, No. 10, October 1982, p., 962.

<sup>16</sup> Mushahid Hussain, Pakistan and the Changing Regional Scenario (Lahore: Progressive publishers, 1988)p.8.

With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, however, the whole context of the relationship between the United States and Pakistan changed. The United States saw the Soviet invasion as a serious threat to its interests in the region. After the loss of Iran, Pakistan offered the only possibility of support against any further Soviet advance in the region. But within Pakistan opinion was divided over the issue of leaning too heavily towards the United States.

Whereas the military in Pakistan saw a dramatic change in the security environment of Pakistan which could be offset only by accepting United States foreign assistance, the Foreign office was ambiguous about the reliability of the United States support to Pakistan. Instead it emphasised the use of a diplomatic alternative to force the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. Since Pakistan had left CENTO in March 1979, Pakistan's foreign Minister Agha Shahi was keen to rely on the support of the non-aligned states and on the friendship of China and Saudi Arabia to circumvent the possibility of any adverse Soviet action against Pakistan.

Pakistan's response in favour of diversifying its options was also the consequence of the perceived inadequacy of the United States aid offered to Pakistan in January 1980.<sup>17</sup> The \$400 million aid divided equally between economic and military aid was deemed wholly inadequate from Pakistan's perspective. Within Pakistan there was ambiguity, firstly as to whether or not Pakistan was included in the Persian Gulf region delineated to be of vital interest to United States security. Secondly, there was doubt whether or not the United States' offers of commitment to Pakistan's defence included protection against any possible Indian threat. Thirdly there was concern over the United States unwillingness to accede to Pakistan's request that the 1959 Security assistance agreement between Pakistan and the United States be given the status of a

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<sup>17</sup> Theodore L. Eliot & Robert L. Pfaltzgraff Jr, The Red Army on Pakistan's Border, Policy Implications for the US (New York: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1986) pp. 19-43.

treaty.<sup>18</sup> These issues were discussed during the visit to Pakistan of the United States Under Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Carter's National Security advisor Brzezinski on 2-3 February 1980. Because the issues could not be satisfactorily resolved, President Zia rejected the offer of United States aid as "peanuts"<sup>19</sup> and added that, "such a paltry sum, would diminish, not enhance Pakistan's security because of provoking potential aggressors."<sup>20</sup> However it is important to emphasise that while Pakistan rejected the amount of aid, it did not foreclose the possibility of acceptance if the aid was raised to a level acceptable to Pakistan. In the interim Pakistan decided to await the outcome of the US presidential elections in November 1980 and instead embarked on the use of the diplomatic option.

A narrative of Pakistan's initial diplomatic efforts in the UNO, OIC and NAM, reveals a laudable contribution on the part of Pakistan in terms of not only being in the forefront of efforts to mobilise international public opinion against the Soviet military invasion in Afghanistan but also in its ingenuity in supplementing the above strategy through negotiations with the aim of finding a comprehensive political solution to the Afghan problem. The predominant feature of Pakistan's foreign policy during the period 1980-82 was acting on the basis of self interest Pakistan sought to broaden its base of support for its Afghan policy by its reliance on not only the United Nations but also the Non-aligned Movement and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference. In other words Pakistan relied on the support of the Islamic and the Third World states. The same consideration of self interest was also apparent in its pursuit of a negotiated solution of the Afghan problem. This was motivated by the following

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<sup>18</sup> Hafeez Malik, "Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan and its Impact on Pakistan's Foreign Policy", in Soviet American Relations with Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan, ( London: Macmillan Press, 87) , p. 131-133. Also see, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Power and Principles 1977-1981, ( London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983), p., 448-49.

<sup>19</sup>*Op. cit.* , Thornton, Between the Stools, p. , 971.

<sup>20</sup> Kamal Matinuddin, Power Struggle in the Hindu Kush: Afghanistan 1978-1991, ( Lahore: Wajidalis, 1991), p. , 125.

considerations: firstly, a realisation that the Afghan resistance alone could not force the Soviets to abandon their support of the government in Kabul: secondly, the desire to avert the possibility of Soviet retaliation against Pakistan, and finally, the need to counter domestic criticism of its Afghan policy. Moreover, the presence of 2.6 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan served as an additional pressure to seek an early solution of the Afghan problem.<sup>21</sup>

The impetus for seeking a negotiated settlement of the Afghan problem was provided by various West European peace proposals on Afghanistan and the Soviet Union's counter proposals in the first six months of 1980. After its initial reluctance to discuss either the question of the internal settlement of the Afghan problem or the issue of the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the Soviet Union, under pressure from the overwhelming negative opinion generated by their action, felt compelled to make a response. The predominant Soviet concern over these issues was embodied in the proposals of May 14th 1980 and 24 August, 1980, from Moscow which, besides laying down the precondition of direct talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan for the normalisation of relations between the two states, also demanded guarantees of non interference from Pakistan, Iran and the United States as a prerequisite for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.<sup>22</sup> These two predominant Soviet concerns were also reflected in preliminary discussions over the evolution of the format of the United Nations sponsored peace talks on Afghanistan. The initiative for the involvement of the United Nations was provided by Pakistan during the debate on Afghanistan in the thirty fifth UN General Assembly session in November 1980.

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<sup>21</sup>Riaz M. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot. Negotiating Soviet Withdrawal (Princeton: Duke University Press, 1992)p.30, also, Mushahid Hussain, Geneva Talks on Afghanistan ; Chances Remain for a Historic Compromise, The Muslim, Islamabad, 13 May 1982.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* Riaz Mohammed, p. , 28-29.

Whereas Moscow's concern over direct talks betrayed its concern to secure legitimacy for the government in Kabul, Pakistan resolutely rejected the proposal for direct negotiation with Afghanistan. Pakistan's position was embodied in the United Nations General Assembly resolution of November 1980 on Afghanistan, which laid down the following principles for political settlement on Afghanistan viz.,

- 1) "Preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan."
- 2) "The right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind."
- 3) "Immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan."
- 4) "Creation of the necessary conditions which would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour."<sup>23</sup>

In view of the Soviet refusal to discuss the question of the future regime in Kabul, the principle of the right of the Afghan people to self determination was not included in the Geneva talks. It was only in 1986 that Moscow proposed the formation of the government of "National reconciliation" in Kabul, but by then the Afghan resistance was unwilling for any compromise on the issue.<sup>24</sup> The four agenda items agreed to be included in the Geneva talks were: i) non interference in each other's internal affairs; ii) international guarantees against intervention; iii) withdrawal of the Soviet troops and iv) the return of the refugees. In an attempt to reconcile the divergent views of Pakistan and The Soviet Union, all the issues were interlinked meaning that they would be implemented only if agreement had been secured on all of them.

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<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.* p. 38. also See, Interview with Mr. Agha Shahi published in , *Zindagi*, May 14, 1992.

<sup>24</sup>Interview with Mr. Riaz Mohammed Khan, Director General of the Afghan Cell, Pakistan Foreign office, Islamabad, 26 May 1992.

The Geneva Negotiations on Afghanistan reflect an important aspect of Pakistan's Afghan policy. The preliminary delineation of the agenda items, subsequent modifications in the format of the negotiations, and the eventual fruition of the settlement, not only portray the difficulties inherent in reconciling the conflicting objectives of the negotiators, but also make explicit, the dextrous manoeuvrability required on part of the participants to maximise or otherwise seek to safeguard their respective interests, in accordance with the evolving military and political circumstances. Lastly, the study of Geneva negotiations unveil a diplomatic process which germinated through the fluctuating regional, domestic and international political climate of the period under review i.e, 1982-1988.

As mentioned earlier, in order to enable the negotiations to commence, both Pakistan and the Soviet Union had conceded to give up some of their principal concerns, e.g. faced with the prospect of Pakistan's non recognition of the Soviet installed Kabul regime, the Soviets dropped their insistence on direct talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Reciprocally Pakistan retracted from its demand for the inclusion of the Principle of Afghan self-determination, and its concomitant implications for the shape of the future government in Afghanistan, from the text of the Geneva settlement. But though these demands were obviated from the text of the agenda, they remained deeply entrenched in the minds of their respective benefactors, and haunted the negotiations at regular intervals, along with other non congruities in the resolution of other agenda items.

The first concrete manifestation of the difficulties inherent in resolving the differences in priorities attached to different agenda items by the interlocutors occurred during the second round of the Geneva negotiations held in two sessions in April and June 1983. At the time, confronted by the overwhelming opposition from the Afghan resistance forces, Brezhnev's successor, Yuri

Andropov, publicly admitted for the first time the difficulties encountered by the Soviet troops in their attempts to pacify the indigenous Afghan resistance against the Soviet installed regime of Babrak Karmal.<sup>25</sup> This realisation instilled a new flexibility in the Soviet attitude, evident in their greater receptivity to the United Nations negotiations to seek a resolution of the Afghan crisis.

Encouraged by the Soviet attitude and anticipating a breakthrough in the negotiations, the United Nations mediator, Diego Cordovez evolved a draft text for the settlement, comprising four sections corresponding to the four agenda items previously agreed upon. During the course of the second round of the Geneva negotiations held in April 1983, Diego Cordovez secured Pakistan's formal acceptance of the broad contours of the non-interference principle, a major Soviet demand, incorporated in Section II of the draft text. This acceptance was backed by a concomitant assurance by Cordovez for the reciprocal resolution of the remaining issues of fundamental concern to Pakistan, in the ensuing round, primary among which was an assurance to an elicit withdrawal time table in Section I, from the Soviet side. At the resumed round in June 1983 however the negotiations stalled amid mutual mistrust. The Soviets while adhering to their commitment to withdrawal, adopted an intransigent attitude over the question of provision of withdrawal time frame, which they maintained as a bilateral matter between the Soviet Union and Kabul to be settled separately between them, and not within the framework of the United Nations comprehensive settlement. This was obviously unacceptable to Pakistan who insisted on the integrated nature of the settlement. The critics however blamed Pakistan for retracting from its commitment to non-interference under American pressure, over its scepticism about the nature of the future regime in Kabul.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Selig Harrison, *A breakthrough in Afghanistan Foreign Policy*, Summer 1983, pp. 6-10.

<sup>26</sup> Selig Harrison, *A breakthrough in Afghanistan, Foreign Policy*, Summer 1983, pp. 6-10.

The impasse in the negotiations raised the question of the need to change the format of the negotiations to make it more palatable to the Soviets. Consequently, at the fourth Geneva round in June 1985, the agreement was broken into four separate instruments,<sup>27</sup> comprising of two bilateral agreements between Afghanistan and Pakistan, on the principles of non intervention and non interference in each others internal affairs, and in the voluntary return of the Afghan refugees. The third agreement consisted of declarations of international guarantees by the United states and the Soviet Union on the principles of non-interference and non intervention embodied in the bilateral agreement between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. The fourth instrument aimed at the solution to the problem of withdrawal time table from the Soviet side in accordance with a separate Moscow-Kabul agreement.<sup>28</sup> In view of the sensitivity over the question of securing a withdrawal timetable from the Soviet Union it was agreed that this instrument would be the last to be tackled. By December 1985 agreement was reached on the first three instruments through the format of indirect negotiations.

Meanwhile substantial changes in the domestic politics of both the Soviet Union and Pakistan began to have a profound impact on the course of the negotiations. The ascent to power of Mikhail Gorbachev in March 1985, was accompanied by subtle indications from the new Soviet leader of his desire to probe new avenues of co-operation on East West relations, specifically in the field of arms control and solution of the regional problems.<sup>29</sup> Concurrently signs of change in the Soviet attitude towards the Afghan problem began to appear imperceptibly. Within Pakistan the process of gradual transition to democracy was set into

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<sup>27</sup> Mushahid Hussain, Afghan issue: shifting through diplomatic verbiage, Nation, 24 April 1988.

<sup>28</sup> Riaz Mohammed Khan, *op. cit.* p. 136.

<sup>29</sup> Mehrunnisa Ali, Geneva Accords and the Super powers, Pakistan Horizon, No. 3, July 1988. pp. 115-120.

motion, with the holding of elections in February 1985 and the lifting of martial law in December 1985.

The change in Pakistan's domestic politics provided an increased opportunity for the articulation of public opinion against the negative repercussions arising out of the protracted stay of the Afghan refugees on Pakistan's soil. As the economic costs of hosting three million Afghan refugees began to mount, a variety of social and economic problems generated by the large refugee influx began to surface. Moreover an increase in the acts of terrorism and sabotage carried out by the Khad agents disguised as Afghan refugees, and the increasing threats to Pakistan's security arising from the ground and air violations of Pakistan's territory by the Afghan forces provided a strong incentive for the growing public criticism of the government's Afghan policy.<sup>30</sup>

In an attempt to capitalise on the Pakistan's government vulnerability to the domestic criticism of its Afghan policy, the Soviets in August 1985 started to insist on direct talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan for the settlement of Instrument four. Pakistan adamantly rejected this demand, as it betrayed the Soviets' lack of sincerity in resolving Pakistan's basic objective for the political settlement of the Afghan crisis, viz., the unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the repatriation of the Afghan refugees to their homes in safety and honour.

Explaining the rationale of Pakistan's opposition to bilateral talks with the Kabul regime, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Sahib zada Yaqub Ali Khan in a foreign policy debate in Majlis- i-Shoora (Parliament) on 24 December, 1985 said,

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<sup>30</sup>Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, Impact of the Afghan war on Pakistan, Pakistan Horizon, January 1988, pp. 27-39.

"that resort to direct talks with the Kabul regime would amount to recognition of the communist regime of Babrak Karmal imposed on the Afghan people by the use of force. Such an act would not only set a dangerous precedent in the region but would also carry negative implications for Pakistan's own security. It would erode international support for Pakistan's principled stand on Afghanistan and would demoralise the Afghan refugees and would in fact legitimise the present situation in Afghanistan including the presence of Soviet troops as a fait accompli."<sup>31</sup>

As later events proved, Pakistan's apprehensions regarding Soviet intentions on the question of withdrawal were justified. The deadlock over the provision of time frame for the Soviet troop withdrawal persisted for another three years. In the interim the drama of shifting political and military realities in Afghanistan unfolded new areas of concern, the resolution of which required the co-operation from two very important, but heretofore, unrecognised actors in the Afghan crisis, viz., The Afghan resistance and its patron, the Inter Services Intelligence agency (ISI).

The year 1986 was marked by candid indications of the Soviet desire for a military disengagement from Afghanistan. Addressing the 27 CPSU Congress in February 1986, Gorbachev described Afghanistan as a "bleeding wound."<sup>32</sup> The reversal in Soviet attitude in favour of a political settlement of the Afghan problem came in face of increasing resilience shown by the Afghan resistance against the Soviet invasion. The Soviets gradually realised that the task of countering the resistance sustained by overwhelming international moral and material, economic and military, support was impossible. There was a gradual escalation of the U.S support to the Afghan resistance, it was raised from \$120

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<sup>31</sup>Saeedudin Ahmed Dar, Selected Documents on Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan 1947-1985, (National institute of Pakistan Studies, Quaid i Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan), pp. 473-480.

<sup>32</sup>Dr. Hasan Askar Rizvi, Soviet disengagement from Afghanistan, The Nation, 15 May 1988.

million in 1984, to \$ 250 million in 1985, to \$ 470 million in 1986, to \$ 630 million in 1987.<sup>33</sup> By 1988 total U.S aid to the Afghan resistance amounted to \$ 2 billion.<sup>34</sup> The most important development was the supply by the U.S of the 'Stinger' anti air-craft missile, to the Afghan resistance in mid 1986.<sup>35</sup> Confronted by such adversities the Soviets made a number of concessions in order to resolve the Afghan issue, e.g., in May 1986 Barbak Karmal was replaced by Najibullah as the leader of PDPA, in July 1986 Gorbachev announced the withdrawal of six regiments from Afghanistan by the end of 1986, and in November 1986 in a visit to New Delhi Gorbachev expressed his desire for an independent and non aligned Afghanistan.<sup>36</sup>

The momentum generated by six years of diplomatic bargaining combined with the clandestine military support of the Afghan resistance by the ISI, reached a crescendo in 1987 when the Soviets showed increasing signs of war weariness and desired a face saving settlement of their Afghan imbroglio.

The atmosphere of political expediency, unravelled all the inherent contradictions in the diplomatic or the overt, and the military or the covert aspect of Pakistan's Afghan policy, which had defied all attempts at resolution and had been a major impediment to an effective solution to the Afghan crisis. To avoid this eventuality would have required great political acumen on the part of the negotiators, in order to harmonise the divergent interests of their clients and make them correspond to the fast moving political realities. Unfortunately it was this lack of accommodation and compromise among the different actors in the Afghan conflict, combined with Pakistan's own growing inability to effectively synthesise the two divergent aspects of its Afghan policy, which seriously

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid, Selig Harrison , p. 50.

<sup>34</sup> Agha Shahi, The Geneva Accords, Pakistan Horizon, July 1988. p. 30.

<sup>35</sup>U.S missiles a big hit with the Afghan rebels, The Nation, 5 November 1986.

<sup>36</sup>Bhabani Sen Gupta, Afghan peace prospects brighten, The Nation, 31 December 1986.

undermined the prospects of a satisfactory resolution of the Afghan conflict in 1988. The conduct of Pakistan's diplomacy was also pre-empted by the policy initiatives of other extraneous actors the U.S and the Soviet Union who, acting on the basis of their own self interest, desired a speedy resolution of the conflict.

Pakistan's support to the Afghan resistance through the ISI, was the second most important aspect of its Afghan policy. Pakistan's association with the Afghan resistance specially with the fundamentalist groups can be traced back to 1974-75 when a group of Islamic fundamentalists Hikmatyar and Rabbani, fearing persecution from the government of Mohammed Daoud which had come to power with the support of the Parcham faction of the PDPA, sought asylum in Pakistan. The government of Prime Minister Bhutto, resentful of Daoud's nationalist (pro Pathan) ambitions, provided these groups with sanctuary and training in order to revolt against Daoud's government. After the overthrow of Daoud in a Marxist coup in April 1978, there was again widespread resistance provoked by the radical socio-economic reforms introduced by the governments of Taraki and Amin in a largely backward and traditional society unaccustomed to any challenge to their tribal and religious customs. Thus Afghan resistance had originated prior to the Soviet invasion in December 1979 and Pakistan's involvement with the resistance groups was also well established.<sup>37</sup>

The task of devising the overall strategy for the implementation of the military aspect of Pakistan's Afghan policy was the responsibility of ISI and its Chief, Lieutenant General Akhtar Abdul Rahman. From the start General Akhtar advocated the policy of supporting the Afghan resistance in a guerrilla campaign against the Soviets. He was convinced that the courage and stamina of the Afghan people, their strong historical tradition of maintaining their

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<sup>37</sup> Tahir Amin, *Afghan Resistance: Past, present and future*, *Asian Survey* Volume. xxiv, No. 4, April 1984. pp.375-380.

independence and their conviction in the cause of "Jihad" holy war were important factors which if properly harnessed could turn them into an effective guerrilla force in the pursuit of the goal of forcing the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan.<sup>38</sup> To achieve operational effectiveness on the battlefield and to eliminate the possibility of endangering Pakistan's own security the ISI desired and retained strict control over the conduct of the Afghan Jihad. It was a daunting task, for not only was international moral and material support for the Afghan Mujahideen lacking, especially in the early years, but also there were serious reservations both within Pakistan and abroad over the ability of the Afghan guerrillas to take on a super power. Lastly the Afghan themselves were deeply divided along tribal, ethnic and ideological lines.

To achieve success ISI established certain parameters within which the war was to be conducted. Firstly, the Afghan Mujahadeen were trained in guerrilla warfare to destabilize the Soviet forces indirectly and to avoid direct encounters. Secondly the military pressure on the Soviet forces was to be carefully monitored to avoid provoking the Soviets into attacking Pakistan.<sup>39</sup> President Zia cautioned General Akhtar in 1979 that "the water in Afghanistan must boil at the right temperature." This latter consideration also necessitated Pakistan retaining strict control over the distribution of weapons received from China, the U.S, Saudi Arabia, Egypt etc., the training of Afghan mujahadeen by Pakistani army instructors only, and the selection of targets being made always under Pakistan's guidance: "Pakistan's army instructors accompanied the mujahadeen in sabotage and combat operations against the Soviet troops inside Afghanistan."

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<sup>38</sup>Brigadier (ret) Mohammed Yosuf, Silent Soldier : The man behind the Afghan jihad, (Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1993)p.40.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid. pp. 39-90.

<sup>40</sup>Robert G .Wirsing, Pakistan's Security Under Zia, 1977 - 88 (London: Macmillan Press, 1991)p.54.

The most significant achievement of the ISI was the formation of the Seven-party "Afghan Alliance" in Peshawar in 1985. It consisted of four fundamentalist and three moderate parties. It was through the Alliance that arms and ammunition were distributed to the commanders inside Afghanistan. The allocation of weapons to each party was determined by its operational effectiveness. It was a coincidence that the fundamentalist parties due to their better operational performance received about 70% of the total arms supplied to the resistance from abroad. This gave rise to the erroneous impression among both the moderate groups in the Alliance and Pakistan's allies abroad that Pakistan was partisan in the support of Islamic fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan. One explanation for this criticism was the deep ideological split among the moderate groups favouring restoration of the monarchy of ex King Zahir Shah which was staunchly rejected by the fundamentalist parties in favour of an Islamic government in Afghanistan. The Mujahideen exclusion from the Geneva peace talks in 1982 and the ISI's own inability to reconcile the differences among the various groups temporarily foreclosed the debate over the question of the leadership of the Afghan resistance.<sup>41</sup> But in 1987 the issue was again raised when the Soviets raised the question of the formation of an interim government in Kabul.

Beginning in 1987, the most important constraint on Pakistan's Afghan policy was its inability effectively to converge the divergent goals of the Foreign office committed to a negotiated settlement of the Afghan crisis and more importantly to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, and those of the ISI, committed to the goal of a military victory by the Afghan Mujahideen, in order to evolve a unanimously acceptable political initiative for the settlement of the question of a post withdrawal interim government in Afghanistan. The initiative for the settlement of the internal political situation in Afghanistan as a

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<sup>41</sup> *Op. Cit.* Riaz, p. 72-77.

prerequisite for the provision of a short, originally four-year time table was proposed by the Soviets in May 1986, and was put forward by the Soviets, in December 1986, when Najibullah launched his programme of 'National Reconciliation'. The salient features of this programme included (i) the offer of a unilateral cease-fire commencing January 15, 1987 (ii) the formation of a coalition government composed of the PDPA, opposition groups and "leaders of anti-state groups operating abroad"<sup>42</sup> and (iii) the declaration of a "general amnesty".<sup>43</sup> The opposition groups were to take part in the elections of the National assembly and participate in the formation of a new constitution."<sup>44</sup> The Alliance spurned Najibullah's offer as a trap and expressed their reservations over the prospect of sharing power with the PDPA regime. Initially it was Pakistan that had suggested the inclusion of the item of the right of "self determination" for the Afghan people in the agenda of the Geneva talks, and the OIC resolution adopted in 1980 had proposed the formation of a standing committee to hold talks between the Afghan Mujahideen and the Kabul regime, but the Soviets at the time refused to hold talks with the leaders of the Afghan alliance and labelled them as 'bandits' and "counter revolutionaries".<sup>45</sup> Confronted with the implacable opposition of the Afghan Alliance to being drawn into any compromise formula to share power with the PDPA or Najibullah, but at the same time, acutely aware of the necessity for the formation of an interim government in Afghanistan, Pakistan's Foreign office proposed the idea of endorsing former King Zahir Shah as the head of a neutral interim government, for a transitional period.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Afghanistan Crisis; Policy positions of Afghanistan, Pakistan, U.S.S.R., U.S, Iran, and India, A Staff Report, Crisis and Conflict analysis team, Strategic Studies, Islamabad, Vol. XI, No. 3, Spring 1988, p.

<sup>43</sup> Brigadier A.R Siddiqi, Najibullah's Cease-fire offer; a trap and an opportunity, Nation 12 January 1987.

<sup>44</sup> Najib's appeal for cease-fire rejected, Nation, 3 January 1987.

<sup>45</sup> Mushahid Hussain, Afghan issue; Shifting through the diplomatic Verbiage, Nation, 24 April 1988.

<sup>46</sup> *Op. Cit.* Riaz Mohammed, p.191.

Later in July 1987, the UN mediator Diego Cordovez enunciated his "Second track" approach which stipulated UN sponsored dialogue among the representative of the PDPA, the resistance, refugees, Zahir Shah and the tribal leaders, to decide the question of an interim government.<sup>47</sup> Both these proposals were rejected by the Alliance because they involved the holding of a Loya Jirga, that is, a grand Council to endorse the former King Zahir Shah, which was rejected by the Fundamentalist components of the alliance. The participation of the PDPA regime envisaged under Cordovez's "Second track" policy drew objections from the moderate groups in the Alliance especially in the absence of a firm Soviet commitment to withdraw.

The impasse in diplomacy revealed the chronic problem of a lack of co-ordination in Pakistan's Afghan policy. Until 1987 the prevalent view was that the ISI maintained enough leverage with the Afghan Alliance to make the acceptance of a political settlement based on a timetable for the Soviet troop withdrawal.<sup>48</sup> But this myth was shattered in 1987 when lack of progress over an agreed political initiative with the Afghan Alliance left the Foreign Office bereft of its ability to resolve the question of an internal political settlement in Afghanistan. Throughout 1979-87 the ISI was an embodiment of the twin objective of seeking to protect Pakistan's security by keeping in check the danger of Soviet intrusion across the border of Pakistan. To achieve this goal it was involved in the process of enhancing the military prowess of the Afghan resistance to keep the military pressure on the Soviets and prevent the consolidation of the PDPA regime in Afghanistan. But behind this facade there was also an ulterior ideological interest, which the ISI shared with the Afghan Alliance viz., the establishment of an Islamic government in Kabul after the Soviet retreat.

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<sup>47</sup>Barnett R. Rubin, Afghanistan: The Next Round, *ORBIS* Vol. 33, No. 1, Winter, 1989

<sup>48</sup>Asad Hayat ud Din, The Decision Making Approach, Pak-Afghan policy 1974-1991 (M.Phil. Thesis, Dept. of International Relations, 1991)p.169.

After the Soviet invasion the Afghan groups came together to fight in a "Jihad" against the communists. Islam provided both a motivating and a unifying force to keep the disparate groups of Afghans together. It was a sine qua non for the success of Jihad. In terms that it forced the Soviets to withdraw from Afghanistan it was a success. In the process however, the ISI has not only invited criticism both at home and abroad over several aspects of its policy but also because of its close working relationship with the Afghan Alliance it developed strong mutual interdependence of interests. The ISI's modus operandi, under General Akhtar, of maintaining strict control over the conduct of war, was resented by the Americans who, being the major suppliers of money and weapons always wanted more leverage in the conduct of the war. But the ISI strenuously avoided their direct participation, firstly to negate opposition propaganda that the Afghans were not fighting a Jihad but engaged in a war by proxy against the Soviets on American behalf and secondly to maintain the tenuous unity of the Mujahideen intact.<sup>49</sup> In 1987 in view of the imminent victory of the Mujahideen against the Soviets ISI advocated the policy of capturing Kabul and believed that the "Mujahideen must first secure a military victory before a political future for Afghanistan could be agreed."<sup>50</sup> This was essential because there was lack of political unity among the Mujahadeen and any struggle of power would only serve to undermine their unity of faith and belief in their cause. President Zia ul Haq had considerable leverage with the Afghan Alliance leaders but even he could not convince them to accept any political initiative to share power with the Soviets. Amidst growing deadlock over an acceptable political settlement Pakistan's emphasis on a short time table for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan became more pronounced in the March 1987 and September 1987 rounds of Geneva talks.

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<sup>49</sup>*Op. Cit.* Silent Soldier, p. 76.

<sup>50</sup> Mohammed Yousaf and Mark Adkin, The Bear Trap, Afghanistan's Untold Story (Lahore: Jang Publisher's, 1992)p. 209.

Faced with the growing deadlock over the question of the settlement of an interim government in Afghanistan, mainly due to the implicit incompatibility of the Mujahideen's demand for the transfer of power and the Soviet Union's insistence on preserving PDPA representation in any future government in Afghanistan, combined with strong pressure from both the U.S and Pakistan for the provision of withdrawal timetable, induced the Soviet leader, Mikhael Gorbachev to offer a twelve month time table at the Washington Summit in 1987. The offer was based on the condition that "outside military and financial assistance to the Mujahadeen would be terminated."<sup>51</sup> This announcement however, instead of producing the expected elation, posed several new dilemmas to Pakistan's foreign policy makers.

While creating an exorable push for the settlement of the Afghan crisis it placed Pakistan in a precarious position. It revealed certain incongruities in the text of the 'Geneva instruments', that is Instrument two on non-interference and non-intervention, and its related provisions for the curtailing of aid to the Afghan Mujahideen, which had evolved over some time as a result of the conciliatory attitude adopted by Pakistan in the expectation of nudging the Soviets to provide a short withdrawal time table. By capitulating at last to the main Pakistani demand, that is withdrawal, the Soviets shifted the onus for the settlement of the Afghan crisis onto Pakistan's shoulders, and confronted it with an arduous task of safeguarding its interests in the context of changed political realities. In this regard, Pakistan's foreign policy was, in the final analysis, only partially successful.

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<sup>51</sup>Afghanistan Crisis, policy Positions, A staff Report, Strategic Studies, Islamabad, Vol. XI, No. 3, Spring 1988, p. 33.

In December 1987 Gorbachev's announcement renouncing the Soviet insistence on the formation of an interim government to precede any Soviet pullout from Afghanistan was followed by an even more radical exposition of Soviet resolution to withdraw from Afghanistan. In a statement made on 8 February, 1988 Gorbachev specified 15 May, 1988 for the start of Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan provided the Geneva accords were signed by 15 March, 1988. The withdrawal process was to be completed within ten months. These two Soviet initiatives combined to produce a major crisis in Pakistan's Afghan policy.

Acting on the basis of a genuine concern as a guardian of the Mujahideen interest and also realising the futility of any attempt to convince the Afghan Mujahideen to share power with the PDPA regime, President Zia made a belated attempt to reinvigorate the issue of the formation of transitional government in Afghanistan but with an important qualification. On 24 February, 1988, he announced that "Pakistan would not sign an agreement with the officials of the Kabul regime and that an interim government excluding Najibullah and acceptable to the Afghan Mujahideen was to be brought into being in advance of any settlement."<sup>52</sup> The motivating compulsion underlying Zia's concern was the prevention of bloodshed, anarchy and civil war in the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal, which could prevent the safe repatriation of the refugees to their homes.<sup>53</sup> But according to the former Foreign Minister Agha Shahi, "Zia's reversal was due to second thoughts about the correctness of Pakistan's long held inarticulate premise of the inevitable collapse of the PDPA regime, once the Soviet troops bolstering it, quit Afghanistan."<sup>54</sup> President Zia's last minute attempts to form an interim government were thwarted by Soviet intransigence

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<sup>52</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Wirsing, p. 69.

<sup>53</sup> "Our name being sullied by U.S -U.S.S.R. deal on Afghan issue" Zia, Nation, Lahore, 19 February 1988.

<sup>54</sup> Agha Shahi, The Geneva Accords, Pakistan Horizon, July 1988, p. 39.

about retracting from their newly espoused policy. Soviet deputy Foreign minister Voronstov in an interview with Pravda on February 18, 1988 said, "creating a transitional government has nothing to do with the Geneva talks because the agreements discussed there aim at settling the external aspects of the Afghan problem such as cessation of foreign interference including military intervention and Soviet troop withdrawal."<sup>55</sup> The U.S also having urged the Soviets to separate the two issues were resigned to allowing the Soviets to withdraw without any new preconditions. Furthermore serious differences arose between President Zia and Prime Minister Junejo who in defiance of President Zia's attempts mobilised Pakistani public opinion in favour of the signing of the Geneva accords. On March 2-3, 1988, Prime Minister Junejo called a Round Table conference of the opposition parties which endorsed the view that the formation of a transitional government in Afghanistan should not be allowed to scuttle the negotiations.<sup>56</sup>

Apart from its attempts to resolve the question of the formation of an interim government in Afghanistan prior to the Soviet withdrawal, the other issue of immediate concern to Pakistan was to address the problem of cutting off military aid to the Afghan Mujahideen. The problem had its genesis in instrument 1, viz., the bilateral agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan on the principles of mutual relations, i.e. non interference and non intervention in each others internal affairs. Under this agreement, "Pakistan was prohibited to assist or permit its territory to be used to assist the Afghan resistance."<sup>57</sup> There was no reciprocal obligation of the Soviet Union to halt aid to its client in Kabul. The rationale behind Pakistan's acceptance of this agreement in 1983 was the expectation that the Soviet withdrawal would lead to the collapse of the Kabul

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<sup>55</sup>*Op. Cit.* Strategic Studies, p. 36.

<sup>56</sup>Kamal Matinuddin, "War of Liberation" ( political dimension) in, Power struggle in the Hindu Kush: Afghanistan (1978-1991), (Lahore: Wajidalis Press, 1991), p. 203.

<sup>57</sup>Rosanne Klass, Afghanistan: The Accords, Foreign Affairs, p. 923.

regime.”<sup>58</sup> But in the changed circumstances of 1988 the likelihood of any such eventuality in Pakistan’s estimate was quite remote. This concern of Pakistan was shared by the United States, one reason being that the U.S was a co-guarantor of the Geneva accords under Instrument Two on "the Declaration of international guarantees”, accepted in 1985. The other reason was the criticism launched by the pro Mujahideen lobbies in the U.S against the unilateral cutting off of military assistance to the Afghan resistance. The Soviet Union however refused to comply with any U.S suggestion of a moratorium on arms supplies to the Kabul regime(negative symmetry). After prolonged discussions between Soviet foreign Minister Shervadnadze and the U.S Secretary of State George Shultz in March 1988 the “positive symmetry” approach was agreed upon under which the U.S retained the right to continue to supply assistance to the Afghan Mujahideen as long as the Soviets continued their military assistance to the government in Kabul.

Pakistan's concern over the unresolved issues of the formation of a transitional government in Kabul, and the issue of "symmetry" dominated the final round of the Geneva negotiations held from 2 March to 14 April, 1988. At the outset of the Afghan crisis the question of the settlement of an internal political situation in Afghanistan had been of Pakistan's foremost concerns. The OIC resolution adopted in May, 1980 had specifically mentioned, "the right of Afghan people to determine their own form of government."<sup>59</sup> It had also suspended the membership of the Kabul regime from the organisation. But the Soviet Union had rejected the OIC’s resolution and its recommendations. Instead they had demanded direct talks between Afghanistan and Pakistan to address the twin issues of non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of Afghanistan and international guarantees for non-intervention. The demand for

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<sup>58</sup>*Op. Cit.* Riaz , pp. 242-248.

<sup>59</sup> p. 127. *Ibid*, p. 31.

direct talks betrayed Soviet concern to gain legitimacy for the Kabul regime. The Soviets also refused to accept the inclusion of either the Afghan Mujahideen or the question of the Afghan self determination , as suggested by Pakistan's Foreign Minister, in the agenda items of the UN sponsored talks. This was to prove a major set back to the solution of the Afghan crisis in 1988.

In late 1986 the Soviets talked about the formation of the government of "National Reconciliation", but by then no amount of political manoeuvrability could convince the Afghan Mujahideen to accept anything less than complete transfer of power to an Islamic government. In 1988 with the provision of a withdrawal timetable from the Soviets and with the finalisation of the four Geneva 'instruments', the prospects for the settlement of the internal political situation in Afghanistan were greatly circumscribed.

Pakistan, unable to resolve the deadlock over the formation of an alternative government in Afghanistan and under pressure from the international community signed the Geneva Accords on 14 April 1988, on the basis of two reservations, firstly, on the basis of positive symmetry, the right to continue arms supplies to the Afghan Mujahideen as long as the Soviets continued to supply arms to the regime in Kabul, and secondly, on the basis of an understanding for the continued UN role in search for the solution of the question of an internal political settlement in Afghanistan.<sup>60</sup> With continued supply of weapons to the belligerents and without the formation of an alternative government in Kabul acceptable to the vast majority of Afghans the chances of peace returning to Afghanistan or the refugees returning to their homes were greatly diminished. Thus Pakistan's Afghan policy suffered due inadequate attention given to the political dimension of the Afghan crisis.<sup>61</sup> The question of the formation of an

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<sup>60</sup> "Without a transitional government acceptable to all sections, peace will not return to Afghanistan", Zain Noorani. *Herald*, Karachi, March 1989.

<sup>61</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Kamal Matinuddin, p. 215.

interim government in Afghanistan suffered due to lack of effective co-ordination and due to divergence of goals of two important centres of Pakistan's Afghan policy viz. the foreign office and the ISI.

Moreover beginning in 1986 there emerged a latent tension between the civilian government of Prime Minister Junego and the CMLA, Chief martial law administrator, Zia-ul-Haq. Prime Minister Junejo was more amenable to the political solution of the Afghan crisis based on the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. President Zia's complacency and failure to attach urgency to the solution of the settlement of future political arrangements in Afghanistan in 1987 was another related factor which deprived Pakistan of a unique opportunity to the satisfactory resolution of the Afghan crisis.<sup>62</sup>

This chapter has traced the evolution of Pakistan's foreign policy towards the Afghan conflict during 1979-1988. Pakistan's main concern during this period was her own security. With most of its armed forces deployed on the eastern border with India, Pakistan simply did not have the resources to directly confront a Superpower. Moreover, in 1979 the bilateral relations between Pakistan and the US were also tense. In these circumstances Pakistan adopted a cautious foreign policy. The most important feature of Pakistan's foreign policy during 1979-88 was that it consisted of two elements, diplomacy and the military pressure. The diplomatic aspect was aimed at finding a political solution to the

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<sup>62</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot, pp. 237-238.

crisis by holding indirect talks with the Soviet Union under the auspices of the UN. The military aspect of Pakistan's foreign policy was aimed at training the Afghan Mujahideen to fight a guerrilla war against the Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The military aspect was under the control of the ISI and was not made public. In 1986 the military aspect of Pakistan's foreign policy under the control of the ISI began to prove successful in terms of putting pressure on the Soviet Union to agree to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan. Ironically the resolution of the main issue of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan also brought to the surface certain incongruities in the text of the 'Geneva Instruments'. It also exposed a lack of co-ordination between the Pakistan's Foreign Office and the ISI.

By September 1987 three out of four agenda items in the Geneva negotiations were satisfactorily resolved. The negotiations were deadlocked over the question of the future interim government in Afghanistan. The principle of the right of self-determination was not included in the UN sponsored talks as the Soviet Union refused to grant legitimacy to the Afghan Mujahideen and rejected to hold direct talks with the Afghan Resistance. By 1986 the Soviet Union realising its inability to defeat the Afghan Resistance proposed the formation of a broad based government in Afghanistan before the Soviet troops could withdraw from Afghanistan. However, the Afghan Resistance buoyed by their success refused to share power with the Communist government of President Najibullah. The ISI was unable to influence the Resistance leaders to reach an agreement on the composition of an Afghan interim government. In the absence of any agreement on power sharing because of the conflicting objectives of the various actors involved in the conflict, the only alternative was to put pressure on the Soviet Union to give a short time frame for the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan. Without the formation of an interim government the 15 May 1988 was specified by Gorbachev for the start of the Soviet troops withdrawal if the

accords were signed by 15 March 1988. The Soviet Union de-linked the issue of Soviet troop withdrawal with the formation of an interim government in Afghanistan. Last minute efforts by Pakistan to revive the issue of the formation of an Afghan interim government before the Soviet withdrawal were unsuccessful. In the final analysis Pakistan foreign policy was only partially successful. It achieved its main aim of the Soviet withdrawal but the two other goals of the return of the refugees and non interference in each others internal affairs were not realised. Pakistan's foreign policy was heavily constrained by the changing domestic, regional and global politics. Domestically, by 1987 the public opinion in Pakistan became increasingly critical of the governments Afghan policy. From 1987 onwards the economic burden of hosting three million Afghan refugees and a steady increase in the acts of terrorism undertaken by the KHAD agents against the civilian population in Pakistan turned the public opinion against the government's Afghan policy. The civilian government of the Prime Minister M. K. Junejo was under increasing pressure to seek the negotiated withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. At the global level the coming to power of President Gorbachev in the Soviet Union in 1985 marked a turning point in the slow improvement of US-Soviet relations. The US was no longer willing to let the Afghanistan conflict hinder the improvement of its relations with the Soviet Union. Thus, the conflicting interests of the main parties involved in the Afghan conflict made the satisfactory resolution of the conflict impossible to achieve.

## **PART II**

### **CHAPTER TWO**

#### **American Foreign Policy towards the Afghan Conflict, 1979-**

**1988**

"In international Relations there are no Permanent friends or Permanent enemies; there are only Permanent interests."<sup>1</sup>

#### **2. 2:1 Historical Background**

After World War II former allies the Soviet Union and the US emerged as rival superpowers. The distinguishing feature of World War II was the enormous human, material and economic loss coupled with the destabilisation inflicted upon all the combatants. There was a complete collapse of the previous multipolar international system based on the principle of balance of power. The US owing to its geographical position not only escaped the horrors of war but during the war her economy actually flourished. After World War II it discarded its isolationist posture and embarked on an ambitious foreign policy. There were several reasons both domestic and foreign for US extensive involvement in world affairs in the aftermath of the World War II. Domestically it had abundant economic and material resources which needed to be invested abroad in foreign markets. The main lesson learned from the recession in the aftermath of World War I, when the rival European states adopted protectionist policies and exclusive trade blocs, meant that the US could no longer afford to adhere to an isolationists foreign policy. Due to its abundant resources it was not only in a unique position to rebuild Europe but in order to ensure its continued economic prosperity it needed an unrestricted access to the foreign markets and raw materials abroad.

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<sup>1</sup>M. Howard, "The World According to Henry: From Metternich to Me", Foreign Affairs (May/June, 1994)

However, the US, in pursuit of its foreign policy objectives encountered resistance from the Soviet Union which like the US was equally intent on expanding its sphere of influence. One manifestation of Soviet expansionism was that Eastern Europe swiftly came under the control of the Soviet Union. Soviet Foreign policy was based on an ideology which was anti-imperialist, anti capitalist and its domestic politics was based on the practice of strict totalitarianism. The Soviet ideological view of the World was based upon Marxist analysis. Its view of the history was based on the class struggle between the capitalist and proletariats and the Soviets envisaged a final victory of proletariats throughout the world. Thus, the US and the Soviet Union political systems were based on completely different ideologies and completely different socio economic systems. After World War II these differences conditioned their view of the world and led to the onset of the Cold War.

One consequence of the different ideologies was that they promoted different conceptions of security. The Soviet concept of security was conditioned by historical and geographical factors. Its policy was also conditioned by insecurity and the destruction and enormous human loss it suffered during the World War II. The US concept of security promoted the establishment of democratic institutions. The ideological and security differences were however not the only reason for the emergence of Cold War hostility. It was also a combination of a number of actions which each power took in order to promote and protect its interest which had the unfortunate consequence of generating hostility and mistrust on the other side.

Soon after World War II there emerged a debate within the US administration over how best to respond to the Soviet threat in the World. The Soviet concern with its security needs and its preoccupation to reconstruct its war ravaged economy meant that the US and the Soviet Union were soon locked in a fierce

battle to gain allies. These sharp ideological differences and the incompatibilities between the two systems were soon transformed into a foreign security policy overshadowing the whole range of relations. Thus, domestic reasons and security considerations shaped the course of the US politics for the next few decades. The policy had a strong domestic economic rationale which was used as a means to justify its foreign policy abroad. Moreover, the increasing globalization and increase in the means of communication meant that the US needed strategic bases abroad to protect its security interest. Another important development after the World War II was the process of decolonisation. A large number of new states gained independence with nationalist and anti-imperialist leaders and their own ideas to enhance their economic development and prosperity. These states were soon caught up in the Cold War ideological struggle between the US and the Soviet Union.

In July 1947, George Kennan, a US State Department expert in the Soviet Union in an article in 'Foreign Affairs' enunciated a doctrine of 'Containment', which became a blue print for an activist US foreign policy in the successive years. George Kennan traced the Soviet Union's territorial and ideological expansion to its Communist ideology which was a complete anathema to capitalism and was incompatible with the Western liberal institutions and political ideals. Historically, the Soviet Union was a geographically insecure power whose ruling elites had adopted an expansionist foreign policy abroad and at home established political institutions which were ruthless and totalitarian, denying Soviet people basic human rights and liberties. The Soviet leaders used the outside threat as a justification to command total control over the Soviet people. The Soviet foreign policy was based on an ideology which promoted world revolution and destruction of the capitalist system. Due to these historical and cultural differences between the US and the Soviet Union, George Kennan argued that the Soviet system was incapable of liberalisation or of responding to

any modification efforts by the US. He argued that US liberal values and traditions will not be able to flourish in a world dominated by Communist ideology. His proposal was to check Soviet assertiveness through vigilant application of containment at a series of gradually shifting points. One way to check the Soviet threat was seen by defending the regions of Western Europe, Japan and the Far East.

In the US the rivalry with the Soviet Union was presented in terms of an ideological battle between the two different political systems. This was intended not only to muster a wider domestic support for conflict, but also to provide a moral justification for the US foreign policy at the global level. The Soviet Union was perceived to be a threat not only to the democratic institutions and values held by the US, but also a security threat to the US as economic deterioration abroad would easily force the weak states to be lured into the communist camp. However, an often unstated motive of the US foreign policy in the period immediately following the World War II was to protect the freedom of the world for the sake of its own economic interests and to establish economic institutions which would be under the control of the US because of its economic strength.

Endowed with this sense of mission President Truman in March 1947 sought to gain legitimacy for his foreign policy by providing economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey who were trying to resist Soviet subjugation and armed aggression. In 1947, the Marshall Plan was proclaimed through which the US made available its substantial economic resources not only to rebuild but also to restore confidence in war ravaged Europe. In the military sphere the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was formed in 1949. In 1947 the US, it seemed, had two choices, the first course open to them was to try to create the world according to American precepts of international relations through the

League of Nations and the UN. However, this option was unrealistic as it demanded an open-ended commitment of US resources and was discarded in favour of the second alternative which acknowledged the diversity of international relations, and tried only to defend areas vital to the preservation of US security interests. The US, it was argued, was not capable of confronting the Soviet Union at every point in the world as it did not have unlimited resources. However, with the loss of China to Communism in 1949, the outbreak of the Korean war in 1950, and the Soviet acquisition of the atomic bomb a wider commitment to the defence of freedom was advocated by the NSC Document-68 in 1950.<sup>2</sup>

During President Eisenhower administration, use of such strategies as massive retaliation, nuclear weapons, covert acts, alliances, and building a perimeter of defence around the Soviet Union was advocated. The US sought regional allies to prevent the spread of Soviet influence into areas of vital strategic importance to the US. The US was not capable of confronting the Soviet Union at every point in the globe as it did not have unlimited resources. In the Third World a strong nationalist force was emerging owing to the decolonization process after the World War II. The Soviet Union portrayal of capitalism as the highest stage of imperialism meant that Soviet Union could easily exploit the anti-colonialist struggle of the Third World nationalist leaders. This became a source of alarm in the US.

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<sup>2</sup>Also See, H. Kissinger, Diplomacy (New York: Simon and Scuster, 1994) Chp. 2 and 18, J. L. Gaddis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Post War American National Security Policy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), T. G. Paterson, Meeting the Communist Threat: Truman to Reagan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), A. A. Jordan, W. J. Taylor, Lawrence J. korb, American National Security Policy and Process (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1993), W. Lafeber, America, Russia and the Cold War. 1945-1996 (London: The McGraw Hill, 1997), H. Kissinger, American Foreign Policy (.....) J. L. Gaddis, The Soviet Union and the United States. An interpretive history (New York: Mc Graw Hill Publishing Company, 1990), Z. Brezizinski, "The Cold War and its Aftermath", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 71, No.4. 1992) pp.31-49.

### **2.2:2. The Response of President Carter Administration to the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan**

The Islamic revolution in Iran (February, 1979) and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (December, 1979) dealt a severe blow to bilateral US-Soviet relations. At the regional level it was a blow to the prestige and already diminished credibility of the power of the US among the regional states, especially in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The US was perceived as a weaker power compared to the Soviet Union. In the US these events became a symbol of serious threat to their security and economic interests in the Persian Gulf region. This led to a major reevaluation of US security interest in South Asia, and the importance of the Gulf and the Middle Eastern region in the US strategic calculations. The previously moderate attitude of the Carter Administration towards the Soviet Union advocated by his Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, in order not to jeopardise the Arms Control talks with the Soviets, was suddenly replaced from 1979 onwards with a hard-line stand advocated by President Carter National Security advisor Z. Brzezinski. During the 1970s, the US policy in the Middle East rested on the doctrine of 'Regional Influentials' which in the South Asian context implied safeguarding the stability of Iran and Saudi Arabia to protect US vital interests in the region.<sup>3</sup> The Iranian revolution followed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan marked the failure of that policy.

The new policy had three elements: (1) the adoption of economic and diplomatic sanctions against the Soviet Union; (2) the formulation of a new security doctrine under the rubric of the 'Carter Doctrine' which proclaimed that any threat to the Persian Gulf region would be considered as a serious threat to the vital security interests of the US, and would be repelled by any means possible

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<sup>3</sup> S. T. Kheli, "Proxies and Allies: The Case of Iran and Saudi Arabia", *Orbis* (Vol. 24. No. 2, Summer 1980) pp. 339-352.

including military force. The Carter doctrine linked the security of the Middle East to two other zones of vital strategic importance to the US, that is, Western Europe and the Far East and (3) the formation of a new 'defence strategy'. This implied a strategic reformation of the US deterrence strategy which was codified in the Presidential Doctrine (PD) 59 and which replaced the US military defensive posture with a more offensive strategy.

In the immediate aftermath of the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan eleven diplomatic and economic sanctions were imposed on the Soviet Union by the US including, the Senate refusal to ratify the SALT II treaty, the boycott of the 1980 Olympic games to be held in Moscow, restrictions on the Soviet fishing rights in US waters, termination of diplomatic and consular relations and an embargo was placed on the export of grain and technology to the Soviet Union. In addition the US recalled its ambassador from Moscow.<sup>4</sup>

The measures adopted for the new US defence strategy were spelled out in the Presidential Directive (59). One of its chief features was the implementation of a previously contemplated programme of the Rapid Deployment Force. This force was officially launched in March 1980, with a total strength of about 100,000 men. The function of this force was its ability to be deployed immediately in areas where there was no US force or troops. The new defence strategy also shifted the focus from offensive to defensive capabilities in order to improve US ability to deal with protracted and prolonged conflicts. New targets were set for command, control, communication and intelligence objectives (C3I). Substantial effort was devoted to improve the US force projection and intelligence capabilities in the Gulf region.<sup>5</sup> This was done through acquiring bases in

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<sup>4</sup>M. Leitenberg, "United States Foreign Policy and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan", Arms Control (Vol. 7, No. 3, 1986) p. 278

<sup>5</sup>Z. Brzezinski, Power and Principle:1977-1981 (London:Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1983) p. 427-460

Berbera in Somalia, and enlarging the base on Diego Garcia. The Rapid deployment Force was later expanded and incorporated into CENTCOM in the Indian Ocean which was then used during the Gulf war in 1990-91.<sup>6</sup>

Another, important aspect of the US policy towards Afghanistan from 1979 onwards was a complete reappraisal of the strategic value of Pakistan's geographical position in order to restrain Pakistan from accommodating to the presence of the Soviet Union on its borders. Throughout the Cold War period US-Pakistan relations had been uneasy. There were two reasons for this: firstly, the asymmetry in the threat perceptions of both the states; and secondly, after 1971, Pakistan's ambitious nuclear programme. At the height of the Cold War the US was obsessed with a perceived Communist threat to the stability of states located in the periphery of Soviet Union and China, but for Pakistan, India (not Soviet expansionism) was the major security threat. During President Carter's Administration the US-Pakistan relations reached their lowest ebb. There were several reasons for this downward trend. Firstly, President Carter's foreign policy was committed to such global issues as the promotion of human rights, arms control, democracy and nuclear non-proliferation. Bilateral US-Soviet relations were not on a high priority list of the US foreign policy agenda. President Carter was determined to shed the image of major arms supplier to the Third World. On all these issues Pakistan suffered from a serious disadvantage. In 1977 Prime Minister Bhutto was overthrown by the military regime of President Zia-al-Haq. This dealt a mortal blow to the practice of democracy in Pakistan. Under President Zia-al-Haq's martial law regime, Pakistan's human

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<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 427-460, American Foreign policy. Department of State Current Documents 1977 to 1989, "Reagan Initiatives: Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India", in M. Chadda, Paradox of Power: USA in South West Asia, 1973-84 (Santa Barbara: ABC Clio, 1986) pp.175-191, R. G. Wirsing & J. M. Rothertry, "The US and Pakistan", International Affairs (Vol. 58, No. 2, 1982) pp.588-609, S.A. Yetiv, "How the Soviet Military Intervention in Afghanistan Improved the US. Strategic Position in the Persian Gulf" Asian Affairs (Vol. 17, No. 2, 1990) pp. 62-81, "US policy toward Afghanistan", Pakistan Times (9 May, 1986) "Afghan War finally hits Soviets home front", US News and World Report (December 16, 1985) "Pakistan's Afghan policy: An appraisal", Frontier Post (8 June, 1990)

rights record was poor. The second contentious issue in the US-Pakistan bilateral relations was Pakistan's ambiguous nuclear programme. From Pakistan's point of view it was a consequence of its sense of insecurity after the loss of East Pakistan in 1971, and was a response to the State Department's ban on arms sales to Pakistan in 1972. Moreover, Pakistan objected to the US' double standards and its acquiescence to the possession of nuclear weapons by other states such as South Africa, India and Israel. In April, 1979 under the Symington (1976) and Glenn Amendments (1977) to the Foreign Security Assistance Act, a complete ban on US economic aid and military (arms) sales to Pakistan was imposed on the grounds that Pakistan was importing uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing technology from abroad (France).<sup>7</sup> Bilateral US-Pakistan relations further deteriorated in late 1979, when President Zia-al-Haq refused to honour his previous commitment to hold elections in Pakistan. This was followed by a terrorist attack on the US embassy in Islamabad (November 1979) in which two American employees were killed.

However, with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the whole context of US-Pakistan relations changed overnight.<sup>8</sup> Soon after the invasion President Carter telephoned President Zia to convey US commitment to defend Pakistan against any further Soviet expansionism in the region; but Pakistan's primary security dilemma was linked to the Indian threat on its eastern border and suddenly faced with the fait accompli of physical presence of the Soviet forces on its northern border Pakistan's immediate response was one of extreme caution, President Zia said, "Pakistan must adjust itself to the Soviet presence in the area as a political fact of life. You cannot live in the sea and create enemies with whales."<sup>9</sup> In response to the US aid offers, Pakistan demanded the inclusion of a specific US

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<sup>7</sup>Syed Adeb, "Its time to resume US aid to Pakistan", Frontier Post (28 September, 1991)

<sup>8</sup>Special Report, "A Tilt to Pakistan", News week (14 January, 1980) pp.12

<sup>9</sup>Ahmed Rashid, "Zia, the Americans and Agha Shahi's Resignation", The Nation (16 November, 1991)

commitment to Pakistan's defence against any possible Indian attack. In this context Pakistan asked the ratification of the 1959 bilateral US-Pakistan Security Agreement which would make it binding on the successive US administrations to defend Pakistan in case of an outside aggression including India. But the US was not willing to go so far and declined to accede to Pakistan's request. President Zia rejected President Carter's modest aid offer of \$400 million to Pakistan by calling it as 'peanuts'.

In February 1980, Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher joined at the last minute by National Security adviser Brzezinski, made a visit to Pakistan. Publicly the aim of this visit was to reassure Pakistan of the US' commitment to Pakistan's defence, but the underlying motive was to enlist Pakistan's cooperation in the US security plan to check any further Soviet aggression in the region. However, Pakistan having twice (1965 and 1971) experienced the inconsistency in the US commitment to Pakistan's security against Indian attacks, reacted cautiously to these fresh proposals. Not satisfied with the limited amount of military aid and the limited nature of the US commitment, which were restricted only to Soviet threat, Pakistan's President Zia-al-Haq during a private meeting with Brzezinski proposed that instead of seeking a close US-Pakistan relationship Pakistan wished to move closer to the non-aligned and Muslim states, and in this context specifically asked for US assistance to nudge the Saudis to co-operate with Pakistan in order to counter the Soviet threat.<sup>10</sup> One possible explanation for this attitude was to avoid the diplomatic isolation Pakistan had experienced in the Muslim and the non-aligned world during the 1950s and 1960s, as a consequence of its membership in the US led anti-communist alliances in the region.<sup>11</sup> Pakistan's military wanted modern weapons to replace its obsolete and ageing weaponry, including a demand for the supply

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<sup>10</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 449.

<sup>11</sup> 'US Interests in South Asia and the Indian Ocean' in L. Ziring, *The Subcontinent in world politics, India and its neighbours and the great powers* (London: Macmillan, 1982) p. 217.

of latest F16 aircraft which President Carter was reluctant to supply. Thus, in 1980 Pakistan demanded a high price from the US for its willingness to become a 'front line' state against the Soviet threat.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Agha Shahi was wary of adopting a pro-US policy. In September 1981, when the new aid package was finalised Pakistan made it clear that there would be no quid pro quo involved. Pakistan would not compromise its nuclear programme and would not become a part of the new US defensive strategy in the region. Agha Shahi was an advocate of close relations between Pakistan and Iran rather than with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. In contrast, Pakistan's military establishment looked favourably on US' overtures as an opportunity to upgrade Pakistan's defence equipment. As a result Foreign Minister Agha Shahi developed differences of approach with the US and with President Zia-al-Haq and resigned in 1982. Thus, President Carter's policy of enlisting Pakistani support against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was only partially successful.<sup>12</sup>

Another aspect of US foreign policy in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was its efforts to enlist the cooperation of the regional states like China, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Saudi cooperation was enlisted through an agreement by the US to sell AWACS (Advanced Air borne Warning Control System) to Saudi Arabia to counter threats to Saudi security from South Yemen and Iran. Pakistan volunteered to station its troops to train and augment Saudi armed forces. In return, Saudi Arabia agreed to provide funds to Pakistan for the purchase of the latest and expensive weapon systems from the US.

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<sup>12</sup>T. P. Thornton, "Between the Stools? U.S. Policy towards Pakistan during the Carter Administration", *Asian Survey* (Vol. XX11, No. 10, 1980) pp. 959-975.

Under President Carter a modest but covert programme to provide military aid to the Afghan Mujahideen was initiated, with material and operational support from China, Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. In order to counter any Soviet charges of US involvement in the war, only Soviet or communist modelled weapons were bought from China, Israel and India. In this regard the Egyptian role was interesting. The CIA not only purchased large quantities of Soviet made weapons from Egypt but copies of Soviet weapons were also actually manufactured in Egyptian ordnance factories which were then shipped or airlifted to Pakistan. The Egyptians took this opportunity to make huge profits by selling to the CIA old, surplus and sometimes even useless weapons.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the Soviet invasion provided a new assertiveness to the hitherto passive US foreign policy towards South Asia and forged a new strategic consensus between the US and the above mentioned regional states. Thus, contrary to prevalent expectations, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan actually enabled the US to improve its fragile security position in the Persian Gulf region. The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan improved the US strategic position. Security of one state can engender insecurity in other states which encourages them to embark on counter measures, thus turning the conflict into a zero sum conflict.<sup>14</sup> In January 1980, the UN General Assembly adopted a unanimous resolution condemning the Soviet invasion and called for an immediate withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. After being on the receiving end of Soviet sponsored General Assembly resolutions condemning the US in the Third World, the invasion of Afghanistan provided the US with a perfect opportunity to openly condemn the Soviet violation of international norms.

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<sup>13</sup>*Op. Cit.*, S. Harrison & D. Cordovez, Out of Afghanistan, p. 69 & *Op. Cit.*, Yosuf, The Bear Trap pp. 78-96.

<sup>14</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Yetiev, "How the Soviet military Intervention improved the US Strategic Position in the Gulf", pp. 70-75

The UN General Assembly Resolution of 1981 laid down five prerequisites for the settlement of the Afghan conflict; the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the return of the Afghan refugees in safety and honour, the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and a social, political and economic system free from any outside interference or constraint and the preservation of the territorial integrity, sovereignty, political independence and non aligned character of Afghanistan.<sup>15</sup>The Resolution asked the Secretary General Kurt Waldheim to appoint his Personal Representative to find a solution to the Afghan conflict. In May 1981, the Soviet Union proposed holding direct talks with Pakistan and Iran on the question of non-interference. In February 1982, Secretary General Perez de Cuellar, appointed Diego Cordovez as his personnel representative to Pakistan and Afghanistan to find a basis for negotiation towards a political solution to the Afghan conflict. The main objective of Pakistan was the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. It refused to hold direct talks with the regime in Kabul. Soviet Union primary concerns were non-interference and direct talks between Kabul and Islamabad in order to gain legitimacy for the Communist regime in Kabul.

### **2.2:3 President Reagans Foreign Policy, The Strategic Defence Initiative, Arms Control , and the Reagan Doctrine**

The conflict in Afghanistan was strongly affected by the change in the central balance of power between the Soviet Union and the US during the 1980s. Bringing about this reversal in the balance of power in favour of the US, was the basic objective of President Reagan's foreign policy in the 1980s. Thus, in order to properly comprehend what happened in Afghanistan, it is necessary first to trace the context of the evolution and objectives of his foreign policy. It was a determined response to rectify the reverses and setbacks suffered (as a result of

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<sup>15</sup> R. Klass, *Op. Cit.* , The Geneva Accords, p. 927

the Vietnam Syndrome), by the US at the hands of the Soviet Union, through its takeover of a variety of Third World regions during the 1970s, and because of Soviet advance in nuclear weapons despite US-Soviet arms control negotiations of the 1970s. The course of subsequent events, and the steps taken by the Reagan Administration to revitalise US power, in the end proved that US foreign policy was a success in terms of reversing the Soviet expansionism. Its distinguishing feature was that its goals were achieved with relatively little cost, and with no major US foreign policy crisis during the 1980s. It can be said that there was an historical parallel between President Truman's strong response to the threat of Communism in the immediate aftermath of World War II, and the Reagan Administration's response in the 1980s to Soviet behaviour in the Third World, during the 1970s. In both these cases there was a strong or militant response, in terms of both rhetoric and substantial increases in the US defence budget to the perceived threat of Soviet expansionism. But there were also important differences. During the 1980s a unique combination of domestic and international factors made the Reagan administration realise the complete inadequacy of the previous policies of 'Containment' and 'détente' all of which had failed to deter Soviet expansionism and provided President Reagan with an opportunity to adopt a more aggressive foreign policy not only to contain but to 'roll back' the tide of Communism. Secondly, in the 1980s Soviet expansionism took place largely in the weak Third World states where the risk of direct confrontation with the Soviet Union was minimum. Thirdly, the Soviet intervention in these Third World states has given rise to a number of anti-communist national liberation movements which were a convenient target for the US to provide them with aid to fight against communism and prevent its consolidation.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>J. Scott, Deciding to Intervene: The Reagan Doctrine and American Foreign Policy, (Durham: DukeUniversity Press, 1996) p. 15

An early example of President Reagan's toughness in condemnation of Soviet assertiveness in the Third World came at his first Presidential press conference on January 29, 1981 in which he said,

"I know of no leader of the Soviet Union since the revolution and including the present leadership that has not more than once repeated in the various communist congresses they hold their determination that their goal must be the promotion of world revolution and a one world Socialist or Communist, whichever word you want to use. They at the same time have openly and publicly declared that the only morality they recognise is the one that will further their cause, meaning they reserve unto themselves the right to commit any crime, to lie to cheat in order to attain that and that is moral not immoral." <sup>17</sup>

The measures adopted by President Reagan's administration in order to counter the Soviet threat can be classified into two broad categories: Firstly, the underlying rationale of its foreign policy (as described by Coral Bell in her book "The Paradox of power. American foreign policy in the 1980's"), was based on the principle of 'negotiation from strength' with the Soviets.<sup>18</sup> In order to achieve this goal, the policy was oriented towards strengthening the US military defences by: (1) trying to reassert American conventional military strength by increasing the US defence budget, and adopting of several new military doctrines; (2) to build a new nuclear deterrent against the threat of any possible Soviet nuclear (ballistic) attack on the US and its allies; and (3) (as a corollary to strengthening of US defences) negotiating arms control agreements with the Soviets.<sup>19</sup> The most important step to regain political leverage in bilateral negotiations with the Soviets was taken through the 'Strategic Defence initiative' (SDI), announced in March 1983. This was a new deterrence policy (defensive) abrogating or

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<sup>17</sup>C. Andrew, For the Presidents Eyes Only (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995) pp. 460-1.

<sup>18</sup>C. Bell, The Paradox of Power. American Foreign Policy in the 1980's (England: Edward Elgar, 1989), M. Cox, "Whatever happened to the Second Cold war? Soviet American Relations: 1980-88", Review of International Studies (Vol. No. 16. 1990)

<sup>19</sup>C. W. Weinberger, "US Defence Strategy", Foreign Affairs (No. 4, Spring, 1986)

substituting the old strategy of nuclear deterrence which was based on the concept of 'Mutual Assured Destruction' (MAD) that is, any attack on the US by the Soviets would be met by a strong retaliation by the US, the fear of which would deter the Soviets from launching a nuclear attack on the US in the first place. President Reagan regarded this strategy as outdated as well as immoral and unsatisfactory. His proposed new strategy was aimed at securing a defensive shield in space against an all out Soviet ballistic nuclear attack. If successful, this strategy was to render the nuclear weapons ineffective and obsolete.<sup>20</sup>

Secondly, there was a significant increase in the US covert support, both economic and military, to various Third World indigenous insurgencies fighting to destabilise and overthrow Soviet supported Communist regimes in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, and Nicaragua. This strategy, which was characterised as the 'Reagan Doctrine', was proclaimed openly and publicly throughout President Reagan two terms in office in order not only to prevent the consolidation of these regimes but also to ostracise the Soviets for their behaviour in the Third World. President Reagan's commitment to this cause can be gauged from his 1985 State of the Union address in which he announced that,

"Freedom is not the sole prerogative of a chosen few, it is the universal right of all God's children. Look to where peace and prosperity flourish today. It is in homes freedom built. Our mission is to defend freedom and democracy and communicate these ideas everywhere we can. We must not break faith with those who are risking their lives on every continent from Afghanistan to Nicaragua to defy Soviet supported aggression and secure rights which have been ours from birth".<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>G. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: My years as Secretary of State* (New York: Charles Scribner Sons, 1993)

<sup>21</sup>R. W. Copson & R. P. Cronin, "The Reagan Doctrine and its Prospects", *Survival* (Vol. XXIX, No. 1. 1987) p. 42 & S. S. Rosenfeld, "The Guns of July" *Foreign Affairs* (No. 4, Spring 1986) p. 701.

In October 1985 in an address to the UN General Assembly he linked the resolution of the Third World regional conflicts as a major precondition for negotiation with the Soviets on arms control talks in his forthcoming Summit meeting with President Gorbachev at Geneva in November 1985.

The Reagan Doctrine was a comprehensive and multi-faceted policy. It was implemented by a wide variety of agencies and departments: the CIA, the Defence Department, the NSC, the State Department, the Pentagon, and the Congress. The support of these agencies for the Reagan Doctrine varied from conflict to conflict. The success of this doctrine can be gauged by the fact that eventually it helped the US win the Cold War. According to professor Fred Halliday the doctrine had five components that is, Pro-insurgency, anti-terrorism, counter insurgency, asserting US military strength, finessing revolutionary crisis.<sup>22</sup> In order to gain bipartisan and domestic support the Reagan Doctrine sometimes propagated contradictory goals and themes. For example, of promoting the cause of democracy when it had no relevance to that particular conflict as in Nicaragua. Discarding the use of the conventional military approach of direct US military involvement abroad, the Reagan Doctrine was based on the concept of Low Intensity Conflict (LIC), which meant helping the counter insurgency forces to overthrow unpopular Communist regimes.<sup>23</sup> It was a reversal of the 1960s counter insurgency tactics employed by the Soviets to overthrow unpopular governments supported by the US (Vietnam). The policy became more coherent and more vigorously implemented from 1985s onwards after President Reagan had consolidated his position in his first term of office (1981-85).

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<sup>22</sup>F. Halliday, Cold War, Third World: An essay on US Soviet Relations (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989)pp. 69-91, For precise details on LIC See, NSDD No. 277 in C. Simpson, National Security Directives of the Reagan and Bush Administration (Boulder: West view Press, 1995) p. 812

<sup>23</sup>E. G. Carr & S. Sloan (ed.) Low Intensity Conflict: Old Threats in a New World (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992).

There were three broad criteria for the application of the Reagan Doctrine to a particular conflict these included, "an indigenous independent insurgency, a government relying on Soviet arms and personnel and local population denied a right to participate in their government."<sup>24</sup>

As there were differences in the origins, nature and duration among the various Third World conflicts supported by the US, the amount of support each received was often a subject of controversy among the advocates of the Reagan Doctrine. This controversy can be gauged from the variable amounts of aid allocated to different conflicts. For example, in July 1985, the US Congress voted in favour of providing the following amounts of material and military support to anti-communist forces: Angola (\$15 million), Nicaragua (\$27 million), Cambodia (\$5 million), and the highest amount to Afghanistan (\$250 million).<sup>25</sup> Only in Afghanistan, where there was direct Soviet intervention, occupation and the insurgency enjoyed by widespread public support, was all the criteria met for the application of the Reagan Doctrine. As a result, there was a bipartisan support for the Afghan cause within the US administration. Afghanistan is an example of the most successful application of the Reagan Doctrine. In Cambodia, the Vietnamese forces backed by the Soviet Union had invaded, in December 1978, to overthrow the unpopular Khmer Rouge government, and installed Heng Samrin as their client. The US and China provided aid to a coalition group called the Coalition Government of Democratic Cambodia (CGDK) which also included the discredited Khmer Rouge, in order to overthrow the Vietnamese installed government. In the Angolan civil war, Soviet and Cuban troops provided support for the Communist factions, that is, the Popular Movement for

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<sup>24</sup>Scott, *Op. Cit.* Deciding to Intervene, p. 31.

<sup>25</sup>S. S. Rosenfield, "The Guns of July", Foreign Affairs (No. 4, Spring 1986) pp. 705-706 & R. H. Shultz, "Low intensity Conflict, Future challenges and lessons from the Reagan Years", Survival (Vol. No. 1989) pp. 359-371, R. W. Cospon & R. P. Cronin, "The Reagan Doctrine and its Prospects", Survival, (Vol. XXXIX, No. 1 1987) p. 44.

the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) against the US support to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA); the US' client South Africa also provided support to the UNITA faction led by Jonas Savimbi. In Nicaragua, the US provided aid to the Contras to overthrow the Sandinista regime backed by the Soviet Union and Cuba.<sup>26</sup>

The US justified its intervention in the Third World in terms of promoting the cause of democracy, human rights, freedom and self-defence. However, in reality, it was also protecting its own security interests and the US policy is motivated more by considerations of Realpolitik than by legal principles. For example, there were widespread human rights violations in areas where the US was providing aid, that is, in Nicaragua, in El Salvador and in Guatemala. The US supported Contras were ruthless and frequently violated the human rights in Nicaragua. There were many instances where the US was supporting undemocratic right wing authoritarian regimes as long they were not Communist. For example, China, the Philippines, Pakistan, South Korea and South Africa. Moreover, historically there had been many instances where the US had intervened to overthrow democratically elected governments, "owing to the fear of strong nationalist and left wing governments taking power." For example in Iran 1953, Guatemala 1954, Chile 1973 and Cuba 1962. In some places there has been direct US intervention, Grenada (1983), Libya (1984) and Panama (1989). In other words, the principle of supporting the cause of democracy in US foreign policy is not applied consistently, instead pragmatic considerations, based on national and security interest prevail. According to Euan Luard,

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<sup>26</sup>P. J. Schraeder, "Paramilitary Intervention", in P. Schraeder (ed.) Intervention into the 1990's. US foreign Policy in the Third World (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992) pp. 137-151

"Each power sometimes wishes to apply one set of principles in one sphere and a different set in another. Thus, the Russians seem to believe that their security interests justify them in seeking to dictate what type of government comes to power in Afghanistan but dispute the right of the US to do the same in Nicaragua and Cuba. Conversely, the US may declare itself justified in supporting revolutionary forces seeking to overthrow the regimes in Nicaragua, Angola, Cambodia and Afghanistan claiming that they are undemocratic and unrepresentative, yet strongly resists efforts by others to overthrow established governments that are based on the same claims, El Salvador, Pakistan, Chad, or the Philippines."<sup>27</sup>

Superpowers aid to their clients intensified these regional conflicts in the Third World. In 1988, due to domestic economic difficulties and under pressure from the US, the Soviet Union could not carry on supporting its clients. As a result, all the warring factions in these conflicts were brought to the negotiating table. This was mainly due to accommodation achieved between the superpowers in their bilateral relations, but peace did not return in any of these conflicts. This was because several issues were left unresolved, for example, question of power-sharing, various antagonist factions claiming political legitimacy, the termination of external aid by the superpowers to their clients, and vast amounts of weapons left by the outside actors involved in these conflicts which fell in the hands of the rebels. As a consequence these conflicts became extremely complex to resolve and with the end of the Cold War Russian and US interest in the resolution of these conflicts declined. Thus, the Reagan Doctrine was a multifaceted, deliberate, openly espoused, but ruthless policy to reverse the trend of Soviet expansionism in the Third World.

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<sup>27</sup>E. Luard, "Super Powers and Regional Conflicts", Foreign Affairs (Vol. No. 5, 1986) pp.1006-1017, N. Chomsky, J. Steele & J. Gittings, Super Powers in Collision. The New Cold War of the 1980's (Middlesex: Penguin books, 1984)

On the question of whether the US policy of providing support to the Third World anti-Communist guerrillas had the intended results, it can be said that it had mixed and overall successful results for the US foreign policy. There were many constraints imposed by the various Departments of the US government on the Reagan Administration in its relentless pursuit of its objective to 'roll back' Communism. However, the implications of the Reagan Doctrine for the regional states security were not so positive. For example, in Afghanistan the US policy was successful in achieving its basic objective of Soviet troop withdrawal, but the promised goal of democracy, self-determination and freedom for the Mujahideen was not achieved. In Nicaragua, the US policy was not widely supported by the Congress or the public, it was implemented in a clandestine manner as a result of which it lost its coherence and brought embarrassment to the Administration with the outbreak of the Iran-Contra Affair in 1986. In Angola, Afghanistan, Cambodia and Nicaragua, Peace Accords were signed after the Cold War, and both the superpowers disengaged from these conflicts, but the goal of the peaceful transition of power to democratically elected leaders was not implemented. Instead, after the cessation of outside aid these states plunged into a vicious phase of civil wars.<sup>28</sup> Thus as the US geo-strategic objectives changed after the Cold War so did the goals of its foreign policy. If morality was an important factor in the US foreign policy, as was proclaimed in the Reagan Doctrine, then the achievement of the right of self-determination, democracy and freedom was essential, but if strategic considerations were crucial, then only the maintenance of strong diplomatic and military pressure on the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces from the Third World was an adequate requirement for the success of the US foreign policy.

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<sup>28</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Schraeder, pp.131-151, *Ibid.* N. Chomsky (ed) Super Powers in Collision. The new Cold War of the 1980s. & P. J. Olson, "No easy choices US policy and Support for Resistance Movements", Pakistan Horizon (Vol. XI, 1987) pp. 39-57

Of all the four anti-communist movements supported by the Reagan Doctrine the Afghan Mujahideen were the largest recipient of US aid. Afghanistan represented the biggest and most successful covert operation undertaken by the CIA after the Vietnam war. On Afghanistan, the support for the policy was unanimous in both houses of Congress. "It was a cost effective, low profile, low risk policy for the US to bleed the Soviets."<sup>29</sup> In 1984, a joint resolution was passed by the Congress, which pledged unanimous support for the Afghans fighting for freedom and democracy. This resolution became instrumental in promulgation of another Presidential Directive in April 1985 (NSDD166) which, "committed US security agencies to use all means available to aid Afghan rebel groups."<sup>30</sup> It also represented a change of goals, from the limited aim of inflicting material damage on the Soviets in Afghanistan, to actually driving them out.

The US policy on Afghanistan was implemented through Pakistan, because initially national security interests of both Pakistan and the US converged. But with the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union in 1989, and with the recession of the Communist threat, providing aid to the Eastern European States became a US priority to the detriment of the ongoing and unresolved civil war in Afghanistan. It was a bi-partisan policy in the US to fight to the last Afghan. Afghanistan presented a golden opportunity for the US to avenge its defeat in Vietnam. Under international law the US was justified in supporting the Mujahideen, because the Soviets had invaded and blatantly violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of another state. In Nicaragua, the US policy to overthrow the Sandinistas regime was not supported by either the public or the Congress. Two Boland Amendments passed by the Congress restricted US aid to

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<sup>29</sup>The Nation (4 March, 1987)

<sup>30</sup>A. Alexiev, "US policy and the War in Afghanistan", Global Affairs (Vol. 3, Winter, 1988) p. 89, A. Dixit, "US policy towards Afghanistan: The Pak. Factor", Strategic Analysis New Dehli (Vol. XII, No. 1, 1988) & *Op. Cit.*, C. Simpson, National Security Directives of the Reagan and Bush administrations (Boulder:Westview Press, 1995) pp. 446-447.

the Contras. In Angola, the Clark Amendment passed by the Congress (1975) prohibited US aid to the rival Angolan factions after its independence from Portuguese in 1974. The Reagan Doctrine is an excellent example of the reversal of the Brezhnev Doctrine.

From 1985 onwards the 'New Political Thinking' (NPT) in the Soviet foreign policy implied that President Gorbachev adopted a more conciliatory attitude towards various bilateral US-Soviet issues such as arms control talks and regional conflicts. The reason for the change in the Soviet foreign policy was driven by domestic economic needs that is, in order to implement its programme of domestic reform 'Perestroika' the Soviet Union decided to curtail its commitments abroad which were an enormous drain on its resources. In international politics foreign policy of a state can change with the advent of a new leader, and this was a good example of such a reversal. Under Gorbachev, Soviet foreign policy changed from its previous conception of the world as divided into two hostile camps, to a world which was becoming increasingly interdependent. Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan was also essential for the Soviet Union in order to normalise foreign relations with other states, particularly China and the Muslim World. It is ironic as most of the themes in the Soviet NPT were reminiscent of ideas proclaimed by the US in the 1970s when the US was in a weak position.

#### **2.2:4 The US Foreign Policy towards Afghanistan during President Reagan Administration**

President Reagan's foreign policy towards Afghanistan was based on the continuation of the implementation of policy goals of the outgoing President Carter Administration. A \$3.2 billion six year aid package divided equally between economic and military aid was signed with Pakistan in September 1981

followed by \$4.2 billion for the next six years till 1987; President Reagan also agreed to provide Pakistan with 40 F16's air crafts. The Symington and Glenn Amendments barring US military and economic aid to Pakistan were waived.<sup>31</sup>

The most salient feature of President Reagans foreign policy towards Afghanistan was the intensification of the programme of providing covert aid to the Mujahideen. This policy was implemented under the direct supervision of William Casey, Director General of the CIA and Charles Cogan, Director of the South Asian region of the CIA. A former OSS and a staunch anti-Communist Casey was not only a close adviser to President Reagan, but wielded tremendous influence over the entire course of the US foreign policy towards the Soviet Union (1982 till his death in 1987). He was one of the staunchest supporter, of the Afghan Mujahideen in President Reagan's Administration and lobbied extensively on behalf of the Afghan Mujahideen to be provided not only with increased levels of US aid but also with better and more sophisticated weapons to counter the Soviet air attacks. He travelled extensively around the world to co-ordinate covert strategy with US allies in order to defeat communism. During 1981-82 the level of covert US aid to the Afghan Mujahideen was only \$30 million. In public pronouncements an attitude of 'plausible deniability' was maintained by the US. There were two reasons for it: firstly; in order not to provoke the Soviets to retaliate against Pakistan which was the main conduit of US covert aid to the Mujahideen and secondly; initially there was deep scepticism in the US over the ability of the Afghan Mujahideen to defeat the Soviet forces. During the debate over the supply of stingers to the Mujahideen, "the CIA bureaucracy and the Pentagon feared that if the US provided advanced weapons such as anti-aircraft missiles to the guerrillas they would eventually sell them to hostile intelligence services or to pro-Iranian Islamic militias. These US

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<sup>31</sup> S. T. Kheli, The US and Pakistan: The Evolution of an Influence Relationship, (New York; Praeger, 1982) p. 350

officials favoured limited aid to the Afghan guerrillas as a means of 'harassing' and 'bleeding' the Soviet troops in Afghanistan, but little more than that." <sup>32</sup>

The CIA played a very significant role in the Afghan war. It undertook the biggest covert operation after the Vietnam War. It was in charge of buying and transferring weapons to Pakistan. CIA officials provided training to ISI officers in the use of sophisticated weapons who then trained the Afghan Mujahideen. Funds were allocated for logistics and transport of weapon supplies from Pakistan into Afghanistan. The CIA provided maps, intercepted messages, intelligence and satellite photographs of the Soviet troop position in Afghanistan to Pakistan, and imparted technical information on how to carry out acts of sabotage blowing up dams bridges and Soviet supply routes into Afghanistan. In 1984, on William Casey suggestion Pakistan and Saudi Arabia undertook to enlarge the scope of covert CIA activity against the Soviet Union by launching direct attacks across northern Afghanistan into Central Asia and infiltrating Islamic propaganda material to stir up rebellion in the Soviet Central Asian republics. At the same time, in view of the Soviet escalation of war in Afghanistan both the CIA and Pentagon recommended an upgrade in the quantity and quality of CIA assistance to Pakistan. As a result, Pakistan was provided with sophisticated satellite photographs of the Soviet troop positions in Afghanistan.<sup>33</sup> However, the CIA resented the exclusive control of Pakistan ISI over the military aspect of the policy and the fact that they were not consulted in decisions over the distribution of aid to the Mujahideen. The CIA policy in Afghanistan was basically without a political aim, its primary goal was to keep maximum military pressure on the Soviet troops and to substantially raise the costs of their occupation.

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<sup>32</sup> *Op. Cit.*, Simpson, National Security Directives, p. 446

<sup>33</sup> Yusuf, *Op. Cit.*, The Bear Trap. pp.40-54 & *Op. Cit.*, P. Rodman, More precious than Peace pp.80-90

Apart from the covert role played by the CIA, the US Congress was instrumental in pressurising the Administration to raise the level of aid to the Afghan Mujahideen. As a result, beginning from 1982, there was a gradual increase in the amount of US aid for the Afghan Mujahideen. In 1982 the amount was raised to \$40 million. In 1983 the aid level was increased to \$80 million, in 1984 to \$130 million and in 1985 \$250 million. In analysing the role of Congress, the personal efforts of Republican Congressman Charles Wilson, Gordon Humphrey and Senator Orrin Hatch are praiseworthy. Charles Wilson used his position as a member of the Congress Appropriation Committee to exert influence on the administration to increase the level of funding for the Afghan war and sometimes to divert funds from other areas like the defence budget into the Afghan Aid programme. The Afghan Task Force was set up which was dismantled after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, and efforts were also made to raise the public profile of the Afghan Mujahideen throughout the world. During 1980-84 the objectives of the US policy on Afghanistan were based on NSDD 75.

“Secretary of State Shultz described this decision as an effort to move beyond the policies of containment’ (which he said had outlived its usefulness) and détente (which Shultz said had failed) in US relations with the USSR. NSDD 75 was closely intertwined with the NSDD 32, where the President had called for Western economic pressure, publicity, and covert operations to destabilise the governments allied with the USSR. At the same time, NSDD 75 and Secretary Shultz public statements left the door open to improved US USSR relations if the Soviets met the US Terms.

While the NSDD 75 recognised that the USSR is and will remain a global superpower with legitimate security interests, it also authorised clandestine US political and military support for rebellions by those who have a positive alternative to the Soviet model in countries such as Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Poland and Grenada. The new directive

authorised US efforts to convince Western allies to further restrict trade technologies.”<sup>34</sup>

During 1981-84 bilateral relations between Moscow and Washington were tense. The shooting down of the Korean airliner by the Soviets in September 1983 brought harsh criticism from the US. President Reagan adopted a strong rhetoric against the Soviet Union calling it an ‘evil empire’, adding that, “they reserve to themselves the right to lie, to cheat, the only morality they recognise is the one which will further their cause.” Chances of any improvement in US-Soviet relations were low as there was a leadership crisis in the Soviet Union with the deaths of Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, and Chernenko between 1982-84. Arms Control talks with the Soviets were linked to the resolution of regional conflicts by the US. From 1981-1984 Central America was the main focus of US diplomatic attention as there was a fear of a possible Cuban and Soviet collaboration to overthrow regimes in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, and even as far as Mexico.

During President Reagan's second term in office there were two significant features of US policy towards Afghanistan, that is, the signing of NSDD 166 in April 1985 followed one year later in April 1986 by Presidential authorisation to provide the Afghan Mujahadden with 'Stingers' the most sophisticated anti-aircraft missile to counter Soviet air supremacy in Afghanistan. The NSDD 166 changed the objective of the US assistance,

“It committed the US to support a significant escalation in the guerrilla war in Afghanistan, which had spluttered since the USSR military occupation . The directive authorised greater funding for the guerrillas provision of much more advanced weapons, more sophisticated

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<sup>34</sup>*Op. Cit.*, C. Simpson, National Security Directives of the Reagan and Bush Administrations, pp. 891-892

intelligence support and expanded US cooperation with the Pakistani and Chinese governments on the behalf of the guerrillas.

Meanwhile, the pro Soviet-Kabul government anti guerrilla strategy depended on Soviet helicopter gunships and air support to close the Afghan-Pakistani border to clandestine arms and supply shipments for the guerrillas. By the spring of 1985, a Pentagon intelligence study concluded that those tactics were succeeding and might eventually crush the insurgency. The US under Secretary of Defence specialising in political military affairs, Fred Ikle, used that study to lobby President Reagan in favour of providing anti aircraft missiles and more extensive aid and training to the guerrillas.

Ikle, backed by Secretary of Defence Casper Weinberger, convinced the President to sign NSDD 166, which committed US security agencies to use "all means available" to aid Afghan rebel groups."<sup>35</sup>

The demand for Stinger missiles was not new. There was a growing recognition of the need among the supporters of the Afghan Mujahideen to provide them with anti-aircraft missiles in order to replace the ineffective Soviet modelled anti-aircraft missiles the SA-7 (which were purchased from Eastern Europe) and the British made 'Blowpipes' (which were ineffective in the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan). Both of these decisions, that is the NSDD 166 and the supply of Stingers were undertaken by consensus and support of the Executive Branch. The State Department was a strong advocate of the decision to supply Stingers, the Congressional role was marginal and it provided approval and background support for these decisions. Secretary of State Casper Weinberger resigned in 1987 and was replaced by George Shultz after he became the main architect of the US foreign policy in 1985 he advocated that stingers should be supplied to the Afghan Mujahideen. Negotiations on Arms Control with the Soviets was also proceeding successfully. From 1985 onwards there was an increased activity on

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<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 446-447

these two areas of bilateral US-Soviet relations, that is, arms control and third world regional conflicts.

The accession to power of Gorbachev in 1985 was an important landmark in changing the entire course of Soviet domestic and foreign policy. Under Gorbachev there was a complete reappraisal of the Soviet Union's foreign policy. The Soviet foreign policy during the Brezhnev years was successful in terms of increasing the number of Soviet allies in the Third World. But it came with a price. It led to an over extension of Soviet power and became a huge burden on its resources. The Soviet foreign policy of helping the 'National Democratic' or 'Socialist Oriented' states in the 1970's did not always produced the intended or desired results. Most of the new Third World allies were weak, did not enjoy political legitimacy or popular support of the masses, were overzealous and antagonised the population by their ruthless reforms. They adopted independent policies and thus became a liability for the Soviet Union. Indications of Soviet willingness to withdraw from Afghanistan were given as early as 1986. In private discussions with their US counterparts the Soviets dropped hints about their resolve to leave Afghanistan. As an example, Andrei Gromyko was replaced by Edward Shervadnadze as the new Soviet foreign minister.

Under Gorbachev there was also substantial progress on Arms Control talks. Two separate agendas including the INF (Intermediate Nuclear forces) and the Strategic Weapon limitation talks (START) were discussed. The INF talks had been deadlocked since 1979 when NATO's decided to deploy Pershing 11 and Cruise missiles in Europe by 1983 (in response to Soviet deployment of SS-20 missiles with first strike capability) which dealt a serious blow to progress on these talks. The INF talks resumed in 1981 and 1982 but without progress. The START talks were linked to Soviet insistence on the abandonment of SDI. Three summits were held at Geneva (November 1985), Reyjavik (October 1986)

and Washington (December 1987) between the US and the Soviet Union to discuss Arms Control procedures.

On 8 February, 1988, Gorbachev unilaterally delinked the two issues of withdrawal of Soviet troops and the formation of a coalition government in Afghanistan. This brought to the surface a major error in the US policy toward Afghanistan. In 1985 the US had agreed to be the guarantor of the UN supported accords, which implied that according to the non-intervention and non-interference treaty between Pakistan and Kabul, the US would be unable to provide aid to the Mujahideen after the Soviet troop withdrawal. In 1988, under sharp criticism from the hard-liners and supporters of the Mujahideen in the Congress and the Senate over the unilateral cut off of US aid to the Mujahideen, the State Department retreated from its earlier position. The US Senate passed a unanimous resolution against the unilateral cut off of aid to the Mujahideen after the finalisation of the Accords in March 1988. Faced with growing criticism the Secretary of State George Shultz in a meeting with his counterpart Edward Shevardnadze insisted on the US right to continue to supply the Mujahideen as long as the Soviet military aid to their client regime in Kabul continued. This agreement of continuing the supply of military aid by the US and the Soviet Union to their clients led to the outbreak of a Civil War in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal.

The removal of General Akthur Rahman as the head of the ISI (who was the architect of Jihad or holy war and a strong proponent of the Mujahideen first achieving military victory) in March 1987 had dealt a serious blow to the military success of 'Jihad' against the Soviets. It was rumoured that it was done at the instigation of the US and with the consent of President Zia.<sup>36</sup> General

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<sup>36</sup> M. Yosuf, "US never Wanted Pakistan Victory in Afghanistan", The Nation (12 August, 1992)

Rahman believed that any wrangling over political power sharing arrangements among the Afghan Mujahideen before the actual Soviet troop pullout from Afghanistan, would harm the cause of Jihad which was an unconventional guerrilla war better suited for the Afghan temperament. He believed that the Mujahideen should first win a decisive military victory and capture the capital Kabul and only then enter into discussions over the political future of Afghanistan. General Akhtar wanted a military victory to be followed by political transfer of power to the elected representatives of the Afghan people. However, the Soviets, the UN, and the Pakistan Foreign Office were pursuing a diplomatic solution of the crisis in which the ISI was only marginally involved. Throughout 1987-88 there were increasing indications of Soviet willingness to withdraw, on the precondition that a government of national reconciliation be installed in Afghanistan before the withdrawal. Unfortunately there was a complete deadlock among all the parties involved in the Afghan conflict on this issue. The US, whose foreign policy had so far neglected the political dimension of the conflict, and the CIA had allowed the ISI to retain control of the military strategy of the war and were suddenly confronted with a serious dilemma in 1988. This was the realisation that the US policy of supporting the Afghan Mujahideen had indirectly led to the strengthening of the radical and fundamentalist groups in the Afghan resistance. In view of the already present danger of Iranian Islamic fundamentalism in the region the US was not in favour of the fundamentalist groups coming to power in Afghanistan. After the removal of General Akhtar as the head of the ISI, the CIA was able to attain its long cherished policy goal of supplying weapons directly to the commanders inside Afghanistan and bypassing the Afghan Resistance parties. This policy not only intensified the power struggle within Afghanistan, but also diminished the prospects of achieving consensus among the rapidly fragmenting power centres on the political future of Afghanistan. Moreover, just four days before the signing of the Geneva Accords for the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from

Afghanistan, on the 10th April 1988 a huge explosion at the ammunition depot (Ojhiri Camp) near Rawalpindi which contained the bulk of military supplies for the Afghan Mujahideen took place. In 1989 the US cut back on aid to the Afghan Mujahideen at a time when the Soviets were stepping up their aid to their puppet regime in Kabul.

After the Soviet troop withdrawal in 1989 there was a change of government in both the US and Pakistan: there was a return to democracy in Pakistan, and President Reagan left office in January 1989. Iran and Saudi Arabia also became involved in a bid to influence Pakistan's attempt to shape the future interim government. There was no agreement among the Afghans over a power sharing formula. The ISI had been an advocate of a military solution to the conflict but it should have been achieved before the Soviet withdrawal and not after it. In March 1989, there was an unsuccessful attempt to capture the city of Jallalabad by the Mujahideen to set up an Interim Afghan Government inside Afghan territory. This policy was not successful because except for the OIC, no state, not even Pakistan or the US, recognised it. The CIA had predicted that the regime in Kabul would collapse after the Soviet withdrawal which proved to be wrong. After the Jallalabad fiasco military solution to the Afghan conflict was abandoned.

As a result of the agreement on 'positive symmetry' in 1988, which allowed both the superpowers to continue providing military aid to their clients, the USSR supplied about \$3 billion worth of arms to their client in Kabul, whereas US aid amounted to only \$ 600 million for that year.<sup>37</sup> This had an affect on the ability of the Mujahideen to overthrow the Najib government. "The US and its allies failed to match their supplies with the changing requirements of the Mujahideen and the Mujahideen also failed to switch from guerrilla war to a conventional

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<sup>37</sup> "First Steps towards a Political Settlement" The Nation (9 February, 1990)

war." <sup>38</sup> President Bush was preoccupied with the Eastern Europe crisis and in Pakistan the Bhutto government did not have sufficient domestic support to take a firm stand on Afghan policy. In the beginning it followed the ISI policy. However after the Jalallabad fiasco, Prime Minister Bhutto turned down the military strategy in favour of finding a political solution to the conflict. On 13th September 1991, a superpower agreement was signed to cut off military aid to their respective clients in Afghanistan with effect from the January of 1992. The UN sponsored plan was to transfer power to a transitional government which was then to hold elections and transfer power to the elected representatives. However, the UN plan could not be implemented because with the collapse of President Najibullah regime in April 1992, Afghanistan became engulfed in a bitter power struggles among the various Afghan groups.

The credit for Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan belongs to the bravery of the Afghan Mujahideen. As Morton Kaplan wrote towards the end of his book Soldiers of God, "The only people willing and able to fight a super power were poverty stricken peasant guerrillas who have no motive to surrender because they have no material possessions at risk."<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately despite their successful and heroic struggle against the Communist onslaught, Afghanistan is still involved in a civil war.

This chapter has described the US foreign policy towards the Afghan conflict during the Cold War period. The US response to the Soviet invasion was motivated by it's own security interests. Afghanistan was part of the wider strategy of President Reagan foreign policy whose aim was to roll back the tide of communism. The US policy was based on the concept of Low Intensity Conflict which involved providing covert aid to the counter insurgency

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<sup>38</sup>See President Nixons Article, The Nation (15 February, 1990)

<sup>39</sup> M. Kaplan, Soldiers of God (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1990) p. 224

movements in the Third World to overthrow unpopular communist regimes. The CIA in liason with the ISI executed the military aspect of this policy in Afghanistan. At the height of the Cold War period the US did not pay any serious attention to the UN sponsored peace talks aimed at finding a political solution to the conflict. The prevalent view in the US was that the UN negotiations were just a side show. The military strategy was more important to force the Soviets to withdraw. The US State Department ambivalent attitude towards the UN negotiations can be gauged from the fact that in 1985 the US agreed to become the guarantor of the UN sponsored indirect negotiations on Afghanistan. This meant that in case of a final agreement reached the US (under the non-intervention and non-interference treaty between Pakistan and Afghanistan) would be obliged to terminate its military and economic aid to the Afghan Mujahideen. In March 1988 the US Senate passed a Resolution against the unilateral cut off of aid to the Mujahideen after the finalisation of the Geneva Accords. As a result of this strong criticism, Secretary of State Shultz concluded an agreement with the Soviet Foreign Minister on 'positive symmetry'. Under the new agreement the US retained the right to continue to supply military aid to its clients in Afghanistan as long as the Soviet Union continued to provide aid to the Najibullah regime.

Throughout the Afghan War the CIA had allowed the ISI to retain control of the supply of funds to the fundamentalist groups in the Afghan Resistance. With the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1988 the US was suddenly confronted with the spectre of an Islamic Fundamentalist government in Afghanistan. To avoid this scenario the head of the ISI General Akhtar Abdur Rahman was removed in March 1988. The CIA then began to supply aid directly to the local commanders inside Afghanistan. This policy not only fueled power struggle among the local commanders but also reduced the chances of the Mujahideen reaching a consensus on the future government in Afghanistan.

During 1979-1988, bilateral US-Soviet relations involved two avenues, that is, arms control and third world regional conflicts. It was at these Arms Control Summits that the Soviet leaders discussed their policy changes on Afghanistan with the US officials. For example the final Soviet decision to withdraw from Afghanistan was conveyed to the US at the Washington Summit in December 1987. Thus, from 1985 onwards the US policy towards Afghanistan was strongly affected by the process of gradual improvement in bilateral US-Soviet relations .

## **Part II**

### **CHAPTER THREE**

#### **The Soviet Union's Political and Military Policies During the**

#### **Conflict in Afghanistan 1979-1988.**

"Turkestan, Afghanistan, Transcaspia, Persia, to many these words breathe only a sense of utter remoteness, a memory of strange vicissitudes and of moribund romance. To me I must confess they are the pieces on a chessboard upon which is being played out a game for the domination of the world."

(George Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India)

#### **2.3:1 The Soviet Foreign Policy towards South Asia during the Cold War Period**

The conduct of Soviet foreign policy towards the Third World states during the Cold War period had gone through different stages. Its basic feature was its pragmatism and its constant modifications and adaptations to the changing international developments. During the immediate aftermath of World War II South Asia was not a region of high priority for the Soviets. Soviet activities were mainly a response to the US policy of concluding alliances with Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and Iraq on the Soviet southern border which spurred the Soviets to gain influence. The Soviet view of international politics was based on the theory of class struggle rather than on the traditional framework of inter-state relations. Its aim was the eventual victory of the proletariat and the working class over the capitalist classes. In the immediate aftermath of World War II Stalin adopted a cautious approach towards the national liberation movements taking place in the Third World. This was mainly due to the bitter Soviet experience during the Chinese revolution in 1946 when the Chinese Nationalist forces led by Chiang ki Shek used the Soviet support to defeat the Communist forces of Mao. It was only after Stalin's death in 1955 that the Soviet Union under Khrushchev recognised the enormous potential of using National Liberation struggle in the Third World states in the fight against imperialism and

capitalism.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the Soviet foreign policy towards the Third World states suffered from an inadequate regard to the domestic political conditions prevalent in a majority of the Third World states. Most of the leaders in the newly independent states were extremely nationalistic and had their own models for socio-political development which did not always correspond to Soviet priorities. Realising the absence of a significant number of the proletariat in the Third World the Soviets adopted the concept of creating 'National Democratic' states in the Third World states in which the Soviet Union could serve as a vanguard in states where there were no proletariat or communist parties.

The instruments used by the Soviet Union in the Third World included economic and military aid, diplomatic support and cultural exchanges. Most of the economic aid during the first period from 1955-65 was given to Egypt, India and Afghanistan. There were certain important features of extending economic aid for example they were given on government to government basis, carried low interest rates, were donated for heavy industries or for high profile projects (the Aswan Dam, and the Bhilai Steel mill in India) and were announced at the time of the visit of high ranking Soviet officials to these states. Moreover, Soviet trade with the Third World states was usually conducted on the basis of a barter system. Military aid was another important instrument of Soviet foreign policy, which involved the training of Third World military personnel in the Soviet Union and the stationing of Soviet military experts abroad. In Afghanistan

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<sup>1</sup> J. Noguee & R. H. Donaldson, Soviet Foreign Policy since World War Two (London: Macmillan, 1992) pp.163-228, R. Allison & P. William's, Super power Competition and Crisis Prevention in the Third World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) pp. 29-47, W. Barnds, "South Asia" in, K. London (ed) The Soviet Union in World Politics (London: Groom Helm, 1980) pp. 195-228, S. Kheli, "The Soviet Union in Asia, The Soviet Union in Afghanistan: Costs and benefits" in R. H. Donaldson (ed) The Soviet Union in the Third World, Successes and Failures (London: Groom Helm, 1981) pp. 217-231, E. P. Hoffman, F. J. Floren Jr. The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy (New York: Aldine Atherton, 1971) & R. Edmonds, Soviet Foreign policy: The Brezhnev Years (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983)

extensive economic aid was given with the political objective of establishing the monopoly of the Afghan Communist Party (PDPA) in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup>

In 1968 the Soviet Union enunciated the Brezhnev doctrine which stated that it was incumbent, "on the Soviet Union to intervene militarily in Socialist countries when their governments have become unreliable or failed to ensure effective control of the government apparatus".<sup>3</sup> The concept of global 'correlation of forces' was another important variable in the Soviet Union foreign policy approach to the outside world. According to the Soviet analysts the correlation of forces applies to the non military aspects of national power including political, economic and ideological forces, the emphasis being on class struggle rather than traditional state to state relations. Even after the Soviet Union entered into détente with the US in 1972 it continued to provide assistance to Third World revolutionaries under the banner of the shifting global correlation of forces which were perceived to be moving increasingly in the Soviet Union's favour. In the US this raised serious doubts over the Soviet Union true global intentions. It was perceived that the Soviet Union was pursuing a global strategy to dominate the world. For example the Soviet ambassador to France S.V. Chervonenko speaking in reference to the invasion in Afghanistan asserted that the, "Soviet Union would not permit another Chile." He went on to say that, "now any country, in any region, anywhere in the globe has the full right to choose its friends and allies and if it becomes necessary to repel with them the threat of counter revolution or foreign intervention."<sup>4</sup> Thus both the US actions

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<sup>2</sup> M. S. Noorzoy, "Soviet Economic interests in Afghanistan", Problems of Communism (Sep/Oct. 1987) pp. 43-54 & F. Fukuyama, "Patterns of Soviet Third World policy", Problems of Communism (September/October 1987) pp.1-13.

<sup>3</sup> R. B. Rais, War without Winners. Afghanistan's Uncertain Transition after the Cold War (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1994) p. 74.

<sup>4</sup>Verenon V. Aspaturian, " Soviet Global power and the Correlation of Forces", Problems of Communism (Vol. XXIX, May June, 1980) p. 17& A. Saikal, "Soviet Policy toward SouthWest Asia", Annals of the American Academy of Political Science (No. 481, September 1985) pp. 104-116.

and the increasingly assertive Soviet behaviour in the Third World during the 1970s enhanced the security dilemma for both states.

So far different explanations have been put forward by various writers explaining the goals of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. These writers include Fred Halliday, Raymond Garthaff, Jiri Valenta, Zalmay Khalilzad, Henry Bradsher and Anthony Arnold to name a few.<sup>5</sup> Their arguments can be broadly categorised under the heading of, 'ideology', 'security', and 'pragmatism'. These arguments are related to the ideological and global considerations in the Soviet Unions foreign policy, the worsening security situation inside Afghanistan in 1978-79, the regional developments in the vicinity of Afghanistan (Iran and Pakistan), and (in the global context) the gradual deterioration in the bilateral US-Soviet relations during the 1970s.

In my view all these factors were interconnected and each contributed in its own way to the Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan. The immediate motivating factor was spurred by the precarious security situation inside Afghanistan, but in a broader context the increasing Soviet assertiveness in the Third World and the role of ideology in the formulation of Soviet foreign policy were also significant factors.

The real motives of the Soviet decision are not known, due to the closed nature of the Soviet decision making process under President Brezhnev. However, there

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<sup>5</sup>F. Halliday, "War and Revolution in Afghanistan", New left Review (No.119, Jan/ Feb. 1980), R. L. Garthaff, "Afghanistan: Soviet Intervention and the American Reaction", in Détente and Confrontation (Washington: The Brookings Institute, 1994) pp. 887-965, J. Valenta, "From Prague to Kabul : The Soviet Style of Invasion" International Security (Vol. 5, No. 2, 1980) pp.115-141, J. Valenta, "The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan: The difficulty of knowing where to Stop", ORBIS (Vol. 24, No.2, 1980)pp. 201-218, H. Bradsher, Afghanistan and the Soviet Union (N.C: Durham Press Policy Studies, 1983) & J. Collins, "Soviet Policy toward Afghanistan", Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science (Vol. 36, No. 4, 1987) pp. 198-209.

is some evidence that the decision was taken in late November 1979 "by a small elite group in the CPSU Politburo including, the Defence Minister Dimitri Ustinov, the party's chief ideologist Mikhail Suslov, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, KGB chief Yuri Andropov, Chief of the General Staff Ogarkov and the General Secretary of the CPSU Leonid Brezhnev."<sup>6</sup> There was some opposition by the KGB and the military leaders which was overruled by Brezhnev. The official Soviet justification for the invasion was that the Soviet forces were invited by the PDPA leader Hafizullah Amin under the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation signed in December 1978, to prevent the collapse of the regime which was under threat from counter revolutionary imperialist forces aided by China, Pakistan and the US. But this cannot be regarded as a credible reason in light of both the Soviet attempt in September 1979 to assassinate Prime Minister Hafizullah Amin and replace him with a more moderate leader Nur Mohammed Taraki, and considering the fact that after the failure of this plan Amin was murdered by the invading Soviet forces and replaced by the Soviet puppet Babrak Karmal, who at the time was living in diplomatic exile in Eastern Europe. It was a difficult decision for the CPSU Politburo but one which had to be taken. Prior to the invasion in April 1979 and in August 1979 respectively, the Soviet military missions sent into Afghanistan to assess the security situation concluded that the situation was worsening and posed a danger to the safety of Soviet personnel in Afghanistan. In September 1979 Taraki met Brezhnev in Moscow to discuss plans to remove Prime Minister Amin whose ruthless policies were provoking widespread demonstrations against the communist regime in Afghanistan.

When the Soviet forces invaded Hungary in 1956 the US was distracted by the Suez Crisis. In 1968 when the Soviet forces invaded Czechoslovakia the US was

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<sup>6</sup>A. Arnold, "Soviet Relations with Afghanistan: The Current dynamic" in H. Malik (ed) Domestic Determinants of Soviet Policy toward South Asia and the Middle East (London: Macmillan Press, 1990) p.190.

embroiled in the Vietnam war. At the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the crisis in Iran and the fall of the Shah (a close ally of the US) may have encouraged the Soviets to intervene in Afghanistan hoping to avoid invoking a strong reaction from the US. Also due to its geographical proximity on the southern border of the Soviet Union the turmoil in Afghanistan was regarded as an immediate security threat. The two Soviet Generals who visited Afghanistan prior to the invasion to assess the ground situation viz., General Pavlovsky and General Yepsiev, had both played an important role in the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. According to their assessment a speedy and decisive Soviet military intervention was essential to stabilise the political and security situation in Afghanistan.

Whatever the immediate alarmist interpretations of the Soviet motives in the immediate aftermath of the invasion were or, whatever the more sanguine judgement with the benefit of hindsight have been, there is no doubt that the invasion, coming in the context of increased Soviet assertiveness in the Third World in the second half of the 1970s, raised alarm bells about Soviet intentions throughout the world. The invasion was dubbed by President Carter as the greatest threat to world peace since World War II. In a television interview he said, "my opinion of the Russians has changed more drastically in the last week than even the previous two and a half years in office".<sup>7</sup> It heralded an end to the era of détente with the Soviet Union and led to the onset of a Second Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union.

Why did the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan evoke such a strong reaction in the United States ? After all Afghanistan had been a victim of diplomatic neglect by the United States throughout the Cold War period due to an erroneous evaluation of its strategic significance, combined with an implicit assumption by successive

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<sup>7</sup>"Chill in a New Cold War" Special Report, NewsWeek (January,1980) p. 7.

US Administrations that a neutral nonaligned Afghanistan was the best means of its survival and this could be achieved by not competing with or challenging the Soviet influence in Afghanistan. In order to comprehend the strident response of President Carter to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 it is important to point out that by the end of 1960s the international environment since World War II (characterised by the dominance of the Cold War rivalry between the two Superpowers) had undergone substantial changes. These changes compelled the US to seek normalisation of relations with the Soviet Union. However, the failure of this normalisation process and the increasing anti-Soviet mood in the US following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan marked the end of détente.

There were different reasons for both the US and the Soviet Union for seeking détente. It was basically a process of adaptation to the changes in international affairs, but each side was responding to different threats facing it. As a consequence of the divergence in their respective national interests both the Soviet Union and the US developed conflicting interpretation of détente and of permissible behaviour under it. For the US détente was an attempt to reverse the process of gradual decline in her status as a superpower as a consequence of the Vietnam war, economic difficulties encountered due to the emergence of Japan and Western Europe as new economic powers, the Soviet advance in strategic nuclear weapons and increasing domestic discontent. For the Soviet Union the underlying aims in seeking détente were to secure western aid and access to western technology, regulate the global arms race, to mitigate the Chinese threat, but most importantly it was an attempt to secure US recognition of the Soviet Union's status as a superpower in global affairs. <sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>M. Boker, P. Williams, Superpower Detente: A Reappraisal (London: Sage Publications, 1988) pp. 256-267.

The chief architect of détente was National Security Adviser to President Nixon Henry Kissinger, who later became Secretary of State in President Ford's Administration. The measures adopted by Henry Kissinger to achieve US goals included entering into arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union in order to limit the expansion of strategic nuclear weapons, using the arms control negotiations and the bilateral US-Soviet trade to exert influence on the Soviet Union not to assist its allies in the Third World, developing close relations with China, using the opening to China to exert pressure on the Soviet Union and enabling the US forces to withdraw from Vietnam.<sup>9</sup>

For the US the underlying aim of détente was to regain US superiority in global affairs. But the pursuit of détente was marked by certain inconsistencies on the part of the US. For example, while the Soviet Union was expected to restrain from aiding her Third World allies the US encouraged both Iran and Saudi Arabia to play the role of regional policemen in the region. They also supported the overthrow of the democratically elected government in Chile in 1973, and finally the arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union were aimed at allowing the US to develop new and superior weapons while curtailing the Soviet numerical superiority in the ICBMs. Thus while the US expected the Soviet Union to abide by certain rules of conduct or 'linkage' there was no such reciprocal restraint on the pursuit of US foreign policy aims. The problem was that by the 1970s the Soviet Union was in a much stronger position than before and did not feel obliged to forgo opportunities in the Third World that were perceived in Soviet favour. In 1974 the Soviet Union intervened in the Angolan civil war through her proxy Cuba. The Angola intervention marked the beginning of the end of détente.

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<sup>9</sup>F. Halliday, The Making of the Second Cold War (London: Verso, 1986) p. 205.

A second problem lay in the implementation of détente by the US. The increasing assertiveness of the US Congress weakened Kissinger's ability to implement linkage. The Watergate Scandal further weakened the powers of the US President. In 1977 President Carter came to power. He advocated a liberal and democratic foreign policy with strong emphasis on human rights. He toned down the Cold War propaganda on the Soviet threat and instead focused on North-South issues, and cut back on arms supplies to the Third World states. Under President Carter the US Soviet relations deteriorated further and with the fall of the Shah of Iran followed by the American hostage crisis in November 1979 the image of decline in US power was widespread. It led to the emergence of a growing anti-Soviet mood in the US public. The Soviet Union had failed to conform to the rules of détente.<sup>10</sup> Thus the various measures undertaken by both the US and the Soviet Union during 1972-79 intensified the security dilemma for both the states.

### **2. 3:2 Afghanistan's Deteriorating Security Situation.**

Geographically Afghanistan is located at the cross-roads of Central Asia, the Middle East and South Asia. Ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversity is an important feature affecting both its domestic and foreign policy.<sup>11</sup> Soon after its inception as a nation state in 1747, it was caught up in an imperial rivalry between its two neighbours-the British in India in the south and the Russian Empire on its northern border. After several failed attempts by both the British and the Russians to encroach upon its territory in pursuit of their respective motives, which were often tainted with an exaggerated fear of each other's intentions, Afghanistan's survival was at last ensured by an agreement in 1879 between its two neighbours to convert it into a buffer state. Geography not only

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<sup>10</sup>J. Dumbrell, American Foreign Policy: Carter to Clinton (London: Macmillan Press, 1997) p. 11-52.

<sup>11</sup>F. Halliday, "Revolution in Afghanistan", New Left Review (No. 112, Nov./Dec.1978) p. 7.

affected Afghanistan's foreign policy but also affected the structure of Afghan society and its domestic politics. Poor grasp of the Afghan political culture by the Soviets proved to be enormously costly and showed that communist models cannot be automatically applied in disregard of a deeper appreciation of the indigenous realities of Third World states.

After World War II the United States replaced Britain as the major power in world politics. The Afghan rulers were disappointed by the US response to their repeated requests for military and economic aid. The US did not accord diplomatic recognition to Afghanistan till 1934, fifteen years after it had gained formal independence from the British in 1919. Afghanistan's repeated overtures to the US for military aid in 1951 and 1954 were turned down. It was not a member of the US sponsored regional defence pacts for the containment of the Soviet Union like the SEATO or the CENTO formed in 1954 and 1955 respectively. This was firstly due to the Afghan leaders' desire to adhere to the traditional concept of neutrality in their foreign relations and secondly because of its strained relations with Pakistan which for her own domestic and foreign policy compulsions joined the US sponsored regional defence pacts in the 1950s.

Another landmark in Afghan foreign relations which contributed to the Soviet interest was related to Afghanistan domestic policy in the post World War II era. This was the coming to power of the egoistic and nationalistic Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud in 1953, who was described by one writer as being "happiest when he could light his American cigarettes with Soviet matches." <sup>12</sup> Eager to achieve rapid economic progress for Afghanistan but feeling humiliated and unwilling to accept the American condition to first reach an accord on the boundary dispute with Pakistan as a precondition to qualify for aid, he turned to

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<sup>12</sup>S. R. Galster, "Rivalry and Reconciliation in Afghanistan: What Prospects for the Accords", *Third World Quarterly* (Vol. 10, No. 4, 1988) pp. 1512.

the Soviet Union for aid, thus throwing to the wind the centuries old tradition of 'cautious neutrality' in Afghan foreign relations. An opportunity was thus created for the Soviet Union who after the death of Stalin in 1953 had embarked on a sympathetic policy towards the Third World under Khrushchev. This development was again ignored by the US. Moreover, Soviet military aid was useful for Daoud's foreign policy against Pakistan. Thus Afghanistan was bypassed and deprived of the US regional security umbrella during the Cold War period.

The overthrow of King Zahir Shah by Daoud in July 1973, was of great political significance. It laid the roots of increasing Soviet involvement in Afghanistan. Daoud came to power with the help of the Communist Party in Afghanistan-the PDPA- but after gaining power he did not succeed in laying the foundations for a stable political order in the country. In foreign policy he worked towards the alignment of Afghanistan with the pro western states in the region such as Iran and Saudi Arabia. Daoud was given generous economic aid by these states. The Shah of Iran played an important part in forcing him to tone down his anti-Pakistani propaganda over the Pushtunistan issue. In return Daoud was promised economic as well as political support for his regime. Despite these efforts the international events in the later half of the 1970s (Revolutions in Iran and Pakistan) did not go in Daoud's favour.

The two Marxist factions of the PDPA collaborated in the overthrow of Daoud in a revolution called the Saur revolution on April 27th 1978, and later embarked upon a policy of introducing radical reforms aimed at the modernisation of the country. These reforms turned out to be highly unpopular and strengthened right wing opposition against the regime. There was another cause of concern, the lack of unity in the party ranks. The PDPA was divided into two factions, Khalq (masses) led by Nur Mohammed Taraki and Parcham (banner) led by Babrak

Karmal. The Parcham faction was more moderate than the Khalq. There was intense political struggle between the two factions to gain an upper hand in Afghanistan. The Soviets faced a dilemma. They could either stand back and do nothing or they could take some action. In the end they decided to get rid of the leader of the Khalq, Hafizullah Amin who was responsible for introducing the radical reforms which had led to the growing unpopularity of the party among the rural people. The Soviet aim was to broaden the political base of the party and to enlist more public support. Nur Mohammed Taraki, the President of the PDPA, was also alarmed over the mounting opposition to the regime. He met with Brezhnev in Moscow on 10th September 1979 to discuss the matter. The motive of the meeting was somehow to get rid of Amin. But the Soviet plan failed. Amin became aware of the plot against him and in the end it was Taraki not Amin who was overthrown and killed. Moscow became alarmed. Brezhnev considered it a personnel insult. Amin also became very suspicious of the Soviets and sought protection from abroad. Meanwhile the political situation in the country was becoming more and more volatile. Moscow was again faced with a dilemma: first it was becoming increasingly clear that something had to be done to save the crumbling communist regime in Afghanistan. Secondly, in the case of any direct action, the Soviets would have to face the consequences of a direct Soviet intervention in another country. The Soviets decided in favour of the first choice and the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan took place on December 25th, 1979.

According to Moscow sources apart from the fact of growing domestic resistance to the PDPA, there were other motives behind the intervention.<sup>13</sup> One of the justifications given by Moscow was their concern over increased Chinese activity in the region. Growing Sino-American co-operation was perceived as a

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<sup>13</sup> D. Murarka, "The Russian Intervention. A Moscow Analysis", The Round Table (Vol. 71, No. 282, 1981) pp. 122-139.

threat to Moscow's interests especially in the long run. The Soviets rejected the commonly held view that they were alarmed over the spread of the Islamic influence reaching their own republics. They regarded ethnic ties as more cohesive than religious bonds. They were also aware of the fact that the presence of a common religious ideology in the region had never served to eradicate differences among the different countries in the region. Iran, Pakistan, Syria and Libya are all Muslim states but without much unity. Thus for the Soviets China was the main threat, not the sweeping Islamic tide in the region. They also felt obliged to protect Communist Party interests in Afghanistan. They viewed Sino-America co-operation as a 'card' against them. China was also a communist power but it was not considered a threat to US interests unlike Russia. For the Soviets this fact amounted to double standards by the Americans. Moscow was very fearful over the covert assistance given to the opposition in Afghanistan from outside sources. Opposition against the Communist Party was mounting in Afghanistan but it was very dispersed and not well organised. Had it not been for the assistance provided by the Americans, Pakistan, China, Saudi Arabia and Iran, the rebels would not have been so successful. The Soviets were drawn in a fear of encirclement.

These were some of the factors operating behind the Soviet decision to intervene in Afghanistan. But it seems reasonable also to mention the US perception of the crisis. This would be helpful in understanding American policy towards Pakistan later on. William E. Griffith, in his article "Superpower relations after Afghanistan", touches briefly on the subject of how the US viewed the Soviet intentions behind the invasion of Afghanistan.<sup>14</sup> According to the US calculation the Soviet Union wanted to keep a communist government in power in Afghanistan That was their first motive. But the eruption of conflict in the party

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<sup>14</sup>W. E. Griffith, "Superpower Relations after Afghanistan", *Survival* (Vol. 32, No. 4, 1980) pp. 146-150 & Z. Khalilizad, "Afghanistan and the Crisis in American Foreign Policy", *Survival* (Vol. 32, No. 4, 1980) pp. 151-159.

was something they had not bargained for. It was undermining their hold on power. They mistrusted Amin and blamed him for arosing Islamic resistance to his regime in the first place. The Resistance started in Afghanistan but it was funded from abroad. The US agreed that the Soviet move was primarily defensive in nature. But for the US that was not an end in itself. In their analysis there were other motives behind the invasion-for example the Soviets hoped to turn the situation in Iran to their advantage. For the Soviets the revolution in Iran, though anti-communist in nature, was preferable to the pro-western regime of the Shah. For the US however the fall of the Shah was a devastating loss; it was a blow to their whole policy in the Persian Gulf. They were alarmed over the events in Iran, and were under no circumstances willing to let the Soviets take advantage of instability in Afghanistan. The situation in Pakistan at that time was also not stable. The trend towards ethnic separatism was gaining strength in Pakistan. The Soviet move was also viewed in the US as aimed to destabilize Pakistan further in the hope that in any crisis the separatist movements would look towards Moscow for help.

Finally, if successful the Soviet move would project the image of superiority of Soviet military power abroad and help in moving the Soviet influence a step closer to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Thus, from the US point of view, the Soviets were in a strong position to take advantage at that time. The question was whether the US would just stand back and do nothing or take decisive action to save their influence in the region, and not let the Soviet incursion into Afghanistan be turned into a starting point for any further Soviet gains in the neighbouring countries.

### **2. 3:3 Strategic and Foreign Policy Considerations in Soviet Policy towards Afghanistan**

As mentioned earlier one of the reasons for the Soviet Union to enter détente was the growing domestic economic problems which were partly a consequence of increased defence spending during the Brezhnev era.<sup>15</sup> Under Brezhnev the Soviet Union discarded the Khrushchev concept of 'minimum deterrence', and embarked on a policy to achieve strategic nuclear parity with the United States. This process started after the Cuban Missile crisis fiasco in 1962 and gained momentum with the Sino-Soviet split in 1969. By 1972 the principle of strategic parity was embodied in the 'Basic Principles of Relations' between the US and the Soviet Union signed by President Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow which stated that "one of the prerequisites for maintaining and strengthening peaceful relations between the US and the Soviet Union is the recognition of the security interests of the parties on the basis of equality."<sup>16</sup> Thus the Soviet Union under Brezhnev's leadership had for the first time since World War II achieved 'strategic parity' in nuclear weapons with the US, and expected to be treated as an equal partner in global politics.

However the varying interpretations of détente by both sides undermined the bilateral US-Soviet relations. It seriously affected the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) between the US and the Soviet Union. The SALT were signed in two stages in May 1972 and June 1979 respectively. These negotiations were difficult particularly on account of the technical issues involved and suffered from the impact of the deteriorating US-Soviet relations during the latter part of the 1970s. By 1978 "the growing public mood in the US was that under détente the Soviet leaders had sought to deter the US from responding effectively to the changing political balance, and nowhere was this more apparent than in the field

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<sup>15</sup> P. William's, "Soviet-American Relations", Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science (Vol. 36, No. 4, 1987) p. 55.

<sup>16</sup> H. Kissinger, American Foreign Policy (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977) pp. 143-176.

of arms control."<sup>17</sup> The SALT II signed in June 1979 also came under strong criticism from the US Congress.

In 1974 at the Vladivostok Summit an interim agreement was reached, "on the maximum number of 2,400 missile launchers for each side and a minimum of 1,320 launchers with Multiple Independent Retargetable Vehicles (MIRV) capability. There was also an agreement on the maximum numbers of Inter Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) launchers, Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBM) launchers etc."<sup>18</sup> However in the US the concern remained over the numerous and bigger Soviet land based ICBMs which though lacking in accuracy could be equipped with the MIRVs. The Soviet Union on the other hand was concerned about the US more accurate and technologically advanced Cruise missiles. In 1977 the US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance put forward 'deep cuts' proposal to Brezhnev. The main aim of this was to impose a limit on the Soviet land based missile capability. In return the US offered to abandon its MX missiles which were still in the experimental stage. The Soviets rejected this proposal as a deviation from the original Vladivostok agreement (1972) and regarded it as a symbol of US lack of seriousness in arms control talks, it led "the Soviet leadership to conclude that the new Administration did not really know what it was doing".<sup>19</sup> The US decision not to include the European Forward Based System or the theatre missiles in SALT II prompted the Soviets to launch SS-20s in 1979 which in turn prompted the US and the NATO members to go ahead with the stationing of Cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe by 1983. Thus by the time of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan SALT II had become increasingly controversial and the Soviets were deeply sceptical whether it would be ratified by the US Senate.

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<sup>17</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Dumbrell, American Foreign Policy, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup>*Op. Cit.* , William's Superpower détente: A Reappraisal, p. 208.

<sup>19</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Dumbrell, American Foreign Policy, p. 42.

From the Soviet Union's perspective President Carter was constrained by domestic politics. The conservatives in the US Congress criticised the arms control talks as a sign of the weakening of the US position. Moreover President Carter, despite his emphasis on human right issues and his election manifesto to tone down anti-Soviet propaganda and instead focus on North South issues, failed to portray an image of consistency in the application of US foreign policy abroad. In December 1974 the 'Jackson Amendment' was passed which linked US-Soviet trade with human rights issues in the Soviet Union and with the question of Jewish immigration from the Soviet Union.<sup>20</sup> Also the US did not deter the Chinese attack on Vietnam in 1979. The reason behind Vietnamese forces invasion of Cambodia was, "as much to save that country from the murderous onslaught of its own ruler Pol Pot as to fulfil the role of Soviet ally."<sup>21</sup> The reason behind the US support of the Chinese attack on Cambodia was to contain the spread of Soviet influence in the region. In Iran the US ignored human rights violations by the Iranian secret police SAVAK. These inconsistencies undermined the Soviet Union's faith in the sincerity of the US efforts to improve relations with the Soviet Union.

The US-Soviet relations also suffered due to the Soviet behaviour in the Third World. In the US détente was perceived to be depended on 'linkage' or on an implicit expectation that the Soviet Union while negotiating with the US on arms control would show restraint by not exploiting the Third World revolutions in its favour. The Soviets, however, felt bound by no such restraint. For the Soviets détente was not meant to be a freezing of the status quo. While the Helsinki Accords of 1975 formally recognised the post World War II borders in Europe, in the Third World fourteen revolutions took place during the 1970s. For example in Angola, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Vietnam, South Yemen, Afghanistan,

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<sup>20</sup>*Op. Cit.* , P. William's Superpower détente: A Reappraisal, p. 225

<sup>21</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Dumbrell, American Foreign Policy, p. 46.

Iran, Grenada, Nicaragua etc. The main reason for the revolutions in Africa was the political turmoil created in the horn of Africa after the end of the Portuguese rule but from the US perspective the Soviet responses in the region were regarded as offensive moves designed to gain unilateral advantage at a time when the US was reluctant to become involved in the Third World due to the legacy of the Vietnam war.

Thus, by the end of 1979 US policies such as the NATO decision to deploy Pershing and Cruise missiles in Europe by 1983, the establishment of the US diplomatic relations with China in December 1978, granting China the most favoured nation status, the increase in US defence spending and the deployment of the Rapid Deployment Force in the Middle East, were seen in the Soviet Union as being inconsistent with the spirit of détente. By the latter half of 1979 the controversial SALT II treaty looked unlikely to gain the US Senates approval. Finally the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 marked the end of détente and provoked a violent condemnation of the Soviet Union in the US. In Soviet perception the security of its southern border was more important than the already bogged down US- Soviet relations.

#### **2.3:4 The Analysis of the Soviet Military Strategy during the War in Afghanistan**

Whatever the real political motives of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan were, the Soviet forces were soon involved in a protracted and difficult counter insurgency war with the Afghan Mujahideen, in which they were not initially well trained to fight, and which despite the gradual and large scale improvement in their tactics were unable to win militarily. Finally, the Afghan war served as a valuable lesson not only for the Soviet military; it also had an important impact on Soviet domestic politics, Soviet ideology and on Soviet foreign policy. The

pattern of the Soviet war in Afghanistan can be analysed under two main headings: firstly, conventional warfare: continuity and change (1979 to 1984); and secondly, escalation to large scale offensives (1984 to 1987).

### **2.3:5 Conventional Warfare: Continuity and Change**

At the time of the invasion the immediate military aim of the Soviet army was to help the PDPA in consolidating the crumbling Soviet installed Marxist regime of Babrak Karmal. The Afghan army was marked by large scale dissensions and bitter factionalism. The strength Afghan army was reduced from its pre invasion 100, 000 level to just under 30, 000 or 40, 000 after the invasion. Government authority was fast eroding. The direct Soviet invasion, however, soon turned into a serious disadvantage for the Soviets as it provoked a completely unanticipated and adverse reaction from the Afghan population. It unified the various independent and separate local resistance groups and provided the Afghan Resistance with an ideological tool to wage "Jihad" (holy war) against the invading Communist forces. The Soviet invading forces were drawn from the Soviet 40th Army based in Turkestan. Most of its troops were reserves from the Central Asian Muslim Republics, who were hastily drafted and were often poorly and inadequately trained. Moreover they were not well motivated to fight their fellow Muslims in Afghanistan. They were equipped with old, some dating as far back as the World War II, poor quality weapons not suitable to be used in specific geographical terrain of Afghanistan.<sup>22</sup> At the time of the invasion the Soviet forces consisted of seven Motor rifle divisions (MRD) and an air Assault division (AAD). They included 360th MRD in Kabul, 201th MRD in Jalallabad Kunar, 191th MRD in Ghazni, 16 MRD in Mazari Sharif, 54th

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<sup>22</sup>A. Alexiev Inside the Soviet Army in Afghanistan, The Rand Corporation, R-3627, May 1988, pp. 5-11.

MRD in Herat and 5th MRD in Farah.<sup>23</sup> This shows that the Soviets were not expecting a protracted resistance.

Initially the Soviet army used conventional warfare techniques against the Mujahideen which proved to be completely inappropriate for an anti guerrilla warfare for example the use of numerous tanks, armoured vehicles, extensive artillery shelling, large but easily visible troop formations and mechanised warfare. The Afghan guerrilla tactics included hit and run tactics, ambush, sabotage, mining, sniper attacks, blowing up the bridges blocking the roads and the supply lines etc., which were very unlikely to be tackled through the Soviet conventional warfare tactics.<sup>24</sup> The lack of preparedness of the Soviet army can be assessed from the uniform initially worn by the Soviet troops sent to Afghanistan, " The soldiers who invaded Afghanistan in 1979 looked much like their counterparts of the 1941-45 Great Patriotic War. A few scouts wore bulky, clumsy camouflaged coverall, the rest made do with crudely made uniforms and great coats of Khaki, grey, brown, and every shade in between, emblazoned with the sort of large, brightly coloured insignia to make snipers heart sing. Lacking body armour of any kind they were only protected by their 1940 vintage steel helmets." <sup>25</sup>The soldiers were young, poorly trained and their officers. Initially the Soviet forces made limited use of air power or helicopters. However, because the nature of the terrain and lack of convoy roads restricted the use of tanks in Afghanistan the use of specialised assault helicopters, aircraft's, fighter planes increased dramatically. They included for example, MIG 23, MIG 27 flogger, MIG fishbed, SU 17 fitter-D, SU-25 frogfoots fighters, and Mi-8-Mi-17 Hip, Mi-24 Hind, and small Mi-6 and Mi-26 Halo helicopter. <sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Yosuf, The Bear Trap, pp.44-61 & Z. Khalilzad, "Moscow Afghan War", *Problems of Communism* (Vol. XXXV, Jan-Feb. 1986) pp. 2-6.

<sup>24</sup>D. M. Hart, "Low intensity Conflict in Afghanistan: The Soviet View", Survival (March-April 1982) pp.

<sup>25</sup>"The Afghan war" in M. Galeotti, Afghanistan : The Soviet Union Last War (London: Frank Cass, 1995) pp. 192-93.

<sup>26</sup>D. Isby, War in a Distant Country, (London: Arms and Armour, 1986) p. 67.

In 1980 three major offensives took place in Kunar in March, in the Panjshir valley in September and in Logar in December 1980. These offensives were based on the use of conventional warfare methods which reflected the limited objectives of the Soviet forces at the time. One recurring problem for the Soviet forces was that the machine guns fitted on their BTR 60 personnel carriers or 'Bronya' otherwise labelled as "wheeled coffins", and on the BMP infantry fighting vehicles lacked sufficient elevation to counter guerrillas attacks from the high mountain and ridges. To remedy this problem new improved BTR-70, BTR 80 and BMP 2 vehicles were introduced.<sup>27</sup> In December 1980 in the battle of Logar air borne combat vehicles or the BMDs were deployed for the first time to carry the Soviet air borne troops. During 1980-81 the common pattern of fighting was that the Soviet forces after a ground assault against the enemy would frequently withdraw to their bases and the Afghan guerrillas would be soon recapture the lost territory. As a consequence of this no major or decisive battles took place between the Afghan Mujahideen and the Soviet forces during 1980 to mid 1981.

A possible explanation for the limited Soviet military objective was the Soviet unwillingness to conquer the whole of Afghanistan which would have required substantially raising the number of soldiers and the level of fighting. The Soviet authorities were not willing to do so for both political and economic reasons. Moreover, the mountainous terrain and the long supply routes from the Soviet border to different towns in Afghanistan meant that the supply routes were extremely difficult to defend, for example highway thirteen from Kandahar (south) to Herat (East) was 600 km, and highway two from Soviet border to Kabul (centre) was 450 km, and from Kabul to Kyhber pass (east) was 250 Km.

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<sup>27</sup>Mark Urban, War in Afghanistan, (London: Macmillan Press, 1988) pp. 51-72 Also See p.120 & *Op. Cit.* , Gilottee, Afghanistan : The Soviet Union Last War p.193.

<sup>28</sup> These roads were frequently ambushed by the Mujahideen. During 1980-81 the main objective of the Soviet forces was to gain control of the key cities for example Kabul, Herat, Jalallabad, Mazir-i-Shariff, to protect military installations from the Mujahideen attacks and to secure major lines of communications from ambush attack. The most important was the Salang Highway. The security of the capital Kabul was also high on the Soviet list of priorities. Roads were frequently targeted by the Afghan guerrillas and the communication and supply lines were ambushed to disrupt supplies from the Soviet Union.

By 1980 these problems prompted extensive restructuring and reformation of the Soviet forces also known as the Limited Contingent of the Soviet Forces in Afghanistan (LCSFA). The LCSFA was put under the command of first deputy Defence Minister Marshall Seigei Sokolov. The Soviets came to realise that counter insurgency operations have to be carried out on a smaller scale at regimental and battalion levels, not so much at divisional level. The first step was to change the basic structure of the LCSFA which was carried out from June 1980 till mid 1981. The seven Motor Rifle Divisions (MRD) were dismantled and converted into three MRD two independent Motor Rifle Regiments and two independent Motor Rifle Brigades. It also involved the stationing of three helicopter Regiments based at Bagram air base (South of Kabul), Konduz (north-east) and Kandahar (west ).<sup>29</sup>

The 360th MRD based in Kabul was restructured into 108th MRD, the two other MRD were 201st MRD based in Kunduz and 5th Guards at Shindand. Motor Rifle Regiments included 180th at Kabul and 181st at Bagram. Motorised Rifle Brigades were 70th in Khandahar, 66th MRB in Jalallabad, 866th in Faizabad.

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<sup>28</sup>*Ibid*, p. 64.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid*, p. 68.

By 1983 majority of Soviet forces were deployed mainly around Kabul, Afghan-Pakistan border in the east and on the Afghan Soviet Central Asian border in the north. The paratroopers (air assault units) were better trained but they were not used in the beginning. <sup>30</sup>

Another feature of the restructuring of the LCSFA was the decentralisation of command structure. The Soviet combat support artillery, engineers and signals was organised at divisional level and the aviation support was even at a higher level in the 40th army. This was unsuitable for small unit operations in which the need is for quick availability and access to resources. Decentralisation of command also implied junior officers and field officers were given more authority in the execution of war strategy. <sup>31</sup>

Typical offensives in 1982 North East again came under attack, South of Kabul Bagram airbase, and further north in the Panjshir valley which witnessed the 5th and 6th Panjshir offensives by the Soviet forces in May 1982 and August 1982 respectively. The valley was of special strategic significance due to its proximity to the main supply line the Salang Highway. Altogether seven attacks were launched against the Panjshir valley. The seventh attack in 1984 was a big success for the Soviet forces. By 1980-81 helicopters were beginning to be used to protect infantry convoys, combined Arms Reinforcement Battalions (CARB) were introduced for greater flexibility and mobility. In order to crush the resistance extensive use was made of traditional anti guerrilla techniques for example the 'scorched earth tactics' and the 'enveloping detachments' in which helicopters were used to surround and then destroy the enemy. The destruction of crops, irrigation system and villages was aimed to force the population to

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<sup>30</sup>Brigadier M. Yosuf and M. Adkin, The Bear trap, Afghanistan's Untold Story (London: Leo Cooper, 1992) p. 46-47.

<sup>31</sup>*Op. Cit.* , M. Urban, War in Afghanistan, p. 65.

migrate and thus to deprive the guerrillas of their support base.<sup>32</sup> Special "sandory" forces under the Afghan Ministry of Interior and militia groups under the Afghan intelligence agency (KHAD) were formed to protect Kabul from guerrilla infiltration's and attacks.

### **2. 3:6 Escalation to large Scale Aerial offensives 1984-87**

The significant feature of this phase of fighting from 1984-87 was the increased use of special counter insurgency units by the Soviet Union. These consisted of Air borne troops (VDV), air assault troops (BHsB) and reconnaissance troops (Spetsnaz) . The emphasis moved away from conventional ground attack to the use of sophisticated air attacks and the use of counterinsurgency troops. This period also marked increase in the level of fighting on both the Mujahideen and the Soviet side. The level of physical fitness, training and selection procedures of these troops were much higher and demanding than that of the ordinary occupation forces. Air borne troops were used for frontal assaults, penetration of the Mujahideen forces, capturing mountain passes, lying ambushes and carrying out rescue operations. Air assault troops were used for the laying mines, disrupting supply routes, launching surprise attacks on the Mujahideen areas, carrying out night time ambushes and providing save passage for the Soviet military convoys. The reconnaissance troops were used for assassination attacks or the protection of important Soviet posts for long periods and under difficult conditions. They operated in small groups, launched diversionary operations for the Mujahideen about to be attacked, and arranged rescue operations and launched propaganda campaigns.<sup>33</sup> The Air assault troops deployed in Afghanistan received the largest proportion of the medals but they were costly

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<sup>32</sup> K. McCormick, "The Evolution of Soviet Military Doctrine", Military Review, (July 1987) pp. 64-67 & C. G. Wheeler, "The Forces in Conflict", Military Review(July 1987) pp. 54-60.

<sup>33</sup>*Op. Cit.* , A. Alexander, Inside the Soviet Army in Afghanistan, pp. 20-34.

and the number represented about twenty to twenty five percent of the total Soviet force in Afghanistan.

With these changes and improvements the Soviet forces embarked on extensive and well co-ordinated attacks on the Mujahideen bases in Afghanistan. Between 1985 and 1987 there was a significant increase in the operations on the eastern part of Afghanistan to block the infiltration routes through which weapons and ammunition were channelled into Afghanistan, but this objective met only with a limited success. Most of the fighting by the Soviet and Afghan troops in 1984-5 (like the Zahwar campaign of 1985, and the large scale 7th Panjshir offensive in 1984) was focused on the eastern provinces bordering Pakistan. The introduction of Stinger anti-aircraft missiles in the summer of 1986 neutralised the temporary Soviet air supremacy in Afghanistan. The Soviet MI 24 Hind helicopter was targeted by the Mujahideen with the Stinger anti air craft missile as a revenge.<sup>34</sup> Due to the costs involved the Soviet military came under heavy criticism within the Soviet Union. It was unable to achieve its three important objectives of subduing the resistance, blocking the infiltration routes and preventing Pakistan from aiding the Mujahideen.

### **2. 3:7 Political Measures for the Sovietisation of Afghanistan.**

Another drawback for the Soviets was that the political measures undertaken by President Babrak Karmal failed to win over the population. As the Soviet role in the running of the Afghan government became more visible the government lost its legitimacy in the public eye. The Afghan government (PDPA) was modelled along the CPSU and political power was concentrated within the party. But the continued factional struggle between the Parcham and the Khalq could not be overcome and continued to undermine the effectiveness of the PDPA. Most of

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<sup>34</sup>*Op. Cit.* ,Yosuf & Adkin, The Bear trap, Afghanistan's Untold Story p. 158-173.

the new ministers were Parchamites. The government relied on the army, the intelligence agency (KHAD) and the Secret police to consolidate its power. Large number of Soviet advisers were attached to all these services. But the policies undertaken by these agencies were not successful; conscription laws were tightened and efforts were made to enlist men into the army by lowering the age, increasing their pay and forming of conscription committees. But desertion and draft evasion were rampant. The intelligence agency KHAD under Mohammed Najibullah was more successful. It was assisted by KGB officers. Its counterinsurgency operations consisted of working closely with other ministries like the Ministry of Nationalities and Tribes to cultivate and win over tribes on the Pakistan Afghan border. The KHAD also worked to portray the regime as devoted to Islam by giving stipends to religious leaders.

The level of Soviet aid and economic assistance to Afghanistan also increased substantially. Though the Soviets, for political reasons, did not venture physically into Pakistan they extensively violated Pakistani airspace, and KHAD was engaged in propaganda, sabotage, and terrorist attacks on the civilian population in Pakistan in order to put pressure on Pakistan to stop supporting the Afghan Mujahideen.

A "National Reconciliation" campaign was launched to broaden the base of the government and mass organisations were formed- for example the Democratic Youth Organisation and the Democratic Women Organisation of Afghanistan. But the close identification of these with the KHAD and with the KGB invited little sympathetic response from the public. The PDPA was a small party which was brought to power prematurely in 1978 and did not enjoy widespread support among the population.

In 1980 Karmal embarked on various policies to win support for the government, Khalqis were given posts in the cabinet, a new constitution was adopted, land was returned to its owners, Islamic themes were adopted, and the National Fatherland Front (designed to win support from the tribal leaders who were hostile to the PDPA) was proclaimed in June 1980 as an alternative to PDPA. Security was tightened around Kabul. After Gorbachev came to power the 'National Reconciliation' program was launched in Afghanistan to broaden the support base of the regime but like its predecessor, the National Fatherland Front of June 1980, it was not successful. The Soviets began to realise that the social conditions were not suitable for the implementation of Communism in Afghanistan.<sup>35</sup>

### **2. 3: 8 The Impact of the Afghan War on the Soviet Union**

The war in Afghanistan had an important impact on the Soviet Unions domestic politics and foreign policy. It provided a symbol for the Soviet political elite's intent on reforming the Soviet system. The media coverage of the Afghan war in the Soviet Union went through several stages. Initially during the Brezhnev era the severity of the war was played down: in the official media Soviet action was portrayed as fraternal and internationalist duty in which the Soviet soldiers were helping the Afghans by distributing aid and medicines. However during the Glasnost period the media coverage of the war increased and as reality became obvious questions about the impact, costs, motives and the morality of sacrificing Soviet lives in Afghanistan began to be raised. The war in Afghanistan also brought to the surface the prevalence of corruption and the use of influence in Soviet society. The sons of elites and influential people were exempted from conscription. The local draft boards were bribed to allow exemption from military service in Afghanistan by paying 3,000 rubbles when

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<sup>35</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Barnett, The Fragmentation of Afghanistan, p. 122-145.

the annual average annual salary of a soldier was 130 rubbles. During the war in Afghanistan the soldiers were recruited mainly from the rural or low income industrial towns whereas the big cities including Moscow and the Kremlin were exempted. This became instrumental in breeding public opposition to the recruitment policies of the state.

Over the years the war was instrumental in changing public perceptions and attitudes about the efficacy of waging a war when there were growing domestic economic problems and questions were raised about the rationality of funding the expensive Soviet Empire abroad when the ordinary Soviet citizens were facing economic hardships and food shortages. The political elite during the glasnost era facilitated this criticism in order to achieve their aim of the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Under glasnost the Afghan war became a subject of films, arts, music and newspaper articles which led to the gradual increase in the level of public awareness about the war. It also led to a growing public demand for the reform of the entire Soviet system. Thus the Afghan war ended an era in Soviet politics when propaganda and official media were used to form and mould public opinion. The war shattered the myth about the invincibility of the Soviet empire.<sup>36</sup>

The Afghan war furnished some valuable military lessons to the Soviet Red Army. It exposed the army's limitations, the inefficient and hasty training provided to the soldiers and the lack of enthusiasm among the soldiers. By exposing these shortcomings the war provided a valuable training ground to remedy these shortcomings for any possible future wars. The Soviet soldiers in

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<sup>36</sup>*Op. Cit.* , M. Galeotti, Afghanistan : The Soviet Union's Last War, pp. 198-206, F. Fukuyama, "Gorbachev and the Third World", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 64, No. 4,1986) pp.715-731, E. Kulesza, "Russias Afghan Syndrome" European Journal of International Affairs, (Fall, 1989) pp. 44-61& A. Arnold, The Fateful Pebble. Afghanistan role in the Fall of the Soviet Empire, ( Novato: Presidio, 1993) pp. 183-200.

Afghanistan often lacked motivation, morale was low, drug and alcohol use were common and often accompanied by bullying, corruption, and poor relations between the new-comers and the veterans. The "Afghansty" or the Afghan veterans became a symbol of public disillusionment in the Soviet Union. The Afghan War led to a reevaluation of the traditional Soviet military doctrines which had emphasised rigid centralisation, pre-planned strategies and lack of innovation or individual initiative to respond to emergencies. Faced with a low intensity protracted guerrilla war important changes were made to strategy and to the war and to improving relations between soldiers and their officers. The impact of the Afghan war on the Soviet foreign policy process was also significant. The Soviet official blunder in Afghanistan led to growing demands for greater accountability and democratic procedures in the making of foreign policy. A greater role for research institutes in policy planning and evaluation was demanded.

This chapter has analysed the main features of the Soviet foreign policy towards the conflict in Afghanistan during the Cold War period. The evolution of Soviet foreign policy towards South Asia was characterised by pragmatism and opportunism. The Soviet Union adapted and modified its foreign policy according to the changed circumstances. The chapter has also discussed the various reasons given by various experts to explain the possible motives behind the Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan in 1979. The chapter then gives an overview of the Soviet military strategy during the Afghan war. The analysis shows that the Soviet troops were not prepared to fight a prolonged guerrilla insurgency against the Afghan Mujahideen in Afghanistan. There was lack of adequate training, the morale was low and the war was not popular among the Soviet soldiers. The Soviet Union was not willing to escalate the war or commit more troops. As a result of which the Soviet Army was unable to achieve its

important objective of defeating the Afghan Resistance and blocking the infiltration routes.

## PART II

### CHAPTER FOUR

#### The Role of the United Nations in the Afghan Conflict During the Cold War

The role of the UN in the Afghan conflict can be analysed by dividing it into two categories. Firstly, there is the Cold War period 1982-88, and secondly, the post-Cold War period of 1989-97. During these periods the UN's role was chiefly that of a mediator. However, the Cold War period can be subdivided into two further parts, namely the laying of the groundwork for the negotiations (1982-85) and the resolution of the deadlock in the negotiations over the settlement of the internal political situation in Afghanistan (1986-88).

#### **2.4:1 Laying the Groundwork for the Negotiations. 1982-85.**

In January 1980, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 462, condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. This Resolution was, however, vetoed by the Soviet Union. This led to the convening of the Sixth Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly (11-14 January, 1980) which adopted Resolution ES-6/2 which was entitled "The Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security"(See Appendix A). The Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) held an Emergency Special Session at foreign minister level in Islamabad (27-29 January, 1980). It adopted Resolution 1/Eos calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and recognition of the non-aligned and neutral status of Afghanistan. It also suspended Afghanistan's membership of the Islamic organisation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A. Shahi, Pakistan's Security and Foreign Policy (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1988) pp.11-12 & "Outrage in Islam" Time (11 February, 1980) pp. 18-19.

Prior to the involvement of the UN in the negotiated settlement of the Afghan conflict, various proposals for an acceptable settlement were put forward by the EC, the OIC, and discussed in bilateral contacts between Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Agha Shahi, with his counterparts in Islamic, Western and East European states. The EC proposal put forward by the British Foreign Minister, Lord Carrington, in February 1980, called for the holding of an international conference to work out arrangements for the cessation of external interference in Afghanistan. A second stage was envisaged to discuss ways to implement international arrangements in order to ensure the future of Afghanistan as a non-aligned state. In the second stage, the involvement of representatives from the Afghan Resistance was proposed.<sup>2</sup>The Soviets, however, refused to discuss the internal situation in Afghanistan in an international forum, and remained confident that they would defeat the Afghan Resistance.

Under increasing international pressure, and in a response to various international peace proposals, the Kabul regime put forward its position regarding the requirements for a political solution. These proposals were made in May 1980 and August 1981. The comprehensive proposals of 14 May 1980 called for both the holding of direct bilateral discussions between Afghanistan and both Pakistan and Iran and the cessation of outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. These were in addition to international guarantees of non-interference by the Soviet Union and the US which were to become part of a settlement. Only after outside interference was stopped could the question of troop withdrawal be discussed in bilateral talks between Kabul and Moscow. (see Appendix B)

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<sup>2</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot, pp. 25-26.

The OIC session of the Islamic foreign ministers, held in Islamabad from 14-22 May 1980, adopted a resolution laying out in detail the objectives of the settlement, and which for the first time mentioned the solution of the internal dimension of the conflict. It also decided to set up a standing committee of the OIC under the chairmanship of its Secretary General, Habib Chatti, to hold talks with the foreign ministers of Iran and Pakistan in order to find ways to resolve the Afghan conflict. The OIC meetings were attended by the leaders of the Afghan Mujahideen. The OIC Standing Committee held two meetings in Tehran and Mont Pelerin (Geneva) in June 1980. The Afghan Foreign Minister, Shah Mohammed Dost, agreed to meet with the Secretary General of the OIC only on a bilateral basis and only if the committee did not go ahead with its meeting with the delegation of the Afghan Mujahideen. The OIC initiative was perceived by the Afghan side to be biased and attempting to give recognition to the Mujahideen.<sup>3</sup>

In June 1982, Pakistan Foreign Minister Agha Shahi made an extensive tour of the Western and Eastern European capitals in order to discuss ways of seeking a possible solution to the Afghan conflict. In his meetings with his counterparts, he encountered scepticism about the possibility of Soviet troop withdrawal, and especially with regard to the replacement of the Karmal regime. In discussions with the Romanian President, he elaborated principles for the resolution of the conflict in detail, which included the, "formation of a government of national reconciliation under a figure acceptable to both the Afghan Resistance and the PDPA."<sup>4</sup> Both Kabul and Moscow rejected these proposals and insisted on direct talks with Iran and Pakistan. They reiterated their demand for the cessation of outside interference as a precondition for troop withdrawal. For the Soviets, and the regime in Kabul, the change of government in Kabul was not acceptable.

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<sup>3</sup>*Op. Cit.*, A. Shahi, Pakistan's Security and Foreign Policy, p. 11-12.

<sup>4</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot, p. 35.

At the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly (20 November 1980), resolution 35/37 on the "Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security" was adopted, which for the first time called for a negotiated settlement of the Afghan conflict. (see Appendix 1) This UN resolution laid the groundwork for the need of the appointment of a personal representative of the UN Secretary General.<sup>5</sup> Pakistan was anxious to begin the process of negotiations. The Soviet Union was under increasing international condemnation. It was facing a stalemate in the war in Afghanistan, and more specifically a change of Administration in the US, which adopted a very tough stand against Soviet behaviour in the Third World, forced them to adopt a conciliatory attitude. As a consequence, the Soviet Union started to show some flexibility in its demands for a political settlement of the conflict. In seeking a negotiated settlement, the UN was a preferable forum for the Soviet Union, compared to either the Non-Aligned Movement or the OIC because, as mentioned earlier, the OIC had suspended Afghan membership of the organisation in 1980. For the Afghan side, the advantages of UN involvement were that these negotiations were officially between the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) and Pakistan. The two other bilateral agreements in the framework of these negotiations were also between Pakistan and the DRA (see below). As a result of the non-interference obligation imposed on Pakistan, the DRA regime had some assurance of survival, even after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops. <sup>6</sup>

In January 1981, Agha Shahi requested the Secretary General of the UN to appoint his personal representative, and in February 1981, Perez de Cuellar was appointed to hold talks with the parties involved in the conflict. Perez de Cuellar undertook two visits to the area in April and August 1981 in order to discuss the agenda items and the format of the negotiations. Pakistan accepted the agenda

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<sup>5</sup>Year book of the UN (Vol. 34, 1980) pp. 308-309.

<sup>6</sup> S. Harrison, "Cut a Regional Deal" Foreign Policy (No. 62, Spring, 1986) pp. 134-140.

items identified by Perez de Cuellar in his visit to Pakistan in August 1981, but insisted on linkage among them. On procedure, Pakistan insisted on the trilateral nature of the talks. It was decided to hold indirect negotiations between Pakistan and Afghanistan through the intermediary of the UN Secretary General's personal representative. An important point is that the item relating to Afghan self-determination was not included in the discussion and during his visit to Kabul, the Karmal regime reiterated its demand for direct talks to Perez de Cuellar, but agreed on the agenda items.<sup>7</sup>

Iran declined to participate in the UN sponsored negotiations without the inclusion of the Afghan Mujahideen leaders, whom they regarded as the true representatives of the Afghan people. As an alternative, it was agreed that Pakistan would keep Iran informed about the progress in the negotiations through the Iranian Charge d'Affairs in Geneva.<sup>8</sup> After the retirement of Kurt Waldheim, Perez De Cuellar was promoted to the rank of Secretary General, and Diego Cordovez, a diplomat from Ecuador, was assigned to the post of Under Secretary General for Political Affairs and designated as the Secretary General's new personal representative to Afghanistan. By the time of the thirty-sixth session of the UN General Assembly in September 1981, the Soviets had started to show signs of flexibility in their demands and the Afghan side agreed temporarily to put aside the precondition for direct talks with Pakistan and to focus on the agenda items instead.

In April 1982, Diego Cordovez visited Kabul and Islamabad to discuss the agenda items and the format of the negotiations with the two interlocutors. These agenda items dealt only with the external aspects of the conflict, namely non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of each other, and the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The two other agenda items

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<sup>7</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot, pp. 44-45.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 41-53.

related to international guarantees against intervention and the voluntary return of the Afghan refugees. At the outset of the talks, Pakistan refused to hold or participate in direct talks with the Kabul regime, which it considered to be illegal and installed with the help of Soviet troops. The Afghan side, on the other hand, was reluctant to discuss the question of the withdrawal of Soviet troops within the UN negotiating framework. They regarded the withdrawal question as a bilateral matter between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan.<sup>9</sup>

The concession which was implicit for Pakistan's acceptance of the exclusion of the item of self-determination, was the hope that the Soviets would not agree to withdraw their forces from Afghanistan without some kind of change in the composition of the Communist government under Babrak Karmal. Moreover, emphasis on a short timetable of two to three months by Pakistan was regarded as a safeguard to protect the Mujahideen interests during the withdrawal period. Pakistan Foreign Minister, Agha Shahi, who was against adopting a pro-US policy in formulating a response to the Soviet invasion, faced opposition from the military in Pakistan, who perceived a closer relationship with the US an opportunity to upgrade their weapon systems. He resigned in February 1982 and was replaced by Shahibzada Yaqub Khan.<sup>10</sup>

The first round of negotiations was held from 16-24 June 1982. It was devoted to discussing the issues to be included under the four agenda items, and the format of the negotiations. The aim of the discussions was to highlight the concerns and interests of the two sides and come to an acceptable agreement for the negotiations to start. In separate formal and informal discussions with the Pakistan and Afghan delegates, Diego Cordovez elaborated on the various issues to be tackled under the agenda items. Responding to the prime Afghan concern to end intervention and interference, discussions centred on the measures which

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42-48.

<sup>10</sup> "Zia, America and the Agha Shahi Resignation", *The Nation*, (16 November, 1991)

could be included under this agenda item. The Afghan side accused Pakistan of training and arming Afghans on her territory and demanded the dismantling and abolition of their camps, closure of the Mujahideen offices, ending the supply of arms, and restriction on their movements. Pakistan's chief concern was the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, and she maintained that there should be no link between withdrawal and non-interference. The discussion on the scope of international guarantees and the identification of the guarantor states remained to be discussed.<sup>11</sup> On the issue of the voluntary return of the refugees, Pakistan insisted on UN consultation with the refugees, and provisions or assurances for their safe return. In view of Pakistan's concern, it was agreed that the various items on the agenda would be inter-linked and implemented only when a satisfactory agreement on all of them had been reached. Although the agenda items were agreed upon, their progress remained dependent on the dynamics of superpower relations and their willingness to resolve regional conflicts. The US was not directly involved in the UN negotiations and in the beginning was quite unenthusiastic towards UN involvement. The primary interest of the US was the withdrawal of the Soviet forces and the replacement of the Communist regime. The US involvement in the negotiations began in December 1985 when the State Department agreed to the US (along with the Soviet Union) becoming a guarantor of the Geneva Accords.

After the death of Brezhnev in November 1982, Yuri Andropov became the Secretary General of the Soviet Politburo. During his fifteen months in office there was a reappraisal of Soviet foreign policy, and the beginning of a realisation of the need for urgent domestic reform by restricting Soviet economic and military commitments abroad, especially in Afghanistan. Andropov was receptive to the idea of UN involvement in order to facilitate a political settlement of the Afghan conflict, but he encountered resistance from the Soviet

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<sup>11</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Riaz, Untying the Afghan Knot, p. 97.

hard-liners in the Politburo, particularly from the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, Marshal Ogarkov, Defence Minister Dmitri Ustinov, his rival Chernenko and Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, his health problems restricted his control over policy mechanism. In a visit to Kabul in February 1982 he told Karmal to broaden the base of his government to include some non-communist members. On 28 March, 1983, in a meeting with the United Nations Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar, and mediator Diego Cordovez at Moscow Airport, he showed an increasing willingness to withdraw Soviet troops from Afghanistan by narrating how the war was bad for the Soviet domestic economy, and for relations with the United States and the Third World states. For these reasons, there was a growing optimism regarding a breakthrough in the negotiations.<sup>13</sup>

The second round of the Geneva negotiations was held in two sessions: from 11-22 April and 12-24 June 1983. In preparation for the second round, Diego Cordovez prepared a draft text of a comprehensive settlement consisting of four sections. Section One dealt with inter-relationship between various agenda items and withdrawal; Section Two with non-interference and non-intervention; Section Three with the voluntary return of refugees; and Section Four with international guarantees. Implementation was to follow after agreement was reached on all the four sections of the settlement. During the first session (11-22 April) substantial progress was made on Section Two, dealing with non-interference and non-intervention between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Section Two was based largely on "The Declaration of Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States" in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations adopted in 1960, and the UN General Assembly Declaration on inadmissibility of intervention and interference in the

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<sup>12</sup> S. Harrison, "Making the Russians Bleed" in, D. Cordovez and S. Harrison, Out of Afghanistan, (New York, Oxford University Press, 1995) p. 94.

<sup>13</sup> *Op. Cit.*, D. Cordovez, "From Break through to Breakdown", in Cordovez and Harrison, Out of Afghanistan, pp. 123-124.

internal affairs of states adopted in 1981.<sup>14</sup> Cordovez took eleven clauses out of these Declarations and converted them into obligations on the negotiating states. The section dealing with the voluntary return of the refugees provided for appropriate consultations between the governments concerned to facilitate the repatriations process, and the establishment of mixed commissions with the participation of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) for co-ordinating and supervising the repatriation process. Pakistan objected to the idea of mixed commissions or any joint operation involving Afghan personnel. The Afghan side objected to the involvement of the UNHCR.<sup>15</sup>The section on international guarantees was limited to non-interference obligations by the US and the Soviet Union. These last three issues were of major concern to Pakistan and remained to be resolved. In order to achieve substantial progress in the negotiations and to send a positive signal to the Soviets, Diego Cordovez put pressure on Pakistan to accept Section Two, if the Soviets, on the basis of separate discussions between Kabul and Moscow, simultaneously agreed to provide a withdrawal timetable in the next round, which was then to become part of the text of the comprehensive settlement. Pakistan's major concerns which were not addressed were, the absence of a time-frame for Soviet withdrawal in the draft settlement, the concern over the question of international guarantees which were confined only to section two (non-interference), and the issue of consultation with the refugees. The Afghan side, on the other hand, was reluctant to discuss the withdrawal timetable within a UN agreement, and also demanded that Section Two be converted into a bilateral treaty between Pakistan and Afghanistan. At the adjournment of the April session, hopes for a possible breakthrough in the negotiations were raised. In the aftermath of this session, Cordovez remarked during a press conference that, "the draft text of the items of the comprehensive settlement was 95% complete",<sup>16</sup>and this generated undue

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<sup>14</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot, pp. 100-109.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid*, p. 112.

<sup>16</sup>S. Harrison, "Inside the Afghan Talks", Foreign Policy (No. 72, Fall, 1988) p. 43.

optimism for a possible breakthrough in the next round of the negotiations. The Soviets appointed a special representative, Stansilov Gavrilov, to the first round of the Geneva negotiations. On the question of the future government in Kabul, Pakistan demanded the removal of Babrak Karmal, (who was installed by the Soviet Union at the time of invasion), before she would agree to sign a bilateral settlement within the UN framework.

In the interval between the April and June sessions in 1983, Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Yaqub Khan, visited Moscow, Washington, London, Riyadh, Peking, and Paris. He was confronted with serious doubts about the possibility of the change of the Karmal regime in Kabul. China suggested that Pakistan should not sign Section Two on non-interference until after the withdrawal.<sup>17</sup> On 9 June 1982, Yaqub Khan met the Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. During their meeting, hopes for any breakthrough in the negotiations were dashed. The Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko emphasised the importance of the non-interference principle, and accused Pakistan of interfering in Afghanistan. He also maintained that the question of the timetable for troop withdrawal could not be discussed within the context or framework of UN negotiations because it was an internal matter for Afghanistan, and, as such, could only be treated separately in bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan.<sup>18</sup>

The resumed session of the second round (12-24 June 1983) was marked by misunderstandings and the hardening of the positions of both Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Afghan delegation refused to provide a withdrawal timetable on the grounds that it was a bilateral matter between Moscow and Kabul. They demanded direct talks with Pakistan and accused Pakistan of back-peddalling on their earlier agreement to accept Section Two relating to non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of each other. Pakistan, on the other hand,

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<sup>17</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot, p. 119.

<sup>18</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, p. 121.

maintained that it had agreed to sign a bilateral agreement on non-interference with the Kabul regime in the context of a 'package deal' of comprehensive draft settlement, and in the expectation that Moscow would provide a withdrawal timetable during the June session.

One possible explanation for this policy reversal can be linked to Andropov's deteriorating health and his weakening hold on foreign policy. Also, 1983 was marked by tensions in superpower relations which diminished the prospect of any quick breakthrough in the negotiations. Critics accused Pakistan of reneging on its promise to sign a bilateral treaty with Afghanistan under US pressure. For the US, the possibility of Soviets leaving a communist regime in Afghanistan was totally unacceptable during a period when US-Soviet bilateral relations were so tense. The main objective of the US foreign policy towards Afghanistan was the withdrawal of the Soviet troops. The CIA and the hard-liners in the US Administration discounted any evidence that the Soviet Union was serious in leaving Afghanistan. After the Korean airline disaster in September 1983, followed by Yuri Andropov's death in February 1984, hopes of improvement in superpower relations evaporated.

After the failure of 12-24 June session (1983), there was an impasse in the negotiations. In 1984, Konstantin Chernenko came to power and the Soviet pressure on the Mujahideen increased as the war in Afghanistan escalated. At the same time, within the US, pressure by the hard-liners and Congress mounted to increase the quality and quantity of covert assistance to the Resistance. The CIA covert operations in Afghanistan were stepped-up. In order to break the deadlock in the negotiations, Cordovez undertook a shuttle to the area in May 1984 and managed to secure Pakistan's agreement to sign a bilateral treaty with the Karmal regime on non-interference and non-intervention in return for an Afghan agreement to start discussions with the Soviet Union on the withdrawal

timetable. Pakistan agreed to conclude a bilateral treaty with the Afghan regime on non-interference without consultation with the US and in order to force the Afghan side to provide a timetable for the negotiations to proceed. Cordovez assured Pakistan that an agreement to sign a bilateral treaty did not imply Pakistan's recognition of the Karmal regime. In the third round of the Geneva negotiations, held from 20-24 August 1984, the timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was finally incorporated in the UN settlement after the Afghan side reluctantly accepted it to be part of the settlement. Before the August round, Afghan Foreign Minister Shah Mohammed Dost remained very adamant that the issue of the withdrawal timetable was a bilateral matter between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, and repeatedly demanded direct talks with Pakistan. However, under pressure from Cordovez and the Soviet Union, he gave in.<sup>19</sup>

Kostantin Chernenko died in March 1985 and was succeeded by Mikhail Gorbachev. The fourth round of the Geneva negotiations, scheduled for February 1985, was postponed until June 1985 because of the impending non-party elections in Pakistan. In a meeting in Kabul between Cordovez and the new Soviet representative to Geneva Nikolai Kozirev, Kozirev suggested that the draft of the comprehensive settlement be broken into four legally binding Instruments comprising: bilateral agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan on non-interference; bilateral agreement on the voluntary return of the refugees; a declaration of international guarantees signed by the US and the Soviet Union; and an agreement on the interrelationship between the various components of these Instruments, including a separate bilateral agreement between Kabul and Moscow on the time-frame for the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. This last Instrument was to be signed by Pakistan, Afghanistan, the US and the Soviet Union. This was a big concession in view of the previous

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<sup>19</sup>D. Cordovez, "The Long Winter" in Harrison and Cordovez, *Out of Afghanistan*, *Op. Cit.*, p. 174.

Soviet position which insisted that they would not give a commitment to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan to a third state. Through the new approach, the Soviets agreed to legally commit themselves to withdraw in a binding document signed by both Pakistan and the US. However, the settlement of the first three instruments was essential before any discussion on Instrument Four, dealing with withdrawal, could begin.<sup>20</sup>

The advent of Mikhail Gorbachev was marked by increasing signals of Soviet willingness to withdraw her forces from Afghanistan. A reappraisal of Soviet foreign policy was undertaken by the Politburo. Gorbachev faced resistance from the hard-liners in the Soviet military and from his Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko. Babrak Karmal was warned not to rely on indefinite Soviet support. In 1985, NSDD 166, which increased the level of the United States aid to Afghanistan, was signed by President Reagan. During 1985-86, the negotiations remained deadlocked over the question of the format of the talks. Kabul repeated its demand for direct talks with Pakistan to discuss Instrument Four on inter-relationship and the withdrawal timetable. Both the US and Pakistan rejected this demand. Pakistan's position was that the withdrawal timetable and settlement of Instrument Four should take place before direct talks could be held. In February 1986, Gorbachev, in a speech at the Twenty Seventh Communist Party Congress, referred to Afghanistan as a 'bleeding wound'.

The fourth round of the Geneva negotiations (June 18-25, 1985) finalised the three Instruments dealing with non-interference and non-intervention, return of the refugees and international guarantees. The fifth round of Geneva negotiations (August 27-30, 1985) was devoted to the settlement of the issue of guarantees. Geneva Six (December 16-20, 1985) dealt principally with Afghan insistence on direct talks. In 1985, Pakistan came under increasing pressure from the Afghan

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<sup>20</sup>B. Rubin, The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to Failed State, (London: Yale University Press, 1995) p. 70.

side to agree to direct talks to resolve the final Instrument Four dealing with the provision of the timetable. Implicit in this demand was the Afghan need for recognition in order to safeguard its security after the Soviet troops left Afghanistan. Pakistan was placed in a very difficult position due to increased public opinion in favour of an agreement. It resisted any changes in the format of the talks and declined to hold direct talks on principle. Engaging in direct talks would have granted legitimacy to the Karmal regime. There was no guarantee that, even after direct talks, the Afghan side of the agreement on withdrawal would be concluded. Lastly, in view of the fact that the three Instruments had been settled through indirect talks, there was no reason to change the format to direct talks to settle the important question of the time-frame for the withdrawal of Soviet troops .<sup>21</sup>

Progress in the negotiations was influenced by the situation on the ground. Even though the three Instruments were finalised by 1985, it took another three years to resolve the difficult question of the provision of an acceptable timetable. In both the Soviet Union and the United States, there were proponents (dealers) and opponents (bleeders) of the agreement. Gorbachev's accommodating attitude towards the UN was accompanied by military escalation of the war in Afghanistan in 1985 which sent confusing signals to the US. Years of mistrust between the two superpowers could not be easily overcome. In March 1985, Reagan finally agreed to sign NSDD 166, increasing the level of the US aid and committed the US to win the war militarily. Thus, UN insistence on the US becoming a guarantor to the settlement was opposed by the Pentagon. In December 1985, the US position on guarantees was put forward by the Deputy Secretary of State, John Whitehead. He stipulated that the US would concur to become a guarantor to the UN settlement only if all the other issues were satisfactorily resolved, and the UN settlement included a satisfactory timetable

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<sup>21</sup>"Resuming the Sixth Round", The Pakistan Times (March 12, 1986) & Dr. Ijaz Hussain, "Direct Talks with Karmal Regime", The Muslim (30 March, 1986).

for withdrawal.<sup>22</sup> The US administration's realisation of the changing Soviet policies emerged slowly after the Superpower summit held in Geneva from November 20-21, 1985. After Gorbachev came to power the Soviet Union agreed to become a guarantor and to discuss the withdrawal timetable within the existing format of comprehensive settlement, and not as a separate bilateral issue between Kabul and Moscow. In February 1986 the decision to provide Stingers' air to surface missiles to the Resistance was taken by the Inter Agency Committee. On 26 February, 1986 Gorbachev, in his famous speech to the twenty seventh Communist Party Congress, sought to disengage Soviet troops [from Afghanistan] within the framework of the UN settlement. Gorbachev also persuaded Babrak Karmal to broaden the base of his government as a result of which, in November 1986, Karmal launched the policy of 'National Reconciliation' in Afghanistan to broaden the base of his regime. Gorbachev's aim was to withdraw Soviet troops and to leave behind a friendly regime in Afghanistan. Karmal, on the other hand, wanted to hold direct talks with Pakistan in order to gain legitimacy for his government. Under UN pressure to finalise the Instrument on withdrawal within the existing format of the comprehensive settlement, Karmal was replaced by Najibullah on 4 May, 1986.

The seventh round of the Geneva negotiations was held from May 16-23 1986. Afghan Foreign Minister, Dost Mohammed, gave a four year timetable which was rejected by Pakistan. Pakistan regarded the Soviet proposal as outrageous and as a symbol of Afghan insincerity in facilitating a settlement. The eighth round of the Geneva negotiations was held in August 1986. It finalised some of the outstanding issues under the four Instruments and discussed two important

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<sup>22</sup>S. Harrison, "Inside the Afghan Talks" *Foreign Policy* (No.72, Fall,1988) p. 52 & S. Harrison, "Bleeders, Dealers and Perestroika", in *Op. Cit.*, Harrison & Cordovez(ed.) *Out of Afghanistan*, pp. 185-207.

matters; firstly, verification and monitoring the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan; and secondly, consultation with the Afghan refugees.<sup>23</sup>

On the question of monitoring, initially the Afghan side was against any UN involvement. Their preference was for bilateral consultations between Pakistan and Afghanistan to deal with any problems or complaints regarding violations of the withdrawal. Pakistan was against bilateral contacts and wanted active UN participation to monitor the withdrawal of Soviet troops. As a compromise, Diego Cordovez proposed two five-member UN teams in each capital, headed by a senior military officer acting as the Secretary General's representative. Cordovez was against the involvement of the Security Council on the issue of monitoring. In 1989-90, the Afghan side wanted to give more power to UNGOMAP to monitor the violations of the Accords by Pakistan.<sup>24</sup>

The requirement for consultation with the refugees was first raised in 1982 by Pakistan (under Section Three dealing with the voluntary return of the refugees) as a way to include them at some stage in the UN negotiations. In the earlier years the prevalent view in the Pakistan Foreign office, based on assurances given by the ISI, was that provision of a short timetable by the Soviet Union would make it easier for the refugees and their leaders to accept a settlement. In order not to antagonise either the Soviet or the Afghan side, the UN mediator, Diego Cordovez, was initially reluctant to personally associate with the Afghan 'Tanzeemat' or parties in Pakistan. He suggested the enlisting the role of UNHCR to conduct consultations with the refugees, but the UNHCR declined in view of the political nature of the task. The Afghan side refused to regard political

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<sup>23</sup>"Talks on Afghan Issue Begin; Cordovez Making Efforts to Dispel Misgivings", The Pakistan Times (1 August, 1986), "Sharp differences over Soviet Pullout Time-frame" The Pakistan Times (7 August, 1986), 'No headway in Geneva Proximity talks', The Muslim (8 August, 1986), "Success hopes Cool down", The Pakistan Times (8 August, 1986), 'Geneva: Still hopeful', The Pakistan Times (10 August, 1986), 'After Geneva; The Road to Nowhere', The Muslim (10 August 1986), "Geneva VII", Dawn (11 August, 1986) & "Unfruitful Talks", Morning News (11 August, 1986).

<sup>24</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan. Untying the Afghan Knot, p. 156-158.

groups, resident in Pakistan prior to the invasion, as refugees. Following the enunciation of the policy of 'National Reconciliation' by Najibullah in 1986, to deal with the internal political situation in Afghanistan, the issue of consultation with the refugees and inclusion of the Alliance leaders in the negotiations suddenly acquired urgency. By 1986 the Afghan Mujahideen had become a force to be reckoned with and their co-operation was therefore required to set up a broad-based government in Afghanistan before Soviet departure. The Afghan Alliance, whose leaders were bitter over years of mistreatment and neglect by the UN, refused to participate in the negotiations or co-operate with the UN mediator in setting up a 'Government of National Reconciliation' in Afghanistan, and demanded instead direct talks with the Soviets. In December 1986, the Foreign office failed to arrange a meeting between Cordovez and the Afghan Alliance, as a result of which the issue of UN consultation with the refugees was quietly dropped. From then onwards, the Foreign Office regularly briefed the Alliance leaders about the progress made in the negotiations. <sup>25</sup>

#### **2.4: 2 Deadlock in the Negotiations over the Settlement of the Internal Political Situation in Afghanistan. 1986-88**

In contrast to the rigid position maintained by the Soviet Union since 1980 (that any change in the composition of the regime in Kabul was not negotiable), 1986 saw a regression in the their position regarding the future government in Afghanistan. In a dramatic U-turn, the Soviet Union linked the provision of the timetable for withdrawal to progress in the formation of a broad-based government of 'National Reconciliation' under Najibullah. The debate over this issue brought to the surface serious policy differences between the different actors involved in the Afghan conflict. The formation of a broad based government in Afghanistan was beyond the parameters of the UN negotiations.

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<sup>25</sup>*Ibid*, p. 159-163.

Throughout 1987, intense diplomatic activity in Pakistan and the UN was focused on devising a formula for the creation of a coalition government acceptable to the parties involved in the conflict. This proved to be an impossible task, as each side pushed for the acceptance of its own proposal. In the absence of any consensus, pressure was applied to the Soviets to provide a short timetable as the only alternative which, it was hoped, could facilitate a solution.

President Najibullah's proposal for the creation of the government of 'National Reconciliation' in Afghanistan was put forward in early January 1987. It included a unilateral cease-fire and a new constitution changing the name of Afghanistan from the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) to the Republic of Afghanistan. However, important Ministries like Defence, Finance, Foreign Affairs and Police were to be placed under the PDPA control, and all powers were to be concentrated in the office of President, which Najibullah himself held.<sup>26</sup>

At the ninth round of the Geneva negotiations (25 February to 9 March 1987), the new Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Abdul Wakil, first proposed twenty-two months for the withdrawal of troops, and then, under pressure, reduced it to just eighteen months. In turn, Pakistan's Foreign Minister proposed seven months as an acceptable timetable for Pakistan. As there was no progress on the issue of national reconciliation, no further progress could be made on the timetable. The diplomatic efforts thus became focused on the issue of the political settlement.

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<sup>26</sup>Ahmed Rashid, "Kabul Cease-fire Campaign to Enhance its Image Abroad", The Nation (8 January, 1987), Ahmed Rashid, "Najib's Cease-fire Creates a Dilemma", The Nation (4 January, 1987), "Weinberger Suggests Two Weeks for Pullout", "End of Afghan War Imminent", The Nation (14 January, 1987) & "No Cease-fire but Pullout No.1 Priority, Gorbachev should be told what Aggression could cost him", The Nation (13 January, 1987)

Pakistan's Foreign Office suggested the idea of an interim government under a neutral personality, such as former King Zahir Shah. The difficulty was that the Soviet position strictly adhered to the creation of a broad based government only in the context of the PDPA proposal of National Reconciliation. The Soviet Union was not willing to accede to any proposal to minimise the predominant role of the PDPA in Afghanistan. In January 1987, the Soviet position was reiterated by the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Anatoly Kovalyev, during his visit to Pakistan; and again in February 1987 by the Soviet Foreign Minister, Edward Shevardnadze, in discussions with Yaqub Khan during the latter visit to Moscow.<sup>27</sup> This was a significant meeting, as Shevardnadze was in charge of policy towards Afghanistan in the Soviet Politburo. Moscow was willing to accept Zahir Shah's role only in the context of Najibullah's policy of National Reconciliation. Diego Cordovez was not briefed on the changes proposed by the Soviet Union with regard to Afghanistan because, according to the Soviets, the question of the internal political situation was not within his mandate. At the beginning of 1987, the US rejected Soviet insistence on linkage between the creation of a broad based government under the PDPA and Soviet withdrawal. The US Under Secretary of State, Michael Armacost, visited Pakistan soon after Anatoly Kovalyev and emphasised the need for a short timetable.<sup>28</sup>

Faced with a deadlock in the negotiations, and beginning to realise the importance of diplomatic progress on the issue of future government in Afghanistan, Diego Cordovez formulated his own proposal for an intra Afghan dialogue in July 1987. This proposal called for the creation of a transitional government based on three groups, the PDPA, the Afghan Alliance and the Afghan technocrats living abroad. No group was assured a predominant position

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<sup>27</sup>"Talks with Soviet Leaders to Help find out Afghanistan Solution", The Nation (4 February, 1987), "Soviet Pullout under UN Supervision", The Nation (10 February, 1987), "Advance Bargaining for Soviet pullout", The Nation (7 February, 1987) & "Soviets have no Intention to Keep Soviet Troops in Afghanistan", The Nation (9 February, 1987)

<sup>28</sup>Ahmed Rashid, "Pakistan Delicately Placed in Superpower Tussle", The Nation (13 February, 1987)

in this transitional government which was then to convene a Loya Jirga to work out the details. Cordovez proposed a 'Second Track' scenario which envisaged a prominent role for the former King Zahir Shah, but this was not acceptable either to the fundamentalist groups in the Alliance or to the commanders inside Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup>

In 1987, the morale of the Afghan Alliance was very high, and they were unwilling to compromise by agreeing to share power with the PDPA in an interim government. In March 1987, General Akhtar Abdur Rahman, the head of the ISI, was removed and a new Director General, General Hamid Gul, was appointed. A strong advocate of the success of Jihad, and unable to force the Alliance to share power with the PDPA, the ISI became an advocate of a 'Shura' (assembly) of the Afghan Alliance. The period of eighteen months required to carry out elections under the Shura was too long for this proposal to be accepted.

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The tenth round of the Geneva negotiations was held from 7-10 September, 1987. It was convened at the request of the Afghan side, and there was an expectation that they would agree to a short time frame of six months. This did not happen.<sup>31</sup>The Afghan side shortened the timetable to sixteen months while Pakistan responded by suggesting eight months. An important outcome of this round was that the Soviets eventually realised the difficulties involved in implementing the National Reconciliation programme without first providing a short timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. By 1987, the newly elected Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohammed Khan Junejo, responding to the growing public opinion in Pakistan against prolonging the Afghan conflict, also began to

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<sup>29</sup>D. Cordovez, "The Final Hurdles: Linkage and the Time Frame", in *Op. Cit.*, Cordovez and Harrison, (ed.) *Out of Afghanistan*, p. 299.

<sup>30</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, *Untying the Afghan Knot*, p., 209.

<sup>31</sup>Zahur ul Haq, "Failure of Geneva Talks-What Next?" *The Pakistan Times* (22 September, 1987)

favour a settlement based on the withdrawal of the Soviet forces. The Pakistan Foreign Office had no leverage with the Afghan Alliance groups and was dependent on the ISI to influence them. President Zia-ul-Haq also failed in his efforts to pressurise the Alliance into showing some flexibility to accommodate a few non communist members of the PDPA in a transitional government. Thus, in the crucial last stage of the negotiations, Pakistan's foreign policy suffered from lack of co-ordination between the Foreign Office and the ISI, and growing differences between the President and the Prime Minister. Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Shahibzada Yaqub Khan, resigned in October 1987 and was replaced by Zain Noorani.

Towards the end of 1987 US-Soviet bilateral discussions on issues such as arms control, the INF treaty, Europe, and Afghanistan, gained momentum. According to Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, disengagement from Afghanistan was an important indicator of 'new thinking' in Soviet foreign policy.<sup>32</sup> The first signs of change in Soviet policy towards Afghanistan took place outside both the UN and any bilateral contacts with Pakistan, but were conveyed directly to the US in a bilateral meeting between the US Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze on 16 September 1987. Towards the end of 1987 the Soviets formally expressed to the US their desire to withdraw from Afghanistan immediately, and sought their co-operation. Finally, at the Washington Summit in December 1987, Gorbachev de linked the two issues of the Transitional Government and timetable for withdrawal and unilaterally provided a one year timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops provided the guarantees on non-interference in Afghanistan internal affairs were implemented.

### **2.4 : 3 The End Game**

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<sup>32</sup> E. Shevardnadze, The Future Belongs to Freedom, (London, Sinclair-Stevenson Ltd, 1991) pp. 41-59.

Following Gorbachev's announcement at the Washington Summit, serious questions were raised in Pakistan and the US about the implications of the implementation of the Geneva Instruments. Each side tried to safeguard its own interest. Apart from the absence of a coalition government in Afghanistan, two major concerns faced Pakistan. Firstly, there was the question of holding direct talks with the Afghan side to conclude the final settlement, and secondly, there was the issue of the recognition of the Kabul regime by Pakistan, which was embedded in Pakistan's commitment to the UN in 1984 to sign a bilateral treaty with Afghanistan on non-interference. This was if an agreed timetable was provided by the Afghan side. In the US, Conservative and hard-line groups strongly criticised the Administration for agreeing to a one-sided cut off of aid to the Afghan Resistance implicit in the Instrument on International guarantees. This instrument also prohibited Pakistan from allowing its territory to be used for subversive activities against Afghanistan. In 1985, the State Department had agreed to sign the Instrument on international guarantees after a satisfactory settlement was reached which, from the US point of view, only entailed the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Faced with growing criticism both at home and abroad over the sell-out of the Mujahideen interests, discussions on additional safeguards like front loading, phasing and monitoring were proposed by the US in order to ensure an orderly and speedy withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan. Before the final deadline for the conclusion of the Accords in March 1988, President Zia-ul-Haq, in a last minute attempt, tried to refocus diplomatic efforts on the creation of a coalition government in Kabul. He did not succeed. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Yuri Vorontov, visited Islamabad in January 1988 to convey the new Soviet policy to Pakistan, but refused to consider any changes in the new Soviet position (to delink the issue of withdrawal and the formation of an interim government in Afghanistan). Cordovez also visited Pakistan before the convening of the final Geneva round on 2 March 1988. Under pressure from President Zia, the Afghan Alliance did

put forward a last minute proposal for an interim government in February 1988 but it also failed to resolve the differences among the Mujahideen over the representation of various groups in any proposed new government.

In the face of growing criticism, the US Secretary of State, Shultz, first suggested 'negative symmetry' to Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, namely that both sides should cut-off military aid to their clients after the conclusion of the settlement. According to the new US position, the US emphasised that the obligations in the guarantee Instrument should be reciprocated by both the signatory states, that is the US and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union refused to abide by such a policy. They argued that their commitment to provide aid to Afghanistan was based on a separate bilateral treaty with the Afghan government, and they refused to equate Afghanistan's 'legitimate' government under Najibullah, which was still a member of the UN, with unrecognised Afghan Resistance groups outside Afghanistan.

In the end, in another meeting with Shultz and Shevardnadze on 30 March 1988, an understanding was reached on 'positive symmetry', which allowed both the sides to provide military assistance to their clients in Afghanistan. This agreement was supported by both Pakistan and the ISI. The prevalent expectation was that after the withdrawal of the Soviet troops, the Mujahideen would be able to capture Kabul and overthrow the Communist regime of Najibullah. However, the agreement on 'positive symmetry' deprived the Accords of any effectiveness. Pakistan signed the Accords on the basis of two reservations: firstly, that Pakistan did not recognise the PDPA regime; and secondly, on an understanding that the parties involved would continue to co-operate in their efforts to establish a broad based government in Afghanistan.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>“Without a Transitional government Acceptable to all sections, Peace will not Return to Afghanistan”, Zain Noorani, Herald (March, 1989) & S. Harrison, "Inside the Afghan Talks", Foreign Policy ( No. 72, Fall 1988)

The Geneva Accords were signed on the 14 April 1988 and consisted of four agreements. (see Appendix C) The Agreements, the Secretary General said, were “a significant achievement” a “major stride in the effort to bring peace to Afghanistan and assure reprieve for its people”. Mr. Perez de Cuellar added. “The Agreements lay the basis for the exercise by all Afghans of their right to self-determination, a principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.”<sup>34</sup>

The discussion of the role of Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union and the UN in the Afghan conflict in this section has highlighted the important and complex issues involved in the Afghan conflict. An important feature of the Afghan War is that it marks a transition from the Cold War period and the post- Cold War period. This transition had important implications for the policies of the states involved in the conflict, that is, Pakistan, Afghanistan, the US and the Soviet Union, and also for the UN. Nowhere is this more evident in the conduct of the UN diplomacy. In contrast to the recent extensive involvement by the UN peacekeeping forces in the intra state conflicts, in the case of Afghanistan the principle of self-determination was not included in the text of the UN negotiations. This omission deprived the UN of a unique opportunity to play a constructive role in the settlement of the internal aspect of the Afghan conflict at the crucial stage of the negotiations. However, as the UN involvement in the Afghan conflict began during the height of the Cold War, it could only address the external dimensions of the conflict, that is, the withdrawal of the Soviet troops and the return of the Afghan refugees. Thus during the Cold War the UN was constrained by international norms which did not recognise the legitimacy of the insurgency movements.

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<sup>34</sup>“A UN Success: Four Part Afghanistan Agreement Signed in Geneva”, UN Chronicle (June 1988) p. 6.

Another important conclusion is that it was the use of force which eventually forced the Soviets to withdraw from Afghanistan. This finding is confirmed by the analysis of the Soviet behaviour throughout the UN negotiations. Initially the Soviets were confident to secure a military victory over the Afghan Resistance. The Soviet willingness to participate in the UN negotiations stemmed from the fact that the UN accorded recognition to the government of B. Karmal in Kabul. From 1982-85 the Soviets main objective was put pressure on Pakistan to hold direct talks with the regime in Afghanistan. For this reason they withheld the timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops till 1986. It was the supply of the Stinger missile to the Afghan guerrillas in 1986 which forced the Soviet Union to adopt a more conciliatory posture at Geneva. The changing military situation in Afghanistan forced the Soviets to adopt a more flexible position. In 1988 the Soviet Union de linked the two issues of the formation of an interim government in Afghanistan with the withdrawal of it's troops. The Soviet Foreign Minister Y. Voronstov heavily criticised the last minute frantic efforts made by Pakistan to form an interim government in Afghanistan before the signing of the Geneva Accords. At the signing of the Geneva Accords the Soviets reluctantly agreed to Pakistan's suggestion to allow the UN to continue it's role in finding a diplomatic solution to the crisis after the Soviet withdrawal. However, in 1989 it was the Soviet Union which requested the UN to intervene in finding a political resolution of the Afghan conflict.

Thus an analysis of the Afghan Conflict during 1979-88 supports several of the Realist assumptions. It also suggests how important the role of the major powers is in determining the course of international politics. The analysis of the behaviour of the Pakistan and Afghanistan show that their response was largely shaped by their perception of their national interests.

### **PART III**

This section will discuss the foreign policy of Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union and the UN towards Afghanistan in the Post-Cold War period from 1989-94. The final section on the Taliban would conclude the discussion on the role of the Pakistan, the US and the Soviet Union in Afghanistan from 1995-1998. First, a brief review will be given of some of the global and regional changes which have taken place in the vicinity of Afghanistan during 1989-98.

#### **3.1:1 Introduction.**

With the end of the Cold war in 1989 the bipolar system of international relations based on the nuclear balance of terror between the US and the Soviet Union has collapsed. Instead a new multi-polar system of international relations has emerged in which there are several states and groups of states of roughly equal strength contending for power. In contrast with the rigid system of Cold War alliances, states are ideologically less restrained in the pursuit of their foreign policy goals. But this does not necessarily mean that the future world order will be more stable or peaceful than the bipolar system. In fact interstate competition and rivalry, whether for economic power or military power, will continue to be a fact of political life in international relations and as long as there is competition or hierarchy there will be potential for conflict among the states. In an highly anarchic international system states are still the sovereign actors in international affairs, but now they will have to rely increasingly on their own limited resources in order to protect their security interests.<sup>1</sup> This is so because with the threat of Communism gone the United States is now less willing to intervene in ethnic conflicts to resolve regional disputes. Thus the acquisition of power by states is still very important in international politics.

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<sup>1</sup> "New International Realities", in C.W. Kegley & G. Raymond (ed.), A Multipolar Peace, Great Power Politics in the Twenty First Century (New York: St. Martins Press, 1994) pp. 3-17.

Moreover, apart from internal domestic threats some states will have to shape new responses to the rapidly changing external environment and to the shifting balance of power around them. In some cases this can lead to the formulation of a new definition of 'national interest' for the states in international system.<sup>2</sup> This is another salient feature of the post -Cold War era. Thus the type of international system, since 1989, may have been transformed from a bipolar, to a multi polar system, but this does not mean that world problems are going to disappear. Historically each multipolar system has been unique and there can be a number of variables affecting the stability of such a system: for example, the number of actors involved, the pattern of alliance formation and international norms in which the states have to operate in pursuit of their interests that is whether it is a permissive or restrictive system.<sup>3</sup> In the new post-Cold War multi polar system several new global security and environmental issues have emerged without the satisfactory resolution of some of the old security threats and territorial disputes. Moreover as the recent changes in the international system are so enormous every region in the world is being affected by them and it will be some time before the contours of a new international system emerge. Meanwhile there is continuing uncertainty and ambiguity about the future. Uncertainty about the future can breed caution among states but it can also lead to the outbreak of conflict in interstate relations. Therefore, caution should be taken because if unchecked these trends can become dangerous.

The United States is still a superpower in terms of its military strength but there is no guarantee that its dominant position will remain unchallenged. This is specially true in view of the emergence of new economic coalitions in the world e.g. the European Union, the economic progress made by the states in the Far

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<sup>2</sup>G. E. Fuller, "Central Asia and American National Interest" in H. Malik, Central Asia its Strategic Importance and Future Prospects (New York: St Martins Press, 1994) p.129

<sup>3</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Kegley, A Multipolar Peace, Great Power Politics in the Twenty First Century pp. 57-146.

East, the emergence of strong Japan, Germany and China.<sup>4</sup> Thus if the United States wants to retain its influence in world politics, it will have to remain vigilant to the rapidly unfolding changes in the world. Otherwise, the US risks falling behind the the rapidly unfolding events throughout the world.

Historically when faced with a multipolar system one of the techniques states have used to achieve stability has been to resort to a "balance of power" mechanism to ensure that no one state or group of states can acquire an uncontested position of power in the world. Balance of power is an essential, and according to the realist school of thought, an automatic (inevitable) mechanism for the regulation of relations between sovereign states in the international system.<sup>5</sup> But this is a European concept which emerged in Europe during the seventeenth century. It demands careful handling and its aim is the promotion of equilibrium rather than peace. There are several techniques for achieving a balance of power for example, formation of alliances, creating buffer states, arms acquisition, resort to war, emergence of a balancer, and divide and rule. But in Asia where there is a lack of cultural homogeneity and where there has been no strong shared experience of international rules of behaviour the future shape of the balance of power is very uncertain and unpredictable. During the Cold War period Asian states relied on bilateral alliances with one of the superpowers. In the post Cold War period the prospects for a viable multilateral security framework emerging in Asia are not very encouraging. The reasons for this are that there are many unresolved disputes left over from the Cold War era, especially in the South Asia region; this area is the object of rapid changes in the distribution of power among the regional states. Also there are many ascending powers situated in Asia. In such an environment the middle powers in the region want to retain their freedom of manouver to avoid domination and to enhance their security. There can be a variety of combinations of alignments between the

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<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 166-190.

<sup>5</sup>M. Sheehan, The Balance of Power: History and Theory (London: Routledge, 1996) pp.1-22

regional players in response to these changes. These shifting patterns of distribution of power can have important implications for the emergence of any future regional security framework. It can encourage competition among the big powers and the formation of new power balances.

The distinguishing features of Asia are its cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. This is combined with variations in the type of governments and level of economic development among the various states. In contrast to Europe during the Cold War period, in Asia there has been no strong precedent of economic, political and military co-operation among the regional states. Instead various states have relied on bilateral alliances with the superpower in pursuit of their regional disputes. In the post-Cold War period the economic progress in Asia may increase but underlying differences of interests will remain. Thus there are many potential sources of disagreements. In contrast to the Cold War era the future of balance of power in Asia will be strongly influenced by the relative power and foreign policies of the regional great powers like China, Japan, Russia, India and the US. In extreme cases Russia, due to its geographical proximity and the US, in order to safeguard its global power position, will play a stabilising role if there is a threat to the balance of power in the region. In some areas where the conflict of interests among the regional states is too strong the US presence will be desired by the middle powers. In this interactional process there will be both opportunities for competition (conflict) and co-operation (progress) for the regional players.<sup>6</sup>

There is no one state in Asia which has all the requisites of a hegemonic power. Asia is an important geographical area as China, India, Japan and Russia- the future world powers- are situated here. However, power is distributed unequally

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<sup>6</sup>P.Dibb, Towards a New Balance of Power in Asia, Adelphi Paper, No. 295, and R. G. C. Thomas, South Asian Security in the 1990's, Adelphi Paper, No. 278 & A. Friedberg "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multi Polar Asia" in International Security (Vol.18, No.3, 1993)pp. 5-32.

among these Asian States: for example Japan has economic power but is restrained militarily; India is strong in military terms but lacks economic strength and faces acute domestic problems. India's main rival in the region has always been China and after the disintegration of the Soviet Union India was left feeling very insecure against China and in order to be the dominant player in regional politics it has embarked on an aggressive military policy to defend its interests.<sup>7</sup> China is going through a period of rapid economic growth under strict authoritarian control. Russia is in a transitional stage and its future is unclear. Moreover, there is also the possibility of several combinations between different small neighbours in the region to thwart the hegemonic aims of their stronger neighbours. This is particularly so in case of Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea and Vietnam against China. Then there is the question of policy posture adopted by the middle power states on specific policy issues.

The regional balance of power will also be affected by the role that middle powers in the region play in order to protect their interests. In the post-Cold War era these powers may have to rely on their self defence capabilities to protect their security and economic interests. Indeed the trend in this direction is strong. In order to safeguard their security, the middle powers in Asia are increasingly trying to become self reliant in conventional and nuclear weapons. This can introduce a mechanism of checks and balances in bilateral relations but if unchecked the pursuit of individual self interests through arms accumulation can become a dangerous precedent in view of the fact that in Asia crisis prevention or management techniques are not well developed. For example the dangers arising out of the recent nuclear weapon explosion by both India and Pakistan in terms of miscalculation, mistrust, suspicion, and the incentive to strike first due

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<sup>7</sup>M. Malik, "India Copes with the Kremlin's Fall", *Orbis* (Vol. 37, No. 1, 1993)

to uncertainty about the nature of each others nuclear stockpiles, are extremely de-stabilising factors for the peace and security of the region.<sup>8</sup>

Though the trend towards a stable economic growth can encourage inter-state co-operation, the paucity of collective or multilateral security mechanisms in Asia can impede confidence building measures or effective resolution of disputes. Due to the lack of institutionalised mechanisms for inter-state co-operation the future balance of power in Asia will be characterised by bilateral arrangements to deal with specific disputes. Nuclear proliferation and conventional arms build up are de-stabilising trends ; moreover numerous unresolved territorial disputes are potentially dangerous, especially when they involve rival great powers in the region such as China and India, Russia and China, Japan and China or India and Pakistan.<sup>9</sup>

A distinction can be made between the "regional balance of power" and the "global balance of power". Some scholars contend that historically it is the balance of power between the major global or world powers that determines or has a decisive affect on the regional balance of power.<sup>10</sup> As the global balance of power is going through a process of redefinition in the post-Cold War period this has important implications for the regional balance of power which has also become very uncertain and unpredictable.

In the South Asian region some of the post-Cold War security problems include: ethnic conflicts and separatist movements in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka; the arms race; the proliferation of nuclear and conventional weapons; nationalist

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<sup>8</sup>*Op. Cit.* , P. Dib, Towards a New Balance of power, pp. 56-69, "Nuclear Neighbours", International Herald Tribune (26 May,1998) S. Coll, "Asia's Nuclear Breakout: Opening up a Perilous Route to Prestige", International Herald Tribune (30 May, 1998) & S. R. Weisman," India and Pakistan were better off before these tests", International Herald Tribune (1 June, 1998)

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.* P. Dib, pp. 39-55

<sup>10</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Kegley. A Multipolar Peace, Great Power Politics in the Twenty First Century pp.46-88.

revolts, civil wars and the threats of state disintegration; territorial disputes; terrorism; and the rise of radical and militant Islamic fundamentalism. This latter phenomenon is of particular concern to India due to her large Muslim population and to Russia in view of the independence of the Central Asian States. All these problems not only threaten the security and integrity of the states involved, but also have the potential to spill over into adjoining geographical areas due to overlapping religious or ethnic ties across the state borders. Several regional states like India, China, Iran and Pakistan have made changes in their respective foreign policies to respond to the global changes which will also affect the way they handle their regional problems. India, since the disintegration of the Soviet Union, has been affected by ethnic problems and the loss of Soviet support in the Security Council of the United Nations. Pakistan, since after the end of the Afghan war, has lost its strategic value to the US and now is looking to Central Asia for economic opportunities and to gain strategic depth against India by trying to install a friendly government in Afghanistan. China is responding to its economic growth etc. But it is also essential that these states first find internal stability in order to play a constructive role in regional and global politics. In view of the above mentioned regional changes and the on-going civil war in Afghanistan the outlook for a stable South Asian balance of power emerging is quite grim. Thus the political stability and reconstruction of Afghanistan is one of the prerequisites for the maintenance of healthy balance of power in the region.

Another significant regional development is the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. This has added five new Central Asian states- namely Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan-with the combined population of approximately fifty five million people, onto the global map.<sup>11</sup> One

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<sup>11</sup> P. Ferdinand, The New Central Asia and its Neighbours (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994) p. 4, B. R. Rubin, "The Fragmentation of Tajikistan" in Survival (Vol. 35, No. 4, 1993-94) & A. Hayman, "Central Asia's Relations with Afghanistan and South Asia", in P. Ferdinand (ed.) The Central Asia and its Neighbours (London: Pinter Publishers, 1994) pp.75-94.

of the reasons for the importance of Central Asian states derives from their geographical proximity to the Middle East and South Asia and the close cultural, ethnic, and religious ties with the region. The new Central Asian States are passing through a crucial stage of transformation from Russian colonialism to full independence. In order to assert their independence they are eager to cultivate close relations with the outside world but at the same time in order to safeguard their political independence they cannot afford to break completely from Russian economic and security ties. This is especially so in view of the narrow political base of some of their leaders and their cautiousness in adopting new models for development which has led to increased competition among the outside states to gain influence in the region. As a result the leaders in these states have adopted a cautious and pragmatic attitude in their foreign relations, one aspect of which is to retain close ties with Russia. Thus, Russia continues to play a significant role in the emergence of the future balance of power in the region.

The emergence of the Central Asian States has given rise to several new security concerns in the region. The crucial factor is the fear of the Islamic threat in the region. The diverse and overlapping ethnic composition of these Central Asian states has added a new complexity to the old patterns of inter-state relations in the region. The most dangerous example of this occurred in 1992 with the outbreak of a civil war in Tajikistan which threatened to spread to neighbouring Afghanistan. Though the reasons for the outbreak of the Tajik civil war were mainly internal and were embedded in regional tensions and the power struggle between the Islamic-nationalist forces from the Gorno-Badakshan and Kurgan-Tyube region and the communist political elites from the Leninabad and Kulyab region led by President Nabyev. It was perceived in Russia and Uzbekistan as signalling the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism in Central Asia. Afghanistans ideological and material support to the opposition groups in

Tajikistan further heightened these fears. Russian forces under the 'Common Security Agreement' signed in May 1992 between Russia and the Central Asian states, intervened in the Tajik civil war. Also, Russian troops were deployed along the Afghan-Tajik border to stop the infiltration of arms from Afghanistan and to seal the border with Afghanistan where the Tajik refugees and Islamist rebels fighting to overthrow President Nabiyev's government were given refuge and training. Thus, the Tajik civil war could have either spilled into Afghanistan or alternatively the radical and extremist Islamist groups in Afghanistan could have gained control in Tajikistan.

Moreover, Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan are engaged in an economic competition to gain access to the Central Asian oil and gas resources and to exploit commercial opportunities in Central Asia.<sup>12</sup> In November 1992 Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and the CIS joined in the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) to promote trade and bilateral ties with each other. So far this project has only met with limited success. The disintegration of Afghanistan after 1992 also led to strained relations between Afghanistan and the new Central Asian States.

The Central Asian states particularly Kazakhstan, had vast reserves of nuclear weapons which in 1996-97 were shifted to the Russian Federation. According to the IISS military balance report Kazakhstan still has some Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). Possession of nuclear weapons by these states poses a security threat to the entire region. Lastly, India and China are important regional powers who will determine the future shape of the balance of power in the region.

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<sup>12</sup> R. Menon & H. J. Barkey, "The Transformation of Central Asia: Implications for Regional and International Security" *Survival* (Vol. 34, No. 4, Winter 1992-93) & A. Z. Rubinstein, "The Geopolitical Pull on Russia", *Orbis* (Vol. 38, Fall, 1994)

Before discussing the role of Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union, and the UN in the Afghan conflict in the post-Cold War period it is important to see how these changes have affected the political developments in Afghanistan.

### **3.1:2 The Afghan Conflict and its Impact on the Regional Balance of Power.**

The above mentioned shifting global and regional developments from 1989 onwards have affected the political developments within Afghanistan in a negative way. This combined with the long term negative effects of the war on the domestic politics of Afghanistan have diminished Afghanistan's prospects of finding internal peace in the near future. The political turmoil in Afghanistan poses a threat to the stability of the regional states, as any disintegration of Afghanistan along ethnic lines can also de-stabilise Pakistan, Iran and seriously affect the political future of the Central Asian States. Afghanistan does not serve as a good example of power politics in the post- Cold War era. In the post-Cold War period the multi polar balance of power has not worked for the benefit of the security of a small state with few economic assets.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan has lost its Cold War strategic significance for the US and for the international community. But the political interest and co-operation of the international community, or at least a more active role by the US, is essential to bring peace in Afghanistan. The regional states at present are unable to come to an agreement about the future of Afghanistan. Instead the prospects of regional co-operation have been diminished due to the pursuit of ethnic and political rivalries by the regional states in Afghanistan.

Moreover, the interplay of regional politics with the domestic politics of Afghanistan is complex and in some instances both are closely connected. Thus

in order to understand the role played by the Afghan conflict in shaping the regional balance of power, it is also essential to understand some of the domestic changes which have taken place in Afghanistan as a result of the war. This will put the reasons for the continuing civil war in Afghanistan in a better perspective.

Unfortunate legacies of the Afghan war 1979-98 which have complicated the Afghan political culture are threefold. Firstly, the most important point to remember is that the war in Afghanistan has profoundly changed the structure of Afghan society. It has transformed the traditional pattern of social and political relationships between state and society in Afghanistan. In some regions it has replaced the authority of the traditional and local elites such as the khans, maliks and tribal leaders or aristocrats, who in the past had served as intermediaries between the peasant society and the state, and instead given rise to several new political forces.<sup>13</sup>

The Soviet invasion shifted the power from the traditional elites in Afghanistan to the religious leaders such as the 'ulama' or the 'mawlawi', as at the beginning of the war they played an important role in mobilising people through the use of such religious symbols as 'Umma' (Islamic unity) and 'Shariat' (Islamic law) against the Soviet invasion. For example, at the beginning of the war the Harqat-i-inqilabi-Islami yi Afghanistan (Islamic Revolutionary Movement) led by Nabi Muhammad Nabi and composed mainly of the ulemas was quite influential but in later years its popularity declined sharply. Moreover the devastation caused by the war destroyed land and trade routes in Afghanistan which were the essential basis of the economic power of the traditional leaders, apart from the custom of state patronage. Religion acquired a much more important role in peoples lives. But the influence of the 'ulama' remained quite limited as in different regions

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<sup>13</sup> O. Roy, Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986) pp. 19- 25.

peoples primary allegiances were largely local or to their 'qawm' (a local social network based on patronage), which historically was a major cause of social divisions in Afghan society and which even the power of increased religious unity during the war could not overcome. This is especially true of the eastern Afghanistan where tribal and 'qawm' divisions are strong. However, this is not so apparent in the north, north east or the southern regions of Afghanistan. Moreover, these indigenous religious leaders did not have unlimited resources to distribute to the people to win their loyalties.<sup>14</sup> The initial uprising against the Communist government in Kabul (from 1978-79) was local and largely disorganised. It was carried out without the support of political parties which were anyway non-existent in Afghanistan at the time.

This lack of organisation was fulfilled by the formation of seven political parties in Pakistan in 1980 which were funded chiefly by foreign aid. They became a symbol of the organisation of the Afghan resistance at a national level.

The origin of Afghan resistance in Afghanistan is linked to the Islamist movement founded in 1958 by Professor of theology Ghulam Mohammad Niyazi in Kabul University. Other members of this movement were Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, and intellectuals Sibghatullah Mujaddidi, Tawana and Minhajuddin Ghais. They were influenced by the sunni 'Muslim Brotherhood' movement in Egypt. In the 1960s in view of the political liberalization of the constitutional period 1963-73, political activity flourished in the campus of Kabul university. In 1965 the Communist party was formed which came into direct conflict with the Islamist groups. In 1972 the Islamist movement was organised into a party called Jamiati-Islami whose leader was Barhanuddin Rabbani.

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* pp 150-52.

When Daoud came to power in 1973 with the help of the Parcham faction of the PDPA he launched a campaign to eliminate these Islamist groups. As a result most of them fled to Pakistan where they were given asylum by the government of Prime Minister Bhutto. In 1975 in response to Daoud militant propaganda against Pakistan and support for the Paktunistan movement, Pakistan provided training to these groups to stir an uprising in Afghanistan to overthrow Daoud. This uprising failed due to lack of coordination and lack of a wider response from the public. As a result of this failed attempt most of the members of the movement were persecuted by Daoud. The main lesson the Islamist group learned from their failure was that they had to enlist the support of the ulema and the traditional leaders to gain a widespread following. After 1975 both Saudi and Iran cut back on the funds provided to the movement which further deprived them of their support. By 1976 the Islamist movement was divided into two sections led by Barhanuddin Rabbani and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar respectively. Rabbani was in favour of infiltrating the army and generating wider support for his party, whereas Hizb-i-Islami under Hekmatyar adopted a cautious attitude and wanted to strengthen the Islamist movement throughout Afghanistan before staging another rebellion. Professor Rabbani party namely the Jamiat-i- Islami was more diffused whereas Hizbi- Islami of Hekmatyar was highly centralised and dogmatic. The Soviet invasion in December 1979 galvanised these nascent Islamist groups and they were transformed into political parties in the fight against the Soviets.

The formation of political parties in Afghanistan has followed the old pattern of political competition based on patronage which was practised by traditional leaders like Khans and maliks. The formation of a political party in Afghanistan implied a group based on interpersonal relations, either at the 'qawm', ethnic or geographical level, and the distribution of funds and weapons by the leaders to

their followers.<sup>15</sup> However, these resources were not produced domestically as they were in the past, but were acquired through international networks or foreign aid given by outside states. As mentioned earlier, at the time of the Soviet invasion only two organised political parties that is the Hizb-i-Islami of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar and Jamiat-i-Islami of Burhanuddin Rabbani were in existence. But with the foreign invasion the amount of foreign aid increased causing splits among various political groups. In the aftermath of the Soviet invasion traditional or nationalist parties were formed. Several attempts to unite these newly formed political parties into an alliance failed as the leader of the alliance usually transformed the alliance into his own personal party. This happened in 1978 with Sibghatullah Mujaddidi and with Abdul Rasul Sayaf in 1979 when they both used their position as leaders of a broad alliance to set up their own individual parties. Another split occurred in 1979 when Yonus Khalis broke away from Hizbi-Islami of Hikmatyar accusing him of complacency and avoiding combat against the communist forces.

During the period of Soviet occupation Afghan society underwent rapid politicisation. The war symbolised a struggle between Islamic ideology and communist ideology and gained immense international significance. Politics was suddenly transformed from a local to an international level. But the internationalisation of the ideological struggle and the creation of new leaders and political parties has not served to decrease the social and political segmentation of Afghan society. On the contrary political factionalism has increased and is now linked to regional states trying to control the Mujahideen. Religion has not bridged societal divisions or provided a vehicle for a single well organised political organisation to emerge. Religious rhetoric is used only to further political interests. The hold of tribal or traditional laws is still very strong in Afghanistan and where it clashes with Sharia or the Islamic law it is the tribal

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<sup>15</sup> O. Roy, Afghanistan from Holy War to Civil War (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1995) p. 105-115.

law, not Sharia, which prevails. This is done to avoid confrontations at the qawm level. Since the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan Islamic ideology has proved to be inadequate in submerging differences among the Mujahideen. The trend towards ethnic polarisation in Afghanistan was also reinforced by the creation of Central Asian states in 1991.

Besides their ability to distribute foreign weapons and funds to the Mujahideen there were three other major criteria for the distribution of support for political parties in Afghanistan. According to Oliver Roy these included; the physical distribution of various ethnic groups, the political rivalry between the Islamists and the traditionalist groups and the social networks already in existence in Afghanistan. They include 'Sufi', 'ulama', 'tribal' and 'Islamists networks. The traditional parties were primarily based on the social network of 'ulama' and 'sufis'. Whereas the fundamentalist parties were based on strict Islamic ideology. These social networks provided the support base for the seven Resistance parties throughout the period of Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.<sup>16</sup>

The party structure consisted of a leader, the military committee and the commanders. The various commanders inside Afghanistan were required to align themselves to any one of the seven parties in order to qualify to get aid and weapons. The strength of each party depended on the number of its commanders, the success of its military operations, and amount of foreign aid it could distribute to its followers. Most of the fighters were loyal to their commanders and if the commander changed over from one party to another he usually took his followers with him.<sup>17</sup> The parties became a potential source of disunity in Afghanistan as in any geographical area rival groups had the option of joining a different party. Political parties competed with each other to attract more

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<sup>16</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Roy, Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan, pp. 110- 118.

<sup>17</sup>R. Barnett, "International Aid, War and National Organisation" in The Fragmentation of Afghanistan. State Formation and Collapse in the International System (Yale: Yale University Press, 1995) pp. 196- 203.

followers while their leaders acquired a new elite status financed by international sources and foreign aid. The geographical map of support for these political parties throughout Afghanistan is very complex. In different regions affiliations are determined by ethnic, tribal or qawm differences rather than a common ideology. As such in any one geographical area two or more parties can be active.

During the course of the war some of the more powerful military commanders formed extensive military-political organisations at a local level to achieve greater effectiveness and co-ordinate their military operations beyond the usual divisions of tribe and 'qawm'. In this endeavour they were generously funded by international humanitarian organisations and Non-governmental Organisations. This was particularly true in the Tajik areas of north-east of Afghanistan where tribal divisions were not very strong. After the collapse of the Communist regime of President Najibullah in 1992 the regional commanders who by then had set up their individual 'regional coalitions' sought more power and autonomy from the party leaders. They held the leaders of the political parties living in exile in Iran and Pakistan responsible for the continuation of conflict in Afghanistan. They resented the control of the Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan and refused to cooperate in launching an integrated military attack against Kabul after the Soviet withdrawal. The famous commander of Jamiat-i-Islami, Ahmed Shah Massoud, has established his own organisation called the 'Supervisory Council of the North.' In the west commander Ismail Khan of Jamiati- Islami has set up his own regional organisation. On the other hand, in the Pashtu speaking areas in the East and around Kabul, areas where tribal divisions and disunities are strong, such regional organisations have failed to develop. In the South of Afghanistan the power of the Durrani Pashtuns, the traditional rulers of Afghanistan, remained mostly intact as a result of which the old local Khans and tribal leaders

are still influential.<sup>18</sup> According to one estimate there are roughly about nine hundred commanders scattered throughout Afghanistan.

In order to put political pressure on the Soviet Union, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia pressurised the seven Sunni political parties based in Pakistan to form an alliance in 1985. The alliance was supposed to represent the struggle of the Afghan people to the outside world. But it was an artificial unity imposed on different ethnic and ideological groups brought together to fight the Soviet forces.<sup>19</sup> The US foreign policy motive in encouraging the formation of the Afghan Alliance was to impart political legitimacy to the Afghan Resistance. The aid organisations were instructed to distribute aid inside Afghanistan through the Alliance committees such as the agriculture committee, the health committee and the education committee. A secondary aim was to stop the flow of the refugees into neighbouring states. By keeping the local people inside Afghanistan the US aim was to counter the Soviet policy of depopulating rural areas which were the main source of support to the Afghan guerrillas in Afghanistan.

During the period of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan the differences between the various political parties were either ignored or submerged under the overriding military aim of inflicting maximum damage on the Soviet forces. Moreover war made communication between the various parts of the country difficult. After the Soviet troop withdrawal in 1989 however, the leaders of these parties lost their main unifying impulse i.e. the religious obligation to fight against the Communist troops. With the common enemy gone the deep seated ethnic, linguistic, tribal and sectarian differences of Afghan society once again emerged. Different leaders became engaged in an intense power struggle to rule Afghanistan. In this process the parties were backed by their respective foreign supporters and the vast amounts of weapons poured into Afghanistan during the

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<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.* "International Aid, War and local and Regional Organisations" pp. 226-246.

<sup>19</sup>*Op. Cit.* , Oliver Roy, Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan p. 124.

war has made political compromise nearly impossible to achieve. The religious obligation of 'Jihad' has also now been replaced by the formation of larger ethnic entities which are engaged in a struggle for political power. Thus the formation of political parties and diverse sources of foreign aid to them has led to the emergence of new power centres in Afghanistan. Since the Soviet withdrawal the ethnic divisions in Afghanistan for example between the Pathans and the Tajiks have been used by regional powers to thwart the political ambitions of their rival regional powers.<sup>20</sup>

Secondly, another legacy of the war is the role of outside influences on Afghan politics. Foreign military and financial aid, political manipulation and frequent policy shifts by the major outside states involved in the Afghan conflict is significantly responsible for the fragmentation and competition for political power in Afghanistan. Various factions are divided along ethnic, Shia-Sunni, moderate-radicals and geographical lines. In the post-Cold War period regional commanders have emerged as local strongmen. Their power is derived from foreign aid, the revival of the agricultural production of opium, tax collection and business opportunities which have provided the local commanders with resources to consolidate their power. After the fall of Najibullah, commanders captured regional towns and garrisons and set up their autonomous local authority. The regional states established links with these regional organisations to promote their own interests. As these regional coalitions are not under a united leadership it causes ethnic conflicts. They have adopted the role of 'Islamic khans' and derive their income from levying taxes and by profits made through the drug trade. The formation of regional organisations by the commanders has

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<sup>20</sup>For a good discussion of the social changes brought about by the war in Afghanistan See, R. L. Canfield, "Afghanistan: The Trajectory of Internal Alignments" in Middle East Journal (Vol. 43, No. 4, 1989)pp.635-649, S. M. Tarzi, "Politics of the Afghan Resistance Movement, Cleavages, Disunity and Fragmentation" in Asian Survey (Vol. XXXI, No. 6, 1991)pp. 479-495, W. Maley, "Political legitimization in Contemporary Afghanistan" Asian Survey (Vol. XXVII, No. 2, 1987) & T. I. Eliot, Jr. "Afghanistan in 1990, Groping toward Peace" Asian Survey (Vol. XXXII No. 2, 1991) pp.125-133,

given them local autonomy and intensified ethnic conflict in which regional organisations are backed by regional states.

There have been several stages of outside intervention throughout the long period of chaos in Afghanistan. Initially a significant role was played by Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI). At the beginning of the war weapons were distributed by Pakistan directly to the Afghan commanders inside Afghanistan. With the intensification of the war and the arrival of increasing amounts of foreign aid this system became increasingly unmanageable and corrupt in view of the number and diversity of various rebel groups fighting against the Soviet troops throughout Afghanistan. Moreover the resistance to the Soviet invasion was spontaneous and uncoordinated and not under one national leader. Thus in order to impose some order on this chaotic distribution system and to keep a strict control over the amount of weapons distributed to the Mujahideen, Pakistan in 1980 decided to recognise only seven political parties based in Pakistan. The refugees in Pakistan and the various Mujahideen groups fighting inside Afghanistan were to register with any one of the seven parties in order to qualify for weapons. The amount of weapons was allocated to each party quarterly by the ISI after consultation with the heads of the military committees of the seven parties and was determined on the basis of its military efficiency on the ground. As long as the Soviet troops remained in Afghanistan this system operated fairly smoothly, but it also became a potential source of problems. Firstly it caused disunity in Afghan society as the rival groups in any given area could easily join a rival party to oppose their opponents. Secondly, some parties resented the exclusive control of Pakistan on the amount of weapons that each party received; for example some of the nationalist and traditionalist parties accused Pakistan of favouring the fundamentalist Party the Hizbi-Islami, of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar who had links with the Pakistan's intelligence Service even before the Soviet invasion.

For security reasons Pakistan did not encourage the formation of a politically united Afghan government in control of the military strategy of the war on her territory. President Zia who was military attaché to King Hussein of Jordan in 1972 wanted to avoid a crisis similar to one faced by Jordan when the Palestinian refugees in Jordan turned into a militant organisation- the Palestinian Liberation Organisation and posed a threat to the security of Jordan. Moreover Pakistan did not favour the nationalist and Durrani Pathan groups belonging to the Royal family of Afghanistan including the former King Zahir Shah, as they had opposed the creation of Pakistan. Pakistan mainly supported the Ghilzais pathan and the Islamists parties. Initially Saudi aid went to Professor Sayyaf's party in order to promote a particular version of sunni Islam called 'Wahabi'ism' in Afghanistan. The biased attitudes of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia became a source of resentment for various parties, particularly the traditionalist parties, who complained of not getting a fair share of foreign aid. The leaders of all these political parties lived in comfort in Pakistan and frequently travelled abroad to gain support for their cause.

The leaders of these seven political parties represent different ideologies, geographical areas and ethnic groups in Afghanistan. These are the prime source of divisions in the Afghan Resistance. Out of these seven parties three are traditionalist (moderate) parties, and four are the Islamist's or Fundamentalist parties.

The Traditional parties include; (i) Harkat- i -Inqilabi-Islami -yi -Afghanistan (the Islamic Revolutionary Movement) led by Mawlawi Mohammed Nabi Muhammadi a religious leader well connected with the Ulama (ii) Mahaz-i -Milli- yi- Islami -yi Afghanistan (the National Islamic Front for Afghanistan) led by Pir Sayyid Ahmed Gailani, a 'pir' of the Qadiriyya Sufi order (iii) Jabaha-

yi-nijat-i -milli - yi Afghanistan (the Afghanistan National Liberation Front), led by Sibghatullah Mujaddidi, descendant of a prominent religious family belonging to the Naqshbaniyya sufi order in Afghanistan.

The Islamist or the Fundamentalist (Sunni) parties include, (iv) Hizb-i-Islami (the Islamic Party) led by Gulbaddin Hikmatyar. It consists of Ghilzai Pathans. (v) Hiz-bi -Islami (the Islamic Party) led by Yunis Khalis, a Pathan from the Nangarhar province (vi) Jamiat-i-Islami-yi Afghanistan, (the Islamic Society) led by Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani. It consists of Tajiks and Persians in the north and north-east of Afghanistan. (vii) Ittihad-i-Islami-Barayi-Azadi-yi-Afghanistan, (the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan) led by Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, a Pathan from the Paghman region near Kabul.<sup>21</sup> This party received substantial amounts of Saudi funds in order to promote Saudi interests in Afghanistan. After the Soviet withdrawal these parties vied with each other to gain political ascendancy to rule Afghanistan. The most important conflict is

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<sup>21</sup> R. L Canfield, "Afghanistan: The Trajectory of Internal Alignments" in *Middle East Journal*, (Vol. 43, No. 4, 1989) p. 642. Following is a brief analysis of these parties. (1) Hizbi- Islami, of Yunus Khalis was formed in 1979. It was well organised and well prepared for combat. It was strong in Nangrahar and Paktya and later in the Khandahar province. Its support was based on the Islamist and tribal networks. Famous commanders belonging to this party include, Abdul Haq in Kabul, Jalaluddin Haqani in the Paktya province and Mullah Malang and Obedullah from Khandahar.(2) Harakati -Inqalabi -Islami, organised by Nabi Mohammad Nabi. It was based primarily on the Ulema network. It was the most popular and widespread in the beginning but later its popularity declined due to its inefficient organisation and lack of political experience on the part of its leadership. (3) Jamiat-i -Islami, led by Burhannuddin Rabbani was well organised politically with a clear ideology. Its support came from the three networks namely Islamist, Ulema and Sufi. It was strong in the north east, its three famous commanders include Ismail Khan in Herat, Ahmed shah Massoud in Panjshir , Zabiullah based in Mazar i Sharif. Zabiullah was killed in 1984. (4) Hizbi-Islami, under Gulbuddin Hekmatyar a khaurrat pathan from Baghlan. He split up with Rabbani in 1976. Hizbi-Islami was based on the support from the Islamist network. It is the most highly centralised with a hierarchic chain of command. It's aim is the success of the Islamic revolution throughout Afghanistan. It is the most radical party and comes into conflict with other parties (5) Itthead-i -Islami , of Abdul Rasul Sayaf who in 1980 was chosen to head an alliance but he turned it into his own personal party. His support is based on generous Saudi aid which enables him to distribute weapons to his followers. Representing the Wahabbi sect of Islam he is opposed by the sufi network in Afghanistan. (6) Sufi networks account for the membership of the remaining two parties that is, Mahaz-i -Milli -i -Afghanistan, of Syed Ahmed Gailani and Jabai -i -Nijati -Milli Afghanistan, of Sibgutullah Mujaddidi. Jabai -i -Nijati -Milli is the smallest of the Peshawar based parties. Both these leaders are reverent Pirs of the ancient Naqashbandiyya and Qadiriyya sufi orders in Afghanistan. Critics call the followers of Gailani 'Gucci guerrillas' due to their expensive lifestyle. Famous commanders belonging to Mahaz -i -Milli i Afghanistan include Anwar Wardak and Haji Abdul Latif. The Shia parties were based in Hazarajat on the border with Iran including Harkat-i -Ingilabi , Pasdaran -i -Islam and Nasr.

between the Jamait-i-Islami party of Professor Barhanuddin Rabbani in the north of Afghanistan (Persian speaking Tajiks), and the Hizb-i -Islami Party of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a Khurruti pathan from Balghan in the East of Afghanistan.

Before the Soviet troop withdrawal, and under pressure from the US, the Soviet Union and Pakistan, an attempt was made to form a transitional or an interim government in Afghanistan through the holding of Shura in February 1988. It failed due to lack of agreement within the Alliance over such questions as the distribution of power between the different parties, the representation of the Shiites in the transitional government, the representation of local commanders inside Afghanistan, a share for members of the old regime living in exile, and the members of the Communist party of Afghanistan . Moreover Saudi Arabia, due to its heavy financial aid, and Pakistan, due to its sympathy for the Islamic parties, were accused of manipulating the formation of the interim government. Iran, fearful of the ascendancy of Saudi influence in Afghanistan and in order to promote her own interests, demanded a substantial share of power for the Shiites in any future government in Afghanistan.

The emergence of the Central Asian States in 1991 have important regional implications for the conflict in Afghanistan. The political vacuum created by the independence of Central Asia has turned Afghanistan into a battleground where rival forces are competing for influence. These competitive forces include the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia, each promoting their own version of Islam which are based on the sectarian differences between the Sunni and the Shia; the former communist forces, and the nationalistic forces for example the Sunni Turkish speaking Uzbeks. Ironically the fear of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism has given Russia a pretext to retain its military hold and play an increasingly assertive role in the security of these states. The continuing Russian

role in Central Asia is also facilitated by internal competition and overlapping ethnic rivalries within these states. The economic, geographical, and ethnic differences diminish the chances of unification of the Central Asian States on religious basis as ethnic loyalties are stronger than the impulse for religious unity. The Tajik civil war in 1992 set the stage for Russian involvement. It has added another source of outside interference on the forces fighting for the control of Kabul.

The regional states Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan, are trying to fill the strategic vacuum created by the emergence of the Central Asian states. Turkey has links with the mainly Sunni Turkish speaking republic Uzbekistan and is trying to check the spread of Iranian influence in Tajikistan or Turkmenistan. Both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are promoting the Saudi Sunni brand of Islam to check Iranian influence. These states offer aid to different ethnic groups fostering increased political competition among them. Whereas during the period of Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were the chief players in Afghan affairs, now Russia, Iran, Turkey and India, prompted by economic, political and security interests are seeking more influence. India's chief concern was to counter the coming to power of the pro-Pakistani fundamentalist party Hizb-i-Islami composed of Eastern Ghilzai Pathans in Afghanistan. The emergence of the Taliban in 1994 has added to the fear of Islamic fundamentalist threat in the region and raised India's fears of the Afghanistan (under the control of the Taliban) and Pakistan's support for the Kashmiri separatists demanding independence from India. The survival of the government of President Rabbani of Jamiat -i-Islami after he refused to step down after the expiry of his term as President of Afghanistan in 1995 under the "Peshawar Accords" was mainly due to the support of India, Russia and Iran.

In 1996 Russia, China and the three Central Asian states which have common borders with China signed an agreement of non aggression. But the continuation of the Afghan conflict is not only dangerous for the security of these regional states but is also denying them opportunities for trade with the Central Asian States. The instability in Afghanistan has also led Russia to retain its dominant hold over the Central Asian States.<sup>22</sup> Thus political stability in Afghanistan is essential in order to provide these newly independent Central Asian states with a sea outlet and transit routes for trade with the outside world. But unfortunately the rivalries of the regional states which are reflected in the power struggles in Afghanistan are a major hindrance to the reconciliation process.<sup>23</sup>

Thirdly, these two recent developments, i.e. domestic social-political changes during the war and the role of external influences, have interacted with each other to make it increasingly difficult to achieve a broad based political legitimacy for any future government in Afghanistan. Since the destruction of the old centre of power in Afghanistan (the monarchy in 1973) the major political problem facing Afghanistan is the crisis of legitimacy. Throughout its existence the main characteristic of the Afghan state has been a weak state and a strong society characterised by ethnic, tribal and rural urban divisions and the dominant role played by religious leaders in rural society. The Afghan rulers, lacking both well developed political institutions to generate popular support for central rule and the mechanisms to exercise effective authority through coercion over society, have tried to gather support by maintaining good ties with the religious networks whose members come in close contact with the people.<sup>24</sup> In Afghanistan the 'Ulama', 'Pir' and 'Sufi' networks are well developed. Two

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<sup>22</sup> N. Rafeeq "The Afghanistan Crisis Geopolitical Context" Strategic Perspectives (Vol.4, No.1&2, 1996)pp.65-87 & M. Bhatti, "Cross Currents in Afghanistan" in The Dawn (24 November, 1995)

<sup>23</sup> R. Menon & H. J. Berkey, "The Transformation of Central Asia: Implications for Regional and International Security" Survival (Vol. 34, No.4, 1992-3) pp., 69-86

<sup>24</sup> A. Saikal, W. Maley, Regime Change in Afghanistan: Foreign Intervention and the Crisis of Legitimacy (Boulder: WestView Press, 1991) pp. 9-12

important sufi networks are the "Naqshbandiya" and the "Qadiriya" order, whose leaders are Burhanuddin Rabbani of the Jamia-i- Islami and Gilani of the Mahazi-i-Milli of Afghanistan. A second method of invoking legitimacy by the Afghan rulers has been the right to rule on the basis of lineage i.e. Durrani pathans. <sup>25</sup>

Tensions between the state, society and outside interferences have frequently played an important role in shaping Afghan politics. Afghanistan became a nation-state in the eighteenth century when it was transformed into a buffer state by the Russians and the British . During the period of Abdur Rahman (1880-1901) a modern army was created for the first time through foreign (British) subsidy. Afghanistan achieved its independence in foreign relations from the British in 1919. In order to fill the vacuum created by weak central control the Government in Kabul has relied on outside military and economic aid. In the post- World War era Soviet aid provided resources to the state. All this has changed in the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. In the post-Cold War era both the Superpowers have disengaged from Afghanistan but there is no consensus about the future of Afghanistan either among the multiple and antagonist power centres which have emerged inside Afghanistan during the war or among the outside regional states which have become involved in the conflict.

Historically there have been three sources of gaining political legitimacy in Afghanistan; religion (Islam), jirga (tribal gathering) and tradition (tribal rules).<sup>26</sup> Islam played a unifying role in a society marked by divisions of loyalty. The main focus or 'repository' of people's loyalty has been tribe and the tribal leaders i.e., 'khans' and 'maliks' and the informal institution of 'Loya Jirga' was used for settling disputes and making decisions. Any constitutional framework in Afghanistan had to compete with both the tribal legal and social codes called the

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<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 13-16

<sup>26</sup>*Op. Cit.* , O. Roy, Islam and Resistance, pp. 14-20.

Pushtunwali, for example 'badal' (revenge) and 'hospitality', and with the Islamic law or 'Shariat'.<sup>27</sup>

In 1980 the traditionalist or the Royalist forces attempted twice to establish legitimacy through holding a Loya Jirga in Pakistan. They represented King Zahir's Shah lobby of Durrani Pushtuns. Both these attempts proved to be unsuccessful. The traditionalist and nationalist forces were slow to rebel against the Soviet invasion and the leadership of the Afghan Resistance came under the Islamist movement who opposed the Afghan monarchy.<sup>28</sup> The practice of holding a traditional 'Jirga' (tribal gathering) to endorse the king was not acceptable to the Islamists who regarded monarchy as inefficient and responsible for the emergence of Communist influence in Afghanistan. Instead political and military decisions during the war were taken by Shura's under the leadership of the local commanders. Afterwards the social changes brought by the war have meant that various other ethnic groups have become contenders for power, thus complicating the issue of political legitimacy in Afghanistan.

Both the Communist Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) in Kabul from 1979-1992, and the leaders of the Seven party Resistance Alliance based in exile have been unable to establish their political legitimacy in Afghanistan. The PDPA regime was perceived as un-Islamic and installed by the Soviet troops. The issue of political legitimacy of the Afghan Resistance was submerged during the war and after the Soviet troop withdrawal the two main reasons for the Resistance failure to achieve legitimacy are the lack of unity and cleavage between the Resistance outside Afghanistan and the local Commanders inside Afghanistan. By 1989 the Afghan Resistance leaders were seen by the Commanders inside Afghanistan as

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<sup>27</sup>W. Maley, "Political legitimacy in Contemporary Afghanistan" in *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXVII No. 6, 1987) pp. 707-713, S. M. Tarzi, "Politics of the Afghan Resistance Movement, Cleavages, Disunity, and Fragmentation" in *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXXI, No. 6, 1991) & R. L. Canfield, "Afghanistan: The Trajectory of Internal Alignments" *Middle East Journal* (Vol. 43, No. 4, 1989)

<sup>28</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Khan, *Untying the Afghan Knot*, p. 74-77

controlled and manipulated by outside powers. This lack of political legitimacy among the various contending factions has complicated the process of formation of a strong central government in Kabul.

An important legacy of the war is the increased politicisation of the whole of Afghan rural society. This is mainly attributable to large amounts of foreign military and economic aid poured into Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation. Politics, which in the past was a peripheral issue for ordinary local people in the villages, has now become a part of everyday life. The Afghan Resistance was a new phenomenon created in response to the war. It had several organisational layers. At the highest level are the political parties in exile in Pakistan and Iran. At the provincial level control is exercised through an 'Amir' or a commander, who is appointed by the party to be in charge of local affairs. The authority of an Amir depends not only on the strength of the party he is attached to but also on his own efficiency in dealing with the members of different 'qawms' or social groups in his province. In some areas the Amir is treated as the Governor of the whole province. The Amir is also in charge of the local Committees which are the basic units of organisation and authority of the Afghan Resistance. Each party had local bases throughout the country which were called 'garagah' or the 'base' in the north east and 'Markez' or the 'Centre' in the eastern Pathan areas. There can be several bases in one village belonging to different parties or to different 'qawm' in the village or there can just be a single base for the entire village. The head of the base is called a "Rais" or the leader and below him are people in charge of financial, military, judicial and cultural affairs. The base performs both political and military functions, it provides food and shelter to the fighters, it controls the right of passage of outside members through its area, provides protection to journalists and visitors, controls the agricultural trade in the area, holds discussions, settles issues and plans military operations. The

organisation of these bases and Committees varied from region to region and from province to province in Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup>

After having discussed some of the regional and global changes in the post -Cold War period and their effect on Afghanistan, this section will now deal with the foreign policy of Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union and the UN's role in the conflict Afghanistan.

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<sup>29</sup>*Op. Cit.*, O. Roy, Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan, pp. 160-62.

## Part III

### CHAPTER ONE

#### 3. 1.1 Pakistan Foreign Policy towards Afghanistan During the Post- Cold War Period. 1989-1994.

In the immediate aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal Pakistan's Afghan policy lost its coherence. After the signing of the Geneva Accords in April 1988 Pakistan domestic politics underwent several important changes. In the November 1988 all party elections were held and Benazir Bhutto was elected as the new Prime Minister of Pakistan. She was sworn in on 2 December 1988. However, Prime Minister Bhutto party had failed to win a majority in the National Assembly. As a result, the new government had to share power with the military and the ISI who regarded Pakistan's Afghan policy as their prerogative. The domestic power struggles between the new government and the military substantially reduced Prime Minister Bhutto's authority over taking any fresh initiatives on Afghanistan.

The dilemma facing Pakistan's foreign policy after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, was either to support a military victory for the Mujahideen, or to adopt a diplomatic approach of establishing a broad based government in Kabul, by creating a legitimate government in Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup> Both of these were daunting tasks in the best of circumstances. During the period immediately following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the regional and international political situation was not favourable for finding a solution to the conflict. On the

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<sup>30</sup> Naseem Zehra, "Islamabad is Silent over the Jalalabad stalemate", News Analysis-1, The Nation, (14 May 1989) "Can Islamabad make Interim Government succeed?" News Analysis-2, The Nation (15 May 1989) "Preparing ground for new Initiatives? News Analysis-3", The Nation, (16 May 1989) "New initiatives sans Washington. Pakistan's Afghan policy-4", The Nation, (18 May, 1989) "All the cooks that stir the Afghan broth. Pakistan's Afghan policy- 5", The Nation (19 May 1989) "Kabul's winning Strategy, Pakistan's Afghan policy-6", The Nation (20 May 1989).

17 August 1988 President Zia, the US Ambassador to Pakistan and several high ranking Pakistani officials involved in the formulation of Pakistans policy towards Afghanistan, perished in a mysterious plane crash. This was followed by the departure of Diego Cordovez (the chief architect of the Geneva accords) who left the UN in August 1988 to become the Foreign Minister of Ecuador. President Zia commanded great respect among the mujahideen leaders and he might have been able to persuade the mujahideen leaders to cooperate with the UN efforts in the formation of a transitional government. With his death and the resignation of Diego Cordovez the UN efforts were stalled.

Moreover, there was a change of Administration in the US. The Republican candidate G. Bush became the President of the US in January 1989. Thus, during the second half of 1988 the political climate in Pakistan and the US was in a state of transition and concrete foreign policy initiative was formulated regarding Afghanistan. During the first half of 1989 the US aid to the Mujahidden was cut down for two reasons: firstly, in view of the CIA assesement that the regime in Kabul would collapse soon after the Soviet withdrawal and secondly, because of an erraneous assumption in the US that the Soviet Union would not provide further aid to President Najibullah. During 1989-90, both Pakistan and the US opted for a military solution to the crisis. In pursuit of this goal both the US and Pakistan encouraged the formation of an Interim Islamic Government of Afghanistan (IIGA) to replace the Communist government of President Najibullah in Kabul. This government, which was formed in Rawalpindi (Pakistan), included only the seven Resistance parties based in Pakistan. The Shia parties supported by Iran refused to participate due to disagreements over the question of a proper share for the Shia parties in the proposed interim government. The local field commanders, inside Afghanistan who were not given any significant representation in the new government, also boycotted the meeting. The leader of the Saudi funded Itthead-i -barayi Azadi-i- Afghanistan,

led by Professor Sayyaf, was made the interim Prime Minister. The opposition groups criticised this as a symbol of Saudi manipulation. Substantial effort was devoted to make the interim government work. Even international aid agencies were instructed to channel their funds for Afghanistan through the AIG. But unfortunately, the IIGA failed to hold elections or gain legitimacy inside Afghanistan.<sup>31</sup>

The leader of the Persian groups Jamiat-i-Islami, Barhanuddin Rabbani, dissatisfied with the amount of representation given to his party in the IIGA, paid a visit to Iran in 1990. The leaders of traditionalist and nationalist parties including Mujaddidi and Gailani resentful of insufficient Saudi support during the formation of IIGA also visited Iran and opened offices there. The Shia Alliance was promised a hundred seats in the Shura and seven seats in the cabinet of the new government but at the time of the formation of the IIGA in Islamabad they were given only sixty seats and a reduced share in the cabinet. This led Iran to move closer to the Soviet Union. Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shervadnadze was welcomed by Imam Khomeini and by the time of the death of Imam Khomeini in June 1989 Iran strongly denounced the Saudi policy of supporting the Wahhabi groups in Afghanistan.<sup>32</sup> In 1990, Iran, resentful of Pakistani and Saudi manipulation of Afghan politics, encouraged the eight Shiite parties based in Iran into an alliance called the Hizb-i -Wahdat. This became a further source of disunity within the Afghan Resistance. Also in order to counter Saudi and US backing for the Sunni fundamentalist parties within the Afghan Resistance, Iran began to provide financial support to the Communist regime of President Najibullah in Kabul and also strengthened its links with the moderate Persian speaking groups in the Resistance e.g. the Jamait-i-Islami party

<sup>31</sup> Nasim Zehra, "Credibility of Afghan Shooraa a Must for Unity" The Nation (28 January, 1990) Ahmed Rashid, "US begins Review of Afghan Policy" The Nation (17 January, 1990) Altaf A. Sheikh, "First Steps Towards a Political Settlement" The Nation (9 February 1990) Musahid Hussain, "Afghanistan: Peace Still Remains Illusive" The Nation (18 February, 1990) & *Op. Cit.* R. Khan, Untying the Afghan Knot (London: Macmillan publishers, 1992) pp. 302-313.

<sup>32</sup> Altaf A. Sheikh, "Deadlock in Jalalabad" The Nation (19 May, 1989)

composed of Sunni Tajiks. Iran's primary interest was to counter Saudi, US and Pakistani influence in Afghanistan.

Difficulties arose over the conditions required for granting international recognition to the IIGA by Pakistan and the US. These included; (i) a stipulation that the new government must capture a territory in order to establish the IIGA inside Afghanistan; (ii) a statement of support from Zahir Shah and from the commander 'shuras' in Khandahar and Herat; (iii) recognition and support from the 'Supervisory Council of the North (SNC) under the commander Ahmed Shah Massoud and from three other shuras around Kabul; (iv) a stipulation to include the eight party Shia Alliance supported by Iran in the IIGA.<sup>33</sup>

Due to political disunity, lack of co-operation within the Resistance between the resistance leaders and the local commanders and a lack of wider support from within Afghanistan for the IIGA, it failed to execute a united military strategy to capture the city of Jalalabad in March 1989 which was an essential prerequisite for the recognition of the IIGA by the outside world. There were several reasons for the Mujahideen failure to capture Jalalabad: firstly, the lack of unity within the Mujahideen; secondly, the failure to change from guerrilla warfare to conventional warfare; thirdly, the heavy dependence of the Najibullah regime in Kabul on financial and military supplies from the Soviet Union (to the tune of \$200 and \$300 million a month, )<sup>34</sup> at a time when US aid to the Mujahideen was actually cut down to \$600 million for 1989; <sup>35</sup> fourthly, the expected desertions from the Najib government to the Mujahideen ranks did not occur; fifthly, President Najibullah strategy of creating peace zones under the control of local militias to counter Mujahideen attacks was successful, and lastly, because providing financial inducements were provided to various tribes and the local

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<sup>33</sup>"Can Islamabad make interim government succeed?" The Nation (15 May, 1989)

<sup>34</sup>Ghani Eirabie, "An Interim Kabul Coalition without Najib" The Nation (18 January, 1990)

<sup>35</sup>*Op. Cit.* , B. Rubin "Fragmentation of Afghanistan" Foreign Affairs p. 164.

commanders to frustrate Mujahideen attacks. <sup>36</sup>After the failure of Jalalabad a second attempt by the US and Pakistan military to overthrow President Najibullah was made in March 1990 by supporting a coup against Najibullah by his rebel Defence Minister General Shahnawaz Tanai (a former member of the Khalqi faction of the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan) in collaboration with Gulbaddin Hikmatyar. This attempt also failed. It caused further resentments between Hiz-i-Islami of Hikmatyar and the IIGA because the other six parties were not in favour of the execution of this coup and refused to cooperate. Thus, contrary to optimistic expectations in 1988 among the Mujahideen supporters in both the US, (including US ambassador to Pakistan Robert Oakley, NSC expert on Afghanistan, Richard Hass, supporters of the Mujahideen in the US Senate and officials within the CIA), and in the Pakistan's ISI, that the Communist regime in Kabul would fall to the Peshawar based Afghan Resistance groups within four to six months of the Soviet withdrawal, the Resistance failed to overthrow the Communist regime in Kabul until April 1992, when it collapsed from within as a consequence of the failure of Communism in the Soviet Union and the consequent cut off of Soviet aid.<sup>37</sup>

In May 1991 a five point peace proposal for the solution of the Afghan conflict was put forward by the United Nations. Before this could be implemented, with the fall of the Communist government of President Najibullah in April 1992, the struggle between the various factions for the control of Kabul led to regional and geographical divisions of Afghanistan. Regional and local commanders with their heavily armed militias, well developed local military organisations, and with the support of different outside powers, took control of different parts of Afghanistan. In the battle for Kabul in April 1992 four factions were contending

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<sup>36</sup>H. Malik , "Post Geneva developments and the Soviet Collapse" in Soviet Pakistan Relations and Post Soviet Dynamics (Macmillan Press: London, 1994) p. 292 & *Op. Cit.*, R. Barnett, "Fragmentation of Afghanistan" Foreign Affairs p., 161.

<sup>37</sup> Iqbal Ahmed and Steven Galster, "Cold War left to Fester in Afghanistan", News analysis, The Nation (20 February, 1990.)

for power: the Tajiks in the north-east led by Commander Ahmed Shah Masoud of Jamiat-i-Islami; the Uzbeks in the north led by General Abdul Rashid Dostum and based in Mazar-i-Sharif; the Ghilzai Pathans in the East of Afghanistan led by fundamentalist leader Gulbuddin Hikmatyar of Hizbi-Islami; and a Shia Alliance called Hizbi-Wahdat led by Mazari.

After the failure of the UN May 1992 Peace Plan, Pakistan along with Iran and Saudi Arabia hurriedly brokered a regional peace initiative among the different Mujahideen groups. Named the 'Peshawar accords', it was signed on 26 April 1992 in Peshawar (Pakistan), and led to the creation of an 'Islamic Government' of the Mujahideen. According to these Accords, Sibgitullah Mujaddidi was elected president for two months, after which power was to be transferred for four months to Barahanudin Rabbani of Jamiat-i-Islami. Both of these leaders were to be assisted by a fifty-member Leadership Council (Shura-i-Qayadi). After an interim period of eighteen months, a larger Shura (Shura-i-Halwa-al-Agad) was to be convened, and this would lead to nation-wide elections to decide the future political arrangements for Afghanistan.<sup>38</sup> After two months, Rabanni assumed power as the President of Afghanistan, but he spent his term in office trying to gather support to strengthen his authority for prolonging his rule. The elections which were scheduled for November 1992, were postponed until January 1993. The Leadership Council endorsed his extended presidency so that a 200-300 members shura could be called, and this could then organise the elections. The effectiveness of President Rabbani's interim government was undermined by the continued military threat posed by the Hizbi-Islami leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, in addition to the presence of the Uzbek Militia in Kabul. These could engage themselves in plunder and looting, and contributed to the low morale of the remaining bureaucrats, many of who had witnessed colleagues murdered or kidnapped. While Civil War was waging over the control of Kabul,

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<sup>38</sup>*Op. Cit.*, S. Tarzi, "Afghanistan in 1992" *Asian Survey*, pp. 166-168.

power outside the capital had been devolved to local leaders who had formed 'shuras' and collected revenue from the customs post, but did not transfer it to Kabul's central government. These shuras had their own armed forces, engaged themselves in cultivating opium and retained their regional autonomy.<sup>39</sup>

Throughout 1992-93, in an intense struggle for the control of Kabul, Hekmatyar challenged the rule of President Rabbani and the legitimacy of his fifty-member Leadership Council. He was critical of the inclusion of Abdul Rashid Dostam (a former Communist) and Ahmed Shah Massoud (his arch-enemy) in the council. Ahmed Shah Masoud had been made the Minister of Defence and the Afghan army came under his control. Moreover, the presence of Tajik and Uzbek militias in Kabul caused the continuation of ethnic conflict with the Pathans. The war was transformed into an ethnic conflict at a national level. An important reason for the failure of President Rabbani's government to secure political stability was the bitter civil war which broke out between the forces of the Hizbi-islami leader, Hekmatyar, and Ahmed Shah Massoud, who was the leader of the Northern Alliance. In the absence of adequate resources, limited legitimacy, and facing constant security threats from Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, President Rabbani's regime was unable to hold the elections needed to transfer power to a legitimate central authority in Afghanistan.<sup>40</sup>

The on going Civil War in 1992 led to the geographical fragmentation of Afghanistan into four regions. These are: Northern Afghanistan, under the control of the Uzbek Militia of Rashid Dostum; Herat in East Afghanistan, where the Militia of Ismail Nadiri (with support from Iran) was dominant; the Khandahar and Nangarhar areas in the South, which were controlled by various Pathan tribal groups and which, historically, are deeply divided and autonomous.

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<sup>39</sup> S. M. Tarzi, "Afghanistan in 1992, A Hobbesian State of Nature", *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXXIII, No. 2, 1993) p.167.

<sup>40</sup> W. Maley, "The Future of Islamic Afghanistan", *Security Dialogue* (Vol. 24 No. 4, 1993) & *Op. Cit.* W. Maley & F. Saikal, *Political Order in Post Communist Afghanistan*, pp. 30-32.

Under such circumstances, the authority of the transitional government of Burhanuddin Rabbani in Kabul was very weak. <sup>41</sup>

On 7 March 1993, the 'Islamabad Accords' were signed in Pakistan. This time, in order to placate Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, he was given the post of Prime Minister. The Accords were flawed in that they only served to create two strong, but antagonist, positions of power in Afghanistan, namely the President and the Prime Minister. The Accords could not be implemented owing to the bitter rivalry and political differences between Hikmatyar (Prime Minister) and Burhanuddin Rabbani (President). Fighting continued, with both the President and the Prime Minister attacking each other and thus, the significant feature of this period was the political turmoil and the continuation of the Civil War.

An example of the shifting of alliances and change of loyalties among the Afghan factions occurred during the negotiations on the 'Peshawar Accords' on 24 April 1992 which were brokered by Pakistan to seek a settlement of the Afghan conflict after the fall of President Najibullah. Hikmatyar refused to sign the accords with Ahmed Shah Massoud in view of Massoud's collaboration with an Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum, a communist in President Najibullah's government. But by March 1994 Dostum had joined forces with Hikmatyar to launch a fierce attack on the government of Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmed Shah Masoud in Kabul. After the failure to capture Kabul, Dostum and Hikmatyar forces attacked the town of Kunduz to sever the supply route from Tajikistan to the government in Kabul. <sup>42</sup> By 1994 Pakistan, in a bid to forge economic links with the secular oriented leaders of the Central Asian States, stopped supporting the Islamic fundamentalist party Hizb-i-Islami of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. By 1994 Pakistan relations with President Rabbani also deteriorated

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<sup>41</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Shah M. Tarzi, Afghanistan in 1992. A hobbesian State of Nature, pp. 171-172.

<sup>42</sup>"Holding the Road", The Economist (26 March, 1994) & "A tank, a tank, my kingdom for a tank", The Economist (26 February, 1994).

over Rabbanis refusal to step down after his term in office expired. Pakistan foreign policy towards Afghanistan from 1994 onwards and its association with the Taliban militia will be discussed at the end of the thesis.

### **3.1.2 The Impact of the Afghan Conflict on Pakistan**

Pakistan's involvement with the Afghan crisis started in 1979 at the height of the Cold War period. At that time the negative repercussions arising out of Pakistan's involvement with this prolonged crisis were not foreseen by the policy makers in Pakistan. The Afghan crisis was perceived as a major security problem and Pakistan reacted prudently both diplomatically and militarily to safeguard her own integrity. Pakistan accepted an economic and military aid package of \$ 3.2 billion from the US in 1982, followed by \$ 4.2 billion in 1987. In return Pakistan took the courageous step of becoming a front-line state against the Soviet Union and became the main conduit of weapons and military training to the Afghan Mujahadeen. A second feature of Pakistan's involvement with the Afghan crisis involved Pakistan playing host to 3.5 million Afghan refugees who had fled to Pakistan after the Soviet invasion. These refugees constituted twenty five percent of the entire Afghan population and are the world's largest refugee population. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) report of 1996 "Afghans still constitute the worlds single largest refugee population for fourteen years in succession."<sup>43</sup>

Due to the increase in the number of regional conflicts in the last few years the UNHCR and various international humanitarian organisations have come under increasing pressure in trying to deal with the world refugee problem. As such their capacities are over stretched and they are under considerable financial pressure to cope with this latest and gigantic wave of population exodus. The

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<sup>43</sup> UN Chronicle (No. 4, 1996) p. 60.

number of affected people has increased from 17 million in 1991, to 23 million in 1993 and 27 million in 1995. There are now two broad categories of refugees: cross border migrants for example, of Rwanda, Liberia, Somalia etc., (14.5 million); and displaced people within their own borders for example in Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union (5.4 million). Only 4 million former refugees have returned to their homes.<sup>44</sup> Moreover the change in the security perceptions of states in the post-Cold War period means that most of the states are extremely reluctant to allow refugees to enter their borders. The recent increase in the number of humanitarian crises means that Afghanistan is no longer high on the list of international agenda. Due to the onset of "donors fatigue" outside aid has reduced sharply whereas roughly 2.8 million Afghan refugees, about twenty percent of the Afghan population, are still in exile in Iran and Pakistan.<sup>45</sup>

Due to the complex nature of the civil war in Afghanistan any peacekeeping mission requires a multi-dimensional integrated approach for the resolution of the conflict e.g. disarmament, demobilisation and the economic and social reconstruction of Afghan society by the international relief organisations in order for the refugees to return and resettle in their own society. This has not happened in Afghanistan and the continuing instability in Afghanistan has hampered the task of refugee repatriation for example "The UNHCR has been unable to maintain an office in Kabul since 1992 and has on a number of occasions been obliged to evacuate its staff as a result of security problems".<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, those refugees who have returned home are faced with the problem of massive internal displacement due to the ongoing civil war among rival factions which further complicates the task of their effective resettlement and reintegration into society. According to the UNHCR statistics of 1995, there are about 288,000

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<sup>44</sup>UNHCR, The State of the World's Refugees: In Search of Solution (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995) pp.19-20

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.* p. 182.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.* p. 182.

internally displaced people in camps, 300' 000 displaced in Kabul, and 250' 000 displaced in Jalallabad. <sup>47</sup>

During the Cold War period a large amount of humanitarian aid given to the Afghan refugees was heavily influenced by the political interests of both the donor and the host state i.e. Pakistan. A recent survey of the two hundred and fifty Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) involved in Afghanistan during the war demonstrates that their policies were heavily influenced by the political motives of their chief donor the US. There were three types of NGO's involved in Afghanistan: the NGO's working with the refugees inside Pakistan; the cross border NGO's; and the advocacy NGO's. The NGO's working with refugees in Pakistan had to comply with the Pakistan policy of channelling aid only through the seven recognised political parties. In order to get aid the refugees were required to register with any of the resistance parties thus strengthening them and the distinction between genuine refugees and the Mujahadeen was often blurred due to their changing roles. <sup>48</sup>

The US was closely involved with the second category of NGO's i.e. cross border NGO's providing aid to the victims of the war inside Afghanistan. These NGO's e.g. Church Relief services (CRS), the Committee of American Relief Everywhere (CARE), the Church World Services (CWS), International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children, and the Salvation Army etc. were encouraged by the US to work through the Afghan Alliance and the local commanders. Various cross-border NGO's forged links with specific parties and commanders in control of various regions of Afghanistan. Sometimes these NGO's caused divisions among the different parties as each party tried make them work in their area. The development funds enabled the commanders to set

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<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.* p. 183.

<sup>48</sup>H. Baitenmann, "NGO's and the Afghan War: the Politicisation of Humanitarian Aid" Third World Quarterly (Vol. 12, No.1, 1990)

up administrative machinery in their areas by creating schools, clinics and agricultural projects. The US funded NGO's distributed food, medicines and relief assistance inside Afghanistan mainly through the various Afghan Alliance Committees dealing with these issues. The US cross-border humanitarian programme which was implemented through the USAID in Pakistan donated large amounts of aid to the Afghan Alliance including food, medical supplies and extra Department of Defence material. It also included transferring seriously wounded Mujahideen to the hospitals in the US and Europe. Thus the US backed cross-border NGO's helped support the Afghan insurgency against the communist regime.<sup>49</sup>

The third category of advocacy NGO's were in charge of mobilising world opinion in favour of the Afghan Resistance and providing information to influence public opinion in propaganda campaigns. They too were funded by the US government; some examples include, the Afghan Information Centre, the Committee for Free Afghanistan, and the Federation for American Afghan Action.<sup>50</sup>

Initially Pakistan welcomed Afghan refugees and provided them shelter on humanitarian and religious grounds. This was related to both the Quranic injunction of "hejrat" (migration) and the tradition of "Panah" (shelter), to provide shelter to people fleeing persecution at the hands of the infidels. Pakistans retained strict control over all the Afghan refugee issues. Before the Soviet invasion regular cross border incursion of the Afghan nomads along with their cattle into Pakistan's territory was a fairly common occurrence, but in 1973 Pakistan began to give refuge to the radical Islamist groups fleeing from persecution by Afghan Prime Minister Daoud. With the Communist takeover of

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<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 70-77.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 77-82.

Afghanistan in 1978 a serious and overwhelming Afghan refugee influx began which intensified after the Soviet invasion in 1979.<sup>51</sup>

Most of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan were settled in more than 300 camps mostly concentrated in the border provinces of NWFP and Baluchistan. According to the report by the Chief Commissioner for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, Retd. Brigadier Said Azar, there were about 153 refugee camps in the NWFP, 95 in the tribal Agencies, 63 in Baluchistan, 16 in Punjab, and 1 in Karachi.<sup>52</sup> The cost of the upkeep of the Afghan refugees was about \$1 million daily out of which Pakistan provided half the amount with the United States and Saudi government among the major outside donors. Pakistan contributed about thirty per cent of wheat for the refugees from its own resources. A special State and Frontier Regions Ministry (SAFRON) under the President's control was set up by the Pakistani government to implement and handle the refugee policy.<sup>53</sup> Other major international aid organisations, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, (UNHCR), the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the International Food Organisation (IFO), were accountable to SAFRON. The international aid agencies employed Non Governmental Organisations (NGO'S) to implement their policies. At the Provincial level there were "three provincial Commissionaerates" dealing with Afghan refugees each under the control of the Home Department of the province concerned.

As a host state Pakistan has borne the brunt of the refugee burden. Due to security concerns the Pakistani authorities made it compulsory for the refugees to register in order to qualify to get relief aid. Some refugees registered twice, causing administrative delays in the provision of aid. A large bureaucratic

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<sup>51</sup>C. M. Farr, "The Effect of the Afghan Refugees on Pakistan", in Graig Baxter (ed), Zia's Pakistan. Politics and Stability in a Front Line State (West view Press: London, 1985) pp. 94-95

<sup>52</sup>S. Azar, "Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: the Pakistani View", in E. Anderson and N. H. Dupree, The Cultural basis of Afghan Nationalism (London: Pinter publishers, 1990) pp. 105-114

<sup>53</sup>H. A. Rizvi, "Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: Influx, Humanitarian Assistance and Implications" in Pakistan Horizon (Vol. 37, No.1, 1984)

machinery was set up to implement the refugee policy. Pakistan's refugee policy allowed considerable freedom of movement: they were allowed to travel anywhere in Pakistan and could enter into temporary and short term employment. Most of the training and vocational projects set up by UNICEF were only partially successful.

The Afghan refugees have caused serious economic, social, security and political tensions in Pakistan. Refugees have become an enormous burden on the already fragile local infrastructure and struggling economy of Pakistan. Peshawar has become the largest Afghan city outside Kabul. The Afghan refugees entered Pakistan through more than two hundred passes on the Pakistan-Afghan border.<sup>54</sup> The refugees brought with them their cattle and made extensive use of local pasture land and scarce water resources which has led to competition for Common Property Resources (CPR) between the locals and the refugees. Most of the refugees use wood for cooking purposes which has caused grave environmental concern due to the increasing deforestation around the areas of their settlement. In some areas they have changed the demographic balance and outnumber the local inhabitants. Many of them have engaged in small business and urban employment.<sup>55</sup> Some of them brought their own vehicles which are largely unregistered or only temporarily registered and they don't pay motor or road tax and have infiltrated the transport business in Karachi and Peshawar. The local markets are inundated with smuggled goods like cloth, cigarettes, garments, electrical goods, raw opium etc. brought by the Afghan traders all of which adversely affects local industry. A large number of Turkomans have engaged in their traditional craft of carpet weaving threatening the livelihood of the local craftsmen.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> D. Denker, "Along Afghanistan's War Torn Frontier" in National Geographic (June, 1985) pp. 778-785.

<sup>55</sup> P. Cheema, "Impact of the Afghan War on Pakistan" Pakistan Horizon, (Vol. XLI, January 1988)

<sup>56</sup> C. Balchin, "Afghan Refugees: The Problems of Living in Exile", The Muslim (April 15, 1988).

The worst fallout and a major security threat resulting from the refugee influx is the proliferation and spread of illegal arms, weapons and drugs throughout Pakistan. During the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan the arms pipeline involving the CIA- ISI-and the Afghan Resistance culminated in Pakistani tribal agencies on the border with Afghanistan. From here the weapons were eventually transported into Afghanistan. A huge arms black market has emerged in the tribal belt and the towns on the Pakistan Afghan border for example, Dara where in 1984 there were about 60 Afghan refugee camps, in Miram Shah in north Waziristan with about 31 refugee camps, in Parachinar in Kurram Agency with about 32 refugee camps, and in Chitral with about 6 refugee camps etc.<sup>57</sup>These areas were the prime targets of the punitive Soviet and Afghan airforce attacks against Pakistan territory. These areas also witnessed violent clashes between different local tribes and the refugees. Another reason for the emergence of the illegal arms market was that there was no police check on the shipment and transportation of the weapons destined for the Afghan Mujahadeen which was under the jurisdiction of the National Logistic Cell (NLC), a branch of the ISI. Opportunities for corruption existed and some weapons were sold off in the local market for cash. The government of Pakistan was unable to control this lawlessness in the tribal areas as constitutionally these areas were relatively autonomous and are not under the strict jurisdiction of the central government. During the war weapons, including Kalashnikov rifles, mortars, anti tank rocket launchers, dynamite and mines were sold freely and openly in these tribal markets. The local workshops produce exact replicas of Chinese, US and Soviet weapons which can be bought at greatly reduced prices. In 1987 the price of a locally manufactured Kalashnikov was Rs. 7,000, whereas the price of a Chinese Kalashnikov was Rs. 15,000. The bullets for a Kalashnikov cost only one rupee. These illegal weapons were delivered throughout the country for an additional

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<sup>57</sup>*Op. Cit.* , D. Denker, pp. 778.

charge. In the aftermath of the war the easy availability and proliferation of these illegal weapons poses a serious threat to the peace and stability of Pakistani society. In a period of economic hardship and unemployment dissatisfied groups resort to arms intensifying the problems of crime, violence and lawless ness.<sup>58</sup> Pakistan has become the largest exporter of heroin most of which comes from Afghanistan. A new generation of refugees have grown up in Pakistan. They are being trained in camps in Pakistan to go and fight inside Afghanistan. In September 1996 due to increased fighting in and around Kabul and the capture of Kabul by the Taliban militia, 50, 000 Afghan refugees poured into Pakistan.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>A. Rashid, "Afghans Arms Supplies Create Tension in the Tribal Areas", The Nation (31 July, 1987) & C. Smith, The Diffusion of Small arms and Light Weapons in Northern India and Pakistan.

<sup>59</sup> The Times (12 December, 1997).

**PART III**  
**CHAPTER TWO**

**3. 3.1 The US Foreign Policy towards the Afghan conflict in the Post-Cold War Period 1989-94.**

In February 1989 immediately following the Soviet withdrawal, the objective of the US foreign Policy towards Afghanistan was the formation of an interim government in Afghanistan based on the principle of 'self-determination' for the Afghans. This meant installation of a government dominated by the Afghan Resistance. After the signing of the Geneva Accords the US had expected that the Soviet Union would show restraint in Afghanistan and not supply weapons to President Najibullah. The US military aid to Afghanistan was cut short in the first half of 1989. There was no similar cut off of aid by the Soviet Union to their clients in Kabul. Disappointed by the continued supply of weapons by Soviet Union to Kabul, the US and Pakistan efforts were directed towards the formation of an Afghan interim government under the control of the Afghan Resistance. During this period, the UN's was denied any substantial role in the resolution of the conflict. This was the result of the a bilateral agreement between the US and the Soviet Union outside the UN perview to continue to supply weapons to their respective clients in Afghanistan.

In October 1988, President Gorbachev had proposed the creation of a neutral peacekeeping force in Afghanistan to oversee the transition process, but at that time this was seen by the other players in the conflict as a Soviet tactic to protect the incumbent Kabul regime. In 1989, the Soviets assigned Deputy Foreign Minister Yuri Vorontov as their Ambassador to Kabul. He proposed a coalition government in which power was to be shared by the PDPA.<sup>60</sup> The refusal of the

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<sup>60</sup>*Op. Cit.* , B. Rubin, Search for Peace in Afghanistan, p. 130.

Afghan Resistance to share power and to recognise the legitimacy of President Najibullah has been the main stumbling block in the UN efforts to resolve the Afghan conflict. President Najibullah suggested an international conference which was followed by President Gorbachev's proposal in December 1988, that an international peacekeeping force be stationed in Afghanistan. Both these proposals were dismissed by the US and Pakistan owing to their confidence in the Afghan Mujahideen to achieve a military victory over the PDPA regime in Kabul.

In March 1989 the Interim Islamic Government of Afghanistan (IIGA) was formed in Pakistan. The Soviet Foreign Minister, Edward Shevardnadze, came to Pakistan and asked the newly elected Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, to give the PDPA regime a token share of power in the new government. However, she was unable to accede to the Soviet request because Pakistan's Afghan policy was still under the control of the military and the ISI. The Mujahideen failure to capture the city of Jalalabad in May 1989, due to lack of co-ordination and tough resistance by Najibullah regime was followed by a failed coup attempt against President Najibullah on 6 March 1990 (the Hikmatyar -Tani alliance), and the battle for Khost in 1991. These failures marked a decisive change in the US foreign policy which began to favour a political settlement under the UN auspices.

In the second half of 1989 the anti-communist revolutions in Eastern Europe marked the end of the Cold War.<sup>61</sup> As a result the US sought to engage the Soviet Union in a co-operative dialogue in order to find a political solution to the Afghan conflict. The Bush Administration still defined its Afghan policy in terms of seeking the right of self-determination for the people of Afghanistan but there was a change in the US policy. The US now favoured formation of a

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<sup>61</sup> "US Shift On Afghanistan" *The Nation* (8 February, 1990).

moderate government in Kabul by sidelining the extremists like Hekmatyar, Najibullah and Sayyaf. The new US policy was pursued simultaneously along two tracks. On the diplomatic front the US opened a dialogue with the Soviet Union. However, in order to put pressure on the Soviet Union the US decided to apply military pressure through the mujahideen. However, there was one drawback in the US policy, that is, the military aspect of the US policy was under the control of the ISI and the CIA who favoured the extremist Afghan factions who were not in favour of a political solution. After the Soviet withdrawal the Bush administration was faced with increased domestic criticism over the allocation of major share of the US aid to Hekmatyar the leader of Hiz-bi-Islami. In 1989 the US Congress allocated only \$280 million for the Afghan resistance, a substantial reduction over the previous year. However, the US policy proved to be ineffective as the Saudi Intelligence Agency 'Istakbara' continued to fund Hekmatyar despite the US insistence that the ISI and Saudi Government to cooperate. Hekmatyar was also provided funds by Kuwait, Iraq Libya. <sup>62</sup>

In pursuit of its new policy objective the US began to bypass the Afghan Resistance based in Pakistan and distributed aid directly to the local commanders inside Afghanistan. This deepened the rifts between the party leaders in Peshawar and the local commanders inside Afghanistan. The commanders became more powerful and sought greater regional autonomy. In order to achieve better efficiency and co-ordination they organised themselves into regional Shuras. After the failure of Jalallabad the Afghan Commanders organised themselves into 'the National Commanders Shura' (NCS) in 1990 in an attempt to bypass the fundamentalist parties, the ISI and Saudi control over the military strategy of the war. <sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>*op. cit.*, B. Rubin, Search for peace in Afghanistan, pp. 104-105.

<sup>63</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Barnett, The Fragmentation of Afghanistan State Formation and Collapse in the International System p. 254.

On the diplomatic level the US and the Soviet Union engaged in a dialogue to reach a settlement on the political future of Afghanistan began. On 31 July 1989, the first set of concrete talks between the US and the Soviet Union on finding a political solution to the Afghan problem was held in Stockholm.<sup>64</sup> In 1990, Afghanistan again became the subject of bilateral discussions between the US and the Soviet Union, "at the presidential, foreign ministerial and lower diplomatic levels".<sup>65</sup> Talks on the future of Afghanistan dealt with two important issues: firstly, the requirement of a 'transitional period'; and secondly, the nature and authority of the 'transitional mechanism'. Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly told a Congressional Committee in November 1990 that "both the US and the Soviet Union believe that there should be a transition period, culminating in the self-determination to select a government for a non-aligned Afghanistan."<sup>66</sup> The US wanted the removal of President Najibullah's government before elections could be held in Afghanistan, whereas the Soviets wanted the transition to take place under President Najibullah, or an independent commission which could organise elections while Najibullah remained in power. The US Soviet negotiations were deadlocked over the issue of the transition mechanism. The US proposed elections under the supervision of the IIGA, the Soviets rejected the US proposal. The Soviet proposed that a neutral body should be composed to oversee transition. As a result no agreement could be reached.

A second item on the agenda of the US Soviet dialogue on Afghanistan was the issue of the termination of foreign aid and the Soviet demand for a cease-fire. According to the UN, "peace in Afghanistan was impossible as long as the dependence of different parties in the conflict on outside support remained."<sup>67</sup> The continuation of civil war in Afghanistan, even after the Soviet troop

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<sup>64</sup>"The Challenge in Afghanistan and Pakistan's Response", *The Nation* (April 29, 1992)

<sup>65</sup>T. L. Eliot, Jr. "Afghanistan in 1990. Groping toward Peace?" *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXXI, No. 2, 1991) p.132

<sup>66</sup>*Ibid*, p. 132.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid*. p. 150.

withdrawal, was blamed on the continuing supply of weapons by both the superpowers to their respective clients.<sup>68</sup> The Soviet Union proposed a cease-fire and a complete ban on foreign aid to the Mujahideen. The US was unable to promise a cease-fire as the US had no direct control over the Mujahideen. Both the US and the Soviet Union were increasing domestic pressure to reach an agreement on Afghanistan. In December 1990, the Soviet Foreign Minister, Edward Shervadnadze, and the US Secretary of State, James Baker, came close to an agreement to cut off military aid to their respective clients in Afghanistan. However, at the last minute, owing to pressure from the hard-line groups in the Soviet Union, this agreement could not be announced. The Soviet Foreign Minister was unable to set a "date certain" for the termination of Soviet aid.<sup>69</sup> The Soviet Foreign Minister resigned on 21 December 1991. This stalled the US-Soviet dialogue. Eventually, it was decided to let the UN determine the nature of the transition mechanism in consultation with the various Afghan parties.<sup>70</sup>

The emergence of hard-line pressure groups in Moscow and the Gulf war in 1990-1991 led to a renewal of tensions between the US and the Soviet Union. After the Gulf war, the US transferred substantial amounts of arms captured during the war in Iraq to Afghanistan. The ISI and CIA provided aid to Hikmatyar to attack Khost (Paktia) in March 1991 but this attack by the Mujahideen also failed. This failure finally discredited the proponents of a military solution in both the US and Pakistan. The CIA came under harsh criticism for the major share of the US aid going to fundamentalist Afghan groups such as Hizbi-Islami of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar and Abdul Rasul Sayaf who had opposed the US-Saudi led coalition against Iraq during the Gulf War. Three other reasons for change in the Bush Administration's policy to stop

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<sup>68</sup>*Op. Cit.*, A. Hayat-ud-din, Decision making approach; Pakistan's Afghan Policy, pp. 204.

<sup>69</sup>B. Rubin, "Post Cold War Disintegration: The Failure of International Conflict Resolution in Afghanistan", Journal of International Affairs (Vol. 46, No. 2, 1993) & "Bush Administration now fed up with Afghan war" The Nation (14 May, 1991)

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 145-46

assistance to the Afghan Resistance included, firstly: the divergence of political objectives between the Afghan Resistance and the US; secondly, in comparison with the attitude of some hard-line Mujahideen parties, the moderate policies adopted by President Najibullah in the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal were looked upon favourably by some circles in the US administration; and thirdly, the widespread perception in the US administration that the war was no longer an ideological battle between the superpowers but was increasingly becoming a civil war. The chief advocate of this changed attitude was President Bush's National Security Advisor, Brent Scowcroft. In Pakistan Hekmatyar and the ISI tilt towards Iraq during the Gulf crisis discredited the proponents of a military solution to the conflict. In the aftermath of the Gulf War Saudi Arabia became disillusioned by the criticism made by the radical Mujahidden groups over her pro US policy in the Gulf war. As a result Saudi Arabia agreed to seek a negotiated solution of the Afghan Conflict. Iran concerned over the rising Pakistani and Saudi influence in Afghanistan also became an advocate of the UN role. Thus, there emerged a consensus on letting the UN play a role in finding a political solution to the conflict. In May 1991 the UN announced its five point peace plan for Afghanistan. This was followed in on 13 September, 1991 by US Soviet agreement to cut off all military supplies to their clients in Afghanistan from January 1992. As a result, the US terminated all weapon supplies to Afghanistan on the 30 September 1991.

**PART III**  
**CHAPTER THREE**

**3. 3.1 Russian Foreign Policy Towards the Conflict in Afghanistan in the Post-Cold War Period.**

In the post-Cold War period Russian foreign policy towards Afghanistan is closely linked to Russian security interests in Central Asia. The independence of the Central Asian states in 1991 has increased the geopolitical significance of the region for the outside world. The regional and outside states embarked on an active campaign to promote their interests in the region. The key geo-strategic role of Central Asia is based on several factors, including Central Asia's geographical proximity to the Middle East and South Asia, the close ethnic, religious, and cultural ties with the Middle Eastern and South Asian region. Primarily it is the religious (Islamic) factor which has increased Central Asian geopolitical significance. The threat of Islamic fundamentalism has increased the geopolitical significance of the region for both the West and Russian foreign policy. Moreover, oil and gas reserves of Central Asian states have attracted global attention. <sup>71</sup>

Though the regional states, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan have embarked on a campaign to promote close economic, cultural and trade links with the Central Asian states, there are both opportunities and constraints on these states capabilities to make their influence felt. For example, the regional states do not have the financial resources to meet all the security requirements of the new states. They face opposition from Moscow who strongly opposes the spread of Pan Islamic or Pan

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<sup>71</sup> M. Mesbahi, "Regional and Global powers and the International Relations of Central Asia" in A. Dawisha (ed.) The Making of Foreign Policy in Russia and the New States of Eurasia (New York: M.E Sharpe, 1995) pp. 215-216.

Turkic ideology in the region. Moreover, because the Central Asian States have recently become independent their elites are cautious and sensitive to public criticism over adopting alien models for economic or political development or experimenting with new transitional models.<sup>72</sup> Thus the activities of the regional states are confined to the promotion of cultural and commercial links with the Central Asian states.

The above factors have allowed the Russian Federation to fill in the strategic vacuum and protect its historical, political and strategic interests in the region. The outbreak of civil war in Tajikistan in 1992 provided Russia with an opportunity to consolidate its position in the region through the signing the treaty on Collective Security in May 1992. There are military, political and economic reasons for the continuation of the Russian influence in Central Asia. Politically Russia, after a brief experimentation with democracy, reverted to authoritarian style of rule which favours a strong state for achieving stability and economic development. This policy is looked upon favourably by the new elites in Central Asia. Russian foreign policy attaches great importance to safeguarding the security of its former Southern periphery Thus there are strong reasons for the continuation of Russian and Central Asian close interdependence in the future. During 1991-94 the US and Russian interests in Central Asia coincided. The US shared with Russia the threat of Islamic fundamentalism and nuclear non proliferation. The US aim was to promote regional stability and it acquiesced to Russia's playing an important role in the region.<sup>73</sup>

In 1992 Russia policy towards Afghanistan derived from the alleged fears in Russia over Afghanistan's interference in Tajikistan. Russia feared Afghan Mujahideen material and ideological support for Islamic anti-communist groups in Tajikistan. Afghanistan's support for the Tajik opposition also encouraged

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 232.

Uzbekistan to provide assistance to Rashid Dostum. Russian sensitivity to the security of the Central Asian border with Afghanistan remains a priority in Russia even after the fall of communism. In fact Russian security concerns are now supported by some key regional and international players. According to M. Mesbahi,

“Afghanistan provided both the Russian and Uzbek governments with the justification for their regional and extra regional security concerns and their military and political intervention in Tajikistan and Afghanistan itself. The entire political logic behind the Islamic threat perception, in Russia’s current threat perception and foreign policy formulation, has focused on the Tajik post soviet experience and the assertion that the Tajik opposition is fundamentally externally inspired and sustained.”<sup>74</sup>

Since 1994 Russian and Central Asian states, foreign policy towards Afghanistan has been based on maintaining a status quo.<sup>75</sup> The emergence of the Taliban in 1994 caused alarm in Russia and the Central Asian states over the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. In an emergency meeting held on 4 October 1996 in Almaty, which issued a warning to the Taliban not to invade the borders of the CIS,. General Lebed, President Yelstin’s Security advisor urged Russia to support President Rabbani and opposition groups in Afghanistan opposing the Taliban. The reaction of the Central Asian states varied. Turkmenistan’s and Kazakhstan’s responses down played the Taliban threat. It was Uzbek President Karimov who is most critical of the Taliban militia. In September 1997 as the Taliban forces threatened to capture Mazar-i-Sharif on the north of Afghanistan. This was made possible mainly by disunity in the ranks of the Northern Alliance and provoked stern warnings from Russia and Uzbekistan.

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>75</sup> A. Hayman, “Russia, Central Asia and the Taliban”, in *op.cit.* Maley, Fundamentalism Rborn, pp. 104.

An important consequence of the Taliban offensive in northern Afghanistan in September 1997 was the consolidation of the Russian, Uzbek, Tajik, Indian, Iranian alliance in support of the Northern Alliance. The Taliban accused that Northern Alliance planes were allowed to use the Kulyob air base in Southern Tajikistan to launch attacks against the Taliban forces in northern Afghanistan. Russia also provided Ahmed Shah Masoud forces with long range missiles in mid September 1997. Thus after the emergence of the Taliban militia relations between Afghanistan, Russia and the Central Asian states deteriorated even further. The major reason for this deterioration in relations is the fear in Iran, Russia, the Central Asia states and India that Pakistan, the US and Saudi Arabia are providing support to the Taliban militia to promote their joint economic interests. <sup>76</sup> Russia is also concerned that the Afghan Mujahideen are providing training to opposition groups in the Chechen republic.

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<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 110-116.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **The Role of the United Nations in the Afghan Conflict Post -Cold War**

#### **3:4.1 The Failure of the United Nations Conflict Resolution Efforts in Establishing Internal Peace in Afghanistan During the post-Cold War Period.**

In the post-Cold War period the responsibility for resolving complex global security problems has been increasingly assigned to the UN. This is manifested in the sharp increase in the number of peacekeeping operations undertaken by the UN since 1988. Secretary General Boutris Ghali's An Agenda for Peace outlines the ways in which greater use of such operations should be made. This strategy represents an innovation or a radical change from the Cold War period, when peacekeeping operations by the UN were mostly utilised on a limited scale and assigned with a few basic tasks such as monitoring truce or cease-fire lines. They were based on the principle of mutual consent, non-use of force except in self-defence, and usually carried a limited mandate to prevent the resurgence of hostilities between the antagonists.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, they dealt mostly with inter-state conflicts. With the removal of the ideological impediment in relations between the US and the Soviet Union, and particularly in the aftermath of the success of the US-led coalition in the Gulf war in 1991-92, the UN is confronted with an environment of raised expectations regarding its ability as an international organisation to resolve various regional conflicts.

There were two important international political developments in the late 1980s which provided an impetus for the increasing role of UN peacekeeping operations. Firstly, there is the improvement in superpower relations following

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<sup>77</sup>M. Berdal, Whither UN Peace keeping ? The Analysis of the Changing Military Requirements of UN Peacekeeping with Proposals for its Enhancement. Adelphi Paper 281 (London: Brasseys for IISS, 1993) pp. 3, & A. James, "Peacekeeping in International Politics", (London: Macmillan Press, 1990)

political and economic domestic reforms undertaken by President Gorbachev since the mid-1980s. By the late 1980s, the UN had become involved in the execution and implementation of political settlements in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola, and Namibia. Most of these earlier peacekeeping operations were conducted on a limited scale, had limited mandates, and were thus only partially successful. Secondly, with the break-up of the Soviet Union the process of political fragmentation in many of the Third World states accelerated. Consequently, since the 1990s the UN has been involved in the implementation of a wide variety of comprehensive Conflict Resolution Settlements as opposed to the earlier first generation peacekeeping tasks involving limited mandates.

In the post-Cold War period the security threats facing the Third World have become worse and this has changed the nature of regional conflicts. The principle of 'national self determination', which is the basis of many contemporary Third World states, is based more on its functional utility of keeping intact the territorial integrity of these than on granting independence to minorities on the principle of ethnic self-determination. During the Cold War era the political legitimacy in many of the Third World states was based upon the support of the superpowers, whose primary concern was with the maintenance of the global balance of power in their favour. With the end of the Cold War, the security guarantees provided by the superpowers to their clients has been removed. The withdrawal of this support has exposed the fragile and under-developed nature of the civil and political institutions in many of the Third World states.<sup>78</sup> In the absence of effective domestic political development, the removal of outside underpinnings of security poses a grave threat to the territorial integrity of some of the Third World States. R. Barnett has referred to this dilemma as "interim governments without a state".<sup>79</sup> This has increased the

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<sup>78</sup>M. Ayub, The Third World Security Predicament, State Making, Regional Conflict and the International System ( Boulder: Lyner Rienner publishers, 1995) pp. 139-184.

incidents of violent anarchy and ethnic conflicts in many Third World states, and runs counter to the universal demands for democracy and the protection of human rights which are on the increase in the post-Cold War period.

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This situation reflects the phenomenon of 'failed states', that is, many fragile states in the Third World are endowed with juridical sovereignty but are no longer able to perform effectively many of the functions associated with viable states.<sup>80</sup> Failed states are often those which have experienced intense superpower military involvement during the Cold War period and this situation can be compared to Europe after the Thirty Years War. In the latter case, states were formed with the first requirement being territorial integrity. It was endowed with sovereignty, a leader, and a set of institutions to maintain law and order, and these were essential prerequisites for the survival of the state. Armed forces and taxes were levied to centralise the power of the state and to regulate inter-state relations.<sup>81</sup> Many of these features of statehood are missing in the present day Third World states which are engaged in long drawn out civil wars. There are several reasons for their insecurity. In the post-Cold War period many Third World states are burdened with both internal and external sources of insecurity. Internal insecurities are mostly historical in nature, such as colonial legacies and problems of state making. External sources of insecurity are relatively new and relate to the end of the Cold War, the assertion of hegemony of the regional states in various regions, the increase in sales of sophisticated arms to the Third World, nuclear proliferation, and a change in emphasis on various norms of international relations. For example, with the independence of the Central Asian States the Russian Empire has collapsed. The international recognition granted to

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<sup>79</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Rubin, The Search for Peace in Afghanistan: From Buffer State to a Failed State, p.11-30.

<sup>80</sup> G. B. Helman and S. Ratner, "Saving Failed States", Foreign Policy (Vol. 89, 1992-93) pp. 3-20 & M. Ayub, "The New Disorder in the Third World", in, T. G. Weiss (ed.) The United Nations and Civil Wars, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995) pp.13-30.

<sup>81</sup> T. L. Knutsen. A History of International Theory, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997) pp.83-114.

the former Soviet colonies was based upon the Western national interest to give Russia a chance to democratise, not to alienate her and to help integrate the Central Asian States in the global arena. However, this also sets a precedent for demands for ethnic self-determination and increased ethno-nationalism in other parts of the world. If unchecked, hasty capitulation to the demands of varied ethnic groups could cause serious security problems. This is because the distribution of ethnic groups across various states is very complex, and can, in some cases, engulf the neighbouring states. These security predicaments will continue to haunt the Third World states at least until a new [stable] international order emerges.

Because the degree of success achieved by UN peacekeeping operations in regional conflicts is going to be an important catalyst or determinant in the amount of support these operations will receive in future (whether in the form of human or material resources), it is very important to study carefully the nature of the problems which these peacekeeping forces have encountered in recent years. This is essential, not only to take effective measures to overcome constraints or limitations on such operations, but also to maintain a realistic approach regarding the success of the collective security measures in a new post-Cold War environment. The peacekeeping operations should not be discarded straight away, but possibly more effort should be spent on refining them, remedying their short comings, and carefully evaluating their feasibility in a particular conflict before they are executed. This may not be an easy task, but its potential rewards are in terms of maintaining peace, or even lessening conflict in different regions of the world. This is essential for achieving a stable future World Order, and would make the effort worth while. Without the peacekeeping operations, certain regional conflicts will remain unresolved and could even spread to unimaginable proportions. However, the final responsibility for maintaining peace also lies with the belligerents.

The major problem faced by peacekeeping operations in the post-Cold War period is that the number of tasks and range of responsibilities assigned to peacekeeping forces has expanded considerably. The new peacekeeping operations are multi-functional and include a variety of tasks such as electoral management, humanitarian assistance, mine clearance, verification and observation, demobilisation and cantonment.<sup>82</sup> This has given rise to a number of technical problems, that is, logistics, force maintenance, effective command and control of the forces in the field, intelligence gathering, co-ordination of field operations between the United Nations and the field, shortage of funds, shortage of equipment and language barriers.<sup>83</sup> The new type of peacekeeping operations also has to combine a number of civilian operations such as distribution of humanitarian aid and repatriation of refugees, along with the more traditional Military operations. Most of these auxiliary tasks are managed by other UN agencies or NCOs. In theory, the civilian and military operations should be well connected, but in practice they have caused problems, such as in Somalia.<sup>84</sup> There is also the issue of effective command, control, and co-ordination of Military operations between the UN's Commander and the individual contingents from various states. Moreover, these peacekeeping forces are sometimes burdened with responsibilities for which they are ill-equipped or ill-suited to deal with.<sup>85</sup> This is largely a reflection of the change in the nature of conflicts in the post-Cold War period.

A second more serious problem encountered by the peacekeeping forces is that of working in a new and changing operational environment. Most of the present-day conflicts in the Third World have an element of ethnic strife or intra-state

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<sup>82</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Berdal, Whither UN Peacekeeping?, pp. 11-25.

<sup>83</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 26- 50.

<sup>84</sup>J. Mackinley, "Military Responses to Emergencies", in, T. G. Weiss, The United Nations and Civil Wars, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995) pp. 51-67.

<sup>85</sup>*Op. Cit.*, Berdal, Whither UN Peace Keeping? pp. 7-25.

conflict (civil wars), which are waged by groups who are not under the control of a central authority. This has blurred the functional distinction between peacekeeping and peace making or peace enforcement efforts. The UN is designed primarily to deal with war between states or inter-state conflicts where the aggressor is readily identifiable. There are no clear-cut front lines in modern conflicts, as militia and paramilitary groups do not abide by the rules of the agreement between the principal parties and the UN.<sup>86</sup> In the cases of areas experiencing prolonged crisis, there is often no infrastructure or political institutions left to implement a peace plan. Supervision of elections is difficult and incomplete, and partial disarmament often creates more problems than it solves. Furthermore, there is the issue of resolutions and mandates passed by the Security Council. They should avoid excessive rhetoric and should be based on a realistic appraisal of the conflict situation, followed by the provision of adequate resources by the member states to implement peace plans.<sup>87</sup>

The real test of UN peacekeeping abilities was made in Yugoslavia, Cambodia and Somalia, and shows mixed results. The underlying difficulty is related to the expansion of functions assigned to the UN in recent years. Recent UN operations in regional conflicts reveal them not just involving themselves in peacekeeping, but also in peace making and peace enforcement measures. Besides posing the expected technical problems, another fundamental question they raise is whether they can be a substitute for, or an answer to, more basic political problems facing many contemporary Third World states. So far, the UN experience has exposed several practical limitations on the success of these operations which, in turn, has diffused much of the earlier optimism endowed in its ability to resolve complex disputes.

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<sup>86</sup>A. Robert's, "The United Nations and International Security", *Survival*, (Vol. 35 No. 2, 1993) pp. 3-30.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 25.

As the record of UN involvement in Afghanistan will show in the following paragraphs, a very limited UN involvement alone cannot ensure peace. One has the example of Cambodia where the UN was engaged extensively, and when its experience can be contrasted with its failure in Angola and Somalia. To use or not to use force is the basic dilemma for the UN at present, but for any peace plan to succeed, especially in midst of a civil war, diplomacy has to be backed by the determination to deploy or use force. The use of force in international relations is still very selective, and member states are hesitant to commit their troops to areas where their major interests are not at stake. For diplomacy to work, some degree of enforcement (show of strength) is essential, either to disarm the antagonists or to punish the potential aggressors. The importance of the use of force, which includes the deployment of both materiel and personnel resources, is highlighted in the failure of UN mediation efforts in Afghanistan.

The UN's role in Afghanistan in the post-Cold War period can be divided into two broad categories - both its efforts to find a political settlement, and provision of humanitarian assistance. In its efforts to achieve the first objective, the UN has used a 'mediation' strategy to secure a workable political settlement, but this negotiating procedure has proved to be inadequate for its resolution and, not surprisingly, it has repeatedly failed. There are a number of requirements expected from a UN mediator. These are, an ability to pursue a coherent policy, provide leverage with the disputants, be flexible in responding swiftly to events, offering financial support from the Security Council States, an ability to influence the disputants with threats or rewards, maintain effective communications, and finally to be perceived by the antagonists as a credible negotiator. Unfortunately, in Afghanistan these demands have not been fulfilled by the UN appointed representatives.

Considering the tremendous sufferings the people of Afghanistan have endured and the sacrifices they made to stop the spread of Communism in the region, the least the International community can do for them is to help them to find a way to bring the continuing civil war and human suffering to an end. For example, there is the fact that at the height of the Cold War, "there are roughly about three million anti personnel mines left over by the war in Afghanistan making it potentially the largest minefield in the world." In light of this, it is not surprising that Afghanistan has suffered the largest exodus of population in the world since World War II.<sup>88</sup> There are no fixed or ideal solutions for complex civil war conflicts in different parts of the world as no two conflicts are alike. Fortunately, however, the UN has at its disposal a vast experience of peacekeeping operations which can be utilised to formulate more effective and meaningful peace proposals for Afghanistan. The conflicts in Cambodia, Namibia and El Salvador provide good examples of the UN's relative success. The peacekeeping which applies to the first generation of operations have no relevance for Afghanistan. Instead, what it needs desperately are peace-making and peace-building measures. So far, the UN has been reluctant to support these latter measures, and there is no Security Council mandate to force the regional states to stop interfering in internal Afghan affairs.

#### **3.4. 2. Peace Through Negotiation 1989-92.**

After the signing of the Geneva Accords in 1988, the primary task assigned by the UN Secretary General to its mediator, Diego Cordovez, was to continue his efforts towards the creation of a broad based (interim) government in Afghanistan. The establishment of some sort of a structure and political order was essential to secure internal peace in a country devastated by war. The

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<sup>88</sup>Afghanistan the Forgotten War: Human Rights Abuses and Violations of laws of War Since the Soviet Withdrawal, in, Asia Watch Report (Washington: 1991) p. 57 & O. Roy, The lessons of the Soviet Afghan War, Adelphi Papers, No. 259 (London: Brasseys for IISS, 1991) p. 63.

formation of an interim government was to be followed by holding elections and eventually transferring power to the elected representatives of the people. So far, the various UN peace proposals have failed to bring internal peace to Afghanistan. There are several reasons for this failure which will be touched upon in the following paragraphs.

The formula for the creation of a broad-based government in Afghanistan was first spelled-out in the UN's General Assembly Resolution 43/20 of 3 November 1988, followed by a second Resolution 44/15 in November 1989.<sup>89</sup>

During the period May-July 1988, and consistent with the mandate of the Geneva Accords signed in April 1988, the United Nations mediator for Afghanistan, Diego Cordovez, proposed a plan for the formation of a government: 'A National Government of Peace and Reconstruction' as a first step towards the creation of a broad based representative forum in Afghanistan. The basis of this plan was Diego Gordovez 'second track diplomacy' linked to the Geneva negotiations on Afghanistan which he first proposed in July 1987. At that time the Soviets were anxious to withdraw from Afghanistan, but wanted a leave behind a government of 'National reconciliation' in which the Communist Party (PDPA) would be represented. In order to achieve their objective they raised the issue of the future government in Afghanistan during the seventh round of the Geneva negotiations held in September 1987. However, in the absence of a short timetable for Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, both Pakistan and the United States, the main supporters of the Mujahideen, were determined to inflict a complete military defeat on the Soviets and were thus reluctant to put undue pressure on the Afghan Resistance to share power with the PDPA for an interim period. Instead, diplomatic pressure was brought to bear upon the Soviet Union, as the guilty party, to produce a short, realistic timetable

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<sup>89</sup>A. Hayat-ud-Din, The Decision Making Approach. Pakistan's Afghan policy 1974-1991 (Islamabad: Quaid-i-Azam University, 1991) p. 570.

as a sign of its genuine commitment to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. This was the last remaining hurdle in the successful conclusion of the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan which, incidentally, had no provision for the settlement of the internal issue of the future government of Afghanistan.

The new proposal by Cordovez envisaged excluding both the PDPA and the Mujahideen parties from the proposed 'Government of Peace and Reconstruction'. His plan was to include the traditional leadership, either in Afghanistan or in exile, and the various technocrats in a power sharing process. It involved two stages: first, to form a government composed of impartial or neutral personalities who would take up power in Kabul by September 1988. The second stage was to hold a Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) to draw up a constitution for the new Afghan government by March 1989, and to impose a de facto cease fire.<sup>90</sup> According to the critics, the major drawback of this plan included doubts about the impartiality of the neutral personalities in the proposed government, and the fear that a de facto cease-fire would leave the Communist forces and militia groups in control of major towns and communication links still receiving Soviet aid.<sup>91</sup> The Fundamentalist political parties also objected with deep distrust to the proposed inclusion of impartial technocrats in an interim government. The Shiites and the moderate parties were, however, willing to cooperate with the UN.<sup>92</sup> In order to facilitate the formation of the neutral interim government, Cordovez even suggested the names of some of the impartial personalities who would compose this government. But the proposal met with difficulties as Moscow was lukewarm to the idea of the removal of the PDPA from power because it was still determined to retain its influence in Afghanistan through it. President Najibullah continued to receive extensive amounts of Soviet aid. The Cordovez plan was also premature because the intelligence agencies of

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<sup>90</sup>B. R. Rubin, "Afghanistan. The Next Round", *Orbis* (Vol. 33 No. 1, 1989)

<sup>91</sup>R. Klass, "Afghanistan: The Next Steps", *Orbis* (Vol. 33. No.1, 1989) p. 273-276.

<sup>92</sup>*Ibid.* , "The Author Responds" pp. 276-280.

both Pakistan and the US had their own agenda to secure a military victory over the communist regime in Afghanistan. Thus, the foreign powers, though formally disengaged from Afghanistan after the Geneva Accords of 1988, continued to keep an indirect presence in Afghanistan through their clients. In August 1988, Diego Cordovez, who had been involved in the negotiations on Afghanistan since 1982, left the UN.<sup>93</sup> His departure deprived the UN peace process not only of its continuity, but also of a dedicated mediator well acquainted with the region. This was followed by the death of President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan in a plane crash on 17 August 1988. President Zia had substantial influence and leverage with the Islamic Resistance parties based in Pakistan which might have enabled him to force them to form an interim coalition government under the auspices of the UN.

After the departure of Diego Cordovez, Mr. Benon Sevan was designated the UN Secretary General's Personal Representative to Afghanistan in May 1989. The UN observer mission, called the 'United Nations Good offices Mission to Afghanistan and Pakistan' (UNGOMAP), was set up with a mandate to monitor the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. This represented the UN's involvement in the execution of a political settlement. Mr. Benon Sevan was designated to take charge of this mission with a fifty member military team to assist him. The mission was deployed for a maximum period of twenty months,<sup>94</sup> during which time the Kabul regime lodged many complaints with the UN that Pakistan was violating the Accords and interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The UNGOMAP could not implement the two other mandates of the Geneva Accords which dealt with the repatriation of the Afghan refugees and non-interference in the internal affairs between the signatories, that is Pakistan and Afghanistan. The mission was dismantled in March 1990. "After the

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<sup>93</sup>B. R. Rubin, The Search for Peace in Afghanistan. From Buffer State to Failed State. (London: Yale University Press, 1995) p. 99.

<sup>94</sup>UN Doc. S/ 19835 dated 26 April 1988.

UNGOMAP mandate expired on 14 February 1990 the UN established its successor office, namely, The Office of the Secretary General in Afghanistan and Pakistan (OSGAP). Benon Sevan headed OSGAP's main office in Islamabad."<sup>95</sup>

In order to encourage the Afghan refugees to return home, the UN launched 'Operation Salam' in 1989 under the aegis of the UN Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programme. Prince Sadaruddin Agha Khan was appointed as the chief co-ordinator. Its main objective was to de-mine the countryside, develop the agricultural sector, and undertake reconstruction of the destroyed infrastructure. But it had to scale-down its projects due to the shortage of funds, and the demand by some donor agencies and states (for example Japan), to make the provision of aid to the UN contingent on the return of the refugees to Afghanistan. The UN High Commission for Refugees reduced the funding for the Refugee Programme from \$54 million in 1987 to \$33 million in 1990.<sup>96</sup>The UN has also been involved with the monitoring of the Human Rights violations in Afghanistan since 1984. A special representative was appointed in 1984 to report annually on the human rights violations.<sup>97</sup>

In May 1991, a five point peace plan was put forward by the Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar, and its provisions included: 1) Setting up a transitional mechanism; 2) Stoppage of external arms supplies to the Mujahideen; 3) A proclamation of a cease-fire by all the parties in the conflict; 4) Holding of elections under an interim transitional authority to establish a broad based

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<sup>95</sup>*Op. Cit.* , B. Rubin, Search for Peace in Afghanistan, p. 169.

<sup>96</sup>K. Matinuddin, "The Afghan Crisis and the Role of the United Nations", in Strategic Perspectives, (Vol. 4, No. 1-2, 1996) p. 43, A. Khan, "United Nations and Afghan Problem", The Nation (19 November, 1990) & "Sevan to Succeed Aga as UN Co-ordinator" The Nation (9 December, 1990)

<sup>97</sup>*Op. Cit.* , A. Hayat-ud-Din, Decision Making Approach Pak. Afghan Policy 1974-91, p. 254-255

government in Afghanistan and; 5) International aid to help the refugees to go back and participate in the reconstruction of Afghanistan.<sup>98</sup>

It was the unsuccessful coup against President Gorbachev in August 1991 which solved the dilemma of the US-Pakistani demand for the removal of President Najibullah.<sup>99</sup> On 13 September 1991, the new Soviet Foreign Minister, Boris Pankin, and the US Secretary of State, James Baker, officially announced their agreement to terminate military and economic aid to their clients in Afghanistan with effect from 1 January 1992. With this announcement, direct superpower involvement in Afghanistan ended. The implementation of 'negative Symmetry' ending the supply of weapons from the superpowers to their respective clients, soon deprived President Najibullah of his tenuous hold on the major government towns and garrisons in Afghanistan. Unable to distribute aid to the local militias who had enabled him to retain his hold over important cities and supply lines after the Soviet departure brought about his down fall. As an example, as soon as Soviet military aid was terminated President Najibullah lost control of nine northern districts to the Mujahideen militias.<sup>100</sup> Ironically, instead of facilitating the implementation of the UN peace plan the termination of Soviet aid became a source of its failure. The plan did not include the internal commanders, and Benon Sevan was seen to be working too closely with President Najibullah to win the confidence of the Mujahideen.

In November 1991, the four traditional and moderate parties of the Mujahideen were invited to Moscow where they pledged their support for the establishment of an Islamic government and elections under the aegis of the OIC and the UN. The fundamentalist Islamic parties refused to go to Moscow. This was followed

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<sup>98</sup> For full details See, W. Maley & F. Saikal, Political Order in Post Communist Afghanistan, (London: Occasional Paper Series, International Policy Academy, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992) pp. 23-24.

<sup>99</sup> W. Maley, "Soviet Afghan relations After the Coup", Report On the USSR (Nos. 27-52, September 20, 1991) pp. 11-15.

<sup>100</sup> "Butcher of Kabul or Man of Peace" The Nation.

by an informal meeting of all the parties of the Afghan conflict and the representatives of the permanent members of the Security Council with the UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar in his office in New York. The parties pledged their co-operation for the success of the UN's plan. Benon Sevan was entrusted with the task to initiate negotiations among the parties, but the major drawback of this informal gathering was that the plan was not backed by any enforcement mechanism. As a result, the regional powers continued to strengthen their clients in Afghanistan.<sup>101</sup> Amidst these developments, the UN redoubled its efforts to implement its peace plan.

The significant feature of the UN Peace Plan was Benon Sevan's diplomatic efforts to secure agreement from the various Afghan factions on the formation of an interim 'transitional authority' which would take control of Kabul and replace the government of President Najibullah. In January 1992, after Boutris Boutris Ghali took over as the new Secretary General, the UN mediation focused on efforts to compile a list of candidates to whom power could be transferred after Najibullah's resignation. According to this plan, a meeting of hundred and fifty Afghan representatives was to be held in March 1992 to deliberate on the structure of an acceptable future government in Afghanistan. The gathering was then to select a committee of thirty-five members which would take control of Kabul and form the leadership of an interim government. The Leadership Council would then consult the various sections of the Afghan population with regard to the formation of an interim government and hold elections. The method resembled the Afghan tradition of building consensus gradually through Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly). The proposed meeting was to be held in April 1992.<sup>102</sup> However, some Resistance parties still opposed the plan. This increased pressure

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<sup>101</sup> *Op. Cit.*, B. Rubin, Search for Peace in Afghanistan, pp. 126-127.

<sup>102</sup> R. Newell, "Peace Making and the Role of the United Nations in Afghanistan", in David A Charters (ed.) Peacekeeping and the Challenge of Civil Conflict Resolution, ( Centre for Conflict Studies, University of New Brunswick, 1994), pp. 70 & *Op. Cit.*, B. Rubin, Search for Peace in Afghanistan, pp. 127-28.

on Benon Sevan from the US and Pakistan as they demanded a firm commitment from President Najibullah to step down. In turn, this was supposed to facilitate the process of convincing the reluctant parties to give the names of their representatives to the UN Special Representative.

In December 1991, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the operational environment for the implementation of the UN plan changed significantly. The first major test of the practicality of the plan came when President Najibullah announced his intention to step down on 18 March 1992. This was brought about by the intensive lobbying by the UN special representative to Afghanistan. Benon Sevan met with President Najibullah four times, and with his Foreign Minister, Abdul Wakil, nine times.<sup>103</sup> However, before the UN plan could be implemented, Afghanistan was engulfed in a series of tragic events whose origins and momentum were outwith the control of the UN. On 16 April 1992, President Najibullah, in a speech prepared with the help of Benon Sevan, announced his intention to step down and hand over power to a UN organised 'pre transition council'. Before any authority could be transferred to this 'council', the resultant power vacuum was filled by a coalition of non pathan ethnic groups in the north of Afghanistan (Northern Alliance). These forces captured the important provincial town of Mazar i Sharif, and threatened to take control of Kabul in April 1992. Thus, a power struggle started among the Tajiks and Uzbeks against the Pathan ethnic group in the South of Afghanistan for the control of Kabul. Another "de-stabilising factor", to the peace process thus emerged.<sup>104</sup>

The origins of the North-South ethnic divide in Afghanistan are linked to the fact that after the withdrawal of Soviet troops, President Najibullah made significant changes in his policies. He toned down emphasis on Socialism and links with the

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<sup>103</sup> "Najibs Offer a Big Move", The Nation (20 March, 1992)

<sup>104</sup> "Afghanistan Prospects for Peace", The Nation (13 April, 1992)

Soviet Union, and embarked upon a number of alternative steps to secure his hold on power. In order to assure his survival, he created local militias to protect aid routes to Afghanistan from the Soviet Union. The two most important of these militias were the Jauzjani Militia of Abdul Rashid Dostum, an Uzbek commander of the Afghan army in the north of Afghanistan who controlled the important road link to Soviet Tajikistan; and the Ismaili (shia) Hazara Militia of Sayed Mansur Nadiri south of the Salang Highway in Central Afghanistan.<sup>105</sup> The allegiance of these militias to Najibullah depended on his ability to distribute Soviet aid to them. In the process they had become quite autonomous. In April 1992, with the imminent downfall of President Najibullah, these militias revolted against the Pathan dominated administrative structure which had been imposed under his regime. As Soviet aid stopped in January 1992, Rashid Dostum mutinied and aligned himself with the north-eastern Supervisory Council of the North (SCN) led by Commander Ahmed Shah Massoud (a Tajik). The Hazara militia (shia) from the centre of Afghanistan joined them. Iran was involved in the formation of the Northern Alliance in order to counter Saudi and Pakistan initiatives with the UN. The Northern Alliance was strengthened by the defecting members of the Parcham faction (non Pathan) in the Najibullah's Watan Party. The Northern Alliance rejected the UN peace plan involving the formation of a neutral interim government to take over power after Najibullah. In their view, it was biased in favour of the seven Resistance parties based in Pakistan, six of which were Pathans. They wanted an interim government with full powers. This marked the failure of the UN plan.<sup>106</sup>

The second reason contributing to the failure of the UN plan was the outbreak of disunity and factional conflict within the PDPA, which was re-named the 'Watan' (Homeland) party by President Najibullah after the Soviet departure. In order to ensure their survival after the August 1991 coup, in which the hard-

<sup>105</sup> *Op. Cit.*, B. Rubin, Search for Peace in Afghanistan, p. 122.

<sup>106</sup> "Afghanistan No Time Left to Waste", The Frontier Post (April 20, 1992)

liners within the Soviet Union were defeated, its two main factions, 'Khalq'(Pathans) and 'Parcham' (non Pathans), split up and found allies among the Mujahideen and militia groups. <sup>107</sup>

In view of these fast moving events, on 24 April 1992 the UN hurriedly elected a fifty one man Shura (Council) for the formation of a 'pre transition council' which was to be flown into Kabul and to which power was to be transferred.<sup>108</sup> However, the fragile consensus on the 'pre transition council' soon broke down. President Najibullah was captured by the Uzbek Militia of Rashid Dostum and prevented from fleeing Kabul. He took sanctuary in the UN office in Kabul, causing some embarrassment in view of his notorious record as a human rights violator. He stayed there until he was arrested and publicly hanged in Kabul by the Taliban forces in 1996.<sup>109</sup> Benon Sevan got in touch with Ahmed Shah Massoud but by now it was too late as military power was in the hands of the local commanders. There was speculation about Iran's involvement in attacks on Mazari-sharif by Uzbek, the Ismaili Militia of Rashid Dostum and Sayeed Jaffar Naderi. The Iranian backed Hizbi-Wahdat party of the Afghan Shiites refused to support the UN's fifty-one member 'pre transition council'.<sup>110</sup>

Reflecting on the failure of the UN plan of May 1991 to set up an 'interim transitional authority' in Afghanistan, a comparison can be made with the UN peacekeeping role in Cambodia. Here, the UN, after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords in 1991, was involved in an elaborate operation not only to set up a transitional authority, but also to monitor elections and provide logistical facilities to a state whose infrastructure was devastated by years of civil war. With the end of the Cold War, outside parties involved in the Cambodian conflict

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<sup>107</sup> *Op. Cit.*, B. Rubin, Search for Peace in Afghanistan, p. 123.

<sup>108</sup> "Peace be Upon the Afghans", The Economist (May 2, 1992)

<sup>109</sup> "The President the UN Could Not Protect", The News (Oct. 4, 1996)

<sup>110</sup> "After Najib Exit a Vacuum Waiting to be Filled", The Nation (April 19, 1992)

were willing to compromise their interests and put pressure on their clients to agree on a power-sharing formula. This led to the establishment of the 'Supreme National Council' representing Cambodian sovereignty during the transitional period. But whereas in Cambodia the four major warring factions reached a consensus to share power with each other for an interim period, and came to an agreement to implement the accords in Cambodia, there is no such agreement on power-sharing in Afghanistan.<sup>111</sup> There was also no enforcement mechanism to help with the installation of the transitional authority in Afghanistan. This was its crucial shortcoming in view of the continuing civil war in Afghanistan. The formation of the transitional authority was based on informal consultation with the various groups, and its legitimacy depended upon their consent. It was a lengthy process to transfer power. Unlike the extensive involvement of the UNTAC, the UN was not willing to back the installation of any proposed transitional authority in Afghanistan with any peacekeeping force. It also refrained from providing any administrative or financial resources required to hold or monitor elections. Furthermore, there was no provision for a cease-fire or the disarming of antagonists involved in the fighting.

There was no mutually acceptable symbolic leader around which an interim government could be formed in Afghanistan. King Zahir Shah was acceptable to the Traditionalists and Moderate groups, but was unacceptable to the Fundamentalist Parties. Cambodian-style power-sharing transitional authority could not be worked out because all the warring factions in Afghanistan were not willing to cooperate with each other on any formula to share power with President Najibullah. The process of the selection of representatives for an interim transitional authority was further complicated by the Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan and the authenticity of the claims of the various Afghan

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<sup>111</sup> S. Ratner, The New UN Peacekeeping Building Peace in lands of Conflict after the Cold War and UN Peacekeeping in Cambodia (London: Macmillan Press, 1997) pp. 137-188 & M. W. Doyle, UNTAC'S Civil Mandate (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995) pp.16-24.

factions to represent significant portions of the Afghan population. In a society where historically there has been no tradition of strong central government, the results of the war (in the form of the emergence of heavily armed militias and the increase in the power of the local commanders in various regions), had negative implications for the implementation of a peace plan. After the disappearance of a common enemy (that is the Soviet Union), these political changes served to undermine the already weak national cohesion of Afghanistan. The arming of various groups with new and sophisticated weapons of mass destruction (a process which went on during the long period of war) not only made them intransigent, but also more inclined to indulge in power-struggles after the war. This eventually happened with the outbreak of Civil War in 1992 in which power was fragmented along ethnic, ideological and religious lines.

Another explanation for the failure of the UN peace plan of 1992 was that , "it was based on the assumption of a continuing stalemate in the Afghan conflict. But with the announcement of the departure of President Najibullah, the various Afghan factions rejected the UN peace plan and instead opted for a mechanism they could control and from which they perceived to gain individual advantages."<sup>112</sup> Moreover, in the period immediately after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan the UN role was affected by the lack of trust or faith of the various Afghan resistance parties in the organisation. This was due to the controversial role it played in the 'Geneva Negotiations' of 1982-88 which led to the disengagement of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Despite the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 which was in violation of the universal principle of non-intervention and non-interference, the UN continued to grant legitimacy to the Soviet-installed regime in Kabul (PDPA), while the Afghan Resistance

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<sup>112</sup>R. Newell , "Conclusion", in *Op. Cit.*, D. Charters, (ed.) Peacekeeping and the Challenge of Civil Conflict Resolution, P. 73.

was not officially recognised and its members were debarred from participation in the UN sponsored negotiations.<sup>113</sup>

### **3.4 : 3 Post-Communist Afghanistan: Elusive peace and Slide into Anarchy. 1992-1995.**

The most common reason cited for the failure of the UN peace plan of April 1992 is that there was an absence of consensus among the numerous Afghan factions over the composition of a transitional government in Kabul. While it is true that there is a lack of unity among the different Afghan Mujahideen at the domestic level, a much closer examination of the events would also reveal that, in fact, there has been a complete lack of consensus over the future of Afghanistan in the foreign policies of both the global and regional powers. The continuing policy shifts, divergent interests and lack of co-operation in the policies or aims of the states involved in the Afghan conflict (Pakistan, the US, the Soviet Union, Iran, Saudi Arabia and more recently the Central Asian States) have significantly contributed towards undermining the chances of a peaceful solution of the conflict in the post-Cold War period. The negative intervention of these outside forces is prolonging the crisis and making its resolution difficult. Thus, all these factors, internal and external, have combined to create a difficult environment for the UN to operate in. In an uncertain post-Cold War period, Afghanistan has once again become the victim of ruthless global and regional balance of power politics. A brief elaboration of these events will explain this.

At the domestic level, the main reason for the lack of political unity and consensus is a result of the gradual fragmentation of power-centres in Afghanistan. None of the many groups contending for power at present is strong enough to seize it. Although traditionally Afghanistan is a fragmented society, the new political factions are supported by competing outside forces making

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<sup>113</sup> *Op. Cit.*, B. Rubin, "Post Cold War State Disintegration; the Failure of International Conflict Resolution in Afghanistan", International Affairs, (Vol. 46, No. 2, 1993)

compromise difficult. There are several reasons for the emergence of these new autonomous power-centres, and mostly they relate to the social-political changes which took place in Afghanistan during the war.<sup>114</sup> After the Soviet withdrawal, the reasons for the emergence of new power-centres included the interim Islamic Government's failure to install a credible government in Kabul in 1989, the divisions between the external (parties) and the internal resistance (commanders), the leadership vacuum, factionalism and disunity within the PDPA.

After the Soviet withdrawal and with the end of the Cold War in 1989, both the USSR and the US slowly disengaged from Afghanistan. The US did this because it had achieved its goal of defeating Communism in the region, and the Soviet Union did so because of its growing domestic economic problems. Thus, Afghanistan lost the strategic importance it enjoyed during the Cold War years.<sup>115</sup> As the Superpowers disengaged they lost control over their regional allies, and this led to an increase in regional interference in Afghanistan. This, in turn, aggravated the domestic situation by shattering the possibility of achieving a consensus among the various Afghan groups engaged in a fierce power struggle in the country. As these groups (the seven Afghan political parties in exile, local commanders, regional militias and the Kabul regime before its collapse in April 1992) are dependent upon various rival regional powers for aid they have come to represent their divergent interests which are not susceptible to a easy reconciliation in the near future.

Two important features of post-Communist Afghanistan from 1992 onwards include the eruption of Civil War along ethnic lines and increased interference by the regional states. On ethnic grounds, the outbreak of the Civil War in

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<sup>114</sup>O. Roy, "Afghanistan: Back to Tribalism or on to Lebanon?" Third World Quarterly, (Vol. 11. No. 4. 1989) & Bo Hultdt and E. Jansson, The Tragedy of Afghanistan. The Social Cultural and Political Impact of the Soviet Invasion, (London: Croom Helm, 1988) pp. 121-143.

<sup>115</sup>*Op. Cit.*, B. Rubin, Search for Peace in Afghanistan, p. 169.

Afghanistan in 1992 was a significant development because it threatened the traditional dominance of the Afgan Pathans. Historically, Durrani Pathans have ruled Afghanistan but after the war the Pathans were marginalised by the ascendancy of Tajik and Uzbek ethnic groups. A brief elaboration of this change will highlight not only its importance for the political future of Afghanistan, but also the reason for the failure of the 'Peshawar Accords' (the Regional Peace Initiative) in resolving the Afghan conflict in April 1992. The emergence of the power of the northern ethnic groups was not sudden. Since 1985, the Soviets had not only invested heavily in northern Afghanistan, but also had significant military installations which, after their departure, fell into the hands of the Northern Afghans. These groups also had links with similar ethnic groups in Soviet Central Asia. Moreover, because the area had reserves of gas and petroleum which could be exported to the Soviet Union at very low prices, it was economically significant. There was speculation that the Soviets had an interest in setting up a capital in the north of Afghanistan if they were forced to withdraw from Kabul or from the Pathan areas in the South-East which could not be subdued. On the contrary, the Pathan groups south of the Hindu Kush were tribal, more divided and facing a leadership crisis.<sup>116</sup> Between 1989-90 Iran also encouraged the formation of the 'Northern Alliance' by cultivating links with both the Persian speaking (Tajik) Jamiat i- Islami Party of Barhanuddin Rabbani and the Shia party Hizbi-Wahdat.

Secondly, not only are the Tajik and Uzbek groups in the north of Afghanistan more homogeneous, but during the war some northern local commanders had experienced organising themselves into 'shuras' (local administrations or assemblies) in order to co-ordinate their military political activities inside Afghanistan. The most prominent example of this is the Supervisory Council of the north under Ahmed Shah Masoud, which has ten northern provinces under its

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<sup>116</sup>J. Newman, Jr. "The Future of Northern Afghanistan" *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXVIII, No. 7, 1988) pp. 729-739.

control.<sup>117</sup> In the west of Afghanistan, Commander Ismail Khan's 'shura' controlled four provinces. Fear of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the sudden change in 1992 of the US policy of providing aid directly to the local commanders inside Afghanistan by way of bypassing the political parties, has benefited the Jamiati -Islami under the Tajik leadership of Barhanuddin Rabbani. His most efficient commander, Ahmed Shah Massoud, organised the Supervisory Council of the North. Many aid agencies also started to provide aid directly to the local commanders inside Afghanistan. After the war, these 'shuras' became well-organised and well -structured within their regions and grew more autonomous.<sup>118</sup>

By the end of 1992 there was a shift in the alliance coalitions of Afghanistan. The independence of five Central Asian States during 1992 introduced a new destabilising force into Afghan politics, by providing support for, and adding further impetus to, the trend toward ethnic polarisation in northern Afghanistan. The Civil War in Tajikistan destroyed the short-lived alliance between the Ahmed Shah Massoud (Tajiks) and Rashid Dostum (Uzbek) in Afghanistan (Northern Alliance). Fearful of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, Uzbek President Islam Karimov supported Rashid Dostum against Ahmed Shah Masoud, who was allegedly providing sanctuary to the Islamist and democratic dissidents from Tajikistan. Thus, by the end of 1992, there was a shift of alliances in Afghanistan. In view of the power monopoly held by Rabbani's Jamiati-Islami Party and his Commander Ahmed Shah Massoud, Rashid Dostum and the Iranian supported Shia party, Hiz-bi-Wahdat, defected from the Rabanni-Massoud coalition and joined forces with Hekmatyar to establish an opposition force called the 'Supreme Co-ordination Council'.<sup>119</sup> Throughout

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<sup>117</sup> "Afghanistan no Time Left to Waste", *Frontier Post* (April 1992, Peshawar)

<sup>118</sup> A. Ahady, "The Decline of the Pashtuns in Afghanistan", *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXXV, No.7, 1995)

<sup>119</sup> *Op. Cit.*, B. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, p. 230.

1994, these two major coalitions fought each other to gain control of Kabul. In order to compete with Iran, and to reduce Uzbekistan's dependence on Russia, Uzbekistan President, Islam Karimov, provided aid to Rashid Dostum. The turmoil in Kabul, the refusal of President Rabbani to step down and his continued support from Iran, India and Russia, led Pakistan to embark upon a policy to find alternative trade routes to the Central Asian States. The attack on Kabul led to the deterioration of humanitarian and living conditions in the capital. The UN relief programmes were seriously affected, and in some cases, had to be abandoned altogether.

On 21 December 1993, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution asking the Secretary General to intensify his efforts in finding a peaceful resolution to the Afghan conflict. During September and October 1994, in response to this request, a second UN peace plan was formulated. This was under the supervision of the new UNSG Special Representative to Afghanistan, the Tunisian Foreign Minister, Mahmoud Mistri. It involved three stages; a fact-finding mission, consultations with the various Afghan factions, and the formation of an 'Advisory Council'. The major finding of the UN mission was that victory by either side in Afghanistan was impossible. Failing to reach a consensus among the main antagonists to resolve the conflict, the UN affiliated itself with the members of the Advisory Council, which put forward four recommendations. These included, "a cease-fire and demilitarisation of Kabul, establishment of a cease-fire monitoring body under the UN, disarmament and creation of a national security force".<sup>120</sup>This was to be followed by the creation of a transitional government to run Afghanistan for two years, after which elections were to be held. The members of the transitional government would not be able to run in the elections. Before the elections, the transitional government would bring peace to Kabul and draft a new constitution by holding a Loya Jirga. These recommendations were

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<sup>120</sup>Z. Khalilzad, "Afghanistan in 1994 : Civil War and Disintegration", *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXXV. No. 2, 1995) pp. 150-51 & *Op. Cit.*, Search for peace in Afghanistan, pp. 136-137.

not formally adopted by the UN they were only endorsed by the Security Council and the General Assembly in December 1995. In 1994 a new force had emerged on the Afghan scene- the Taliban movement. At the beginning of 1995 M. Mestri sought to gather support from all the Afghan factions for the UN peace plan. In March he succeeded in securing the names of twenty eight member transitional interim government. This body would then be incharge of the formation of a government acceptable to all the Afghan factions. However, the Taliban militia refused to participate in any arrangement in which representatives of the Rabbani government were included. In March 1995 fighting erupted between the forces of Massoud and Hizb-i -Wahdat and between Massoud and the Taliban. As the Taliban forces threatened to take Kabul, Massoud reneged on his earlier commitment to the UN peace plan until the Taliban forces agreed to participate in the process of the transfer of power under the UN plan. Since the Taliban had already rejected Mestri proposals the UN peace plan once again failed. The Taliban refused to work with President Rabbani and Hekmatyar, and rejected the proposal for the return of King Zahir Shah. The Taliban demanded that the neutral peace force for the control of Kabul be made up entirely of the Taliban forces. M. Mestri mission also suffered because of deterioration of relations between him and President Rabbani over Mestri remarks that "the Taliban are the peacemakers" which annoyed President Rabbani. Faced with growing criticism M. Mestri resigned in May 1996 and was replaced in July 1997 by Norbert Holl to head the UN special mission to Afghanistan. Norbert Holl mission also failed due to the intransigent attitude of the various Afghan factions especially the Taliban. The Taliban were bitter that despite having the effective control of two third of the Afghan territory the UN continued to recognise the government of President Rabbani. Finally Lakhdar Brahimi, an Algerian diplomat was appointed as the special envoy of the UN Secretary General Kofi Anan to Afghanistan. The Special Report of the UN Secretary General on the Situation in

Afghanistan and its implications for International peace on 14 September 1997 while being critical of the Afghan factions and the regional governments stated,

"since the early 1990's the Afghan factions and warlords have failed to show the will to rise above their narrow factional interests and to start working together for national reconciliation. Even today the Afghan parties seem determined to go on fighting while outside powers continue to provide material, financial and other support to their respective clients inside Afghanistan. Meanwhile, although those major powers that have the potential influence in Afghanistan have recently started to show interest they have yet to demonstrate the necessary degree of determination to move the situation forward. How can peace be imposed on faction leaders who are determined to fight it out to the finish and who receive unlimited supplies of arms from outside powers. It is this outside support that strengthened the belief among the warlords in Afghanistan that they can achieve their political, religious and social goals by force."<sup>121</sup>

Russian interest in Afghanistan is linked to the emergence of five new republics in Central Asia. Russia regards Afghanistan as its southern security border as it has vital security and economic interests in Central Asia. For the regional states (Iran, Turkey, Pakistan), the independence of the Central Asian States provide economic opportunities, but to exploit these opportunities is dependent on political stability in Afghanistan.<sup>122</sup> Russia is not willing to forego its economic or security interests in these states. By supporting the Tajiks and ethnic groups in Afghanistan, Russia hopes to retain its influence and counter Pathan domination. After the Civil War in Tajikistan in 1991, hard-line interest groups in favour of a more active policy in these regions gained an upper hand in Russia. For their part, the Central Asian States have so far adopted a pragmatic foreign policy

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<sup>121</sup> K. Matinuddin, The Taliban Phenomenon Afghanistan 1994-97 (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999) pp. 251-52.

<sup>122</sup> R. Dannreuther, Creating new States in Central Asia. The Strategic Implications of the Collapse of the Soviet Power in Central Asia, Adelphi paper, No. 288, (London: Brassey's for IISS, 1994) pp. 75- 76 & M. Bhatti, "Cross Currents in Afghanistan", The Dawn (24 November, 1995)

towards both the outside states and Russia. The rise of these new republics has altered the balance of power in the region which, in turn, has prompted the regional states to re-evaluate their foreign policies. India's chief concern is about the Kashmiri demand for self-determination. In view of the presence of Uzbek and Tajik ethnic groups across the Afghan border, Russia is sensitive to the conflict in Afghanistan, as this can have repercussions for the two Central Asian States on Afghanistan border, that is, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. <sup>123</sup>

To summarise, after 1992 the regional powers have fuelled ethnic rivalries in Afghanistan by providing aid and weapons to their clients. In a worse case scenario this can lead to the prospect of the fragmentation of Afghanistan along ethnic lines. The constant regional interference is one of the main reasons for the failure of the UN peace efforts. These regional powers are engaged in pursuit of their national interest in Afghanistan. The whole jigsaw of the conflict is based upon the fear these regional powers have that a change in the balance of power might be favourable to their adversary. Thus, any peace plan which does not forbid the regional states interfering in Afghan affairs, does not have a any chance of success. Disengagement of regional players from Afghanistan is an essential requirement which the UN must incorporate in any future peace plan. So far, it has not succeeded in doing so.

### **Rise of the Taliban. Salience of Politics or Economics. 1994-98.**

During the last quarter of 1994, the Taliban militia suddenly emerged on the Afghan scene. In October 1994, they captured Kandahar in the west of Afghanistan and established their own Shura under the leadership of Mullah Umar. In September 1995 they captured another important town-Herat in the

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<sup>123</sup>R. Rais, "Afghanistan and the Regional Powers", *Asian Survey* (Vol. XXX111, No. 9, 1993) pp. 905-921 & Alvin Z. Rubenstein, "The Geopolitical Pull on Russia", *Orbis* (Vol. 38, Fall 1994)

east of Afghanistan, and forced Commander Ismail Khan to flee to Iran. These militia were principally recruited from among the Afghan Pathans living in Pakistan. But the Taliban movement is not exclusively Pathan dominated, it includes some Tajiks and Uzbeks members. Also there are intra-tribal differences among the Taliban leadership. The movement originated in the religious schools or the Dini Madrasas (Religious Schools) in Pakistan which were established and financed by Saudi funds during the 1980s.<sup>124</sup> Their avowed objectives include, to put an end to the constant power struggles between the various Afghan commanders whose policies, in their view, were responsible for prolonging the Afghan conflict. To establish an Islamic government according to their interpretation of the sharia, and the collection of weapons. The emergence of the Taliban not only introduced another rival faction into an already intense power struggle among the various factions in Afghanistan. It also retarded the mediation efforts of the Special Representative of the UNSG, Mahmoud Mistry. The Taliban refused to share power in any coalition government with the former Afghan Mujahideen leaders, whom they no longer regarded as true representatives of the Afghan people.

The Taliban movement, led by Mullah Muhammad Umar, first attracted public attention in July 1995, when a Pakistani aid convoy, passing through Kandahar on its way to Uzbekistan, was hijacked by men belonging to the local warlord, Mullah Saleem Rocketi, who demanded a large ransom for its release. The Taliban defeated these bandits, freed the convoy, took control of the road and provided safety to the passing vehicles. They also abolished road tax on vehicles using the highway. <sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> "With gun and Koran", The Economist (4 February, 1995), "Afghanistan has a New Master", The Economist (February 18, 1995), "Revenge of the Pathans", The Economist (February 25, 1995), "Taliban defeated", The Economist, March 8, 1995, "The Hole in Central Asia", The Economist, June 8, 1995, "Dreams of Afghan peace", The Economist July 22, 1995, "Kabul threatened", The Economist (September 23, 1995) & A. Sattar, "Afghanistan: Jihad to Civil War", Regional Studies, (Vol. Autumn, 1996) pp.

<sup>125</sup> K. Matinuddin, "Afghan Issue; The Taliban Factor", National Development and Security (Vol. IV, No. 4, 1996) pp. 89-114.

The Taliban Militia have attracted world-wide criticism due to their extremely repressive policies towards their opponents, and especially towards the women in Afghanistan. Recently, in March 1998, a world-wide campaign called 'A flower for the Women of Kabul' was launched by both the European Union Humanitarian Agency and the 'Doctors without Borders' group. This is to pressurise the Taliban to modify their harsh policies by lifting the restrictions on women so that they can work and seek education. However, the effectiveness of the campaign will depend on the use of coercive methods such as the withholding of outside aid to the Taliban - measures over which there is no unanimity among the outside states so far.<sup>126</sup> There are about 11,000 widows in Kabul alone, and in some cases, they are the only bread-winner in the family.

Another important issue which has provoked strong outside criticism of the Taliban is the practice of poppy cultivation in the areas under their control. According to UN sources, about 93% of Afghanistan's annual opium cultivation comes from these areas, and this is then exported to Russia, Pakistan and Europe. This provides an important source of income for the Taliban as they impose a 10% Ushar (Islamic tax on agriculture production) on poppy production, thus giving them, " \$6 million a year from the \$60 million the Afghan traders earn from opium exports out of a business worth \$40 billion in Europe." <sup>127</sup> After it is refined into heroin, it is exported to Europe through Central Asia, Turkey and

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<sup>126</sup>F. Lewis, "Sovereignty Vs. Human Rights", International Herald Tribune (March, 1998), C. Thomas, "Women beggars pay the price of Taliban dogma", The Times (26 September, 1997), J. F. Burns, "Fear reigns as Taleban enforces lifestyle of a Past Millennium", International Herald Tribune (25 September, 1997), C. Thomas, "Taleban outlaws Women and White Socks", The Times (4 April, 1997) & "The Taliban Tactic: Dark ages at home Smuggling Abroad", The Times (5 April, 1997)

<sup>127</sup>M. Dynes, "UN hopes for anti drug pact with Taliban", The Times (11 August, 1997)

Iran.<sup>128</sup>The income from the heroin trade is used for the reconstruction of Afghan villages destroyed during the war.<sup>129</sup>

The rise of the Taliban is related to two factors. The first of these is the fact that the Pathan groups were being overtaken by the Tajik alliance in Afghanistan. The Taliban leaders criticised the Regional Commanders for being selfish and power-hungry, and proposed to take up the task of disarming and demobilising of the warring factions in Afghanistan. However the most important rationale behind foreign support for the Taliban [in Afghanistan] was the economic interests of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. These economic interests were linked to the establishment of trade routes and the construction of oil and gas pipelines from the Central Asian States to the outside world. Both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia wanted these trade routes to pass through Pakistan instead of Iran. In April 1994, Iran pre-empted Saudi and Pakistani moves to establish trade links with the Central Asian States by opening a rail link from Mashud (Iran) to Turkmenistan, and by concluding a bilateral agreement to transport oil and other trade material between Iran and the Central Asian States.<sup>130</sup>

In collaboration with the Pakistan fundamentalist party, Jamiat-i-Ulema-Islam, Pakistan's Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, and her Interior Minister Nazurrullah Khan Babur, devised a new policy to provide support to the Taliban. There were also domestic reasons behind Bhutto's government's assistance. Pakistan's chief domestic Islamic Fundamentalist Party, the Jamat-i-Islami, (which was the chief supporter of Hikmatyar and had supported President Zia who overthrew Benazir father, the late Prime Minister Bhutto in 1979), was now aligned to her chief opponent, the Islami-Jamuri-Itehad (Islamic Democratic Front) led by Mian

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<sup>128</sup>C. Thomas, "Rewards of Opium Trade Highlight Taliban Hypocrisy", The Times (May 6, 1997)

<sup>129</sup>A. Rashid, "Poppy Harvest Booming under Talibans Rule", The Daily Telegraph (3 April, 1997)

<sup>130</sup>Frank Gardner, "Tehran Cashes in on rail Short cut to the Sea", The Times (22 July, 1997)

Mohammed Nawaz Sharif. This was an important domestic reason for Benazir Bhutto's shift of support from Hikmatyar to the Taliban. Pakistan's strategy was to regain Pathan dominance of Afghanistan and to provide alternative trade routes to the Central Asian States from Khandahar to Pakistan. The fighting in Kabul and the continuing anarchy in Afghanistan had greatly diminished the chances for the establishment of such trade routes.<sup>131</sup> Moreover, Pakistan's opposition to the Tajik government of President Rabbani in Kabul was another reason for the emergence of this policy. In September 1995, Pakistan's Embassy in Kabul was attacked by men belonging to Ahmed Shah Masoud, and it resulted in one employee being killed and the Ambassador being injured. After the attack, Pakistan strongly protested to President Rabbani's government and shifted its Embassy to Jalallabad.

The emergence of the Taliban was viewed with misgivings in Iran, Russia, India and the Central States of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. These two Central Asian states regarded it as a tactic to establish Pathan dominance over the ethnic minority groups (Uzbeks and Tajiks) in Afghanistan. The Uzbek President, Islam Karimov, provided aid to the Uzbek leader, Rashid Dostum and Tajikistan provided aid to the Rabbani-Massoud coalition in order to counter Taliban advances towards the north-east of Afghanistan. Another reason for alarm in the Central Asian States was the fear of an Islamic Fundamentalist movement spreading to the largely secular oriented states. Indian interests revolved around the danger of trans-national Islamic movements spreading to Kashmir. According to India, Kashmiri separatists receive training in Afghanistan. From the Indian perspective, a movement under the control of Pakistan would enable Pakistan to forge close ties with the Central Asian States and also provide her with access to the economic and military resources of these states.<sup>132</sup> Since the

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<sup>131</sup> B. Rubin, "Women and pipelines: Afghanistan's Proxy War", International Affairs, 1996.

<sup>132</sup> R. B. Rais, "Afghanistan and the Regional powers", Asian Survey (Vol. XXXIII, No. 9, 1996) pp. 916-922, Christopher Thomas, "Russian Military Alliance to Check the March of Taliban" The Times (15 March, 1997), Raga Sagar, "Taliban Tightens Noose on Rivals last City", The

emergence of the Taliban, India has provided military aid to President Rabbani and Indian technicians were sent to Afghanistan to repair military equipment of Soviet origin which were now under the control of President Rabbani.<sup>133</sup> Iran, whose foreign policy towards Afghanistan became more active after the end of the Iran-Iraq War (1988), regards the emergence of the Taliban as an attempt by Pakistan and the US to economically and diplomatically isolate Iran in the region. The Iranian leader, Ayatollah Khomeini, condemned Taliban, "as a disgrace to Islam."<sup>134</sup> Iran has considerable leverage and provides support to President Rabbani, Ahmed Shah Masoud, the Shiite group Hiz-bi-Wahdat, and Ismaili Commander Syed Naderi in Herat. Iran fear of the Taliban is related to the fact that the Taliban adhere to the Deobandi sect Russia also wants to keep the Central Asian region within its sphere of influence.

Throughout 1995-1996, the Taliban captured areas in the south and south-east of Afghanistan. In September 1995 they captured Herat, forcing Commander Ismail Khan to flee to Iran where he was provided with military assistance to retake Herat. On 14 February 1995, they captured the Hekmatyar stronghold in Charasiab, on 15 February the province of Khost, on 21 March the Logar district, on 28 March the important Shindand base in the East and on 30 May the province of Paghman which belonged to Abul Rasul Sayaf of Itthead-i-Islami. By September 1996 the Taliban had captured fourteen out of the thirty four Afghan provinces.<sup>135</sup>

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Scotsman (29 Sept. 1997), Zahid Hussain, "Pakistani Pupils Sent to aid Taliban", The Times (4 August 1997), Brian William's, "Warlord presses to End stalemate in Kabul battle", The Times (5 August, 1997), John Burns, "Afghan Backlash fails to temper Taliban", The Guardian (30 September, 1997), Michael Dynes, "Warlord Plots Taliban's down fall", The Times (18 August, 1997), Michael Dynes, "Taliban forces shoot refugees fleeing Kabul", The Times (20 August, 1997) & "UN- Pakistan Intensify Efforts for Afghan Peace", The Pakistan observer (29, July 1997)

<sup>133</sup> *Op. Cit.*, K. Matinuddin, "Afghan issue: the Taliban factor", p. 111.

<sup>134</sup> R. Magnus, "Afghanistan in 1996", Asian Survey (Vol. XXXVII, No. 2, 1992) p. 115.

<sup>135</sup> A. Rahman, & H. Hunzi, "The Rise of Taliban: Chronology", Strategic Perspectives (Vol. 4, No.1-2, 1996) pp. 96-120.

In April 1996, in a counter-move against Benazir Bhutto's policy of supporting the Taliban, the ISI mediated a reconciliation between Hikmatyar and the Rabbani-Massoud coalition which was then in control of Kabul. Since 1994, Hekmatyar had been a bitter opponent of President Rabbani and Ahmed Shah Masoud, and joined the Supreme Security Council (SCC) against President Rabbani. Other members of the SCC included Rashid Dostum, Mujadaddi, and Hiz-bi-Wahdat.<sup>136</sup> They demanded the President's resignation. However, in July 1996 Hekmatyar was made Prime Minister in the government of President Rabbani. This alliance was severely criticised by the remaining members of the SCC. The Taliban captured Kabul on 27 September 1996 and hanged the former Communist President Najibullah. President Rabbani and Hekmatyar fled Kabul and sought refuge in the north of Afghanistan, whereas Ahmed Shah retreated to his base in the Panjshir valley. The capture of Kabul by the Taliban forces once again led to the shifting of domestic alliances among the various Afghan factions. In October 1996 Rashid Dostum joined the Rabbani-Massoud alliance in Mazar-i -Sharif, which was later joined by the Shia alliance, Hizb-i-Wahdat.<sup>137</sup> In November 1996, the dismissal of the government of Benazir Bhutto deprived the Taliban of their patron, but this did not lead to any major change in Pakistan's foreign policy.

In 1997 the main target of the Taliban forces became the northern city of Mazar-i -Sharif, the capital of the 'Northern Alliance' under Ahmed Shah Massoud. This happened when General Malik, a prominent General in the Army of Junbish-i-Islami of Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum, defected to the Taliban on May 18, 1997.<sup>138</sup> After the revolt by General Malik, Rashid Dostum fled to Turkey. The Taliban forces managed to pass through the Salang Pass to launch an attack on Mazar-i-Sharif. However, within a week the alliance between the Taliban and

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<sup>136</sup> *Op. Cit.*, R. Magnus, "Afghanistan in 1996", pp. 111-113.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid*, p. 290.

<sup>138</sup> Christopher Thomas, "Defecting General boosts Taliban's Chances of Victory", The Times (20 May, 1997)

General Abdul Malik fell apart when the Taliban Militia tried to disarm his forces. This was in addition to disarming some sections of the Shiite population in Maza-i-Sharif which belonged to the Iranian supported alliance, Hizbi-Wahdat.<sup>139</sup> With the defeat of the Taliban in Mazar-i-Sharif, Pakistan's foreign policy came under severe criticism. Its hasty recognition of the Taliban was taken as a sign of a Pakistani role in its emergence. In July 1997 the 'Northern Alliance' announced their decision to set up a new government in Mazar-i-Sharif and declared it as the new capital of Afghanistan. The anti-Taliban forces in the north of Afghanistan are now, "backed by Russian weaponry, Iranian money and the goodwill of Central Asia and India."<sup>140</sup> All this has widened the gulf of deep mistrust among the contending factions and has also seriously diminished the prospects for a negotiated settlement of the conflict.

The US foreign policy since the Gulf War had originally neglected Afghanistan but in 1996 the US started to show some interest in Afghanistan. However, US foreign policy towards Afghanistan since the emergence of the Taliban has been overshadowed by both opportunities and dangers. The initial US interest in the Taliban was linked to the commercial interests of the American multinational giant UNCol and the Saudi oil company Delta. These two oil companies are planning the construction of a £2.7 billion oil and gas pipeline linking Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan to the Arabian sea. "From there the crude oil would be taken by tanker to East Asia."<sup>141</sup> The second aim of the US policy in 1996 was to counter the Iranian policy of cultivating the Central Asian States. Also the US had concern about the export of terrorism and drugs to

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<sup>139</sup> A. S. Hasan, "Afghanistan Quest for Peace-The latest Phase", Current Affairs Digest (August 1997)

<sup>140</sup> C. Thomas, "Outside powers Set Stage for full scale war in Afghanistan", The Times (June 4, 1997)

<sup>141</sup> C. Thomas, "Consortium Woos Taliban to tap Energy Bonanza", The Times (May 9, 1997) & "The Game's Afoot", Editorial, The Times (9 May, 1997)

western countries.<sup>142</sup> There was optimism in the US that the Taliban would serve US interests in the region firstly by the containment of the growing Iranian and Russian influence in the region; secondly by the ending of the civil unrest in Afghanistan; thirdly by enabling Pakistan to establish economic links with the Central Asian republics, and most importantly by providing security for the oil and gas pipelines.<sup>143</sup> But there were also several problems, the US was not keen to get involved in Afghanistan civil war. The State Department was still pursuing the old policy of calling for the establishment of a broad based government in Afghanistan. Also the US policy of supporting the Taliban in order to counter Iranian influence had the opposite effect of increasing Iranian involvement in Afghanistan. Iran's relations with the Taliban were badly affected after Taliban murdered Iran's ally Abdul Ali Mazari of Hizbi Wahdat in June 1997. Thus, by 1997 the US expectations about the Taliban establishing peace in Afghanistan, ending drug cultivation, and not harbouring the terrorists, including Osama bin Laden, remained unrealised. As a result the US policy slowly began to change in 1997. An important source of constraint on the US policy towards Taliban is related to the US domestic politics. Within the US pressure groups have mobilised public opinion against the Taliban treatment of women and their abuses of human rights. In 1997 Madeline Albright was appointed as the new Secretary of State to replace Warren Christopher. The new administration took a more cautious view of the Taliban. Karl Inderfuth who was appointed as the new Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia outlined the new US policy in a testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on 22 October 1997. He expressed his government misgivings about any side winning a military victory in Afghanistan, he added, the US policy in Afghanistan was to establish,

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<sup>142</sup>N. Rafique, "Afghanistan: the US politics in Context" *Strategic Perspective* (Vol. 4, No. 1-2, 1996) pp. 65-86 & D. Ottaway, "US now Speaks out against Iran Pipelines", *International Herald Tribune* (21 November, 1997)

<sup>143</sup>R. Mackenzie, "The US and the Taliban", in *Op. Cit.* Maley (ed.) *Fundamentalism Reborn*, pp. 96-103.

"an Afghan government that is multi ethnic, broad based and that observes international norms of behaviour."<sup>144</sup>

The Secretary of State on her one day visit to Pakistan in November 1997, paid a visit to a Afghan Refugee camp in Pakistan. She strongly criticized the Taliban and said, "it is clear why we are opposed to the Taliban. Because of their approach to human rights, their despicable treatment of women and children and their general lack of respect for human dignity."<sup>145</sup>

An analysis of the Taliban movement shows that it is naive to presume that they are agents of any outside power. For example, they have reasserted their independence from both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia their main supporters. The Taliban have also exploited the corruption and power struggles in Pakistan domestic politics to their own advantage. The Taliban developed extensive links with the transport mafia in Baluchistan who are engaged in smuggling goods between Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. The taxes collected by the Taliban for letting the truck convoys pass through their territories is Talibans major source of income. During 1994 the Taliban developed close links with the fragile provincial governments in NWFP and Baluchistan. In order to strengthen their political base the provincial Governors of Baluchistan and the NWFP used their authority and issued permits for the supply of fuel and foodstuff into Afghanistan to their own political supporters. The Taliban exploited these divisions and benefited from the permit system. Thus, the Taliban developed links with politicians, businessmen, Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam and smugglers in Pakistan, who because of their own interests influenced the Bhutto government to back the Taliban. The ISI after initial reluctance provided support to Taliban to capture Kabul and Jalallabad. However, Pakistan Afghan policy in the Post-Cold War period lacked a realistic assessment of its potential and became too

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<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* p. 102.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* p.90.

ambitious. In the Post Cold War period Pakistan lacked both the resources and political stability to maintain such ambitious foreign policy.<sup>146</sup>

The above analysis shows how difficult it is to find a solution to the Afghan conflict. With so many players involved any initiative which supports one faction antagonises the other parties. In the Post- Cold War, co-operation for the solution of a regional conflict has become almost impossible.

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<sup>146</sup> A. Rashid, "Pakistan and the Taliban", in *op.cit.* Maley (ed.) Fundamentalism reborn ? pp.72-89. & P.Marsden, The Taliban War, Religion and the New World Order in Afghanistan (London: Zed books ltd. 1998)pp. 126-153.

## Conclusion

This thesis has traced the origins, causes and reasons for the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan. It doing so it has relied on the Realist Theory of international relations to explain the conflict. The Realist approach is applicable for both the Cold War and the post-Cold War period. A fundamental principle of Realist Theory is the 'balance of power' mechanism which explains the way in which inter-state relations are conducted in the absence of a world government to impose order upon individual states. The balance of power is a regulatory mechanism in international relations which is based upon the reasoning, that when a system is threatened by a state seeking hegemony, a coalition of states will emerge to support the weaker side and make sure that no state in the system becomes more powerful than the combined power of all the other states in the system. It is a self-defence mechanism based upon common sense and aims to ensure the survival and continuity of the state system. The balance of power principle works in both a bipolar or a multipolar system. In the case of a bipolar balance of power, there is a rough equality of power between the two most powerful states in the system. The Cold War period (1947-1991) was an example of a bipolar balance of power based on the equality of power between the US and the Soviet Union.

Conversely, in a multipolar balance of power system, power is distributed unequally among several major states. In such an environment there are frequent shifts of power centres and alliance partners. There are more interaction opportunities and freedom of manoeuvre in a multipolar world. This usually creates an uncertain atmosphere regarding the rules of the system and about the motives and reliability of the alliance partners which can causes instability and conflicts.

The bipolar and multipolar systems are inherently unstable as both are susceptible to the outbreak of conflict. The only difference between the two systems is in the

kind of wars that can occur under each system. This is because in the pursuit of power and clash of interests among the states is a recurring feature of international relations. The states in an international system are functionally alike but differ in their capabilities. They have to rely on the self-help principle in such an anarchical system, which generates competition and the pursuit of power by all the states who desire security. However, in an international system no state can achieve absolute security. The quest for security by one state can create a feeling of insecurity in other states and they, in turn, respond by increasing their own power to seek security, thus stimulating the pursuit of power by various states which becomes a self-defeating exercise. This is an example of the 'security dilemma' of the Realist Theory. It explains why cooperation in an anarchical world is inherently difficult to achieve.

Thus, both the 'balance of power' and 'security dilemma' approach of the Realist Theory of international relations can be successfully applied to explain the motives and the behaviour of both the states and sub-state actors involved in my case study of the Afghan conflict.

The war in Afghanistan played an important role in the ending of the Cold War with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1992. As such, it was a success for the US foreign policy of 'roll back', which was aimed at countering the increasing spread of Soviet influence in the Third World between 1974 and 1980. Afghanistan was of no great geopolitical significance to the US during the Cold War period. The US policy towards it for much of this period was based upon neglect, ignorance and disinterest. The main pillars of containment in the region were Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Yet after the Second Cold War (1979-1988), the overall US foreign policy of defeating Communism was a major success and Afghanistan contributed significantly in bringing about this victory. On the other hand, bilateral Soviet-Afghan relations from 1953-1979 were

extensive and wide ranging. Their scope encompassed economic, military and political fields. During the 1955 period, the conduct of Soviet foreign policy in terms of demonstrating its responsiveness to the economic and development needs of the Third World nationalist leaders, achieved one of its first successes in Afghanistan. Despite all this investment, in the end Afghanistan turned out to be the biggest 'mistake' of the Soviet empire. In 1992, Soviet Foreign Minister, Edward Shevardnadze described the decision for the invasion of Afghanistan as 'immoral' and 'wrong'. The Afghan war led to a gradual and wide-ranging re-evaluation of the conduct of the Soviet Third World policy. How can this paradox be explained?

The paradox can be explained by emphasising that during the Cold War period the conflict in Afghanistan was an important determinant of the bipolar balance of power. After World War II, this balance of power system implied that the world was divided into two opposing blocs. Power was concentrated in two superpowers and most of the conflicts in the world were caught up in their competition for hegemony. The possession of nuclear weapons by both the superpowers shifted the competition to the Third World. In a highly inter-dependent world security interests became wider and wider with only little room for compromise. Both the superpowers regarded each other's actions as a symbol of their rival bid for hegemony which had to be resisted by force. However, with the disintegration of the Soviet Empire and the failure of Communism, the Soviets lost their struggle for world superiority and the war in Afghanistan contributed significantly towards this decline.

To analyse the causes of this paradox it is of initial importance to understand the origins, nature and affects of the Soviet-Afghan relations during the Cold War period. This relationship evolved in two phases: indirect influence (1955-78) and direct political control (1979-1992). The origins of Soviet influence in Afghanistan

were related to the Afghan need for foreign aid and investment to achieve economic development, modernisation of its armed forces and to fulfil its security requirements. After World War II repeated Afghan requests for US economic and military assistance were turned down. This was because in the early stages of the Cold War, Afghanistan, owing to its remoteness and backwardness, was of no significance to US, and it was assumed that the US security could be best achieved by not competing with Soviet influence in Afghanistan. Moreover, due to the inclusion of Pakistan in the anti-Communist alliances SEATO and CENTO, US insisted that Afghanistan first drop its border dispute with Pakistan as a pre-condition for receiving aid.

In 1953, King Zahir Shah's cousin, Mohammed Daoud, became the Prime Minister of Afghanistan. Compelled by domestic needs and the desire to achieve rapid modernisation, he turned to the Soviet Union for aid. During the first decade of Daoud's rule (1963-73), Afghanistan ranked first on the list of aid-receiving states from the Soviet Union and second on the list of military aid. Soviet assistance to Afghanistan covered many areas and was mainly carried out on a state to state basis. The bilateral trade was exercised on the basis of the barter system, low interest rates and it even included aid for projects which were turned down by the US. The political aim of Soviet foreign policy was to preclude the possibility of the emergence of US influence in Afghanistan.

Another reason for the development of close Soviet-Afghan ties during the 1950s was the border dispute between Pakistan and Afghanistan. In 1955, faced with constant negative propaganda by Afghanistan, Pakistani authorities retaliated by closing their border with Afghanistan. This deprived landlocked Afghanistan of its access to the nearest port at Karachi and as transit facilities through Iran were not well developed, the Soviet Union offered Afghanistan an alternative transit route through Soviet Central Asia. This became the basis for the subsequent increase in

bilateral Soviet-Afghan trade. The Soviet Union also provided diplomatic support to Afghanistan on the issue of its border dispute with Pakistan. Concerned about growing Soviet influence, during 1963-73 the US provided some modest amounts of development aid, but it was not adequate to compete with such decisive Soviet influence.

The process of gradual modernisation and increasing amounts of Soviet aid to Afghanistan soon began to affect the balance of power between state and society. Historically, the state had relied on the support of traditional leaders. The growth of Soviet influence affected the traditional structure of Afghan society by creating a state controlled bureaucracy and a growing educated class which began to criticise the system of elite and royal privileges by the government. Instead, they demanded an increasing share in the running of the government. In 1963, King Zahir Shah ousted Prime Minister Daoud because of his militant attitude towards Pakistan.

A new Constitution was promulgated in 1963 which barred the members of the royal family from politics. The Afghan experiment in 'Parliamentary democracy' was a failure and this was for a number of reasons. Furthermore, from 1963-73 the US aid to Afghanistan declined, causing economic difficulties. While out of power, Daoud developed links with the Communists and the army officers loyal to the PDPA. In 1973, with the help of the Parcham faction of the PDPA, Daoud staged a coup d'état against King Zahir Shah, abolished the monarchy and proclaimed Afghanistan a republic. However, the second decade of Daoud's rule (1973-78) was marked by important differences from his first decade in power. He came to power with the help of the 'Parcham' faction of the PDPA, but he soon tried to distance himself from them. In foreign policy, he tried to reassert Afghan non-alignment and moved closer to the Shah of Iran and Islamic states in the region, including Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. He rejected Brezhnev's 'Asian Collective Security System' with its emphasis on the inviolability of frontiers.

During his trip to the Soviet Union in 1977, Daoud had an unpleasant encounter with Brezhnev. Soviet links to the Afghan Communists were mainly based upon their ties with the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). The party was founded in 1965 and in 1967 it was split into two factions. In 1978 it was briefly reunited for an April revolution to overthrow Daoud, but it did not have the institutional mechanisms, organisational ability, material resources or unity of purpose to introduce socialism in Afghanistan. After coming to power it tried to impose radical changes, largely through the use of coercive methods. During the 1970s there was a change of direction in Soviet foreign policy. Due to the reverses suffered by the Soviet Union in Egypt and Indonesia, the trend of supporting Third World nationalist leaders was replaced by Brezhnev with a new emphasis on supporting "National Liberation Movements or Regimes" in the Third World states.

After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the conflict was no longer a bilateral issue between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, or of a regional balance of power. It was transformed into a conflict of global significance which was fought within the parameters of superpower Cold War rivalry. In invading Afghanistan, the Soviet Union made two errors of judgement: Firstly, they miscalculated their own military ability to win the war by ignoring particular geographical terrain and political features of Afghan society; and secondly, they misjudged the US response- which was a very sharp reaction. The regional balance of power was in turmoil due to revolution in Iran and Pakistan. By sharply condemning the Soviet invasion and adopting various retaliatory measures, the US soon became the chief beneficiary of the Soviet invasion. It forged unity of purpose with the regional and Islamic states to check any further Soviet advance. Thus, during the 1980s both the superpowers, through their clients, became heavily involved in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union's military strategy, was based upon a conventional model which relied on 'mechanised combined-arms operations' and the use of massive force

and indiscriminate destruction of rural infrastructure, proved inappropriate and unsuccessful against the Afghan Resistance. For the US, the war provided an opportunity to avenge their defeat in Vietnam. Under the 'Reagan Doctrine', military and economic aid was extended to various anti-Communist insurgencies in the Third World trying to overthrow unpopular Soviet installed Marxist governments. Afghanistan met all the criteria for the application of the Reagan doctrine and although US policy was successful in achieving the withdrawal of Soviet forces, it also showed that the primary interest of the US in Afghanistan was this withdrawal. Indeed, the leaving of the Communist regime of President Najibullah in power in Kabul in 1988 exposed US selfishness and hypocrisy and left the political settlement of the Afghan conflict by the installation of a legitimate government in Kabul unresolved. Clearly, throughout the Cold War the underlying and primary aim of US foreign policy was to ensure the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

Under intense conservative pressure and charges of the betrayal of the Afghan Mujahideen, a last minute agreement between the US and the Soviet Union on 'positive symmetry' was reached. It meant that the US retained the right to continue supplying the Afghan Mujahideen with arms as long as Moscow provided aid to the Communist regime of Najibullah in Kabul. This superpower agreement made the conclusion of the Geneva Accords meaningless or obsolete and led to the outbreak of civil war in Afghanistan. The two other provisions of the Geneva Accords, which dealt with Afghan self-determination and the return of the refugees, could not be implemented due to the continuation of this Civil War.

Apart from the issue of the superpower involvement in the Afghan conflict, another related question is the implications the war had for Afghan society. This is significant, because the social changes brought about by the war is one of the main reasons why the conflict has become so intractable. The two significant legacies of

the war, which have negatively affected the prospects of satisfactory resolution of the conflict, include the increased regional interference and a crisis of political legitimacy in Afghanistan.

With the ending of the Cold War and the disengagement of both the Soviet Union and the US, Afghanistan lost its strategic value in the Cold War struggle. But this did not bring peace to Afghanistan because of the legacies of the war, which include the fragmentation of power along ethnic lines, emergence of new elites and power centres, lack of consensus among the contenders for power, shifting of alliances, bitter rivalries and the continued trend of outside interference in Afghan affairs, have served to keep the conflict alive. Thus, in the post-Cold War period, Afghanistan has turned into a battleground for the regional state's struggle to shift the regional balance of power in their favour.

These changes have also affected the UN's ability to bring peace to Afghanistan. The involvement of the UN in Afghanistan began during the Cold War period when it strictly adhered to the principle of state 'sovereignty', which implied non-interference in the domestic affairs of its member states. As it was an organisation composed of sovereign member states it continued to grant legitimacy to the Communist regime in Kabul throughout the Geneva negotiations (1982-88), while refusing to recognise the Afghan insurgency. Owing to this discrepancy, the UN has never been able to enjoy the trust of the Afghan Mujahideen.

The main stumbling block in the resolution of the Afghan conflict is the question of the imposition of a legitimate future government in Kabul. This issue was excluded from the UN agenda items in 1982 due to insistence by both the Soviet Union and Afghanistan Communist Party that the future of the Kabul regime was not negotiable. In 1987, the issue was suddenly raised by the Soviet Union. The reason for this change of Soviet policy was the stalemate in the war in

Afghanistan, the Soviet desire, under President Gorbachev, to disengage its forces from Afghanistan due to the growing burden of the war on the Soviet economy, and the gradual realisation by the Soviet Union of the staying power of the Afghan Mujahedeen, and increasing support for the Afghan Resistance from the US and its allies. But the issue of the composition of the interim future government in Afghanistan could not be resolved quickly because of serious differences among all the actors involved. Faced with a deadlock in the negotiations, but desiring a face-saving settlement under the auspices of the UN, on 8 February, 1988, President Gorbachev unilaterally provided a ten month timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Another feature of the conflict was the bureaucratic battles within the US Administration, the Soviet Union, Pakistan and the Afghan regime. During the Cold War the superpowers pursued their global interests in Afghanistan indirectly through their clients, Pakistan and Afghanistan. As a consequence, the superpower interests were quite often different from the interests of other actors involved in the conflict. The key regional state in the conflict, Pakistan, was deeply affected by the war and paid a heavy price for its role in checking the spread of Communism. The economic burden of hosting three million Afghan refugees, the proliferation of drugs, weapons, crime and lawlessness are just a few examples of the price Pakistan paid for its front-line status. The heavy reliance of the Afghan Communist regime on the Soviet Union for survival further implied that the regime control was confined to major towns, and that PDPA lacked widespread legitimacy.

The reasons for the Soviet decision to withdraw from Afghanistan were linked to President Gorbachev's efforts to improve relations with the US on arms control, seek rapprochement with China and improve relations with the various Third World and Islamic states. On the domestic front, there was growing criticism by

the Soviet public against the war in Afghanistan due to its mounting costs and the exposure of increasing fissures in the Communist system. Afghanistan was used as a model for Soviet troop disengagement from the Third World states based on the policy of 'National Reconciliation' among the belligerents. Afghanistan became a symbol of Soviet public disenchantment with the objectives of Soviet foreign policy, the closed nature of the Soviet foreign policy making machine, the use of propaganda to mould public opinion by the regime, the spread of corruption, and growing divisions among the Soviet policy making elites. The war in Afghanistan also exposed the various shortcomings in the Soviet Army. The war was unpopular among the Soviet soldiers, living conditions in Afghanistan were poor, the army was unprepared for guerrilla warfare, morale was low, drug abuse, alcoholism, and bullying among the Soviet soldiers was rampant. The doctrine of increased centralisation proved ineffective in a guerrilla war and the soldiers lacked qualities of personal initiative and also a lack of enthusiasm for the war. In summary, the war in Afghanistan, in conjunction with Gorbachev's reforms 'perestroika'(restructuring) and 'glasnost'(openness), brought to the surface the shallowness of the twin myths of the invincibility and superiority of the Communist system which had been fed into Soviet society by state propaganda for generations.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Gulf War in 1990-91 there emerged, once again, a consensus between the superpowers to seek a negotiated solution of the Afghan conflict. In a change in the earlier Soviet policy of 1988, which stated that the future of Afghanistan was an internal matter for the Afghans to decide for themselves, in 1989 the Soviet Union agreed with the US for renewed involvement of the UN in the settlement of the conflict in the post-Cold War period. In May 1991 the UN proposed a five point peace plan. Its provisions included the cessation of outside support to the Afghan factions and the formation of a transitional government. The main obstacle was the Mujahideen refusal to

share power with President Najibullah. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the fall of Najibullah's government in April 1992, Kabul was captured by a coalition of Afghan factions called the 'Northern Alliance' and the UN peace plan collapsed before it could be implemented.

In the post-Cold War multipolar balance of power system, there is no deployment of UN peacekeeping forces under the UN's Security Council mandate authorising the use of enforcement measures to bring peace to Afghanistan. There is no consensus and there is a lack of willingness among the permanent members of the Security Council to deploy either peace keeping, or peace enforcement, forces in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is neither a threat to the immediate security of any of the big powers, nor does it have any valuable resources like oil for the major powers. The Secretary General's recommendation for the pursuit of a mediation strategy in Afghanistan is only endorsed by a UN General Assembly resolution.

In view of the recent difficulties experienced by the UN peacekeeping forces in internal conflicts and civil wars, such as in Somalia, Yugoslavia and Rwanda, there is a reluctance to undertake comprehensive peacekeeping operations without the consent of the parties. There is also reluctance to use military force in civil wars. In modern civil war situations, peacekeeping is usually not based upon the consent of the warring parties. The maintenance of UN impartiality is also undermined in cases where military force is used to help in humanitarian operations. The UN member states are reluctant to commit their forces where the combination of humanitarian and military measures is not only complicated, and hazardous, but is also a threat to the physical security of their national forces. The UN's recent peacekeeping efforts have been relatively more successful in conflicts where there has been comprehensive agreement upon peace plans, as has been seen in Cambodia, Namibia and El Salvador, where a desire among the contending parties to bring the conflict to an end accompanied UN efforts. These peace plans

involved extensive efforts, active participation and provision of financial resources by the major powers and important regional states. In Afghanistan, at present, there is no prospect of such an involvement by any of the major powers and there are divisions among the regional states over the issue of their support for various factions involved in fighting.

The causes of the continuing conflict in Afghanistan are numerous and can be traced as far back as its emergence as an independent state in 1747. What is relevant in the present context is to focus on those aspects of the conflict which are most amenable to a peaceful settlement. According to Charles King, the complex nature of civil wars in terms of their structure, such as duration, the role of the outside actors, the economic interests of the various factions involved, asymmetry in the status, organisation, commitment of the belligerents, the absence of any central mechanism to enforce a settlement, and absence of proper security guarantees to all the factions, can present special difficulties for finding a peaceful resolution to civil war. An understanding of the structural aspects of civil wars is essential in order to find ways to end the conflict. As each conflict is different, some solutions can work in some cases but not in others.<sup>1</sup>

Ideally, the most effective way to promote a peaceful negotiated settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan would be through massive diplomatic and financial support by the major powers. There are no prospects of such intervention taking place, by either the US or her allies, in the near future. The US has made it clear that it does not want to become directly involved in the Afghan conflict and instead, would support the UN's efforts towards a negotiated settlement of the conflict. This is tragic, because Afghanistan made a major contribution in enabling the US to win the Cold War against the Soviet Union. Some of the requirements for the peaceful settlement of the Afghan conflict include disarmament, demobilisation, holding of

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<sup>1</sup>C. King , Ending Civil Wars, Adelphi Paper, 308 (London: Brassey's for IISS, 1997)

elections to transfer power to the elected representatives of the people, economic reconstruction and the creation of a legitimate government to enforce law and order in the society. These are serious demands which need resources and commitment and cannot be resolved exclusively through mediation.

The ending of the Cold War has not brought peace to Afghanistan. The Cold War struggle between the US and the Soviet Union in denying each other spheres of influence in the Third World has been replaced by the pursuit of divergent interest of the regional states in Afghanistan. The coherence or the unity of purpose among these regional states in the expulsion of Soviet forces has disintegrated in the post-Cold War period. During the Cold War, Afghanistan suffered from the rigidity and inflexibility of the bipolar world, while in post-Cold War period it has become a victim of the unstable, complex and uncertain multipolar environment. The advantages of a multipolar balance of power are in terms of more flexibility in inter-state interactions, and interaction opportunities, while the propensity for risk aversion is usually combined with certain disadvantages such as instability, miscalculation, distrust of each other's intentions leading to frequent alliance formation and dissolution, lack of restraint and ambiguity about the rules of the game, doubts about the reliability of partners and an inability to distinguish between a friend or a foe.

The vacuum created by the disengagement of the superpowers and the collapse of the central state in Afghanistan has been filled by competition among the regional states to promote their own interests. This has fuelled ethnic hostility among the various ethnic groups in terms of gaining power, seeking economic benefits or simply denying the opposition to come to power, and has also led to ethnic polarisation in Afghanistan. Throughout the conflict, the indigenous ethnic cleavages in Afghan society have been used by the regional states to promote their interests. In a civil war situation, the threatened or the weaker faction has the easy

option of joining a more powerful outside state which promises to provide it with financial or military resources and which can compensate for its inferior position against a superior rival. Under such circumstances the incentives to defect become very strong. This can be compared with an international environment where small states are more exposed to the effects of international instability.

The Realist theory of international relations, and more particularly the 'security dilemma' approach, can be applied to understand the reasons for continuing civil war in Afghanistan. It can explain the difficulties involved in arriving at a negotiated solution of the conflict through the UN. The main argument of the security dilemma approach is that, in an international system, increasing the security of one state decreases the security of another state. Contrary to the conventional Realist approach, which regards the drive for power as based on man's basic instinct to dominate others, the security dilemma approach views the competition for power among the states as a consequence of the security dilemma.

In a Civil War situation, the demise of a legitimate central government or authority means that the various warring factions face a situation similar to that facing sovereign states who are struggling to survive in a competitive international environment. The absence of a legitimate central government in Afghanistan, and the presence of various rival ethnic coalitions competing for power, creates a security dilemma in which any one faction searching for security automatically threatens the existence of another. The various factions, or the sub-state actors involved in Civil War not only have to operate in a hostile environment, but they are also confronted with the same difficulties as those facing individual states in trying to cooperate. Furthermore, the indigenous warring factions have the additional responsibility of building a completely new state structure. This makes the task of resolving the conflict even more difficult.

Before applying the security dilemma approach to the civil war in Afghanistan, it is essential to understand what it means. The main argument of the security dilemma approach is that, in a social constellation, it is the inherent fear of being exploited by others which gives birth to fear and suspicion among human beings. This view was advocated by the English historian, Herbert Butterfield, who called it the 'predicament of Hobbesian fear' which he regarded as underlying most of the human conflict in the world. According to him, it was the fear of each others' intentions, and the human inability to enter into the other persons counter fear, which gives rise to suspicion and makes it impossible for humans to realise that because another person cannot see into your mind he cannot have the same assurances about your peaceful intentions.<sup>2</sup> In an anarchic international system, where there is no central authority, the states try to overcome their mutual fears and suspicions by increasing their security. However, the quest for this by a state does not bring the desired outcome because others react to this increase in power by increasing their own weapons. Thus, a simultaneous quest for security by several states becomes a self-defeating exercise.

The same argument is put forward by advocates of the spiral model, who argue that the pursuit of power by individual states is not due to a flaw in human nature, but rather an instinct of self preservation in an anarchic international environment which leads to competition for power.<sup>3</sup> Different states have different reasons to feel insecure and the higher the level of insecurity, the greater the states degree of armaments, the more these armaments will look as offensive to others even in the absence of a clash of interests. The states can try to overcome their perceived insecurity through acquiring arms or through expansion, but this leads to a fear of

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<sup>2</sup> J. Herz, *International Politics in an Atomic age*, (London: Columbia University Press, 1970) pp. 234-235.

<sup>3</sup> R. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976) pp. 58-113.

encirclement by the other states. The Arms Race is an area where this security dilemma is at its most vicious.

The perceptions of each others' intentions also play an important role in intensifying the security dilemma. The sense of insecurity which leads one state to acquire arms in order to defend itself is often perceived by other states as evidence of aggression or hostile intent towards them. As survival is their basic instinct, states often react to this increase in the strength of another state by increasing the level of their own armaments. This creates tension and a possibility for a conflict in an international environment. The security dilemma also arises when states fail to realise that their own actions could be provoking insecurity among other states. States expect others to have a similar perception about their policies and intentions of peace and defence. But what they fail to understand is that other states are unable to make such distinctions. A state's inability to understand properly the implications for others of its policy of increasing its strength often, makes it underestimate the degree to which its actions are threatening others.

At the level of international politics, the security dilemma operates much more forcefully and with much more serious consequences than at individual level. Moreover, even if the states are assured of the peaceful intentions of other states, there no guarantee that these intentions will not change over time or will not be defined differently by subsequent groups of policy makers. Obviously, the security dilemma is not the only reason for inter-state conflicts but in most cases it has operated to different degrees of intensity and according to the nature of the circumstances. However, it should be emphasised that it is not only the role of perceptions of the decision makers which causes conflict among states, but also the underlying structure of the international system which is the main reason for the creation of the security dilemma.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>*Op.Cit.*, K. Waltz, Theory of International Politics, Chapters 5 & 6.

Apart from the structure of the international system and the misperceptions of each other's intentions, the two other variables involved in creating the security dilemma are, namely, the inability to distinguish between offensive weapons and policies and defensive weapons and policies, and the question of whether offence (attack) has an advantage over defence (protection). Geography and technology are two factors that determine whether offence or defence has the advantage. When two sides have the same defence budgets, and when the choice is between the offensive and defensive forces, the likelihood is that the state will build offensive forces. When war is inevitable, it is tempting to launch the first strike rather than leave the adversary with the choice. In a Civil War the warring factions have principally conventional weapons which are usually scarce and thus there is an incentive to attack as soon as a group perceives that it has the margin of superiority over its enemy. Another variable creating an incentive to launch an offensive attack in a Civil War is the perception of the opposition group's solidarity. Various groups perceive each others unity as a threat to them which creates an offence dominant environment. Thus, in a Civil War the incentive for preventive war, or the temptation to launch an pre-emptive attack on the adversary, can deepen the security dilemma. Geography in a civil war can also create an offence dominant environment. The incentive to break the ring of encirclement, and to force the rival ethnic group to leave a certain area, are all viewed as offensive moves by the other faction.<sup>5</sup>

Efforts made by one side to resolve the conflict through adopting a policy of conciliation, or granting concessions to the adversary, can be interpreted as a sign of weakness by the other side. This can lead to further demands and makes co-operation impossible. Such misperceptions are quite common at the global level

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<sup>5</sup>*Op. Cit.*, R. Jervis, "Co-operation under the Security Dilemma", *World Politics*, pp.167-214 & B. R. Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict", *Survival* (Vol.35, No.1,1993) pp.27-47.

and have led to many conflicts between states. However, in an Civil War, not only are the risks much higher, but the level of mistrust and antagonism between the various factions is deeply embedded, thus creating a security dilemma.

In the Afghan Civil War there are two important factors that have created the security dilemma. Firstly, the regional states had a policy of providing support to different ethnic groups in Afghanistan; and secondly, a process of internal transformation of the Afghan politics has led to an increase in the number of political actors in the country. One major consequence of the war has been the fragmentation of power centres, and thus cooperation among multiple groups have become extremely difficult.

During the Cold War period there were conflicts of interests of the regional states involved in the Afghan conflict. However, as most of the regional states were aligned to one or the other superpower bloc, which for their own self-interest had a stake in keeping the level of local conflicts below a certain threshold, their differences were submerged. There is no such restraining influence on the ambitions of the regional states in the post-Cold War environment. Different regional states perceive their security and economic interests as being threatened by the actions of rival states in Afghanistan. As a consequence, they respond by providing support to the various factions involved in the conflict, making compromise or co-operation among the antagonists impossible. In a multipolar world there is no consensus among the regional states to bring the conflict to an end. During the Cold War the Afghan conflict was an extension of the superpower rivalry in the region. Now it is a battleground for competition among the regional states.

After the Soviet withdrawal the Gulf rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia began to assert itself in Afghanistan. During the period of Soviet occupation, Iran had

played only a marginal role in Afghanistan as it was preoccupied with the Iran-Iraq War between 1980 and 1988. Also, the dominant role played by the US and Saudi Arabia during the Soviet occupation meant that Iran could not be a key actor. However, the end of the Iran-Iraq War, followed by the withdrawal of the Soviet forces in 1989, provided an impetus for Iran to become more assertive in safeguarding its interests in the region. Fearful of the Saudi-US-Pakistani coalition supporting the Sunni Fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan, in 1990 Iran brought together the various Shiite groups in an Alliance called Hizbi-Wahdat and developed close links with its fellow Persian speaking groups [Tajiks] in the Jamiati-Islami party and also with some moderate parties.

The independence of the Central Asian states in 1991 introduced another player in the regional balance of power. In the immediate aftermath of the independence of these States the common perception was that the area would be caught up in the rivalry between Iran and secular Turkey. But it was Saudi Arabia and Pakistan supported who the Sunni groups which included the fundamentalist leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, which caused Iran to step in to support the Persian speaking Tajiks. The failure of Pakistan foreign policy in seeking a military solution to the conflict led it to support the UN plan to a political solution. Pakistan cut back on the military aid to the Afghan factions from 1 January 1992. The UN plan did not include any Afghan commanders. Moreover, the transitional mechanism which was to transfer power to a new interim government failed before it could be implemented. This was because Ahmed Shah Massoud of Jamiat-i-Islami, the Uzbek warlord Rashid Dostum's Junbishi-Milli and the Shiite group Hizbi-Wahdat captured Kabul in April 1992. This Iranian supported coalition captured power after the collapse of the government of President Najibullah. The Peshawar Accords, signed in April 1992, elected an interim government but after six months in power, it was transferred to the Jamiat-i-Islami party of Burhanuddin Rabbani which was supposed to hold elections after eighteen

months. The government was composed of Tajiks and Uzbeks with ties to the ethnic groups in Central Asia, that is to the republics of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. This was resented by the Pathans, who are the traditional rulers of Afghanistan, and led to the outbreak of Civil War (1992-94). This time, four ethnic groups dominated four autonomous regions in Afghanistan undermining the authority of the central government in Kabul. As a consequence of the continuing fighting, another peace plan, the Islamabad Accord, was signed in March 1993. It was brokered by Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Meanwhile the eruption of the Afghan Civil War in 1992 (at the same time as civil war in Tajikistan), undermined the coalition of Tajiks, Uzbeks and the Shiite groups. In 1993, Hizbi-Wahdat and Dostum distanced themselves from Masoud and Masoud's relations with Iran also became distant. In view of the secular orientations of the Central Asian States, Iran gave up its ideological crusade and adopted a pragmatic policy to seek economic benefits in Central Asia. Uzbekistan and Russia, fearing the spread of Islamic fundamentalism, supported Rashid Dostum.

In 1994, there was a change in the alliances of the coalitions competing for the power to control Kabul. The Iranian supported alliance soon disintegrated when Dostum defected to Hekmatyar (1994) and formed the Supreme Co-ordination Council (SCC). The two other members of this coalition were the Hizbi-Wahdat, led by Ali Mazari, and the National Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan under Sibghatullah Mujaddedi. Throughout 1994 the SCC fought against the Rabbani-Massoud coalition government to gain control of Kabul, during which time the UN increased its role in Afghanistan. The UN recommendations of September 1994, including the establishment of a cease-fire monitoring body by the UN, demilitarisation, creation of a national security force and the formation of a neutral transitional authority which would hold elections after two years, could

not be implemented. The reason lay in the conflicting policies of the regional states with Russia and India increasing their roles.

The prospects of gaining economic benefits from the Central Asian states also led Pakistan to change its foreign policy and to distance itself from Hekmatyar. It was also concerned about the refusal of the Rabbani-Massoud government to hand over power to a representative government after their eighteen month rule expired in January 1994. The emergence of the Taliban movement in September of that year also introduced another player in the conflict. It was an alternative to Hekmatyar, who had been discredited, and was in opposition to the Tajik government of Rabbani who had refused to step down. In supporting the Taliban, Pakistan was motivated by economic interests to open an alternative trade route to Central Asia through Uzbekistan. Moreover, the dismemberment of Afghanistan along territorial lines can threaten Pakistan security, due to a significant proportion of ethnic Pathans on the Pakistani side of the border, which in the case of state disintegration in Afghanistan could demand independence to set up a separate Pathan state with their fellow Pathans in Afghanistan.

Pakistan attempted to reach an agreement with Dostum to open alternative trade routes. Dostum, who was the leading military leader at the time and under the influence of Uzbekistan and Russia (who feared the spread of Islamic fundamentalism to their borders) declined to co operate. One consequence was that in May 1996 Hekmatyar joined the Rabbani-Massoud government as Prime Minister against the Taliban. However, he left soon afterwards. The rise of the Taliban alarmed Iran, Russia, and the Central Asian States. In October 1996, Dostum, in view of the Taliban capture of Kabul, also joined forces with the Rabbani -Massoud ousted government and the Shia Alliance, Hizbi-Wahdat. Iran supported this alliance and airlifted supplies and troops to fight against the Taliban.

Afghanistan was divided into Pathan areas in the east and non-Pathan areas in the north bordering Central Asia.

In 1996, the US increased its diplomacy in the region after President Clinton's Administration had neglected Afghanistan for six years because of the US perception of its diminished strategic significance in the post-Cold War period. However, the threat of drugs, Islamic fundamentalism, Iranian influence in Afghanistan and in Central Asia, oil interest, spread of terrorism, and the proliferation of arms, brought US interest back to the region.

In 1997 there was a growing disunity in the ranks of the Northern Alliance (Ahmed Shah Massoud, Dostum's Junbeshi-Milli and Hizbi-Wahdat of Karim Khalili). At one stage the fighting between the Northern alliance and the Taliban forces across the north of Hindu Kush reached the border of Uzbekistan. The military strength of Rashid Dostum declined sharply when one of his allies General Abdul Malik defected to the Taliban in May 1997. Dostum was forced to flee to Turkey.<sup>7</sup> The Taliban captured Mazar-i-Shariff in the summer of 1997, but their attempt to disarm the forces of Shia alliance Hizbi-Wahdat in the Hazara region led to renewed fighting. As a consequence the Taliban were forced to withdraw from Mazari-Shariff. In September 1997, the Taliban advanced once again from Kunduz towards Mazari-Shariff and captured the port of Khairaton on the border with Uzbekistan. However, by now Rashid Dostum had returned from Turkey and after a brief reconciliation with his former ally General Abdul Malik managed to recapture his base of Mazar-i-Shariff. Thus during 1997, as the Taliban made significant inroads in the northern areas of Afghanistan, the unity of the Northern Alliance was gravely weakened. On the economic front two rival consortiums have put forward plans for the construction of gas and oil pipelines from Central Asia to the south. They include the UNCOL composed of Saudi

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<sup>7</sup>A. Saikal. "Afghanistan's Ethnic Conflict", *Survival*, (Vol.40, No.2, 1998) pp. 114-125.

Delta, two Japanese firms, Korean Hyundai and Turkmenistan oil and Gas Ministry. The other bidder is the Argentine company Bridas. These plans are still their formative phase and depend upon the political situation in Afghanistan.

The Iranian Presidential elections in August 1997 led to the victory of Mohammad Khatami. There was also a decline in Uzbekistans support for Rashid Dostum.<sup>8</sup> These two developments gave a renewed impetus to regional peace initiatives. A meeting of six regional states took place at the UN in December 1997, with the participation of the US and Russia. The UN representative Robert Noll was replaced by Lakhdhar Brahimini as the Secretary General representative to Afghanistan who has held talks with different Afghan factions and formulated a plan to enforce arms embargo on Afghanistan which is being passed on to the US and Russia for their approval.

This change in the regional situation combined with US economic interest has once again brought Afghanistan back on the US foreign policy agenda. Within Afghanistan there are two main rival factions; the Taliban and the Northern Alliance. There have been constraints on the US policy too. The Taliban violation of human rights have provoked domestic criticism in the US. Thus in the Post Cold-War period the possibility of peace returning to Afghanistan has become closely linked to (though there are constraints on policy too) the economic interests of the regional and major western states, in their attempts to find profitable route to the Central Asian markets and its natural resources through Afghanistan.<sup>9</sup>

This study has reinforced my conclusion that the concepts of power struggle, the security dilemma and conflict of interests are just as applicable to the analysis of the internal war in a post-Cold War situation as they are to the analysis on inter-

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<sup>8</sup> R. H. Magnus, Afghanistan in 1997, *Asian Survey* (Vol XXXVII, No.2, 1998) pp. 109-113.

<sup>9</sup> Khalid Akhtar, "US owes peace to Afghans", News Analysis, *The Muslim* (13 April, 1998)

state conflict. The study has also been able to show that in the case of Afghanistan it is impossible to fully comprehend the origins and dynamics of the internal conflict without taking a full account of the influence and interventions of the major powers, regional powers (Russia, India, Iran and Pakistan) and the role of the US. Moreover, in view of the criticism of the realist theory that it treats the states as unitary whole this study has also undertaken an analysis of the domestic political development in Afghanistan from 1747-1979. The study of the influence of domestic political development has acquired new importance in the post- Cold War period especially in view of the increasing number of failed states in the post Cold War period. The study shows that neo-realist theory of state can be enlarged, by including the phenomena of functional differentiation to account for differences among the states in the West and states in the Third World.

## **APPENDIX (1)**

### **UN General Assembly Resolution 35/37 on the Situation in Afghanistan and its implications for International Peace and Security, 20 November 1980**

The General Assembly,

Having considered the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security,"

Recalling its resolution ES-6/2 of 14 January 1980 adopted at its sixth emergency special session,

Reaffirming the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the obligations of all States to refrain in their international relations from the threat of use of force against the sovereignty, territorial and political independence of any state,

Reaffirming further the inalienable right of all peoples to determine their own form of government and to choose their own economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever,

Gravely concerned at the continuing foreign armed intervention in Afghanistan, in contravention of the above principles, and its serious implications for international peace and security,

Deeply concerned at the increasing flow of refugees from Afghanistan,

Deeply conscious of the urgent need for a political solution to the grave situation in respect of Afghanistan.

Recognising the importance of the continuing efforts and initiatives of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference for a political solution of the situation in respect of Afghanistan,

1. Reiterates that the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan is essential for a peaceful solution of the problem;

2. Reaffirms the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever;

3. Calls for the immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan;

4. Also calls upon all parties concerned to work for the urgent achievement of a political solution and the creation of the necessary conditions which would enable the Afghan refugees to return voluntarily to their homes in safety and honour;

5. Appeals to all States and national and international organisations to extend humanitarian relief assistance, with a view to alleviating the hardship of the Afghan refugees, in coordination with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees;

6. Expresses its appreciation of the efforts of the Secretary General in search for a solution to the problem and hopes that he will continue to extend assistance, including the appointment of a special representative, with a view of promoting a political solution in accordance with the provisions of the present resolution, and the exploration of securing appropriate guarantees for non use of force, or threat of use of force, against the political independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of all neighbouring States, on the basis of mutual guarantees and strict non-interference in each others internal affairs and with full regard for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

7. Requests the Secretary General to keep the Member States and the Security Council concurrently informed of progress towards the implementation of the present resolution and to submit to Member States a report on the situation at the earliest appropriate opportunity;

8. Decides to include the provincial agenda of its thirty-sixth session the item entitled "The Situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security."

## **Appendix (2)**

### **Statement by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, 14 May 1980**

The Afghan people, having accomplished in April 1978 the national democratic revolution, made a final choice and embarked on the path of the creation in the country of a new society based on the principles of equality and justice, a society ruling out of the exploitation of man by man. The new Afghan society is based on profound respect for, and observance of the national, historical cultural and religious traditions of the people along with the firm observance of the principles of Islam as the sacred religion and with freedom of religious rites guaranteed for Muslims by law.

The Afghan people would like to build a new life in conditions of peace and relations of friendship and cooperation with their neighbours, with Muslim countries and with all other states.

The People of Afghanistan are determined to defend the freedom and independence of their country and its right to decide for itself the social and economic system within the framework of which it wants to live.

Reaffirming that in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan the foreign policy of the DRA is based on the principles of peaceful coexistence and active and positive non alignment, the government of the DRA declares that it is determined to search for a political settlement to ensure the complete termination of aggressive actions against Afghanistan, of subversive activities and all other forms of interference from outside in its internal affairs, to eliminate tension in the area and overcome differences by peaceful means and through negotiations.

The programme of a political settlement could be based on the following clauses:

1. The government of the DRA proposes to the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to hold Afghan Iranian negotiations to work out an appropriate agreement as to promote the development of friendly relations and all round mutually beneficial cooperation between our two countries.

The government of the DRA also proposes to the government of the Pakistan to hold Afghan-Pakistani negotiations with a view to working out bilateral agreements on the normalisation of relations. Such agreements would contain generally acceptable principles concerning mutual respect for sovereignty, a readiness to develop relations on the basis of principles of good

neighbourliness and non interference in the internal affairs, and would also comprise concrete obligations on the inadmissibility of armed or any other hostile activity from the territory of one country into another.

2. The government of the DRA once again calls on the Afghans temporarily staying for various reasons on the territory of Pakistan and other neighbouring countries to return to their homeland and reaffirms that in accordance with the general amnesty announced in the Government Statement on 1 January 1980, and subsequent statements to this effect they will be respected and full freedom and immunity will be guaranteed to them; they will be able to choose freely their domicile and employment, and necessary facilities would be provided for them. The Government of the DRA calls upon the Pakistani authorities and the authorities of other neighbouring countries to facilitate the free return of such persons to Afghanistan. If nevertheless some of the Afghans should not wish to return, then questions connected with this should be discussed in the course of bilateral discussions with a view of achieving relevant accords.

3. Upon reaching mutually acceptable solutions referring to Points One and Two and normalising on this basis the relations between Afghanistan and its neighbours, the government of the DRA would be ready to consider other questions of bilateral relations including those which for a long time have remain subject of differences.

4. Proposing to hold bilateral negotiations with neighbouring countries without any preconditions, the government of the DRA firmly proceeds from the presumption that their conduct would not be accompanied by the continuation of hostile activities against Afghanistan. Accordingly, from the very start of the process of the political settlement practical measures should be taken testifying beyond any doubt that the termination of armed and any other interference in the affairs of Afghanistan on behalf of all states involved in such interference.

5. The government of the DRA is of the opinion that apart from a package of bilateral accords between Afghanistan and Pakistan and Afghanistan and Iran, appropriate political guarantees on the part of some states which should be acceptable to Afghanistan as well as other parties to bilateral accords should become an integral part of the political settlement. Among them in the opinion of the DRA, the Soviet Union and the United States may be named. The essence of the guarantees should be the point the guarantor countries would themselves respect and by their authority support bilateral accords between Afghanistan and Pakistan and Afghanistan and Iran. As far as guarantees on behalf of the US are concerned they should comprise a clearly expressed obligation not to wage any subversive activities against Afghanistan, including any from the territory of the Third Country.

6. The government of the DRA declares that within the context of a political settlement the question of withdrawal of the Soviet limited military contingent from Afghanistan should be resolved. The cessation and guaranteed non-recurrence of military invasions and any other forms of interference in internal affairs of Afghanistan would eliminate the reasons which prompted Afghanistan to request the USSR to send the above-mentioned contingent to its territory. In concrete terms the questions of withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan will depend on the solution of the question of effective guarantees with respect to bilateral accords between Afghanistan and Pakistan and Afghanistan and Iran.

7. The government of the DRA in the process of political settlement is in favour of taking into account the political-military activity in the region of the Indian ocean and the Persian Gulf on the part of states not belonging to this area. Sharing the concern of other states over the build-up of the military presence of the US in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, the government of the DRA supports the proposals on turning this area into zone of peace, on the elimination there of military bases and on taking other measures to lessen tension and strengthen security.

Putting forward these proposals concerning a political settlement, the government of the DRA once again declares that the questions pertaining to the interests of Afghanistan cannot be discussed and resolved without the participation of the government of Afghanistan or bypassing it. Simultaneously the Afghan government regards as useful the efforts of other states aimed at facilitating the beginning of negotiations. In this connection it welcomes and supports the initiative displayed by the Republic of Cuba in its capacity as chairman of the non-aligned movement in offering its good services.

The government of the DRA hopes that the concrete programme of a political settlement suggested by it will meet with due understanding and a favourable response from the government of the Islamic republic of Iran. The government of the DRA expects that its proposals for the normalisation of relations with Pakistan will be constructively and positively received by the government of Pakistan which will make it possible to begin in practice the settlement of the above mentioned issues through negotiations.

## **Appendix (3)**

### **The Geneva Accords on the Settlement of the Situation Relating to Afghanistan, 14 April 1988.**

#### **Bilateral Agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the Principles of Mutual Relations, in Particular on Non-Interference and Non-Intervention**

The Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, hereinafter referred to as the High Contracting Parties,

Desiring to normalise relations and promote good neighbourliness and cooperation as well as to strengthen international peace and security in the region,

Considering that full observance of the principles of non-interference and non-intervention in the international and external affairs of States is of the greatest importance for the maintenance of international peace and security and for the fulfilment of the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the inalienable right of States freely to determine their own political, economic, cultural and social systems in accordance with the will of their peoples without outside intervention, interference, subversion, coercion or threat in any form whatsoever,

Mindful of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations as well as the resolutions adopted by the United Nations on the principle of non-interference and non-intervention, in particular the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, of 24 October 1970, as well as the Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States, of 9 December 1981,

Have agreed as follows:

#### **Article 1**

Relations between the High Contracting Parties shall be conducted in strict compliance with the principle of non-interference and non-intervention by States in the affairs of other States.

#### **Article 2**

For the purpose of implementing the principles of non-interference and non-intervention each High Contracting Party undertakes to comply with the following obligations:

(1) to respect the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, national unity, security and non-alignment of the other High Contracting Party, as well as the national identity and the cultural heritage of its people;

(2) to respect the sovereign and inalienable right of the other High Contracting Party freely to determine its own political, economic, cultural and social systems, to develop its international relations and to exercise permanent sovereignty over its natural resources, in accordance with the will of its people, and without outside intervention, interference, subversion, coercion or threat in any form whatsoever;

(3) to refrain from the threat or the use of force in any form whatsoever so as not to violate the boundaries of each other, to disrupt the political, social or economic order of the other High Contracting Party or its Government, or to cause tension between the High Contracting Parties;

(4) to ensure that its territory is not used in any manner which would violate the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and national unity or disrupt the political, economic and social stability of the other High Contracting Party;

(5) to refrain from armed intervention, subversion, military occupation or any other form of intervention and interference, overt or covert, directed at the other High Contracting Party, or any act of military, political or economic interference in the internal affairs of the other High Contracting Party, including acts of reprisal involving the use of force;

(6) to refrain from any action or attempt in whatever form or under whatever pretext to destabilise or to undermine the stability of the other High Contracting Party or any of its institutions;

(7) to refrain from the promotion, encouragement or support, direct or indirect, of rebellious or secessionist activities, against the other High Contracting Party, under any pretext whatsoever, or from any other action which seeks to disrupt the unity or to undermine or subvert the political order of the other High Contracting Party;

(8) to prevent within its territory the training, equipping, financing and recruitment of mercenaries from whatever origin for the purpose of hostile activities against the other High Contracting Party, or sending of such mercenaries into the territory of the other High Contracting Party and

accordingly deny facilities, including financing for the training, equipping and transit of such mercenaries;

(9) to refrain from making any agreements or arrangements with other States designed to intervene or interfere in the internal and external affairs of the other High Contracting Party;

(10) to abstain from any defamatory campaign, vilification or hostile propaganda for the purpose of intervening or interfering in the internal affairs of the other High Contracting Party;

(11) to prevent any assistance to or use of or tolerance of terrorist groups, saboteurs or subversive agents against the other High Contracting Party;

(12) to prevent within its Territory the presence, harbouring, in camps and bases otherwise, organising, training, financing, equipping and arming of individuals and political, ethnic and any other groups for the purpose of creating subversion, disorder or unrest in the territory of the other High Contracting Party and accordingly also to prevent the use of mass media and the transportation of arms, ammunition and equipment by such individuals and groups;

(13) not to resort to or to allow any other action that could be considered as interference or intervention.

### Article III

The present Agreement shall enter into force on 15 May 1988.

### Article IV

Any steps that may be required in order to enable the High Contracting Parties to comply with the provisions of Article II of this Agreement shall be completed by the date on which this Agreement enters into force.

### Article V

This Agreement is drawn up in English, Pashtu and Urdu languages, all texts equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Done in five original copies at Geneva this fourteenth day of April 1988.

[ Signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan ]

## **Declaration of International Guarantees**

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the United States of America,

Expressing support that the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have concluded a negotiated settlement designed to normalise relations and promote good-neighbourliness between the two countries as well as to strengthen international peace and security in the region;

Wishing in turn to contribute to the achievement of the objectives that the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan have set themselves, and with a view to ensuring respect for their sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and non-alignment;

Undertake to invariably refrain from any form of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and to respect the commitments contained in the bilateral agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the Principles of Mutual Relations, in particular on Non-interference and Non-Intervention;

Urge all States to act likewise.

The present Declaration shall enter into force on 15 May 1988.

Done at Geneva, this fourteenth day of April in five original copies, each in the English and Russian languages, both texts being equally authentic.

[Signed by the USSR and the USA]

### **Bilateral Agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the Voluntary Return of the Refugees**

The Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, hereinafter referred to as the High Contracting Parties,

Desiring to normalise relations and promote good neighbourliness and cooperation as well as to strengthen international peace and security in the region,

Convinced that voluntary and unimpeded repatriation constitutes the most appropriate solution for the problem of Afghan refugees present in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and having ascertained that the arrangements for the return of the Afghan refugees are satisfactory to them,

Have agreed as follows:

### Article I

All Afghan refugees temporarily present in the territory of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall be given the opportunity to return voluntarily to their homeland in accordance with the arrangements and conditions set out in the present Agreement.

### Article II

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan shall take all necessary measures to ensure the following conditions for the voluntary return of Afghan refugees to their homeland:

- (a) All refugees shall be allowed to return in freedom to their homeland;
- (b) All returnees shall enjoy the free choice of domicile and freedom of movement within the Republic of Afghanistan;
- (c) All returnees shall enjoy the right to work, to adequate living conditions and to share in the welfare of the State;
- (d) All returnees shall enjoy the right to participation on an equal basis in the civic affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan. They shall be ensured equal benefits from the solution of the land question on the basis of the Land and Water Reform;
- (e) All returnees shall enjoy the same rights and privileges, including freedom of religion, and have the same obligations and responsibilities as any other citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan without any discrimination.

The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan undertakes to implement these measures and to provide, within its possibilities, all necessary assistance in the process of repatriation.

### Article III

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall facilitate the voluntary, orderly repatriation of all Afghan refugees staying within its territory and undertake to provide, within its possibilities, all necessary assistance in the process of repatriation.

### Article IV

For the purpose of organising, co-ordinating and supervising the operation which should effect the voluntary, orderly and peaceful repatriation of Afghan refugees, there shall be set up mixed commissions in accordance with the established international practice. For the performance of their functions the members of the commissions and their staff shall be accorded the necessary

facilities, and have access to the relevant areas within the territories of the High Contracting Parties.

#### Article V

With a view to the orderly movement of the returnees, the commissions shall determine frontier crossing points and establish necessary transit centres.. They shall also establish all other modalities for the phased return of refugees, including registration and communication to the country of return of the names of refugees who express the wish to return.

#### Article VI

At the request of the Governments concerned, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees will cooperate and provide assistance in the process of voluntary repatriation of refugees in accordance with the present Agreement. Special agreements may be concluded for this purpose between UNHCR and the High Contracting Parties.

#### Article VII

The present Agreement shall enter into force on 15 May 1988. At that time the mixed commissions provided in Article IV shall be established and the operations for the voluntary return of refugees under this Agreement shall commence.

The arrangements set out in Article IV and V above shall remain in effect for a period of eighteen months. After that period the High Contracting Parties shall review the results of the repatriation and if necessary, consider any further arrangements that may be called for.

#### Article VIII

This Agreement is drawn up in the English, Pashtu and Urdu languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of any divergence of interpretation, the English text shall prevail.

Done in five original copies at Geneva this fourteenth day of April 1988.

[Signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan]

**Agreement on the Interrelationships for the Settlement of the  
Situation Relating to Afghanistan**

The diplomatic process initiated by the Secretary General of the United Nations with the support of all Governments concerned and aimed at achieving through negotiations, a political settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan has been successfully brought to an end.

2. Having agreed to work towards a comprehensive settlement designed to resolve the various issues involved and to establish a framework for good neighbourliness and cooperation, the Government of Republic of Afghanistan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan entered into negotiations through the intermediary of the Personal Representative of the Secretary General at Geneva from 16 to 24 June 1982. Following consultations held by the Personal Representative in Islamabad, Kabul and Tehran from 21 January to 7 February 1983, the negotiations continued at Geneva from 11 to 22 April and from 12 to 24 June 1983. The Personal Representative again visited the areas for a high level discussions from 3 to 15 April 1984. It was then agreed to change the format of the negotiations and, in pursuance thereof, proximity talks through the intermediary of the Personal Representative were held at Geneva from 24 to 30 August 1984. Another visit to the area by the Personal Representative from 25 to 31 May 1985 preceded further rounds of proximity talks held at Geneva from 20 to 25 June, from 27 to 30 August and from 19 to 19 December 1985. The Personal Representative paid an additional visit to the area from 8 to 18 March 1986 for consultations. The final round of negotiations began as proximity talks at Geneva on 5 May 1986, was suspended on 23 May 1986 and was resumed from 31 July to 8 August 1986. The Personal Representative visited the area from 20 November to 3 December 1986 for further consultations and the talks at Geneva were resumed again from 25 February to 9 March 1987 and from 7 to 11 September 1987. The Personal Representative again visited the area from 18 January to 9 February 1988 and the talks resumed at Geneva from 2 March to 8 April 1988. The format of the negotiations was changed on 14 April 1988, when the instruments comprising the settlement were finalised, and accordingly, direct talks were held at that stage. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran was kept informed of the progress of the negotiations throughout the diplomatic process.

3) The Government of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan took part in the negotiations with the expressed conviction that they were acting in accordance with their rights and obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and agreed that the political settlement should be based on the following principles of international law:

-The principle that States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner in consistent with the purpose of the United Nations;

-The principle not to intervene in matters within the domestic jurisdiction of any State, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

-The principle that the States shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered;

-The duty of States to cooperate with one another in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

- The principle of equal rights and self determination of peoples;

-The principle of sovereign equality of States;

-The principle that states shall refrain in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

The two Governments further affirmed the right of the Afghan refugees to return to their homeland in a voluntary and unimpeded manner.

4. The following instruments were concluded on this date as component parts of the political settlement:

A Bilateral Agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the Principles of Mutual Relations, in particular on Non-Interference and Non-Intervention;

A Declaration on International Guarantees by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America;

A Bilateral Agreement between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the Voluntary Return of the Refugees;

The present Agreement on the Interrelationships for the Settlement of the Situation relating to Afghanistan.

5. The Bilateral Agreement on the Principles of Mutual Relations, in Particular on Non-Interference and Non-Intervention; the Declaration on International Guarantees; the Bilateral Agreement on the Voluntary return of the Refugees; and the present Agreement on the Interrelationships for the Settlement of the Situation Relating to Afghanistan will enter into force on 15 May 1988. In

accordance with the time frame agreed upon between the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics and the Republic of Afghanistan there will be phased withdrawal of the foreign troops which will start on the date of entry into force mentioned above. One half of the troops will be withdrawn by 15 August, 1988 and the withdrawal of all troops will be completed within nine months.

6. The interrelationship in paragraph 5 above have been agreed upon in order to achieve effectively the purpose of the political settlement, namely, that as from 15 May 1988, there will be no interference and intervention in any form in the affairs of the Parties; the international guarantees will be in operation; the voluntary return of the refugees to their homeland will start and be completed within the time frame specified in the agreement on the voluntary return of the refugees; and the phased withdrawal of the foreign troops will start and be completed within the time frame envisaged in paragraph 5. It is therefore essential that all the obligations deriving from the instruments concluded as components parts of the settlement be strictly fulfilled and that all the steps required to ensure the full compliance with all the provisions of the instruments be completed in good faith.

7. To consider alleged violations and to work out prompt and mutually satisfactory solutions to questions that may arise in the implementation of the instruments comprising the settlement representatives of the republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan shall meet whenever required.

A representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations shall lend his good offices to the Parties and in that context he will assist in the organisation of the meeting and participation in them. He may submit to the Parties for their consideration and approval suggestions and recommendations for prompt, faithful and complete observance of the provisions of the instruments.

In order to enable him to fulfil his tasks, the representative shall be assisted by such personnel under his authority as required. On his own initiative, or at the request of the Parties, the personnel shall investigate any possible violations of any of the provisions of the instruments and prepare a report thereon. For that purpose, the representative and his personnel shall receive all the necessary cooperation from the Parties, including all freedom of movement within their respective authorities required for effective investigation. Any report submitted by the representative to the two Governments shall be considered in a meeting of the Parties no later than forty eight after it has been submitted.

The modalities and logistical arrangements for the work of the representatives and the personnel under his authority as agreed upon with the Parties are set out in the Memorandum of Understanding which is annexed to and is part of this Agreement.

8. The present instrument will be registered with the Secretary General of the United Nations. It has been examined by the representatives of the Parties to the bilateral agreements and of the State Guarantors, who have signified their consent with its provisions. The representatives of the Parties , being duly authorised thereto by their respective Governments, have affixed their signatures hereunder. The Secretary General for the United Nations was present.

Done, at Geneva, this fourteenth day of April 1988, in five original copies each in English, Pashtu, Russian, Urdu languages, all being equally authentic. In case of any dispute regarding the interpretation the English Text shall prevail.

[Signed by Afghanistan and Pakistan]

In witness thereof, the representatives of the States Guarantors affixed their signatures hereunder.

[signed by the USSR and the USA]

## **Annex**

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

#### **1. Basic requirements**

(a) The Parties will provide full support and cooperatinn to the Representative of the Secretary General and to all the personnel assigned to assist him;

(b) The Representatives of the Secretary General and his personnel will be accorded every facility as well as prompt and effective assistance including freedom of movement and communications, accommodation, transportation and other facilities that may be necessary for the performance of their tasks: Afghanistan and Pakistan undertake to grant to the Representative and his staff all the relevant privileges and immunities provided for by the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations.

(c) Afghanistan and Pakistan will be responsible for the safety of the Representative of the Secretary General and his personnel while operating in their respective countries.

(d) In performing their functions, The Representative of the Secretary General and his staff will act with complete impartiality. The Representative of the Secretary General and his personnel must not interfere in the internal affairs of

Afghanistan and Pakistan and, in this context, cannot be used to secure advantages for any of the Parties concerned.

## **II. Mandate**

The mandate for the implementation-assistance arrangements envisaged in paragraph 7 derives from the instruments comprising the settlement. All the staff assigned to the Representative of the Secretary General will accordingly be carefully briefed on the relevant provisions of the instruments and on the procedures that will be used to ascertain violations thereof.

## **III. Modus Operandi and Personnel Organisation**

The Secretary General will appoint a senior military officer as Deputy to the Representative who will be stationed in the area, as head of two small headquarters units, one in Kabul and the other in Islamabad, each comprising five military officers, drawn from the existing United Nations operations, and a small civilian auxiliary staff.

The Deputy to the Representative of the Secretary General will act on behalf of the Representative and be in contact with the Parties through the liaison Officer each Party will designate for this purpose.

The two Headquarters units will be organised into two inspection Teams to ascertain on the ground any violation of the instruments comprising the settlement. Whenever considered necessary by the Representative of the Secretary General or his Deputy, up to 40 additional military officers will be re deployed from the existing operations within the shortest possible time.

The nationalities of all the Officers will be determined in consultation with the Parties.

Whenever necessary the Representative of the Secretary General, who periodically visit the area for consultations with the Parties and to review the work of his personnel will also assign to the area members of his own Office and other civilian personnel from the United Nations Secretariat as may be needed. His Deputy will alternate between the two Headquarters units and will remain at all times in close communication with him.

## **IV. Procedure**

### **(a) Inspections conducted at the request of the Parties**

(i) A complaint regarding a violation of the instruments of the settlement lodged by any of the Parties should be submitted in writing, in the English Language, to the respective headquarters units and should indicate all relevant information and detail.

(ii) Upon receipt of a complaint the Deputy to the Representative of the Secretary General will immediately inform the other Party of the complaint and undertake an investigation by making on-site inspections, gathering testimony

and using other procedure which he may deem necessary for the investigation of the alleged violation. Such inspection will be conducted using headquarters staffs as referred to above, unless the Deputy Representative of the Secretary General considers the additional team as needed. In that case, the Parties will, under the principle of freedom of movement, allow immediate access of the additional personnel to their respective territories.

(iii) Reports on the investigations will be prepared in English and submitted by the Deputy Representative of the Secretary General to the two Governments, on a confidential basis. In accordance of the paragraph 7 a report on an investigation should be considered in a meeting of the Parties not later than 48 hours after it has been submitted. The Deputy Representative of the Secretary General will, in the absence of the Representative, lend his good offices to the Parties and in the context he will assist in the organisation of the meetings and participate in them. In the context of those meetings the Deputy Representative of the Secretary General may submit to the parties for their consideration and approval, suggestions and recommendations for prompt faithful and complete observance of the provisions of the instruments.

#### **V. Duration**

The Deputy to the Representative of the Secretary General and the other personnel will be established in the area not later than twenty days before the entry into force of the instruments. These arrangements will cease to exist two months after the completion of all time frames envisaged for the implementation of the instruments.

#### **VI. Financing**

The costs of all facilities and services to be provided by the Parties will be borne by the respective governments. The salaries and travel expenses of the personnel to and for from the area , as well as the costs of the local personnel assigned to the headquarters units, will be defrayed by the United Nations.

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