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Afghanistan
a country study

Foreign Area Studies
The American University
Edited by
Richard F. Nyrop
and Donald M. Seekins
Research completed
January 1986

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On the cover: Four *mujahidiin* with arms

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Foreword

This volume is one of a continuing series of books prepared by Foreign Area Studies, The American University, under the Country Studies/Area Handbook Program. The last page of this book provides a listing of other published studies. Each book in the series deals with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its economic, national security, political, and social systems and institutions and examining the interrelationships of those systems and institutions and the ways that they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic insight and understanding of the society under observation, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal of it. The study focuses on historical antecedents and on the cultural, political, and socioeconomic characteristics that contribute to cohesion and cleavage within the society. Particular attention is given to the origins and traditions of the people who make up the society, their dominant beliefs and values, their community of interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with the national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward the social system and political order within which they live.

The contents of the book represent the views, opinions, and findings of Foreign Area Studies and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Such corrections, additions, and suggestions for factual or other changes that readers may have will be welcomed for use in future new editions.

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The authors also wish to express their appreciation to members of the Foreign Area Studies staff who contributed to the preparation of the book. These included Catherine L. Connor, Denise R. Barber, Kathryn R. Stafford, and Andrea T. Merrill, who edited the manuscript and the accompanying figures and tables; Harriett R. Blood and Gustavo Adolfo Mendoza, who prepared the maps and charts; Wayne W. Olsen, administrative assistant; Reiko I. Seekins, who prepared the cover and chapter illustrations; Gilda V. Nimer, who furnished valuable bibliographic and library assistance; and Lisa C. Young and Jesse L. Williams, who typed the manuscript. The authors are particularly grateful to Ernest A. Will, publicatons manager, and to Dorothy M. Lohmann, the assistant director for administration. Beverly Mohamed prepared the index.

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Preface

In December 1979 Soviet armed forces seized power in Kabul and installed their puppet, Babrak Karmal, as president. Six years later an estimated 115,00 or more Soviet military personnel continued to wage war against the Afghan people. About one-third of the country's pre-invasion population had fled the country, most of them to Pakistan. Numerous bands of *mujahidiin* (literally, holy warriors, also known as freedon fighters) continued in 1985 to inflict heavy damage on the Soviet forces and on the remnants of Afghanistan's armed forces, but the warriors, their people, and their homelands have also suffered massive damage and losses.

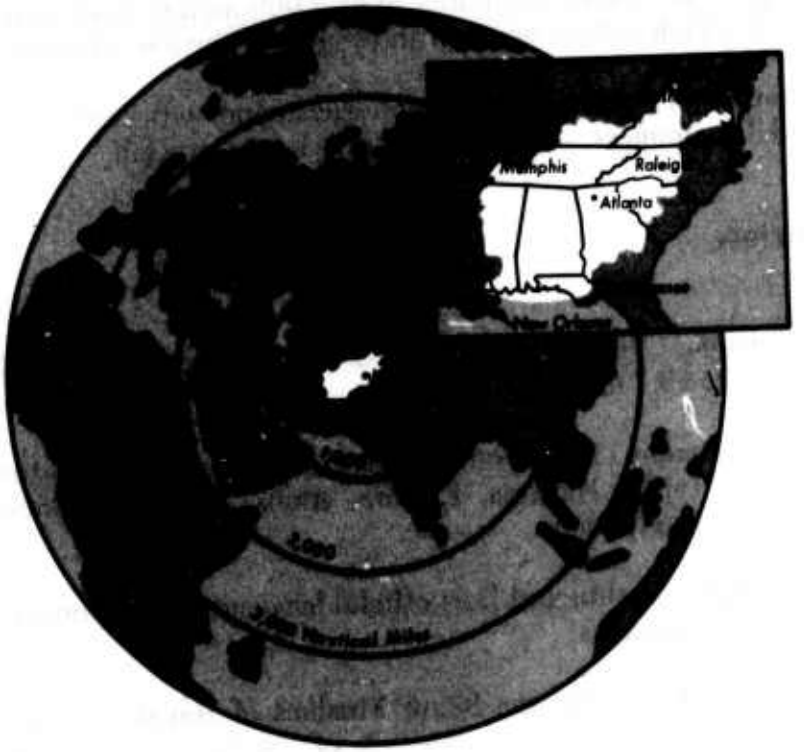
Afghanistan: A Country Study replaces the *Area Handbook for Afghanistan*, which was published in 1969 and updated and republished in 1973. Like its predecessor, the present book is an attempt to treat in a compact and objective manner the dominant historical, social, economic, political, and national security aspects of contemporary Afghanistan. Sources of information included scholarly books, journals, and monographs; official reports and domestic newpapers and periodicals; and interviews with individuals having special competence in Afghan affairs. Relatively up-to-date economic data were available from several sources, but the sources were not always in agreement. Most demographic data should be viewed as estimates based on fragmentary information.

Chapter bibliographies appear at the end of the book; brief comments on some of the more valuable sources for further reading appear at the conclusion of each chapter. Measurements are given in the metric system; a conversion table is provided to assist those who are unfamiliar with the metric system (see table 1, Appendix). A glossary of foreign and other words and phrases is also included.

The transliteration of various words and phrases posed a problem. For many words of Arabic origin—such as Muslim, Quran, hadith, and *zakat*—the authors followed a modified version of the system adopted by the United States Board on Geographic Names and the Permanent Committee on Geographic Names for British Official Use, known as the BGN/PCGN system; the modification entails the omission of diacritical markings and hyphens. The BGN/PCGN system was also used to transliterate other languages, such as Dari, Pashtu, and Russian. The reader may note, therefore, the seeming contra-

diction between Tajik in reference to a major ethnic group in Afghanistan and Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic in the Soviet Union. The spellings of place-names generally adhere to those established by the United States Board on Geographic Names in its official gazetteers; the gazetteer for Afghanistan was published in July 1971. Finally, the reader should also note that the Khan that appears with numerous names--such as Genghiz Khan, Abdur Rahman Khan, Daoud Khan, and Ayub Khan—is an honorific and almost never a surname.

Country Profile



Country

Formal Name: Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

Short Form: Afghanistan or DRA.

Term for Citizens: Afghan(s).

Capital: Kabul.

Geography

Size: Approximately 637,397 square kilometers.

Topography: Extremely mountainous in country's midsection; 49 percent of total land area over 2,000 meters in elevation; plains and deserts in western and southern portions of country.

Climate: Typical of arid or semiarid steppe, with cold winters and dry summers; some areas receive heavy snowfall.

Society

Population: Various estimates in 1985 ranged from 14.7 million to 19.7 million.

Ethnic Groups: Numerous ethnic groups, including Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Hazaras, Kirghiz, Arabs, Baluch, Turkmen, Nuristanis, and others.

Languages: Pashtu and Dari official languages; also numerous minority languages.

Religion: Most Afghans Sunni Muslims of Hanafi school of jurisprudence. Sizable minorities of Twelver (Imami) Shia Muslims and Ismaili Muslims; small minorities of Hindus and Sikhs.

Education: Five years of primary school and five years of secondary school; two universities. Government reportedly waging campaign against illiteracy.

Health: Mobile medical units; medical brigades; few hospitals and physicians. Most of country's physicians and hospital beds located in Kabul.

Economy

Gross National Product (GNP): According to government, Af154.3 billion in 1981 (in 1978-79 prices), drop from 1978 level of Af159.7 billion (for value of the afghani—see Glossary). GNP per capita fell from Af7,370 in 1978 to Af6,852 in 1982, based on estimated population of 15 million.

Agriculture: Dominant economic activity, providing about 63 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1981. Large subsistence agriculture economy not included in official GDP. Agriculture employed 56 percent of labor force in 1982. Main crops: wheat, corn, rice, fruits, nuts, and vegetables.

Industry: Contributed 21 percent of GDP in 1982, employing about 10 percent of labor force, primarily in handicrafts. Principal modern industries, all government-owned: natural gas, textiles, and food processing. Production of carpets and rugs most important handicraft activity.

Services: Represented about 10 percent of GDP in 1981 and employed roughly one-third of labor force Key service sector activities included trade, transport, and government.

Resources: Wide variety of mineral resources: natural gas, coal, copper, iron, barite, chrome, and lapis lazuli. Petroleum discoveries and uranium finds reported.

Exports: Totaled US$707.7 million in 1982, twice 1978 figure. Principal exports: natural gas, dried fruits, carpets and rugs, and karakul sheep skins.

Imports: Totaled US$695 million in 1982, 50 percent higher than 1978. Principal imports: machinery, manufactured goods, and refined petroleum products. Also large food imports, both commercial and aid-financed.

Balance of Payments: During mid-1970s Afghanistan accumulated foreign currency reserves, despite constant current account deficit. By 1980s worker remittances from Persian Gulf and foreign aid inflows diminished, resulting in overall balance of payments deficit, reaching negative US$70.3 million in 1982.

Exchange Rate: Official rate Af50.6 per United States dollar

in 1985. In Kabul money bazaars, United States dollar bought over 100 afghanis in late 1984.

Fiscal Year: March 21 to March 20.

Transportation and Communications

Railroads: In 1985 Soviets building railroad over Amu Darya toward Pol-e Khomri and Kabul; also short spurs of Soviet rail lines at Towraghondi and Kheyrabad.

Roads: In 1978 total of 18,752 kilometers, of which 2,846 paved.

Ports: River ports on Amu Darya at Jeyretan, Shir Khan, and Towraghondi.

Airfields: Total of 41 in 1985; Kabul International Airport the largest. Second largest airport at Qandahar but handled little traffic.

Pipelines: Natural gas pipelines out of Sheberghan into Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic and Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic.

Government and Politics

Government: In late 1985 structure and function of government defined by Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, adopted by Revolutionary Council (RC) of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan on April 14, 1980. Loya Jirgah, or grand national assembly, designated "highest organ of state power." Actual power wielded by RC; RC elected Presidium and Council of Ministers. Chairman of Presidium, concurrently president of RC, head of state. Soviet advisers played supervisory and controlling role in all important state ministries. Afghan officials had little or no independece.

Politics: People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), founded in 1965, defined in Soviet literature as "revolutionary vanguard party of the working people." Membership in mid-

1980s not certain; one estimate as low as 11,000; late 1984 official figure 120,000. Organized according to Leninist principle of "democratic centralism." Top officials: PDPA secretary general and members of the Political Bureau (Politburo). Politburo selected by Central Committee, itself chosen by Party Congress (as of late 1985 only one Party Congress held in PDPA history, in January 1965). PDPA divided since 1967 into Parcham (Banner) and Khalq (Masses) factions. Parcham dominant since Soviet invasion of December 1979, but animosity between factions remained intense in late 1985.

Justice: Highest judicial organ Supreme Court, administering courts on provincial, municipal, and district levels. Special courts established to try political cases. Human rights violations numerous.

Administrative Divisions: Country divided into 29 provinces (*wilayat*); provinces divided into districts (*wuluswali*) and subdistricts (*alaqadari*). Eighty percent of country reportedly outside government control.

Foreign Affairs: Afghanistan closely tied to Soviet Union. Soviet advisers reportedly have preponderant say in formulation of foreign policy. "Proximity talks" with Pakistan continuing in late 1985. Relations tense with Pakistan, Iran, China, and Arab world. Relations with India generally friendly. From 1980 to 1985 United Nations General Assembly annual resolutions called for pullout of foreign troops from country.

The Resistance: Resistance goups operating throughout country in as many as 90 localities. *Mujahidiin* leaders receive arms and funds from parties based in Peshawar, Pakistan. Seven major emigré parties divided into two groups, "Islamic fundamentalist" and "traditionalist." Shia Muslim groups—some with ties to Iran—and leftist groups also in resistance.

National Security

Armed Forces: Total strength in 1985 reported about 47,000 (actual figure probably lower): army, 40,000 (mostly conscripts); air force, 7,000. Divisions reportedly averaged 2,500, about quarter strength. Desertion common. Terms of service (males 15-55): volunteers, two years; conscripts, three

to four years. About 20,000 Sarondoy (Defenders of the Revolution) in charge of rural security; KHAD (secret police), 25,000 to 35,000; militia, around 40,000.

Military Units: Army general headquarters commands three numbered corps: 1st corps (Bagrami, south of Kabul); 2d corps (Qandahar); 3d corps (Gardez). Eleven infantry divisions and three armored brigades compose principal units of three corps; all understrength.

Equipment: Tank inventory mostly Soviet-made-T-34s/-54s/-55s/-62s. In 1985 army had over 400 armored personnel carriers, primarily Soviet-made BTR-40s/-50s/-60s/-152s. Air force had over 150 combat aircraft, completely maintained and controlled by Soviets. Most aircraft MiG-17s/-21s or Su-17s; helicopters: Mi-24s, Mi-4s, and Mi-8s.

Police: Heavily purged after 1978 coup; number given by government 60,000 in 1983. Duration of training course reduced from eight to three months in 1978.

Soviet Forces: Total 105,000 to 115,000; (60,000 combat troops, 30,000 to 40,000 support troops, 10,000 paratroopers, 5,000 air assault troops). Operational headquarters Turkestan Military District, Tashkent in Soviet Union.

Resistance Forces: Estimated 90,000 guerrillas (possibly 20,000 intermittently active) supported by about 110,000 "reserves." Equipment: small arms, 122m howitzers, AGS-17 30mm grenade launchers, M-41 82mm mortars, SA-7 surface-to-air missiles.

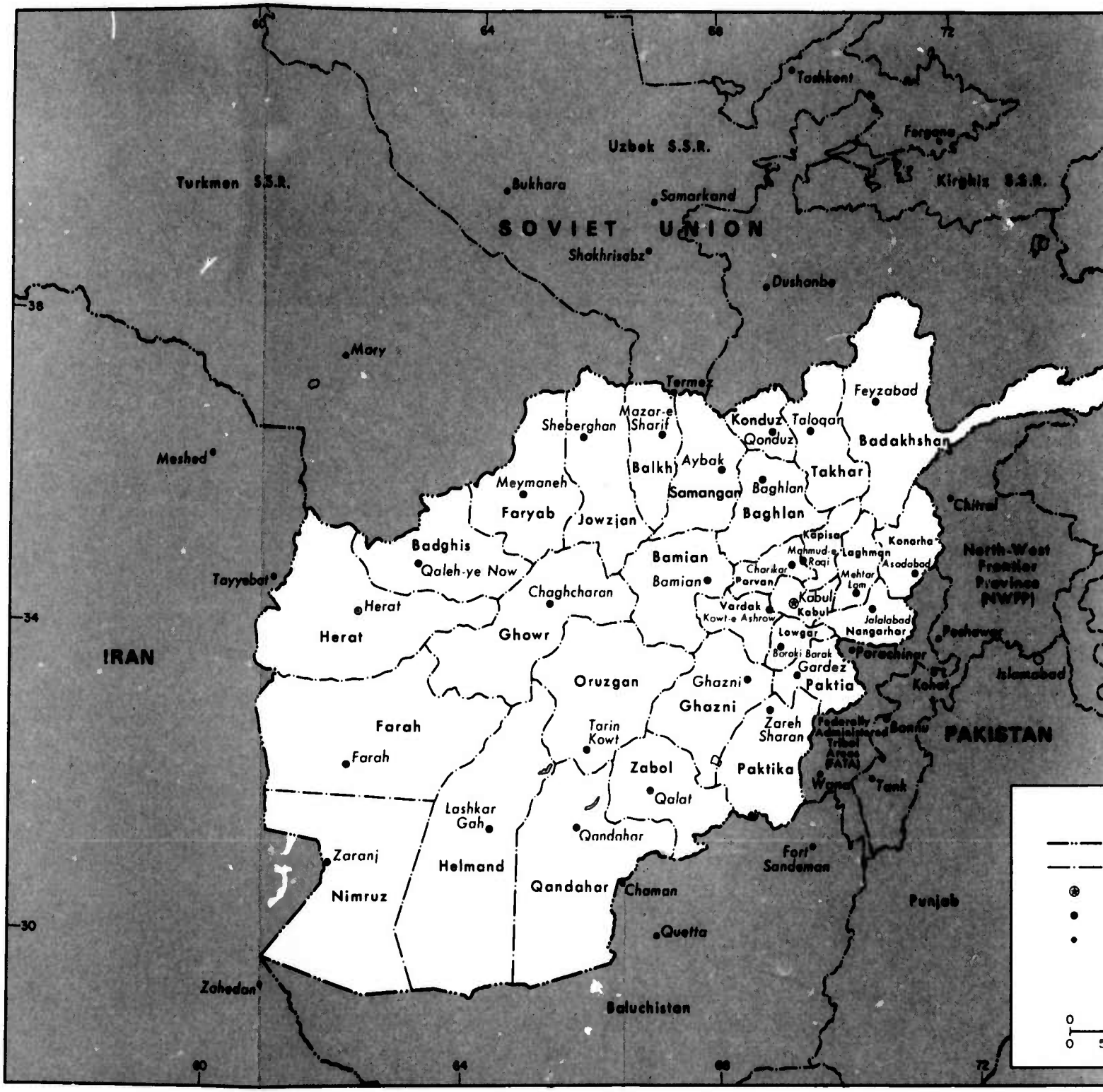
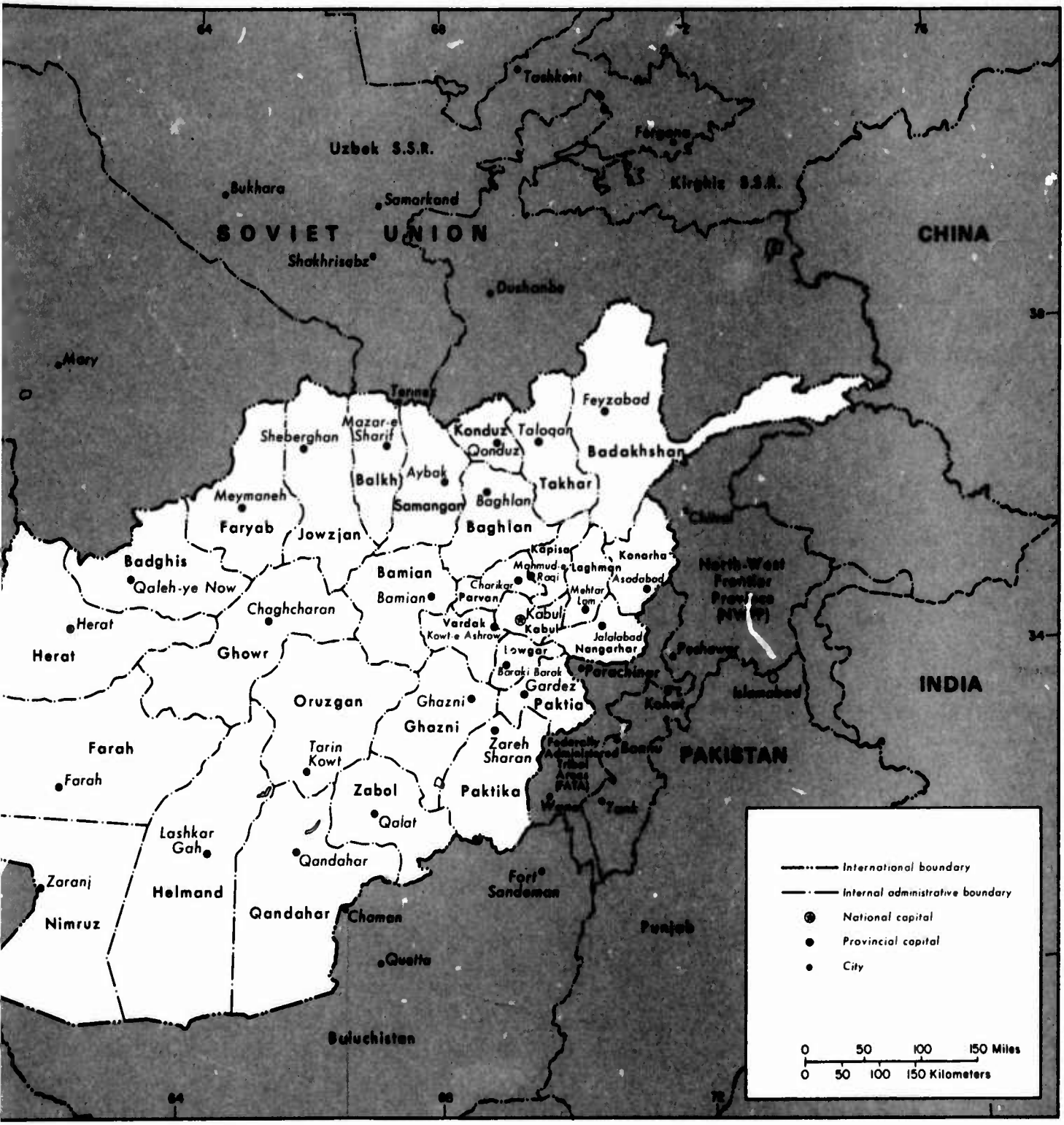


Figure 1. Provinces and Capitals, 1985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Termez
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Sheberghan
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Qonduz
Badakhshan
Balkh
Aybak
Takhar
Meymaneh
Samangan
Baghlan
Faryab
Jowzjan
Baghlan
Badghis
Qaleh-ye Now
Kapisa
Konarha
Mahmud-e Raqi
Laghman
Asadabad
Bamian
Charikar
Parvan
Mehtar Lam
Bamian
Chaghcharan
Herat
Verdak
Kowt-e Ashrow
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Jalalabad
Nangarhar
Herat
Ghowr
Lowgar
Peshawar
Baraki Barak
Parachinar
Gardez
Islamabad
INDIA
Oruzgan
Ghazni
Paktia
Ghazni
Kohat
Farah
Tarin Kowt
Zareh Sharan
Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)
Bannu
PAKISTAN
Farah
Zabol
Paktika
Wana
Tank
Qalat
Lashkar Gah
Qandahar
Zaranj
Helmand
Fort Sandeman
Nimruz
Qandahar
Chaman
Punjab
Quetta
Baluchistan
International boundary
Internal administrative boundary
National capital
Provincial capital
City
0 50 100 150 Miles
0 50 100 150 Kilometers

tals, 1985

Introduction

AFGHANISTAN is one of the few countries of the modern world to have experienced a drastic decline in its population. Between April 1978, when a violent coup d'état brought to power a radical, pro-Soviet political party, and early 1986 perhaps one-third of the populace fled the country. Although accurate data were not available in the mid-1980s, most observers estimated that 2.5 to 3 million Afghans lived in refugee camps in Pakistan, as many as 1.9 million were resident in Iran, and perhaps 150,000 had sought refuge elsewhere, including the United States. According to the United Nations (UN), this constituted the largest refugee population in the world. In addition, since the April 1978 coup—and particularly since the December 1979 Soviet invasion—hundreds of thousands have been killed or have died as a result of wounds, diseases, or other hardships and deprivations caused by warfare.

Although the refugees are known as Afghans and the name of the country literally means "land of the Afghans," within the national society the term *Afghan* usually refers specifically to a Pashtu (or Pakhtu) speaker who is recognized as a member of one of the several Pashtun tribes (see Ethnicity and Tribe, ch. 2). An estimated 50 percent of the population—and reportedly over 50 percent of the refugees—are Pashtuns. The royal families from 1747 to 1973 were Pashtuns, and Babrak Karmal, who was installed as president by the Soviets in 1979 and who remained in nominal power in 1986, was a Pashtun. Although the figures were actually guesses, some observers suggested that Tajiks account for about 25 percent of the population and Uzbeks and Hazaras for about 9 percent each. Baluch, Turkmen, and other small ethnic groups compose the remainder (see fig. 5). The mother tongue of about half the population is Pashtu; Dari (Afghan Farsi or Persian) is the first language of about 35 percent, and Turkic (especially Uzbek and Turkmen), about 11 percent. There is extensive bilingualism.

All but a minuscule number of Afghans are Muslims. Islam is a central facet in the day-to-day life of the overwhelming majority of the members of society. Pashtuns, for example, accept it as a given that to be Pashtun is to be Muslim. Their ethnohistory stipulates that their apical ancestor, Qays, was

converted by the Prophet Muhammad (see Meaning and Practice, ch. 2). In a society in which tribal, ethnic, linguistic, and class cleavages determine most social relations, Islam and the sense of belonging to and participating in the Islamic community (*umma*) continued in the mid-1980s to provide the overriding cohesive force for the freedom fighters. The name used by the resistance forces, *mujahidiin* (sing., *mujahid*), means those engaged in jihad (see Glossary), i.e. warriors of Islam.

Nevertheless, the Islamic community in Afghanistan is a heterogeneous one. A majority—something in excess of two-thirds—are Sunnis (see Sunnis of the Hanafi School, ch. 2). The remainder consist of adherents either of Twelver or Imami Shiism (the dominant faith in neighboring Iran) or of one of the sects of Ismaili Shiism (see Twelver or Imami Shia; Ismailis, ch. 2). Numerous Afghan Muslims, particularly many Sunnis, are practicing Sufis (see Sufis, ch. 2).

These disparate and frequently warring peoples were first incorporated into a nation-state, albeit a fragile one, in 1747 by Ahmad Shah (see Ahmad Shah and the Durrani Empire, ch. 1). His descendants, or those of his collateral lineages, ruled the nation with only brief interruptions until 1978. In 1973 the monarchy was abolished and a republic established by Mohammad Daoud Khan, who as a cousin and brother-in-law of the deposed king was a senior member of the royal family. The peoples of the region had always resisted government control of any kind, and they had contested with particular vigor invasions by non-Muslim aliens. In the nineteenth century the British Indian government sought on two occasions to establish a government in Kabul that would be amenable to British guidance, but in neither instance was it successful (see The First Anglo-Afghan War; The Second Anglo-Afghan War, ch.1). Because of their political victories in the aftermaths of these wars and of a brief border war that they provoked with the British in 1919, the Afghans have evinced pride that theirs is one of the few Muslim states never to be subjugated by a non-Islamic power.

Throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth the kingdom's domestic affairs and its relations with its neighbors reflected its location between the expanding British and Russian empires. By the late 1890s the two imperial governments had determined Afghanistan's northern and eastern boundaries and had been instrumental in fixing the western boundary with Iran (see fig. 1). In 1893 the British Indian government coerced the Afghan ruler, Abdur Rahman Khan, to agree to a permanent boundary—the Durand Line. The central part of the boundary placed more than half of the

Pashtuns within British India and the remainder in Afghanistan. Abdur Rahman disliked the division, and he and his successors continued to claim that they retained the right to protect the interests of the Pashtuns in British India. When in 1947 British India was partitioned and the new state of Pakistan was formed, the Kabul government launched a campaign to declare null and void the treaty that had established the Durand Line. This eventually created what became known as the Pashtunistan issue, which in essence was a demand that the Pashtuns in Pakistan should be granted autonomy within Pakistan, outright independence, or the right to join Afghanistan.

Pakistan obviously insisted on the validity of the Durand Line, and Britain and most Western countries supported Pakistan's position. During the 1950s Pakistan became increasingly aligned with the United States, Britain, and numerous Asian nations in bilateral agreements and multilateral treaties that were designed to prevent or contain Soviet and Chinese expansion. Because of its close relationship with Pakistan and other related reasons, the United States declined repeated Afghan invitations to supply military equipment, training, and assistance. Kabul then turned to Moscow for assistance, and within a few years Soviet economic aid had become critically important to the Afghan economy, and its military aid and training had become pervasive. By the late 1970s almost all army and air force equipment was of Soviet or East European manufacture, thousands of Afghan officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) had received training in the Soviet Union, Soviet military advisers were posted throughout the Ministry of National Defense and almost all levels of the two services, and the Russian language was used extensively in the officer corps. In addition, the officer corps had become increasingly politicized (see Background; Politicization of the Officer Corps, ch. 5).

On April 27-28, 1978, elements in the armed forces carried out a successful coup d'état that toppled the regime of President Daoud. A few days later the Revolutionary Council (RC) of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, a body dominated by civilian leaders of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), assumed power. Nur Muhammad Taraki, PDPA secretary general, was designated president of the new republic. In the months following the coup, he and other party leaders initiated radical policies that challenged both traditional Afghan values and well-established power structures in the rural areas. The measures—especially those dealing with changes in the status of women and the nature of marriage, the abolition of usury, and land reform—were so unpopular that by late 1978 insurrections had begun in various parts of the

country. These movements were headed both by traditional political and religious leaders and by a new generation of Islamic fundamentalist leaders who had been actively opposing Afghan regimes since the mid-1970s (see Political Bases of the Resistance, ch. 4).

The PDPA was a Marxist-oriented party whose following was largely limited to an educated minority in the urban areas. Because this group's perceptions and values were at variance with those of the vast majority of conservative, rural Afghans, it enjoyed a minimum of popular support. The party was further weakened by bitter and sometimes violent internal rivalries. Two years after its founding in January 1965, the PDPA split into two factions that in terms of membership and ideology operated essentially as separate parties: the radical Khalq (Masses) faction, led by Taraki, and the more moderate Parcham (Banner) faction, headed by Karmal. Khalq's adherents were primarily Pashtuns recruited from the nonelite classes. Parcham's adherents included other ethnic groups and tended to come from the Westernized upper classes. At the urging of foreign communist parties and probably the Soviet Union, the two factions agreed in 1977 to reunite as a single PDPA. But once the party was in power, Khalqis, having a strong following in the military, initiated a purge of Parchamis. Following an alleged Parchami plot in the summer of 1978, many Parchamis were thrown in prison and tortured. Parchami leaders, such as Karmal, were sent abroad as ambassadors in mid-1978, and they remained in exile in Eastern Europe or the Soviet Union rather than return to Afghanistan and face certain death (see A Revolution Backfires, ch. 4).

The internal situation deteriorated further through 1979. Armed opposition to the regime spread to practically every region of the country, and there were several serious mutinies within the Afghan armed forces. Hafizullah Amin, a ruthlessly ambitious Khalqi leader, became the most powerful man in the regime as he sought to undermine the position of the less astute Taraki. When Taraki attempted to remove Amin in September 1979, the latter, warned by an informer, turned the tables, arrested Taraki after a shootout at the Presidential Palace in Kabul, and assumed the highest party and state posts. In October Taraki was dead, murdered in prison by Amin's agents.

Amin sought desperately to preserve his country's independence from steadily growing Soviet influence. By late November-early December, the Soviets, acting on the advice of high-ranking military personnel who had toured the country to assess the political and military situation, prepared for a mili-

tary intervention. On December 27, 1979, Soviet troops seized the center of Kabul. Amin was killed (he probably died fighting the Soviets, though official accounts relate that he was executed for counterrevolutionary activities), and the Soviets installed Karmal as the new president.

The Soviet role in Afghan internal politics before the invasion is unclear. It was, however, probably substantial. The PDPA adhered to the Soviet model of revolution, and its leaders in both Khalq and Parcham had close ties with Moscow's embassy in Kabul and operatives of the KGB, the Soviet secret police. Soviet advisers may have played a role in the April 1978 coup détat, and during the 19 months following the coup, the regime became increasingly dependent on Soviet aid and military backing. The Soviets were probably involved in the September 1979 attempt to remove Amin. The December 1979 invasion, undertaken to rescue a friendly regime and prevent the establishment of a hostile new regime (similar ideologically, perhaps, to the radical regime in Iran) on the Soviet Union's southern border, was apparently intended to be a short-term operation. But in early 1986, six years after the invasion, an estimated 118,000 Soviet troops were deployed in Afghanistan and played the principal role in combating the *mujahidiin*.

In the mid-1980s Soviet advisers supervised and controlled state institutions on the national, provincial, and—where guerrilla resistance did not prevent it—district levels. Afghan foreign policy was, according to Afghan defector sources, virtually dictated by the Soviets. Moscow's attempts to foster the development of a stable and viable political system, however, were largely unsuccessful. The central government controlled little more than a fifth of the country's land area. Popular support was estimated to amount to little more than 3 to 5 percent of the total population. Millions had fled to Pakistan or Iran to escape what they perceived as an intolerable situation under de facto Soviet rule. Although Karmal and his associates established bodies like the National Fatherland Front and convened a Loya Jirgah (grand national assembly) in early 1985 in attempts to garner public support and an aura of legitimacy, they relied increasingly on Soviet-backed coercion to remain in power (see The Soviet Occupation, ch. 4). Instruments of coercion included not only Soviet troops and the regime's own armed forces and paramilitary units but also the State Information Service (Khadamate Ettelaate Dowlati, in Dari—KHAD), the dreaded and pervasive secret police that retained close ties to the KGB (see Internal Security, ch. 5). After the invasion, Parcham became politically dominant, but

the rivalry between the two factions continued to smolder, and violence erupted periodically.

Resistance forces in the mid-1980s reflected the divisions and diversity of Afghan society. There were as many as 90 different localities throughout the country where guerrilla commanders and their forces operated. To Western observers, the seven major émigré parties, based in Peshawar, Pakistan, were the most prominent goups in the resistance. These were divided into two loose coalitions of "traditionalists" and "Islamic fundamentalists." Although they provided the in-country commanders with much needed arms and other forms of aid and represented the Afghan struggle to sympathizers and supporters in the Arab and Western worlds, the émigrés did not possess the guerrillas' unconditional allegiance or maintain well-defined chains of command. Most *mujahidiin*, unified but also divided by their allegiance to Islamic values and hostility to the atheistic Soviet invader, operated with substantial autonomy. In the central part of the country, known as the Hazarajat, Shia Muslim Hazaras maintained their own resistance groups, some of which had ties with Iran.

Desertion had thinned the ranks of the Afghan army to about 40,000 men in the mid-1980s, compared with 90,000 to 110,000 before the April 1978 coup. Morale and the quality of personnel were low. Most soldiers were conscripts, often rounded up by press-gangs, and soliders frequently went over to the *mujahidiin* rather than fight. Soviet commanders considered them undependable, often using them to spearhead offensives or defend isolated posts of secondary importance in guerrilla territory. The air force consisted of about 7,000 men. Both on the ground and in the air, the most advanced equipment was used only by Soviet troops, for it was feared that Afghan troops might allow them to fall into the guerrillas' hands (see The Afghan Armed Forces, 1985, ch. 5).

Soviet military operations in the mid-1980s were designed to deprive the resistance of sustenance and popular support by destroying local economies and communications networks, causing large-scale migration to urban areas and neighboring countries, and infiltrating guerrilla organizations to stir up intergroup and intragroup conflict and defections (this latter activity was largely the responsibility of KHAD). The guerrillas, in turn, sought to cripple the regime by sabotaging strategic facilities, such as bridges and power plants, and by assassinating regime officials and collaborators. Western observers noted that despite long-standing rivalries between the émigré resistance groups, commanders on the battlefield possessed far greater coordination and effectiveness than in the months after

the invasion, when they fought the Soviets using traditional tribal tactics. The *mujahidiin* were learning, through costly trial and error, how to fight a modern, well-armed opponent (see Resistance Forces, ch. 5).

The Soviet invasion precipitated a crisis with serious implications for the South Asian and Middle Eastern regions. The presence of as many as 3 million Afghan refugees on Pakistani soil was a source of concern for Islamabad. Pakistan continued, however, to offer sanctuary and aid to the refugees and guerrillas based in the mountainous border region, despite repeated Soviet and Afghan army incursions into Pakistani territory. India, enjoying comparatively good relations with the PDPA regime, viewed foreign, and especially United States, military aid to Pakistan as a potential threat to itself. Principal material and moral support for the resistance came from the Arab world, the Western alliance, and China. The UN General Assembly, in resolutions passed overwhelmingly since 1980, repeatedly called for withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.

In early 1986 UN-sponsored "proximity talks" between the foreign ministers of Afghanistan and Pakistan were continuing; the "proximity" meant that the minister did not meet face to face but negotiated through a senior UN official. Many observers believed that it was possible that procedures could be worked out that would result in the gradual withdrawal of Soviet forces and the acceptance by all parties of some form of national government of a truly neutral Afghanistan. Other observers, however, while hoping that such an agreement could be achieved, doubted that the *mujahidiin* would accept any proposal that failed to provide not only for the departure of the Soviets but also all Afghans who had collaborated with the Soviets. A central feature of the Pashtun code–Pashtunwali—is an insistence on revenge (*badal*). To one degree or another every *mujahid* has a grudge; loss of kin, loss of property, personal injury, eviction from the land of the lineage and its ancestors, torture, and related grievances not only justify acts of revenge but also make them a matter of family and personal honor. For any realistic resolution of the occupation of Afghanistan, the claims of the *mujahidiin* will have to be resolved.

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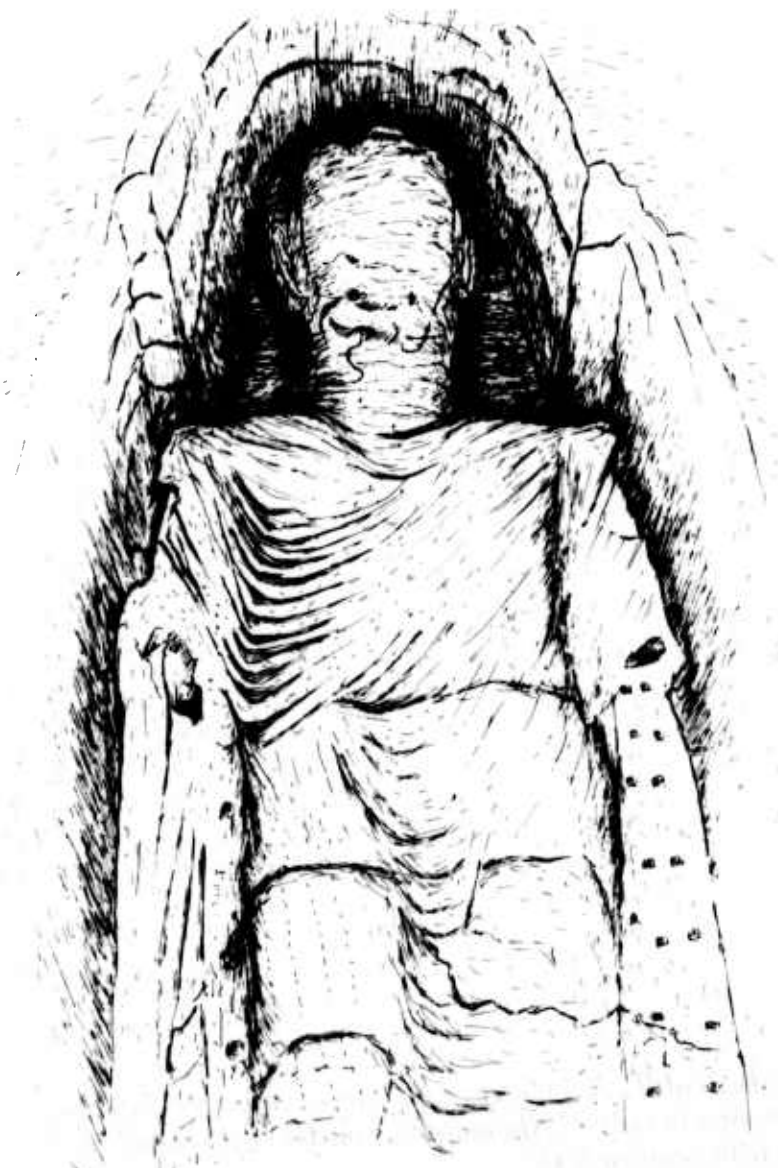
Chapter 1. Historical Setting



Statue of the Buddha, 53 meters high, carved into a sandstone cliff at Bamian in central Afghanistan; constructed around the fourth to fifth century A.D.

AFGHANISTAN'S HISTORY, its internal political development, its foreign relations, and its very existence as an independent state have been largely determined by its location at the crossroads of Central, West, and South Asia. Waves of migrating peoples poured through the region in ancient times, leaving a human residue to form a mosaic of ethnic and linguistic groups. In modern times, as well as in antiquity, great armies passed through the region, establishing at least temporary local control and often dominating Iran and northern India as well.

Although it was the scene of great empires and flourishing trade for over two millennia, Afghanistan did not become a truly independent nation until the twentieth century. For centuries a zone of conflict among strong neighboring powers, the area's heterogeneous groups were not bound into a single political entity until the reign of the brilliant Ahmad Shah Durrani, who in 1747 founded the monarchy that ruled the country until 1973. After his death, the absence of a strong successor possessed of military and political skills resulted in the temporary disintegration of the kingdom he had created, a frequent pattern in the society's history.

Just as it was the arena of conflict between the Mughal Empire of India and the Safavi Empire of Iran in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, Afghanistan in the nineteenth century lay between the expanding might of the Russian and British empires. It was in the context of this confrontation that Afghanistan in its contemporary form came into existence during the reigns of Dost Mohammad Khan and Amir Abdur Rahman Khan.

Historical patterns of the past several centuries remained relevant to the nation's situation in the mid-1980s. First, because of Afghanistan's strategic location geopolitically, great rival powers have tended to view the control of Afghanistan by a major opponent as unacceptable. Sometimes the Afghans have been able to use this circumstance to their benefit, but more often they have suffered grievously in the great power struggles. Great powers have considered Afghanistan's internal politics more as a reflection of international rivalry than as events in themselves.

A second pattern has been the inability of central governments to establish effective and permanent control over the

numerous peoples of the society. Only in response to foreign invasions or as part of a conquering army outside the country have the many diverse groups found common cause. In the more remote areas tribal warriors—particularly the Pashtuns, the largest ethnic group—have successfully resisted foreign domination for centuries. Neither the heirs of Alexander the Great nor those of Genghis Khan, Timur, or Ahmad Shah were able to subdue the tribes permanently.

A third enduring pattern in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been the gradual extension of Russian control into Central Asia. The strategies used by the tsar's generals to subdue the khans north of the Amu Darya may have been instructive to Soviet commanders who moved across the river in 1979. The Afghans, like the Turks and Iranians, historically have had both a fear of the Soviet Union and a desire to benefit from relations with their northern neighbor.

Finally, one cannot examine Afghan history without noting the key role of Islam. Even Genghis Khan was unable to uproot Islam, and within two generations his heirs had become Muslims. Religious leaders have always played a political role and, as in many other nations, religion has served as a means of political expression. An important, if often unacknowledged, event in Afghan history that played a role in the politics of Afghanistan's neighbors and the entire region up to the present was the rise in the tenth century of a strong Sunni dynasty—the Ghaznavids—whose power prevented the eastward spread of Shiism from Iran and thereby assured that the majority of Muslims in Afghanistan and South Asia would become Sunnis.

The Pre-Islamic Period

Archaeological exploration in Afghanistan began in earnest only after World War II and proceeded promisingly until disrupted by the Soviet invasion of December 1979. Artifacts have been found that are typical of the Paleolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze, and Iron ages. It is not yet clear, however, to what extent these periods were simultaneous with similar stages of development in other areas. The area that is now Afghanistan seems in prehistory—as well as in ancient and modern times—to have been closely connected with the neighboring regions to the east, west, and north. Urban civilization in the Iranian Plateau, which includes most of Iran and

Afghanistan, may have begun as early as 3000 to 2000 B.C. About the middle of the second millennium B.C., people speaking an Indo-European language may have entered the eastern part of the Iranian Plateau, but there is little information about the area until the middle of the first millennium B.C., when its history began to be recorded under the control of the Achaemenid Empire.

Achaemenid Rule, ca. 550-331 B.C.

The area that is present-day Afghanistan comprised several satrapies (provinces) of the Achaemenid Empire at its most extensive under Darius the Great (ca. 500 B.C.). The Iranians had subdued these areas to the east with only the greatest difficulty, however, and had to keep substantial garrisons in some of the satrapies in the Hindu Kush areas (see fig. 4). Bactriana, with its capital at Bactria (which later became Balkh), was reputedly the home of Zoroaster, who founded the religion that bears his name.

By the fourth century B.C., Iranian control of outlying areas and the internal cohesion of the empire had become tenuous. Although such areas as Bactriana had always been restless under Achaemenid rule, there were Bactrian troops at the decisive Battle of Gaugamela (330 B.C.) fighting on the side of the Iranians, who were defeated by Alexander the Great.

Alexander and Greek Rule, 330-ca. 150 B.C.

It took Alexander three years, about 330-327 B.C., to subdue the areas that now make up Afghanistan and adjacent areas in the Soviet Union. Moving eastward from the area of Herat, the Macedonian leader encountered fierce resistance from local rulers who had been satraps of the Iranians. Alexander overwhelmed local resistance and even married Roxane, a daughter of the satrap of Bactriana. In 327 B.C. Alexander entered the Indian subcontinent, where the progress of his conquest was stopped only by a mutiny of his troops. Although his expedition through what is now Afghanistan was brief, he left behind a Hellenic cultural influence that lasted several centuries.

Upon Alexander's death in 323 B.C., his empire, never politically consolidated, broke apart. His cavalry commander, Seleucus, took nominal control of the eastern lands and found-

ed the Seleucid Dynasty. Under the Seleucids, as under Alexander, Greek colonists and soldiers came to the region of the Hindu Kush, and many are believed to have remained. At the same time the Mauryan Empire was developing in the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, and it managed, beginning about 30 years after Alexander's death, to take control of the southeasternmost areas of the Seleucid domains, including parts of what is now Afghanistan. The Mauryans introduced Indic culture, including Buddhism, into the area. With the Seleucids on one side and the Mauryans on the other, the people of the Hindu Kush were in what would become a familiar position in modern as well as ancient history, i.e., between two empires.

The Seleucids were unable to hold the contentious eastern area of their domain, and in the middle of the third century B.C. an independent, Greek-ruled state was declared in Bactria. With the decline of even nominal Seleucid control, the period from shortly after the death of Alexander until the middle of the second century saw a variety of Greek dynasties ruling out of Bactria. The farthest extent of Graeco-Bactrian rule came in about 170 B.C., when it included most of the territory that is now between the Iranian deserts and the Ganges River and from Central Asia to the Arabian Sea. Graeco-Bactrian rule fell prey to the internecine disputes that plagued Greek rulers to the west, to ambitious attempts to extend control into northern India, and to pressure from two groups of nomadic invaders from Central Asia—the Parthians and Sakas (perhaps the Scythians). Greek civilization left few, if any, permanent effects, whereas characteristics of Iranian civilization were accepted and retained by the peoples of the Hindu Kush.

Central Asian and Sassanian Rule, ca. 150 B.C.-700 A.D.

The third and second centuries B.C. witnessed the advent to the Iranian Plateau of nomadic people speaking Indo-European languages. The Parthians established control in most of what is now Iran as early as the middle of the third century B.C., and about 100 years later another Indo-European group—either the Sakas or the Kushans (a subgroup of the tribe called the Yueh-chih by the Chinese)—entered what is now Afghanistan and established an empire that lasted almost four centuries. The Kushans, whose empire was among the most powerful of its time, were pushed into the Hindu Kush

area by the Hsiungnu (Huns) of Central Asia, who had themselves been thwarted in their attacks on China by the powerful Han Dynasty.

The Kushan Empire spread from the valley of the Kabul River to defeat other Central Asian tribes that had conquered parts of the northern central Iranian Plateau that had been ruled by the Parthians. By the middle of the first century B.C. the Kushans controlled the area from the Indus Valley to the Gobi Desert and as far west as the central part of the Iranian Plateau. Early in the second century A.D. under Kanishka, the greatest of the Kushan rulers, the empire reached its greatest geographic extent and became a center of literature and art. Kanishka spread Kushan control to the mouth of the Indus River, into Kashmir, and into what are now the Chinese-controlled areas north of Tibet. Although details of his rule are fragmentary, Kanishka is believed to have ruled from a capital not far from present-day Peshawar, with a summer residence at Kapisa, north of what is now Kabul (see fig. 1). Kanishka was a patron of the arts and religious learning. It was during his reign that Mahayana Buddhism, brought to Northern India earlier by the Mauryan emperor Asoka (ca. 260-232 B.C.), reached its peak in Central Asia. The Kushan Empire was a center of trade, especially in silk, and the Buddhism of its rulers followed trade routes into East Asia, with which Kanishka and his successors maintained commercial relations.

In the third century A.D. Kushan control degenerated into independent kingdoms that were easy targets for conquest by the rising Iranian dynasty, the Sassanians (c. 224-561 A.D.). Although the Sassanians conquered as far east as the Punjab, by the middle of the third century most of the kingdoms that were fragments of the Kushan Empire were in practice semi-independent. These small kingdoms were pressed not only by the Sassanians from the west but also from the Indian subcontinent by the growing strength of the Guptas, a dynasty established in northern and central India as early as the beginning of the fourth century.

The disunited Kushan and Sassanian kingdoms were in a bad position to meet the threat of a new wave of nomadic, Indo-European invaders from the north. The Hepthalites (or White Huns) swept out of Central Asia in the fourth or fifth century into Bactria and the areas to the south, overwhelming the last of the Kushan-Sassanian kingdoms. Although little is known of these people—as is the case with most of the pre-Islamic, Central Asian invaders of the Hindu Kush area—it is

believed that their control lasted about a century and was marked by constant warfare with the Sassanians to the west.

By the middle of the sixth century, at the latest, the Hepthalites were defeated in the territories north of the Amu Darya (in present-day Soviet Union) by another group of Central Asian nomads, the Western Turks, and by the resurgent Sassanians in the lands south of the Amu Darya (frequently cited in old texts as the Oxus River). Up to the advent of Islam, the lands of the Hindu Kush were dominated up to the Amu Darya by small kingdoms under general Sassanian overlordship but with local rulers who were Kushan or Hepthalite.

In the mid-seventh century, in the last years before the end of Buddhist and Zoroastrian cultures in the area, a Chinese pilgrim, Hsuan Tsang, passed through Balkh to India. Historian W. Kerr Fraser-Tytler recounts Hsuan Tsang's findings:

> He found in the north a Turkish ruler . . . a devout Buddhist who treated his revered guest with kindness and sent him to visit Balkh before starting on his difficult journey across the mountains. At Balkh Hsuan Tsang found that, in spite of the ravages of the Ephthalites, there were still a hundred monasteries in and around a city lying amid fertile lands and valleys, where today there is only desolation and arid waste. He crossed the Hindu Kush and . . . reached Bamiyan, at that time a flourishing community, including ten monasteries in that high beautiful valley in the heart of the mountains through which all the caravans from China passed on their journey down to India . . . He reached Kapisa . . . and there found a Turkish (or Ephthalite) ruler whose dominion extended as far as the Indus and who, commanding as he did the main trade routes to India, was of sufficient importance to send a present of horses, for which the country was then famous, to the Son of Heaven, the Emperor T'ai-tsung, and to receive presents in exchange. Thence the pilgrim passed . . . into India, noting . . . the contrast between the fierce tribesmen of the mountains and the more effeminate Indians of the lower valleys.

Of this great Buddhist culture and earlier Zoroastrian civilization there remain few, if any, traces in the life of the people of Afghanistan. On the ancient trade routes, however, there are still stone monuments of Buddhist culture. Two great sandstone Buddhas, 35 and 53 meters high and dating from the third and fifth centuries A.D., overlook the ancient route through Bamian to Balkh. In this area and other spots within what is now Afghanistan, archaeologists have found frescoes, stucco decorations, statuary, and rare objects from China, Rome, and Phoenicia that were made as early as the second century A.D. and that bear witness to the richness of the ancient civilizations of the area.

Islamic Conquest

In 637 A.D., only five years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the Arab Muslims shattered the might of the Iranian Sassanians at the battle of Qadisiya, and the invaders began to reach into the lands east of Iran. The Muslim conquest was a prolonged struggle in the area that is now Afghanistan. Following the first Arab raid into Qandahar in about 700, local rulers, probably either Kushans or Western Turks, began to come under the control of Ummayid caliphs, who sent Arab military governors and tax collectors into the region. By the middle of the eighth century the rising Abbasid Dynasty was able to subdue the area. There was a period of peace under the rule of the caliph, Harun al Rashid (785-809), and his son, in which learning fluorished in such Central Asian cities as Samarkand, located in what is now the Soviet Union. Over the period of the seventh through the ninth centuries, most inhabitants of what is now Afghanistan, Pakistan, the southern parts of the Soviet Union, and some of northern India were converted to Sunni (see Glossary) Islam, which replaced the Zorastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and indigenous religions of previous empires (see Religion, ch. 2).

During the eighth and ninth centuries, partly to obtain better grazing land, ancestors of many of the Turkic-speaking groups now identifiable in Afghanistan settled in the Hindu Kush area. Some of these tribes settled in what are now Ghor, Ghazni, and Kabul provinces and began to assimilate much of the culture and language of the already present Pashtun (see Glossary) tribes (see Tribe, ch. 2).

By the middle of the ninth century, Abbasid rule had faltered, and semi-independent states began to emerge throughout the empire. In the Hindu Kush area three short-lived, local dynasties emerged. The best known of the three, the Sammanid, ruling out of Bukhara (in what is now the Soviet Union), extended its rule briefly as far east as India and west into Iran. Bukhara and neighboring Samarkand were centers of science, the arts, and Islamic studies. Although Arab Muslim intellectual life still centered on Baghdad, Iranian Muslim scholarship, i.e., Shia (see Glossary) Islam, at this time predominated in the Sammanid areas. By the mid-tenth century the Sammanid Dynasty crumbled in the face of attack from the Turkish tribes to the north and from a rising dynasty to the south, the Ghaznavids.

Ghaznavid and Ghorid Rule

Out of the Sammanid Dynasty came the first great Islamic empire in Afghanistan, the Ghaznavid, whose warriors raided deep into the Indian subcontinent and at the same time assured the domination of Sunni Islam in what is now Afghanistan, Pakistan, and parts of India. In the middle of the tenth century Alptigin, a Turkish slave warrior of the Sammanid garrison in Nishapur (in present-day Iran) failed in a coup attempt against his masters and fled with his followers to Ghazni, which became the capital of the empire ruled by his successors. The most renowned among them was Mahmud, who consolidated control over the areas south of the Amu Darya, then carried out devastating raids into India, looting Hindu temples and seeking converts to Islam. With his booty from India he built a great capital at Ghazni, founded universities, and patronized scholars, such as historians Al Biruni and Al Utbi, and the poet Firdawsi. Mahmud was recognized by the caliph in Baghdad as the temporal heir of the Sammanids. By the time of his death, Mahmud ruled all the Hindu Kush area and as far east as the Punjab, as well as territories well north of the Amu Darya.

As occurred so often in this region, the death of the military genius who extended the empire to its farthest extent was the death knell of the empire itself. Mahmud died in 1130, and the Seljuk Turks, also Muslims by this time, attacked the Ghaznavid empire from the north and west, while the rulers of the kingdom of Ghor, southeast of Herat, captured and burnt Ghazni, just as the Ghaznavids had once conquered Ghor. Not until 1186, however, was the last representative of the Ghaznavid Dynasty uprooted by the Ghorids from his holdout in the Punjab.

By 1200 Turkish dynasties were in power in all of the easternmost areas of the Abbasid empire, whose caliph was, by this time, a ruler in name only. The Ghorids controlled most of what is now Afghanistan, eastern Iran, and Pakistan, while parts of central and western Iran were ruled by Seljuk Turks (who would eventually sweep all the way to what is now Turkey). Around 1200 most Ghorid lands came into the hands of the Khwarazm Turks, who had invaded from Central Asia across the Amu Darya.

Mongol Rule, 1220–1506

In 1220 the Islamic lands of Central Asia were overrun by the armies of a Mongol invader, whom scholar Louis Dupree

describes as "the atom bomb of his day" because of his widespread destruction of cities and people. Genghis Khan (ca. 1155–1227) laid waste to many civilizations and created an empire that stretched from China to the Caspian Sea, but he failed to destroy the strength of Islam in Central Asia. By the end of the thirteenth century, Genghis Khan's descendants were themselves Muslims.

In south central Asia the Mongols destroyed the Buddhist monuments and buildings in the ancient trading city of Balkh and sacked Herat, the old Buddhist centers in the Bamian valley, and Peshawar. The European traveler, Marco Polo, traveling to the court of Genghis Khan's grandson toward the end of the thirteenth century, reported that Balkh was still a noble city, though ravaged. Sixty or more years later Ibn Batuta, a Moorish traveler, found Balkh destroyed and the cities that were probably Kapisa and Ghazni much diminished by the depredations of the invaders. Unlike other invaders before and after them, the Mongols never attempted to extend their control to India, although they conducted raids into the northern part of the subcontinent. From the death of Genghis Khan in 1227 until the rise of Timur (Tamerlane) in the 1380s, Central Asia went through a period of fragmentation. Although there were 11 Mongol rulers in the area during this period, a Tajik dynasty—the Karts—came to power in Herat and ruled almost independently until Timur destroyed their power in 1381.

Timur was of both Turkish and Mongol descent and claimed Genghis Khan as an ancestor. From his capital of Samarkand, Timur created an empire that by the late fourteenth century extended from India to Turkey. In 1398 he invaded India and plundered Delhi with a ferocity that matched that of Genghis Khan or Mahmud of Ghazni. His successors, however, became supporters of Islamic art, culture, and the sciences. A grandson of Timur built an observatory outside of Samarkand, and under the rule of the last of Timur's successors in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, artists—like the poet Jami and the artist Behzad—and scholars flourished under royal patronage in the capital at Herat. The end of the Timurid Empire came around the turn of the sixteenth century when another Mongol-Turkish ruler overwhelmed the vitiated Timurid ruler in Herat. Muhammad Shaybani (also a descendant of Genghis Khan) and his successors ruled the area around the Amu Darya for about a century, but in the south and west

of what is now Afghanistan two powerful dynasties began to compete for influence.

Mughal-Safavid Rivalry, ca. 1500–1747

Early in the sixteenth century Babur, who was descended from Timur on his father's side and Genghis Khan on his mother's, was driven out of his father's kingdom in Ferghana (now in the Soviet Union) by the Shaybani Uzbeks who had taken Samarkand from the Timurids. After several attempts to regain Ferghana and Samarkand, Babur crossed the Amu Darya and captured Kabul from the last of its Mongol rulers. In an invasion of India in 1526, Babur's army of 12,000 defeated a less mobile force of 100,000 at the First Battle of Panipat, about 45 kilometers northwest of Delhi. Although the seat of the great Mughal Empire that Babur founded was in India, in his memoirs he stressed his love for Kabul, which was not only a commercial and strategic center but also a beautiful highland city with a climate that Babur's memoirs call "extremely delightful."

Although Mughal rule lasted technically until the nineteenth century in India, its days of power were from 1526 until the death in 1707 of Babur's great-great-grandson, Aurangzeb. Although the Mughals came originally from Central Asia, once they had taken India the area that is now Afghanistan became only an outpost of the empire. Indeed, most of the Hindu Kush area during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was a major bone of contention between the Mughals of India on the one hand and the powerful Safavi Dynasty of Iran on the other. Just as Kabul commands the high road from Central Asia into India, Qandahar commands the only approach to the Indian subcontinent that skirts the Hindu Kush. The strategically important Kabul-Qandahar axis was the main area of competition between the Mughals and Safavis, and Qandahar itself changed hands many times during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The Safavis and the Mughals were not the only contenders, however. Less powerful but closer at hand were the Uzbeks of Central Asia, who contended for control of Herat and the northern regions where neither the Mughals nor the Safavis were powerful.

The Mughals desired not only to block the historic western invasion routes into India but also to control the fiercely independent tribes who accepted only nominal control from Delhi in their mountain strongholds between the Kabul-Qandahar

axis and the Indus River—especially in the Pashtun area of the Suleiman mountain range. As the area around Qandahar shifted back and forth between the two great empires on either side, the local Pashtun tribes were able to exploit the situation to their advantage, extracting concessions from both sides. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Mughals had abandoned the Hindu Kush north of Kabul to the Uzbeks, and in 1748 they lost Qandahar to the Safavis for the third and last time.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, as the power of both the Safavis and the Mughals waned, new groups began to assert themselves in the Hindu Kush area, beginning in 1667 with a Pakhtun tribe, the Yusufzais. Although the tribal revolts were successful, they were not linked, and there was no hint of unified action by their leaders. Early in the eighteenth century one of the Pashtun tribes, the Hotaki, took Qandahar from the Safavis, and a group of Ghilzai Pashtuns made even greater inroads into Safavi territory. The Ghilzai Pashtuns even managed to hold briefly the Safavi capital of Isfahan, and two members of this tribe ascended the throne before the Ghilzai were evicted from Iran by a man who became one of the great conquerers of his time, Nadir Shah.

Qandahar and Kabul were conquered in 1738 by Nadir Shah, who was called the Napoleon of Persia. He defeated a great Mughal army in India, plundered Delhi, and massacred thousands of its people. He returned home with vast treasures, including the Peacock Throne, which served as a symbol of Iranian imperial might almost to the end of the twentieth century.

The peoples of the Hindu Kush region fought fiercely, and during the battles the usually hostile Pashtun tribes banded together to face a common enemy. After defeating the tribes Nadir Shah displaced some of them from their homelands. The present location of some Pashtun tribes results from Nadir Shah's efforts to disperse an enemy of which he was both admiring and wary.

Ahmad Shah and the Durrani Empire

From the death of Nadir Shah in 1747 until the communist coup of April 1978, Afghanistan was governed—at least nominally—by Pashtun rulers of the Abdali tribe. Indeed, it was under the leadership of the first Pashtun ruler, Ahmad Shah,

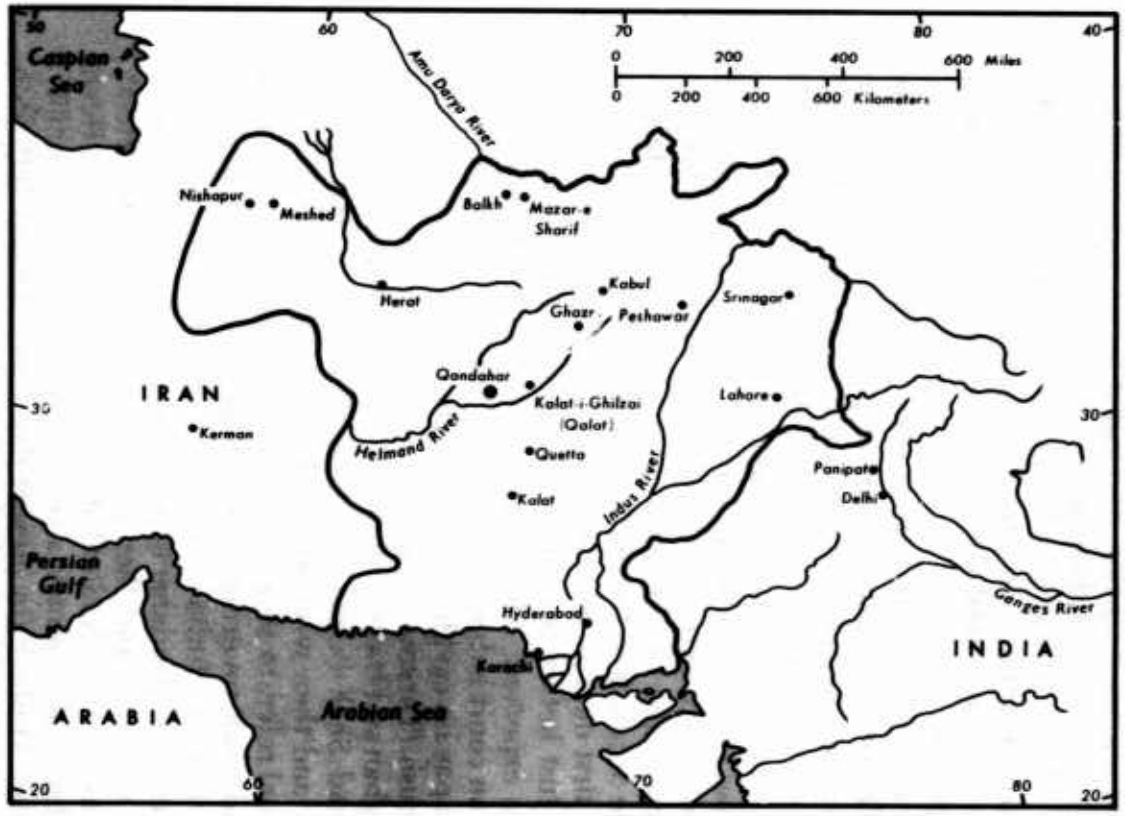
that the nation of Afghanistan began to take shape after centuries of fragmentation and rule by invaders. Even before the death of Nadir Shah, the tribes of the Hindu Kush area had been growing stronger and were beginning to take advantage of the waning power of their distant rulers.

The Ghilzai Pashtuns had risen in rebellion against Iranian rule early in the eighteenth century, but they had been subdued and relocated by Nadir Shah. Although tribal independence would remain a threat to rulers of Afghanistan, the Abdali Pashtun established political dominance, starting in the middle of the eighteenth century with the rise of Ahmad Shah. Two lineage groups within the Abdali ruled Afghanistan from 1747 until the downfall of the monarchy in the 1970s—the Sadozai of the Popalzai tribe and the Muhammadzai of the Barakzai tribe.

Although the names of Timur, Genghis Khan, and Mahmud of Ghazni are well-known for the destruction they wrought in South and Central Asia, the name of the founder of the Afghan nation-state is relatively unknown to Westerners, though Ahmad Shah created an Afghan empire that, at its largest in the 1760s, extended from Central Asia to Delhi and from Kashmir to the Arabian Sea (see fig. 2). There have been greater conquerers in the region before and since Ahmad Shah, but never before his reign and rarely since has there been a ruler of this fragmented area capable not only of subduing the truculent Afghan tribes but also of pulling them together into a nation.

Ahmad was the second son of the chief of the Sadozai, which although small was the most honored of the Abdali lineages. Along with his brother, he had risen in rebellion against Nadir Shah and had been jailed by the Ghilzai in Qandahar. Finally released by Nadir Shah in 1738 when he took the city from the Ghilzai, Ahmad rose in the personal service of the Iranian monarch to the post of commander of an elite body of Afghan cavalry. When Nadir Shah, who had become vicious and capricious in his later years, was killed by a group of dissident officers, Ahmad and some 4,000 of his cavalrymen escaped with the treasury Nadir Shah always carried with him for payments and bribes en route.

Ahmad and his Abdali horsemen rode past Herat and southeastward, joining the chiefs of the Abdali tribes and clans at a shrine near Qandahar to choose a paramount chief. Although his rivals for the post included Haji Jamal Khan—chief of the Muhammadzai, chief branch of the Barakzai, which



Source: Based on information from Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, Princeton, 1973, 320.

Figure 2. Ahmad Shah Durrani's Empire, 1762

would be the other royal branch of the Abdali—and although only 23, Ahmad was finally chosen after more than a week of discussion and debate.

Despite being younger than other claimants, Ahmad had several factors in his favor. He was a direct descendant of Sado, eponym of the Sadozai; he was unquestionably a charismatic leader and seasoned warrior, who had at his disposal a trained, mobile force of several thousand cavalrymen; and he had part of Nadir Shah's treasury in his possession. In addition, the other chiefs may have preferred someone from a small tribe who would always need the support of the larger groups to rule effectively.

One of Ahmad's first acts as chief was to adopt the title "Durr-i-Durran" (meaning "pearl of pearls" or "pearl of the age"), whether because of a dream or because of the pearl earrings worn by the royal guard of Nadir Shah. The Abdali Pashtuns were known thereafter as the Durrani.

Ahmad's rise was owing not only to his personality and talents but also to extraordinary luck. His reign coincided with the deterioration of the empires on both sides of Afghanistan—the Mughals to the southeast and the Safavis to the west. Even his first days as paramount chief were blessed with good fortune. Just before arriving in Qandahar, where some resistance was expected, Ahmad encountered a caravan bound for the Iranian court laden with treasure. The new ruler seized it, used it to pay his cavalry and to bribe hostile chiefs, and invited its Qizilbash (Turkmen Shia who served as palace guards for many Afghan and Iranian rulers) escort to join his service.

Ahmad Shah began by taking Ghazni from the Ghilzai Pashtuns and then wrested Kabul from a local ruler. In 1749 the Mughal ruler, to save his capital from Afghan attack, ceded to Ahmad Shah sovereignty over Sind province and over the areas of northern India west of the Indus. He returned to his headquarters in Qandahar to put down one of an endless series of tribal uprisings and then set out westward to take Herat, which was ruled by Nadir Shah's grandson, Shah Rukh. Herat fell to Ahmad after almost a year of bloody siege and conflict, as did also Meshed (in present-day Iran). Ahmad left Shah Rukh, a 16-year-old who had previously been blinded by a rival, to rule the eastern Iranian province of Khorasan for him. At Nishapur, Ahmad was temporarily halted, but the following spring he struck again, this time employing a cannon that fired a 500-pound projectile. Although the cannon exploded on its first shot, Ahmad Shah's determination and the effect of the

huge missile convinced the local rulers that they should surrender. Before returning to Herat, Ahmad's troops plundered the city and massacred much of the population.

Stopping by Meshed to remind the rebellious Shah Rukh of his subservient position, Ahmad next sent an army to subdue the areas north of the Hindu Kush. In short order the army brought under control the Turkmen, Uzbek, Tajik and Hazara tribes of northern Afghanistan. Ahmad invaded India a third, and then a fourth, time, taking control of the Punjab, Kashmir, and the city of Lahore. Early in 1757 he sacked Delhi, but he permitted the attenuated Mughal Dynasty to remain in nominal control as long as the ruler acknowledged Ahmad's suzerainty over the Punjab, Sind, and Kashmir. Leaving his second son Timur (whom Ahmad married to a Mughal princess) in charge, Ahmad left India to return to Afghanistan. Like Babur, he preferred his homeland to any of his other domains. Dupree quotes an Afghan writer's translation of one of Ahmad Shah's poems:

> Whatever countries I conquer in the world, I would never forget your beautiful gardens. When I remember the summits of your beautiful mountains I forget the greatness of the Delhi throne.

The collapse of Mughal control in India, however, also facilitated the rise of rulers other than Ahmad Shah. In the Punjab the Sikhs were becoming a potent force, and from their capital at Poona the Marathas, who were Hindus, controlled much of western and central India and were beginning to look northward to the decaying Mughal empire, which Ahmad Shah now claimed by conquest. After Ahmad returned to Qandahar in 1757, he was faced not only with uprisings in Baluch areas and in Herat but also with attacks by the Marathas on his domains in India, which succeeded in ousting Timur and his court. Herat was quickly brought under control, and the Baluch revolt was quelled by a combination of siege and compromise, but the campaign against the Marathas was a more substantial operation.

Ahmad called for Islamic holy war against the Marathas, and warriors from the various Pashtun tribes, as well as other tribes such as the Baluch, answered his call. Early skirmishes ended in victory for the Afghans, and by 1759 Ahmad and his army had reached Lahore. By 1760 the Maratha groups had coalesced into a great army. Once again Panipat was the scene of a historical confrontation between two contenders for con-

trol of northern India. This time the battle was between Muslim and Hindu armies, numbering as many as 100,000 troops each, who fought along a 12-kilometer front. Although he decisively defeated the Marathas, Ahmad Shah was not left in peaceful control of his domains because of other challenges to the ailing monarch in his last years. Moreover, the ultimate effect of the 1761 Battle of Panipat may have had detrimental effects on the rule of Ahmad Shah's descendants; by thwarting the consolidation of Maratha power in northern and central India, the battle may have set the stage for the rise of both Sikh and British power in the region.

The victory at Panipat was the high point of Ahmad Shah's—and Afghan—power. Afterward, even before his death, the empire began to unravel. Ahmad Shah was less fit to cope with insurrection because he suffered from severe ulceration of the face, an ailment that was probably cancer. Even before the end of 1761 the Sikhs had risen and taken control of much of the Punjab. In 1762 Ahmad Shah crossed the passes from Afghanistan for the sixth time to subdue the Sikhs. He assaulted Lahore, and when he had taken the Sikh holy city of Amritsar, he massacred thousands of its Sikh inhabitants, destroyed their temples, and desecrated their holy places with cow blood.

The Sikhs rebelled again within two years, but Ahmad Shah's efforts to put down the uprising of 1764 were not as successful. Again in 1767 he crossed the mountain passes. Although much harassed by Sikh guerrilla warfare, Ahmad Shah took Lahore and again laid waste to Amritsar, killing many of its inhabitants. After this attempt Ahmad Shah tried two more times to subjugate the Sikhs permanently, but he failed. By the time of his death, he had lost all but nominal control of the Punjab to the Sikhs, who remained in control until defeated by the British in 1849.

It was not only the fierce Sikhs who rebelled against the rule of Ahmad Shah. His empire was being seriously eroded in other areas as well. Ahmad Shah's Indian domains refused to pay homage, and other regions simply declared their independence. The amir (ruler) of Bukhara claimed some of the northern provinces, and Ahmad Shah reached an agreement with him to accept the Amu Darya as the border between them. Three years before his death, Ahmad Shah had to put down a revolt in Khorasan.

In 1772 Ahmad Shah retired to his home, the mountains east of Qandahar, where he died. He was buried in Qandahar,

where his epitaph, recalling his early connection with the Iranian monarchy, calls him a ruler equal to Emperor Cyrus. Despite his relentless military attacks and his massacres of Sikhs and others in imperial warfare, he is known in Afghan history as Ahmad Shah Baba, or "father." Although confusion reigned after his death, Ahmad Shah was clearly the creator of the nation of Afghanistan. As scholar Leon B. Poullada notes, the loyalty of the Afghan tribes was not transferred from their own leaders and kin to the concept of nation, but Ahmad Shah succeeded to a remarkable degree in balancing tribal alliances and hostilities and in directing tribal energies away from rebellion into his frequent foreign excursions. He certainly enjoyed extraordinarily good luck, but he was clever in exploiting his good fortune, and he showed exemplary intelligence in dealing with his own people. Having started his rule as merely the paramount chief of the Durrani, Ahmad Shah never sought to rule the Pashtuns by force. He reigned in consultation with a council of eight or nine sirdars (or sardars), the most powerful Durrani Pashtuns, each of whom was responsible for his own group. He sought the advice of his council on all major issues. Although he favored the Durrani, and especially his own lineage, the Sadozai, he was conciliatory to the other Pashtun chiefs as well. Ahmad Shah's successors were not so wise, and the nation he had built almost collapsed because of their misrule and the intratribal rivalry that they could not manage.

By the time of Ahmad Shah, the Pashtuns included many groups whose greatest single common characteristic was their Pashtu language. Their origins were obscure; most were believed to have descended from ancient Aryan tribes, but some, such as the Ghilzai, may have been Turks. To the east, the Waziris and their close relatives, the Mahsuds, have been located in the hills of the central Suleiman Range since the fourteenth century. By the end of the sixteenth century and the final Turkish-Mongol invasions, tribes such as the Shinwaris, Yusufzais, and the Mohmands had moved from the upper Kabul River Valley into the valleys and plains west, north, and northeast of Peshawar, and the Afridis had long been established in the hills and mountain ranges south of Khyber Pass. By the end of the eighteenth century the Durranis had blanketed the area west and north of Qandahar.

Successors of Ahmad Shah

Ahmad Shah's successors presided incompetently over a

period of unrest so marked that within half a century of Ahmad Shah's death, Afghanistan was embroiled in civil war. Many of the territories conquered by the military skill of Ahmad Shah fell to others in the 50 years following his death. Sind was virtually independent by 1786; much of northern Afghanistan was controlled by semi-independent khans by 1800; Baluchistan, virtually independent by the 1790s, was annexed by the Sikhs in 1818; and the nominal control of the Punjab was lost to the Sikhs in 1818 and Kashmir to them the following year. By 1818 the Sadozai rulers who succeeded Ahmad Shah controlled little more than Kabul and the territory within a 160-kilometer radius. They not only lost the outlying territories but also alienated the other tribes and lineage groups among the Durrani Pashtuns.

Timur Shah, Ahmad's second son and designated heir, still formally turned to the other Durrani sirdars for advice (especially the chief of the powerful Muhammadzai, Painda Khan), but in other ways he alienated his fellow Pashtuns. Although there were only two major internal rebellions in the 20 years of Timur's reign, his turn away from the council of Durrani advisers to the Qizilbash guards began a process of alienation of the Sadozai rulers from their Pashtun subjects. Although Timur's reign was relatively uneventful by Afghan standards of the day and although the Durrani Empire still included (at least nominally) all of the Hindu Kush area and much of northern India, Baluchistan, and Iranian Khorasan, the seeds of the downfall of the dynasty had been sown. Ahmad Shah had involved his heir in a number of dynastic marriages, and when Timur died suddenly in 1793, he left 36 legitimate children, of whom over 20 were sons. He had failed to designate an heir, and all his sons claimed the throne.

The three strongest contenders were the governors of Qandahar, Herat, and Kabul, although the latter, Muhammad Zeman, was in the most commanding position. When Painda Khan, who had been Timur's adviser and was the chief of the Muhammadzai clan, came to Zeman's support, his accession to the throne was assured. Zeman, Timur's fifth son, became shah at the age of 23; his half-brothers accepted this only by force majeure, having been imprisoned upon their arrival in the capital to elect a shah. The quarrels among Timur's descendants threw Afghanistan into turmoil and provided the pretext for the intervention of outside forces in the country for the first time since its unification under Ahmad Shah in 1747.

The efforts of the Sadozai heirs of Timur to impose a true

monarchy on the truculent Pashtun tribes and to rule absolutely and without the advice of the other (larger) Pashtun tribes' leaders were ultimately unsuccessful. The accession of Zeman was the beginning of a long quarrel that ended with the deposition of the Sadozai by the Muhammadzai, who were of the largest and most powerful lineage of the Barakzai. Zeman's reign lasted only seven tumultuous years. Zeman's half-brothers rose in revolt every time he left Kabul to subdue a rebellion in an outlying area. The Sikhs were particularly troublesome and, after several unsuccessful efforts to subdue them, Zeman made the mistake of appointing a forceful young Sikh chief, Ranjit Singh, as his governor in the Punjab. Ranjit Singh became an implacable enemy of Pashtun rulers in Afghanistan.

Zeman's downfall was triggered by his attempts to consolidate power. Although it had been through the support of the Muhammadzai chief, Painda Khan, that Zeman had come to the throne instead of his brothers, Zeman began removing prominent Muhammadzai leaders from positions of power and replacing them with men of his own lineage, the Sadozai. This upset the delicate balance of Durrani tribal politics that had been established by Ahmad Shah and may have prompted Painda Khan and other Durrani chiefs to plot against the shah. Although it is uncertain whether such a plot existed or not, Zeman moved against the tribal leaders, executing Painda Khan and the chiefs of two other Durrani clans (the Nurzai and the Alizai), as well as the chief of the Qizilbash. This was an act of foolhardiness for a ruler who reigned not by reason of his tribe's size and power but by its royal antecedents and by the consent of the other Durrani chiefs. Painda Khan's son fled to Iran and offered the substantial support of his Muhammadzai followers to a rival claimant to the throne, Zeman's older brother, Mahmud. The tribes of the other chiefs who had been executed by Zeman joined the rebels, and they took Qandahar without bloodshed. The shah was blinded and imprisoned, but he escaped to spend the rest of his life as a pensioner of the British in India.

The overthrow of Zeman in 1800 was not the end of civil strife in Afghanistan; it was the beginning of even greater violence. Shah Mahmud lasted only three years before being replaced by yet another of Timur Shah's sons, Shuja, who ruled for six years, from 1803 to 1809. Only a few weeks after signing an agreement with the British in 1809, Shuja was deposed by his predecessor, Mahmud, whose second reign lasted nine years, until 1818.

Mahmud's downfall in 1818 was certainly the result of his foolish behavior. He had returned to the throne again only as a result of the support of Painda Khan's son, Fateh Khan, now chief of the Muhammadzai and the most powerful chief among the Durrani Pashtuns. Fateh Khan was an able administrator, and some semblance of normal life returned to parts of Afghanistan during this period. He appointed his brothers to important posts all over the country and to some of the remaining outside provinces. While defending Herat against an Iranian assault, Fateh Khan arrested the governor of the city. A serious breach of custom occurred when he sent his younger brother, Dost Mohammad Khan, into the deposed governor's harem, where he snatched a jeweled girdle from a woman who was the daughter of Mahmud. When news of this reached Mahmud's heir, Kamran, who already resented the power of Fateh Khan and his brothers, the young man urged his father to act against the powerful Muhammadzai chief. Fateh Khan was seized and blinded. His 20 brothers, most of whom were in important posts all over Afghanistan, led the Muhammadzai in rebellion. Fateh Khan's youngest brother, Dost Mohammad, whose mother had been a Qizilbash, persuaded his mother's tribesmen in Kabul to join him in removing all of the shah's followers from Kabul. Mahmud and his followers took refuge in Herat.

For eight years, from 1818 until the ascendancy of Dost Mohammad in 1826, chaos reigned in the domains of Ahmad Shah's Afghanistan while various sons of Painda Khan struggled among themselves for supremacy. Afghanistan ceased to exist as a single nation, disintegrating temporarily into a group of small units, each ruled by a different Durrani leader. Mahmud and Kamran controlled Herat, where they later acknowledged the sovereignty of the Iranian monarch. Mahmud died in 1829, and his heir, Kamran, ruled the city until he was assassinated in 1842. Different sons of the dead Painda Khan controlled Kabul, Qandahar, Kashmir, and Peshawar.

The Rise of Dost Mohammad and the Beginning of the Great Game

It was not until 1826 that the energetic Dost Mohammad was able to exert sufficient control over his own brothers to take over the throne in Kabul, where he proclaimed himself amir, not shah. Although the British had begun to show interest in Afghanistan as early as 1809 with their agreement with Shuja, it was not until the reign of Dost Mohammad, the first of

the Muhammadzai rulers, that the opening gambits were played in what came to be known as the Great Game. The Great Game involved not only the confrontation of two great empires whose spheres of influence moved steadily closer to one another until they met in Afghanistan, but also the repeated attempts by a foreign power to impose a puppet government in Kabul. The remainder of the nineteenth century was a time of European involvement in Afghanistan and the adjacent areas and of conflicting ambitions among the various local rulers.

Dost Mohammad achieved predominance among his ambitious brothers through clever use of the support of his mother's Qizilbash tribesmen and his own youthful apprenticeship under his brother, Fateh Khan. He was, by all accounts, a shrewd and charming leader. Many problems demanded his attention: consolidating his power in the areas under his command, controlling his half-brothers who ruled the southern areas of Afghanistan, defeating Mahmud in Herat, and repulsing the encroachment of the Sikhs on the Pashtun areas east of the Khyber Pass. After working assiduously to establish control and stability in his domains around Kabul, the amir next chose to confront the Sikhs.

In 1834 Dost Mohammad defeated an invasion by ex-shah Shuja, but his absence from Kabul gave the Sikhs the opportunity to expand westward. The forces of Ranjit Singh occupied Peshawar and moved from there into territory ruled directly by Kabul. In 1836 Dost Mohammad's forces, under the command of his son, defeated the Sikhs at Jamrud, a post some 15 kilometers west of Peshawar. The Afghan leader, however, did not follow up this triumph by retaking Peshawar. Instead, Dost Mohammad decided to contact the British directly for help in dealing with the Sikhs. In the spring of 1836 he wrote the new governor general of India, Lord Auckland, a letter of congratulations and asked his advice on dealing with the Sikhs. Just as Dost Mohammad's letter formally set the stage for British intervention in Afghanistan, so also did Lord Auckland's reply foreshadow the duplicitous policy of the British in dealing with the Afghans. Auckland responded that he would send a commercial mission to Kabul and stated that "it is not the practice of the British Government to interfere with the affairs of other independent states." In fact, at the heart of the Great Game lay the willingness of Britain and Russia to subdue, subvert, or subjugate the small independent states that lay between them.

The British—through the East India Company—had first

become involved in the subcontinent of India in 1612 during the heyday of the Mughal Empire. British influence spread until, by the end of the eighteenth century, their interests in northern India impinged on Central Asia. Although by that time the empire of Ahmad Shah Durrani was already disintegrating, the British were well aware of his exploits in northern India only four decades before, and they feared what they thought was a formidable Afghan force. By the end of the eighteenth century the British had approached the Iranians, asking that they keep the Afghans in check. By the last years of the eighteenth century, a new worry motivated the British in the region—fear of French involvement. Napoleon was, in the British view, capable of overrunning areas of Central Asia and northern India, just as he had defeated much of Europe. In 1801 the British signed an agreement with Iran not only to halt any possible Afghan moves into India by attacking their western flank but also to prevent the French from doing the same thing. In 1807 Napoleon signed with the tsar of Russia the Treaty of Tilsit, which envisaged a joint invasion of India though Iran. The British hastened to cement their relationship with the Iranians and signed an agreement with Shuja in 1809, only a few weeks before he was deposed.

The debacle of the Afghan civil war left a vacuum in the Hindu Kush area that concerned the British, who were well aware of the many times this area had been the invasion route to India. In the first decades of the nineteenth century it became clear to the British that the major threat to their interests in India would not come from the fragmented Afghan empire, the vitiated Persians, or from the French, but from the Russians, who had begun a steady advance southward from the Caucasus.

As in earlier times, two great empires confronted each other, with Central Asia lying between them. The Russians feared permanent British encroachment into Central Asia as the British moved northward, taking control of the Punjab, Sind, and Kashmir. Equally suspicious, the British viewed Russian absorption of the Caucasus and Georgia, Kirghiz and Turkmen lands, and Khiva and Bukhara as a threat to British interest in the Indian subcontinent (see fig. 3).

Background to the First Anglo-Afghan War

Historians are unanimous in condemning the stupidity of Auckland's policies, which led to the British invasion of Af-

Source: Based on information from Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, Princeton, 1973, 342; and W. Kerr Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia*, New York, 1967, 128.

Figure 3. British and Russian Advances Toward Afghanistan in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

ghanistan in 1838. The governor general sent to Kabul a young official of the East India Company, Alexander Burnes, without investing him with appropriate negotiating powers and without heeding the sensible advice that Burnes sent back. Auckland ignored not only the advice of Burnes but also that of other advisers on his staff, and the First Anglo-Afghan War, unlike most other military adventures of imperial Britain in the nineteenth century, was unpopular with many journalists and prominent officials in London.

In addition to the general rivalry that existed between Russia and Britain, there were two specific reasons for British concern over Russia's intentions. First was the Russian influence at the Iranian court, which culminated in Russian support for the Iranian attempt to take Herat, historically the western gateway to Afghanistan and northern India. Herat was still formally ruled by the deposed Sadozai, Kamran. In 1837 the Iranians advanced on Herat with the support and advice of Russian officers. The second immediate reason for British anxiety over Russian intentions was the presence in Kabul in 1837 of a lone Russian agent who was ostensibly there, like Burnes, for commercial discussions.

The concerns of Dost Mohammad are also easy to discern. Although he was certainly interested in gaining control of both Herat and Qandahar (which was under the control of his brothers), his most immediate objective was to remove the Sikhs from the area around Peshawar. To that end he was willing to delay taking Herat and Qandahar and to deal with whatever foreign power could advance his objectives. Clearly he preferred the British, and he was apparently even willing to agree to the humiliating British ultimatum delivered to him by Burnes in March 1838. The British demanded that Dost Mohammad desist from all contact with the Iranians and Russians, dismiss the Russian agent from Kabul, surrender all claims to Peshawar, and respect Peshawar's independence as well as that of Qandahar. In return, the British government suggested that it would ask Ranjit Singh to reconcile himself with the Afghans and to appoint any Afghan he chose, on whatever terms he chose, to rule Peshawar. Dost Mohammad's agreement to these disadvantageous terms was not enough to placate Auckland, however, and when he refused to put the agreement in writing, Dost Mohammad turned away from the British and began to negotiate with the Russian agent.

In July 1838 an agreement was signed by Auckland, Ranjit Singh, and Shuja. By the agreement's provisions, Shuja would regain control of Kabul and Qandahar with British and Sikh assistance, Herat would remain independent, and Shuja would accept Sikh rule of the former Afghan provinces that Ranjit Singh already controlled. In practice the plan was to replace Dost Mohammad with a British protégé whose autonomy would be as limited as that of the various princes in British India. Although this plan was formulated in light of the pressing Iranian-Russian threat to occupy Herat, the withdrawal of the Iranians and their Russian advisers from the siege of Herat

in September 1838 did not alter Auckland's determination to depose Dost Mohammad. As British historian Sir John W. Kaye declared in his 1874 study of the First Anglo-Afghan War, as soon as the Iranian-Russian threat to Herat had been removed, the plan to invade Afghanistan became "a folly and a crime."

It soon became apparent to the British that Sikh participation—to advance by way of the Khyber Pass toward Kabul while Shuja and the British advanced through Qandahar—was not going to be forthcoming. Auckland's plan in the spring of 1838 for the Sikhs—with some British support—to place Shuja on the Afghan throne was transformed by summer's end to a plan for the British alone to impose the compliant Shuja.

Historians have had difficulty understanding Auckland's wrong-headed policy, but a twentieth-century analyst of the First Anglo-Afghan War, J. Norris, suggests that the global great power situation must also be taken into consideration in assessing British policy at this point. The determination to avoid war with Russia in Europe and to coax the tsar into a joint great power strategy with respect to the faltering Ottoman Empire (the "Eastern question") made it necessary to tread very lightly in Central Asia, where British interests were to be protected as far as possible without directly engaging the Russians. The Russians, meanwhile, having suffered a disappointment in their support of the Iranian siege of Herat, continued to be as suspicious of the British as the British were of them.

The First Anglo-Afghan War

To justify his plan, Auckland ordered a manifesto issued on October 1, 1838, at Simla that set forth the reasons for British intervention in Afghanistan. The Simla Manifesto stated that the welfare of India required that the British have on their western frontier a trustworthy ally. The British pretense that their troops were merely supporting the tiny force of Shuja in retaking what was once his throne fooled no one. Although the Simla Manifesto asserted that British troops would be withdrawn as soon as Shuja was installed in Kabul, Shuja's rule depended entirely on British arms to suppress rebellion and on British funds to pay tribal chiefs for their support. Like other interventions in modern times, the British denied that they were invading Afghanistan but claimed they were merely supporting its legitimate government (Shuja) "against foreign interference and factious opposition."

From the point of the view of the British, the First Anglo-Afghan War (often called "Auckland's Folly") was an unmitigated disaster, although it proved surprisingly easy to depose Dost Mohammad and enthrone Shuja. An army of British and Indian troops set out from the Punjab in December 1838 and by late March 1839 had reached Quetta. By the end of April the British had taken Qandahar without a battle. In July, after a two-month delay in Qandahar, the British attacked the fortress of Ghazni, overlooking a plain that leads to India, and achieved a decisive victory over the troops of Dost Mohammad, which were led by one of his sons. The Afghans were amazed at the taking of fortified Ghazni, and Dost Mohammad found his support melting away. The Afghan ruler took his few loyal followers and fled across the passes to Bamian, and ultimately to Bukhara, and in August 1839 Shuja was enthroned again in Kabul after a hiatus of almost 30 years. Some British troops returned to India, but it soon became clear that Shuja's rule could only be maintained by the presence of British forces. Garrisons were established in Jalalabad, Ghazni, Kalat-i-Ghilzai (Qalat), Qandahar, and at the passes to Bamian. After a winter in temporary quarters, the British thought to move their Kabul garrison to the great fort, Bala Hissar, overlooking the city, but Shuja, either on his own or under pressure, refused to sanction the move.

Omens of disaster for the British abounded. Opposition to the British-imposed rule of Shuja began as soon as he assumed the throne, and the power of his government did not extend beyond the areas controlled by the force of British arms. The British cantonment in Kabul was eventually constructed on a virtually indefensible open plain northeast of the city, with the commissariat and munitions outside the low walls of the garrison. Early in 1841 a new commander, who was elderly, ill, and indecisive, joined the British troops in Afghanistan.

After several attacks on the British and their Afghan protégé, Dost Mohammad decided to surrender to the British and in late 1840 was allowed to go into exile in India. Sir William Macnaghten, one of the principal architects of the British invasion, wrote to Auckland two months later, urging good treatment for the deposed Afghan leader. With that fairness and clearsightedness that, in retrospect, was characteristic of British colonial officials, Macnaghten said:

> His case has been compared to that of Shah Shoojah . . . but surely the cases are not parallel. The Shah [Shujal] had no claim on us. We had

> no hand in depriving him of his kingdom, whereas we ejected the Dost, who never offended us, in support of our policy, of which he was the victim.

Dual control (by Shuja and the British) was unworkable. Shuja did not succeed in garnering the support of the Afghan chiefs on his own, and the British could not—or would not—sustain their subsidies. When the cash payments to tribal chiefs were curtailed in 1841, there was a major revolt by the Ghilzai.

By October 1841 disaffected Afghan tribes were flocking to the support of Dost Mohammad's son, Muhammad Akbar, in Bamian. Burnes was murdered in November 1841, and a few days later the commissariat fell into the hands of the Afghans. Macnaghten, having tried first to bribe and then to negotiate with the tribal leaders, was killed at a meeting with the tribal chiefs in December. On January 1, 1842, the British in Kabul and a number of Afghan chiefs reached an agreement that provided for the safe exodus of the entire British garrison and its dependents from Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the British would not wait for an Afghan escort to be assembled, and the Ghilzai and allied tribes had not been among the 18 chiefs who had signed the agreement. On January 6 the precipitate retreat began and, as they struggled through the snowbound passes, the British were attacked by Ghilzai warriors. Although a Dr. W. Brydon is usually cited as the only survivor of the march to Jalalabad (out of more than 15,000 who undertook the retreat), in fact a few more survived as prisoners and hostages. Shuja remained in power only a few months and was assassinated in April 1842.

The destruction of the British garrison prompted brutal retaliation by the British against the Afghans and touched off yet another power struggle among potential rulers of Afghanistan. In the fall of 1842 British forces from Qandahar and Peshawar entered Kabul long enough to rescue the British prisoners and burn the great bazaar. All that remained of the British occupation of Afghanistan was a ruined market and thousands of dead. Although the foreign invasion did give the Afghan tribes a temporary sense of unity they had lacked before, the accompanying loss of life and property was followed by a bitterness and resentment of foreign influence that lasted well into the twentieth century and may have accounted for much of the backlash against the modernization attempts of later Afghan monarchs.

The Russians advanced steadily southward toward Afghanistan in the three decades after the First Anglo-Afghan War, and historians of the period generally agree that the Russians were motivated, at least in part, by British intervention in Afghanistan. In 1842 the Russian border was on the other side of the Aral Sea from Afghanistan, but five years later the tsar's outposts moved to the lower reaches of the Syr Darya. By 1865 Tashkent had been formally annexed, as was Samarkand three years later. A treaty with the ruler of Bukhara virtually stripped him of his independence, and by 1869 Russian control ran as far as the northern bank of the Amu Darya. As the Russians overran much of Central Asia north of the river, the British advanced toward Afghanistan as well, absorbing territories that had once been part of Ahmad Shah Durrani's empire: Sind in 1843, Kashmir in 1846, the Punjab in 1849, Baluchistan in 1859, and the North-West Frontier in 1895 (see fig. 1).

The Second Anglo-Afghan War

After months of chaos in Kabul, Mohammad Akbar secured local control, and in April 1843 his father, Dost Mohammad, returned to the throne of Afghanistan. In the following decade, Dost Mohammad concentrated his efforts on reconquering Mazar-e-Sharif, Konduz, Badakhshan, and Qandahar. During the Second Anglo-Sikh War, in 1848-49, Dost Mohammad's last effort to take Peshawar failed.

In 1854 the British were interested in resuming relations with Dost Mohammad, whom they had more or less ignored since 1842. In the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Crimean War, British officials in India, though they had no immediate concerns for Russian involvement, thought to make Afghanistan a barrier to Russian penetration across the Amu Darya. Dost Mohammad agreed, apparently perceiving the utility of British backing against the Russians and even the Iranians, to whom the independent rulers of Herat always turned for support against re-absorption into the Afghan kingdom. In 1855 the Treaty of Peshawar reopened diplomatic relations, proclaimed respect for each sides' territorial integrity, and committed each to be the friends of each other's friends and the enemies of each other's enemies.

In October 1856 the Iranians siezed Herat, and the British, whose policy it was to maintain the independence of this city, declared war against Iran. After three months the Iranians

withdrew from Herat and committed themselves never again to interfere there or elsewhere in Afghanistan. This brief war convinced the British that they should bolster the strength of Dost Mohammad in an attempt to enable him to meet future challenges by the Iranians. In 1857 an addendum was signed to the 1855 treaty that permitted a British military mission to go to Qandahar (but not to Kabul) and to provide a subsidy during conflict with the Iranians. Fraser-Tytler notes that as Dost Mohammad signed the document he proclaimed, "I have now made an alliance with the British Government and come what may I will keep it till death." Even during the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion in India, when British forces in the Punjab were thinned dramatically, Dost Mohammad refused to take advantage of British vulnerability to retake the Pashtun areas under British control.

The British governor general of India at the time of the 1857 agreement with Afghanistan stated in a memorandum that the British would never again intervene in Afghan internal affairs or send an army across its borders unless Herat was besieged, and then only with Afghan consent. He went so far as to argue in favor of the Afghan absorption of Herat. In 1863 Dost Mohammad retook Herat with British acquiescence. A few months later Dost Mohammad died and, although his third son, Sher Ali, was his proclaimed successor, he did not succeed in taking Kabul from his brother, Muhammad Afzal (whose troops were led by his son, Abdur Rahman) until 1868. Abdur Rahman retreated across the Amu Darya and bided his time.

The disaster of the First Anglo-Afghan War continued to haunt the British for decades, and the 70 years following the defeat of 1842 were a period of extraordinary vacillation in British policy toward Afghanistan. Not only were political perspectives different in Delhi and London, but there were also changes in government between what writer John C. Griffiths calls "half-hearted Imperialists and ill-informed Liberals." The former favored what was called the Forward Policy, which held that the defense of India required pushing its frontiers to the natural barrier of the Hindu Kush so that Afghanistan (or at least parts of it, such as Herat) would be brought entirely under British control. The Liberal policy rested on the assumption that the Forward Policy was immoral and impractical. Many of its adherents believed that the Indus River formed the natural border of India and that Afghanistan should be maintained as a buffer state between the British and Russian empires.

In the years immediately following the First Anglo-Afghan War, and especially after the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion in India, Liberal governments in London tended toward the buffer-state approach. By the time Sher Ali had established control in Kabul in 1868, he found the British ready to provide arms and funds in support of his regime, but nothing more. Fraser-Tytler reports that Sher Ali declared, "As long as I am alive, or as long as my governments exists, the foundation of friendship and goodwill between this and the powerful British Government will not be weakened." From this high point, relations between the Afghan ruler and the British steadily deteriorated over the next 10 years. Despite the good feeling between Sher Ali and the British in 1869, the sensitivities engendered by the First Anglo-Afghan War made it impossible for Sher Ali to accept a British envoy in Kabul, and there is no doubt that misperceptions colored the unfortunate sequence of events that led to the Second Anglo-Afghan War. In 1873 relations between Sher Ali and the British viceroy began to become strained. The Afghan ruler was worried about the southern movement of Russia, which in 1873 had taken over the lands of the khan (ruler) of Khiva. Sher Ali sent an envoy to ask the British for advice and support. In 1872, however, the British had signed an agreement with the Russians in which the latter agreed to respect the northern boundaries of Afghanistan and to view the territories of the Afghan amir as outside their sphere of influence. With this agreement in mind, and still following a noninterventionist policy as far as Afghanistan was concerned, the British refused to give any assurances to the disappointed Sher Ali.

In 1874 Benjamin Disraeli became prime minister of Britain, and in 1876 a new viceroy was dispatched to Delhi with orders to reinstate the Forward Policy. Sher Ali rejected a second British demand for a British mission in Kabul, arguing that if he agreed the Russians might demand the same right. The Afghan ruler had received intimidating letters from the Russians, but the British offered little in return for the concessions they demanded. Sher Ali, still sensitive to the probable reaction in Afghanistan to the posting of British officers in Kabul or Herat, continued to refuse to permit such a mission.

After tension between Russia and Britain in Europe ended with the June 1878 Congress of Berlin, Russia turned its attention to Central Asia. In the summer of 1878 Russia sent an uninvited diplomatic mission to Kabul, setting in motion the train of events that led to the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Sher

Ali tried to keep the Russian mission out but failed. The Russian envoys arrived in Kabul on July 22, 1878, and on August 14 the British demanded that Sher Ali accept a British mission. Sher Ali had not responded by August 17 when his son and heir died, throwing the court into mourning.

When no reply was received, the British dispatched a small military force, which was refused permission to cross the Khyber Pass by Afghan authorities. The British presumably considered this an insult, but more likely it was viewed at the highest levels as a fine pretext for implementing the Forward Policy and taking over most of Afghanistan. The British delivered an ultimatum to Sher Ali, demanding an explanation of his actions. The Afghan response was viewed by the British as unsatisfactory, and on November 21, 1978, British troops entered Afghanistan at three points. Sher Ali, having turned in desperation to the Russians, received no assistance from them. Appointing his son, Yaqub, regent, Sher Ali left to seek the assistance of the tsar. Advised by the Russians to abandon this effort and to return to his country, Sher Ali returned to Mazar-e Sharif, where he died in February 1879.

With British forces occupying much of the country, Yaqub signed the Treaty of Gandamak in May 1879 to prevent British invasion of the rest of Afghanistan. According to this agreement and in return for an annual subsidy and loose assurance of assistance in case of foreign aggression, Yaqub agreed to British control of Afghan foreign affairs, British representatives in Kabul and other locations, extension of British control to the Khyber and Michni passes, and the cession of various frontier areas to the British.

An Afghan uprising against the British was, unlike that of the First Anglo-Afghan War, foiled in October 1879. Yaqub abdicated because, as Fraser-Tytler suggests, he did not wish to share the fate of Shuja following the first war.

Despite the success of the military venture, by March 1880 even the proponents of the Forward Policy were aware that defeating the Afghan tribes did not mean controlling them. Although British policymakers had briefly thought simply to dismember Afghanistan a few months earlier, they now feared they were heading for the same disasters that befell their predecessors at the time of the First Anglo-Afghan War. Fraser-Tytler summarizes the position of the viceroy:

> He could hardly have based his policy on the assumption that after overrunning the country and thereby once more inflaming the hatred

> of every patriotic Afghan against us, we should by some magic discover among the Afghan chiefs a leader who would be acceptable both to ourselves and to the Afghan people . . . And yet this is what he did . . . The amazing thing is that while his assumption was wholly unwarranted his gamble was successful. While the British and Indian Governments were arguing over the dismembered corpse of the Afghan Kingdom, the one man who could fulfil the requirements of a desperately difficult situation was moving southwards into Afghanistan.

Just as the British interventionists were reaching this conclusion, the Liberal Party won an electoral victory in March 1880. This assured the end of the Forward Policy, which had been a major campaign issue.

Abdur Rahman Khan, 1880-1901

As far as British interests were concerned, Abdur Rahman came almost as an answer to prayer: a forceful, intelligent leader capable of welding his fractured peoples into a state, yet willing to accept the limitations on his power imposed by British control of Afghan foreign affairs and the British buffer-state policy. His 21-year reign was marked by his efforts to modernize and establish control of the kingdom, which was, during the same period, delineated in its modern borders by the two empires that surrounded it. Caught between the Russians and the British, Abdur Rahman turned his formidable energies to what turned out to be virtually the creation of the modern state of Afghanistan, while the British and the Russians, with the Afghans as bystanders, determined the borders of the Afghan state.

Abdur Rahman consolidated the Afghan state in three ways. First, he suppressed various rebellions and followed up his victories with harsh punishment, execution, and deportation. Second, he broke the power of many Pashtun tribes, most notably by forcibly transplanting them. He moved his most powerful Pashtun enemies, the Ghilzai, and other tribes from southern and south-central Afghanistan to areas north of the Hindu Kush that had predominantly non-Pashtun populations, whether Tajik, Uzbek, Hazara, or Turkmen. Although they had revolted against Durrani rule in their original homelands, the Pashtun tribes who relocated in non-Pashtun areas supported the Durrani leader, who shrewdly managed to keep the tribal leaders in Kabul under his control by creating a council that presumably advised him but which in fact had no power at

all. Abdur Rahman also ingratiated himself with non-Pashtun people by lifting the tax with which Sher Ali had burdened them.

A third mechanism Abdur Rahman used to cement the fragmented state was the creation of a system of provincial governorates that were not synonymous with old tribal boundaries. Provincial governors had a great deal of power in local matters, and an army was placed at their disposal to enforce tax collection and suppress dissent. Abdur Rahman kept a close eye on these governors, however, by creating an effective intelligence system. During his reign tribal organization in some areas began to erode as provincial government officials allowed land to change hands outside the traditional clan and tribal limits.

In addition to forging a nation from the splintered regions that made up Afghanistan, Abdur Rahman tried to modernize his kingdom by creating a regular army and the society's first institutionalized bureaucracy, which included government agencies that functioned like cabinet ministries. Although distinctly authoritarian, Abdur Rahman also established a general assembly (the Loya Jirgah), in addition to his royal council. The latter, which had only advisory powers, included tribal leaders, various advisers, and agency heads, as well as state secretaries for the major regions of the country. The Loya Jirgah (jirgah—see Glossary), which did not interfere with Abdur Rahman's autocracy any more than the council, included royal princes, important notables from other regions of the country, and religious leaders. Although these bodies and the government agencies he created did not have independent powers, their creation bespoke the ruler's concern for more efficient administration as well as more centralized rule. According to Abdur Rahman's autobiography (which he never saw in its final form but which Poullada suggests is generally consistent with what is known of the ruler's views from other sources), Abdur Rahman had three goals: subjugation of the tribes, extension of government control through the creation of a strong army, and reinforcement of the power of the ruler and the royal family.

Another aspect of Abdur Rahman's modernization was his attention to technological development. He brought to Afghanistan foreign physicians, engineers (especially for mining), geologists, and printers. He imported European machinery and encouraged the establishment of small factories for soap, candles, and leather goods. He sought outside advice on communications, transport, and irrigation.

Despite his strong internal policies, Abdur Rahman's foreign policy was completely in foreign hands. Vigorous leader though he was, he could not stand up to the overwhelming force represented by the two empires, which faced one another with his kingdom in the middle. Abdur Rahman honored his commitment to give the British control of Afghan foreign relations.

The first important frontier dispute was the Panjdeh crisis of 1885, brought on by Russian advances in Central Asia. Having seized the Merv (now Mary) Oasis by 1884, Russian forces were now directly adjacent to Afghanistan. There were conflicting claims to the Panjdeh Oasis, but the Russians were keen to take over all the Turkomen domains of this area before a planned Russian-British border commission could meet to decide on the border. The British urged the Russians not to attack the Panjdeh area, but they worded their warning against an attack on Herat so much more strongly that the Russians were apparently left in doubt about what the British would do if they attacked Panjdeh. After a battle with Afghan forces in March-April 1885, the Russians seized the oasis. As war clouds gathered, Russian newspapers urged their government to seize Herat as a prelude to moving all the way to the Indian Ocean. Troops were called up in both Russia and Britain, but the two powers were willing to compromise: Russia had what it wanted, and the British felt they could now keep the Russians from advancing any farther. Without Afghan participation the British and the Russians agreed that the latter would give up the area that was the farthest point of their advance but keep Panjdeh. After much disagreement over previous agreements and demarcations, the Joint Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission of 1886 finally agreed on a boundary along the Amu Darya. The Russian-British agreement on these sections of the border achieved a permanent northern frontier for Afghanistan but the loss of much territory, especially around Panjdeh.

The second area of the Afghan border that was demarcated (at least partially) during Abdur Rahman's reign was in the Wakhan area (see fig. 4). In 1891 the Russians began to explore this area all the way to the Amu Darya. The British reacted with great dispatch, deeply concerned that the Russians might outflank Afghanistan and threaten India. The British insisted that Abdur Rahman accept sovereignty over the Wakhan Corridor. Although he was reluctant to rule this remote region in which unruly Kirghiz held sway, he had no choice but to accept the compromise that Britain desired. In

1895 and 1896 another Joint Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission agreed on the frontier to the far northeast of Afghanistan, reaching to Chinese territory (although the Chinese did not formally agree on a border with Afghanistan until 1964). Although the frontiers between Afghanistan and Russia now appeared quite clear, by some oversight no agreement was reached on exactly where on the Amu Darya the border was to be fixed. A subject of disagreement over many years, this issue was not finally resolved until 1946, when the border was fixed at the thalweg line (the mid-point of the channel of the river).

Because the British were primarily concerned with Afghanistan as a buffer between India and the Russians, their greatest interest lay in the definition of the Afghan boundary with Russia. For Abdur Rahman, however, the delineation of the boundary with India, through the Pashtun area, was far more significant, and it was during his reign that the Durand Line was drawn. By the early 1890s the situation in these areas was unsatisfactory both to the British and to the Afghan ruler. In the preceding years the Indian government had pushed farther and farther into Pashtun lands at the expense of Afghan governments that were in no position to gainsay British firepower. Nevertheless, the British were concerned about incursions by the fierce mountain tribes. For his part, Abdur Rahman feared continuing British encroachment into Pashtun areas, and in 1892 he sent his concerns directly to London, bypassing Delhi, which he doubted would treat him fairly in this matter.

Under pressure, Abdur Rahman agreed in 1893 to accept a mission headed by the British Indian foreign secretary, Sir Mortimer Durand, to delineate the limits of British and Afghan control in the Pashtun areas. Abdur Rahman at first seemed to welcome the mission, perhaps because of British railroad construction that was aimed toward Qandahar and Kabul, which he called "a knife into my vitals" and which made him fear further British encroachment unless an agreement were reached. Boundary limitations were agreed upon between Durand and Abdur Rahman before the end of 1893, but there is some question about the degree to which Abdur Rahman willingly ceded certain areas. Scholars have found in his papers and autobiography indications that he regarded the Durand Line as a delimitation of areas of political responsibility, not permanent international frontiers, and that he did not explicitly cede control over the areas (such as Kurram and Chitral) that had already come under British control under the Treaty of

Gandamak. The amir's reluctant agreement to the Durand Line was only achieved with an increase of his subsidy from the British government and quiet threats by Durand.

Although Fraser-Tytler argues that the Durand Line may have been the best line possible under the circumstances, it made little sense. The Durand Line cut through tribes and even villages and bore little relation to the realities of topography, demography, or even military strategy. Devised to divide the tribes that looked to Kabul for leadership from those that looked to Peshawar or other areas under British control, and designed to establish tranquility in the border areas, the Durand Line did neither. It resulted in bloodshed even as it was being fixed, and it laid the foundation not for the peace of the border regions but for heated disagreement between the governments of Afghanistan and British India and, later, between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The clearest manifestation of Abdur Rahman's establishment of control in Afghanistan was the peaceful succession of his son, Habibullah, to the throne upon his father's death in October 1901. Although Abdur Rahman had fathered many children, he had groomed Habibullah to succeed him, and he had made it difficult for other sons to contest the succession by preventing them from assuming positions of power and by keeping them in Kabul under his control.

Reign of Habibullah, 1901-19

Habibullah, although Abdur Rahman's eldest son and heir, was the child of a slave mother, and he had to keep a close eye on the palace intrigues that swirled around the person of Abdur Rahman's most distinguished wife (a granddaughter of Dost Mohammad), who sought the throne for her son. Secure in his rule by virtue of the support from the army created by his father, Habibullah was not as domineering as Abdur Rahman, and his reign saw the rising influence of religious leaders, as well as that of Mahmoud Beg Tarzi Tarzi, a highly educated and well-traveled poet and journalist, founded an Afghan nationalist newspaper with the ruler's agreement, and until 1919 he used it as a platform for reform, for rebuttal to clerical criticism of Western-influenced changes in government and society, and for espousing full Afghan independence (from British control of its foreign policy). Although Tarzi often fell into disagreement with Habibullah in the later years of

his reign, Tarzi's passionate Afghan nationalism influenced a generation of Asian nationalists, and the ruler could not but agree with his demands for an end to British tutelege.

Habibullah came to power at a time when Britain was once again pushing forward its outposts in the Pashtun areas. Upon Habibullah's succession to the throne, the British viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, took the surprising step of demanding that Habibullah renegotiate the treaty reached between his father and the British. Because the British had always demanded that treaty commitments be honored by a ruler's successor, Habibullah was insulted and wary of new British demands. He refused Curzon's invitation (virtually an order) that he come to India for consultation on this matter. If Curzon had had his way, another British invasion of Afghanistan might have resulted, but a more judicious policy prevailed.

The Afghan monarch cleverly decided that, if the British did not regard the old treaty as binding, he need no longer let Britain control Afghan foreign policy. He made known his interest in establishing diplomatic relations with Russia, Japan, Turkey, the United States, and other countries and, no doubt as he had expected, the British quickly sent a mission to negotiate a new agreement, which was reached early in 1905. New demands that the British had been prepared to press upon the Afghans were dropped, and the 1905 Anglo-Afghan treaty was little more than a replacement of the previous one.

Several other foreign policy events with implications for the future occurred in the reign of Habibullah. A boundary with Iran was fixed to replace the ambiguous delineation that had been made by a British commission in 1872 but which had been unsatisfactory to both the Iranians and the Afghans. The British were keen to draw the boundary, concerned as they were with Russian influence at the Iranian court and in the areas adjacent to Afghanistan. In mid-1904 a boundary commission completed its work, which was accepted by both states. A further effort to reach agreement on the distribution of the waters of the Helmand River was more difficult. The scheme proposed in May 1905 was accepted by Habibullah but not by the Iranian government.

Like all the foreign policy developments of this period that affected Afghanistan, the conclusion of the Great Game between Russia and Britain occurred without the participation of the Afghan ruler. The great power configuration changed in the early years of the twentieth century. Four factors combined to bring about the new situation: Russia's defeat in the

1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War, the rising power of Germany in Europe, continued Russian interest in Iran, and British interest in lands adjacent to India (such as Tibet). By 1906 the Russians and the British—brought together by their alliance against Germany in Europe—were discussing a division of spheres of influence in Central Asia and the Middle East, and by 1907, after 18 months of negotiation, they had reached an agreement. The 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention not only divided the region into areas of Russian and British influence but also established the foundation for Afghan neutrality. The convention included provisions for dividing Iran into areas of Russian influence in the north and British in the east and south and granting each side the right to occupy its area of influence if threatened by a third party (a provision that provided the legal pretext for British and Russian occupation of Iran during World War II); providing for Russian acquiescence in Afghanistan's exclusion from its sphere of influence and Russian agreement to consult with Britain on all matters relating to Afghanistan; and providing British agreement not to occupy or annex Afghanistan or interfere in its internal affairs.

A final clause of the convention required Afghan consent to make the treaty binding, but when Habibullah refused to accept the treaty in the making of which he had had no voice, the Russians and the British declared the agreement valid anyway. Encouraged by the Russian defeat by the Japanese, Habibullah wanted British support in an attack on Russia to regain the lands in Turkestan taken by the Russians in the nineteenth century. Britain, far more interested in the European power struggle and the defense of India through an Afghan buffer state, was uninterested in such a scheme.

During World War I Afghanistan remained neutral, despite pressure to support Turkey when its sultan proclaimed his nation's participation in a holy war. Habibullah did, however, entertain a Turco-German mission in Kabul in 1915. Although, after long procrastination, he won agreement from the Central Powers to a huge payment and provision of arms if he would attack British India, the crafty Afghan ruler clearly viewed the war as an opportunity to play one side off against the other, for he also offered the British to hold off the Central Powers from an attack on India in exchange for an end to British control of Afghan foreign policy.

Reign of King Amanullah, 1919-29

On February 20, 1919, Habibullah was assassinated on a hunting trip. Theories about his murder abound and, although arrests were made, there is still some uncertainty about the affair.

Habibullah had not declared a successor, but his third son, Amanullah, had been left in control in Kabul when his father left on his last hunting trip. Controlling both the national treasury and the army, Amanullah decided to seize power, although his two older brothers and his uncle had equal claims to rule. There had been rumors of Amanullah's involvement in his father's murder, which added to the claims of his rivals. Soon, however, the support of the army allowed Amanullah to suppress other claims and imprison those of his relatives who would not swear loyalty to him. Within a few months the new amir had gained the support of most tribal leaders and had established control over the cities as well.

The 10 years of Amanullah's reign were a period of dramatic change in Afghanistan in both foreign and domestic politics. Starting with the achievement of complete independence after his attack on Britain in the month-long Third Anglo-Afghan War, Amanullah went on to alter Afghan foreign policy through his new relations with external powers and to transform domestic politics through his social, political, and economic reforms. Although Amanullah's reign ended in tragedy, he achieved some notable successes, and the failure of his efforts can be traced as much to the centrifugal forces in tribal Afghanistan and the machinations of Russia and Britain as to political folly on his part.

Amanullah came to power just as the détente between Russia and Britain broke down following the Russian revolution of 1917, and once again Afghanistan provided a stage on which the great powers played out their schemes against one another. Amanullah's dramatic changes in foreign policy began as soon as he had ascended the throne. Sensing postwar British fatigue, the frailty of British positions along the Afghan border, unrest in British India, and confidence in the consolidation of his power at home, Amanullah suddenly attacked the British in May 1919 in two thrusts. Although, as Poullada reports, Amanullah had written the British viceroy, rejecting British control of his foreign policy and declaring Afghanistan fully independent, the British were taken by surprise. Afghan forces achieved some success in the early days of the war as Pashtun

tribesmen from both sides of the border joined forces with them. The military skirmishes soon ended in stalemate as the British recovered from their initial surprise. The war did not last long, however, because both sides were soon ready to sue for peace; the Afghans were unwilling to sustain continued British air attacks on Kabul and Jalalabad, and the British were unwilling to take on an Afghan land war so soon after the bloodletting of World War I. What the Afghans did not gain in battle they gained ultimately at the negotiating table.

The British virtually dictated the terms of the 1919 Rawalpindi Agreement, a temporary armistice agreement that did provide—somewhat ambiguously—for Afghan autonomy in foreign affairs. Before negotiations on a final agreement were concluded in 1921, however, Afghanistan had already begun to establish its own foreign policy, including diplomatic relations with the new government in the Soviet Union in 1919.

The second round of Anglo-Afghan negotiations on a final peace were inconclusive. Although both sides were ready to agree on Afghan independence in foreign affairs, as mentioned in the previous agreement, the two nations disagreed on the issue that had plagued Anglo-Afghan relations for decades and would continue to cause friction for many more, i.e., authority over the Pashtun tribes on both sides of the Durand Line. The British refused to agree to Afghan control over tribes on the British side of the line, while the Afghans insisted on it. The Afghans regarded the 1921 agreement as an informal one.

The 1920s saw diplomatic relations established between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union in 1919; Iran in 1921; Britain, Turkey, and Italy in 1922; and France in 1923. Other manifestations of Amanullah's independence were his change of title from amir to padshah (king) in 1923 and his series of visits in 1927 to the capitals of British India, Egypt, Turkey, Iran, and most of the European nations, including Britain.

Despite his newly independent foreign policy, Amanullah's relations with the British and the Soviets remained the most important aspects of Afghan foreign policy during his reign. In the aftermath of the 1907 Saint Petersburg Convention between the British and the Russians, the Great Game tensions over Afghanistan had subsided greatly. The rivalry of the great powers in this area might have remained subdued had it not been for the dramatic change in government in Moscow with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Facing many internal and external challenges, the Bolshevik leaders could not immediately and straightforwardly subjugate their Muslim

subjects, who then made up about 15 percent of the population. Moscow initially adopted a strategy of appeasement. In their efforts to placate the Muslims within their borders, the Soviet leaders were eager to establish cordial relations with neighboring Muslim states. In the case of Afghanistan, the Soviets could achieve a double purpose: by strengthening relations with the leadership in Kabul they could also threaten Britain, which was one of the Western states supporting counterrevolution in the Soviet Union.

When Amanullah, trying to move away from British control of Afghan foreign policy, sent an emissary to Moscow in 1919, Lenin received the envoy warmly and responded by sending a Soviet representative to Kabul and offering aid to Amanullah's government. As Poullada notes, this entente with the Soviets left Amanullah in a position to exploit Britain's weak, post-World War I position in India during and after the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919 and helps to explain how Afghanistan was able to turn a weak military position in that war into a brilliant diplomatic triumph.

Throughout Amanullah's reign, Soviet-Afghan relations waxed and waned according to how valuable Afghanistan was to the Soviet leadership at any particular time. The Soviets valued Afghanistan only insofar as it was a tool for dealing with Soviet Muslim minorities and for threatening the British, and therefore they were truly cordial to Amanullah only when they were appeasing the Soviet Muslims or when Anglo-Soviet relations were poor. The Soviets wanted Amanullah to help them suppress anti-Bolshevik elements in Central Asia in return for help against the British, but the Afghans were still interested in regaining lands across the Amu Darya lost to Russia in the nineteenth century. Afghan attempts to regain the oases of Merv and Panjdeh were easily repulsed by the Red Army, which was rapidly subduing the rebellious Central Asian khans. Throughout the 1920s rebellious Muslims revolted against the growing consolidation of Soviet rule in Central Asia. Amanullah clearly sympathized with these rebels, whom the Soviets called *bashmachi*. Amanullah, despite his sympathy, could offer little support, although volunteers from both Afghanistan and British India were permitted to cross the border to aid their fellow Muslims in Soviet Central Asia.

Poullada's extensive study of the reign of Amanullah makes it clear that the king mistrusted the Soviets but wanted aid from them and wished to use his relations with them as a prod to the British. In May 1921 the Afghans and Soviets

signed a Treaty of Friendship, Afghanistan's first international agreement since gaining full independence in 1919. The Soviets provided Amanullah with aid as early as 1919, and throughout the 1920s they made cash subsidies; provided 13 airplanes, pilots, and transport and communication technicians; and carried out the laying of telephone lines between Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif and Herat and Qandahar. Despite this, Amanullah became increasingly disillusioned with the Soviets, especially as he saw growing Soviet oppression of his fellow Muslims across the border. Thousands of Muslims fled to avoid Soviet efforts to pacify Soviet Central Asia through deportations, secularization, and oppression.

Anglo-Afghan relations during Amanullah's reign soured over British fear of Afghan-Soviet friendship, especially the introduction of Soviet planes into Afghanistan. In addition, Amanullah maintained contacts with Indian nationalists and gave them asylum in Kabul. He also used his Soviet connection to taunt the British, and he sought to stir up unrest among the Pashtun tribes across the border. For their part the British were assiduously patronizing in their dealings with Amanullah. Poullada recites a litany of the insults the British visited upon the Afghan ruler, including their refusal for many years to call him "Your Majesty," restrictions on the transit of goods through India, and a host of other petty refusals to treat Afghanistan as an independent state.

Amanullah's domestic reforms were no less dramatic than his initiatives in foreign policy, but the king's achievement of complete independence was not matched by equally permanent gains in domestic politics. The great Afghan intellectual and nationalist, Tarzi, was Amanullah's father-in-law, and he encouraged the monarch's interest in social and political reform. Tarzi, however, urged gradual reform built on the basis of a strong army and central government, as had occurred in Turkey under Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk), who offered to send Turkish officers to train the royal army. Amanullah, however, was unwilling to put off implementing his ideas. His reforms touched on many areas of Afghan life, but among the first (and perhaps the most important) were those that affected the army.

Although Amanullah has been accused of neglecting the army and of trying to strip it of its power, the foremost scholar of this period, Poullada, concludes that the king was simply trying to cast the army in a different mold. It was under Amanullah, for instance, that in 1921 the Afghan air force was

established, based on a few Russian planes and pilots; Afghan personnel later received training in France, Italy, and Turkey.

The king had come to power through the army's support, but within a few years he had begun a process that steadily eroded military loyalty to his regime. Having raised military pay substantially as soon as he took power, he subsequently lowered it in the expectation of making up for the loss to individual soldiers by providing increased benefits (better food and shelter). He also hoped that the pay reduction would decrease the size of the army, as recommended by his Turkish advisers, who were totally unfamiliar with Afghan notions of military service. When the other benefits did not materialize in the wake of the pay reduction, however, the soldiers were alienated. Amanullah infuriated the tribes by changing recruitment methods to prevent tribal leaders from controlling who joined the army and by increasing the period of conscription from two years to three.

His Turkish advisers also suggested that the king retire older officers and men who were set in their ways and could be expected to resist the creation of a more professional army. Amanullah's minister of war, General Muhammad Nadir Khan, opposed these changes, preferring to recognize tribal sensitivities. The king's refusal to heed Nadir Khan's advice created an anti-Turkish faction, and in 1924 Nadir Khan left the government to become ambassador to France, ostensibly because he (and his brothers) could not support the king's domestic policies.

Amanullah's reforms—if fully enacted—would have totally transformed Afghanistan. Most of his proposals, however, died with his abdication. Among the social and educational reforms were the adoption of the solar calendar; requirement of Western dress in parts of Kabul and a few other areas; discouragement of the veiling and seclusion of women; abolition of slavery and forced labor; introduction of secular education, including education for girls; adult education classes; and education for nomads.

Political and judicial reforms were equally radical for the time and included Afghanistan's first constitution (1923); guarantee of civil rights (first by decree and then in the constitution); universal national registration and issuance of identity cards; establishment of a legislative assembly; creation of a court system and of secular penal, civil, and commercial codes; prohibition of blood money; and abolition of subsidies and privileges for tribal chiefs and the royal family. Although sharia

(Islamic law) was to be only the residual source of law, it regained its prominence after the Khost rebellion of 1923–24. Religious leaders, who had become influential under Amanullah's father, were unhappy over the king's extensive religious reforms. Economic reforms instituted by Amanullah included the reorganization and rationalization of the entire tax structure, antismuggling and anticorruption campaigns, a livestock census for taxation purposes, the first budget (1922), use of the metric system (which did not take hold), establishment of the Banki-i-Melli (National Bank) (1928), and introduction of the afghani (see Glossary) as the new unit of currency (1923).

Conventional wisdom holds that the tribal revolt that overthrew Amanullah grew out of opposition to his reform program. Poullada, however, makes a strong argument against this position. The people most affected by Amanullah's reforms were the urban dwellers, not the tribes, and urban Afghans were not universally opposed to his policies. Poullada believes that Amanullah's opponents simply seized on his radical reform program as a means to transform a minor tribal revolt into a major one. Religious leaders who were threatened by the king's reforms found common cause with tribal leaders, whose power Amanullah had systematically undermined through his efforts to create a modern administrative and political system. The loyalty of the army, which had been the base of Amanullah's accession to power, had been eroded by the measures the king had taken to create a professional army. Poullada concludes that "social change or religious liberalism did not destroy Amanullah so much as his efforts to create a strong central government . . . and this classical struggle between centralized power and tribal separatism was resolved in blood."

In late 1928 Amanullah's regime started to unravel as Shinwari tribesmen revolted in Jalalabad. Many of the king's troops deserted as tribal forces advanced on the capital. He faced two threats, for in addition to the Pashtun tribes, forces led by a Tajik were moving toward Kabul from the north. In January 1929 Amanullah abdicated in favor of his oldest brother, Inayatollah, who ruled only three days before going into exile in India. Amanullah's efforts to recover power by leading a small, ill-equipped force toward Kabul failed. The deposed king crossed the border into India and went into exile in Italy.

Tajik Rule, January-October 1929

The man who seized Kabul from the faltering hands of Amanullah was a Tajik tribesman from Kala Khan (a village about 30 kilometers north of Kabul), whom historians usually describe as a Tajik bandit. The new Afghan ruler called himself Habibullah Khan, but he was called by others Bacha-i Saqqao (Son of the Water Carrier). A deserter from the Afghan army, he had worked in Peshawar as a tea seller and then served 11 months in prison for housebreaking. He had participated in the Khost rebellion of 1924 and then had become a highwayman. Although Bacha-i Saqqao robbed Afghan officials and the wealthy, he was generous to the poor. His attack on Kabul was shrewdly timed, following the Shinwari Rebellion and the defection of much of the army. Habibullah was probably the first Tajik to rule in the area since before the coming of the Greeks, with the possible exception of the brief Ghorid Dynasty of the twelfth century.

Little is written of his nine-month reign, but most historians agree that he could not have held power for very long under any condition. None of the powerful Pashtun tribes—even the Ghilzai, who in the beginning had supported him against Amanullah—would long tolerate rule by a non-Pashtun. When Amanullah's last feeble effort to regain his throne failed, the clearest contenders for the throne were the Musahiban brothers, who were also Muhammadzai Barakzai and whose great-grandfather was an older brother of the great nineteenth-century ruler, Dost Mohammad.

There were five prominent Musabihan brothers. Nadir Khan, the eldest, had been Amanullah's minister of war until he left office in dissent over Amanullah's military and domestic reforms. Although it has generally been believed that the British had a hand in the overthrow of Amanullah and in the accession to power of Nadir, such scholars as Louis Dupree, Fraser-Tytler, and Poullada concur that the British did not bring down Amanullah and that while the British hoped that the Musahiban brothers would establish control, they tried to maintain some degree of neutrality in the contest. Fraser-Tytler derides the rules established by the British for dealing with this situation as "a mixture of the rules of cricket and football." The brothers were permitted to cross through the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) to go into Afghanistan to take up arms. Once on the other side, however, they were not to be permitted to go back and forth across the border to

use British territory as sanctuary, nor were they allowed to gather a tribal army on the British side of the Durand Line. The restrictions were successfully ignored by the Musahiban brothers and the tribes.

After being thrown back several times, Nadir and his brothers finally raised a sufficiently large force (mostly from the British side of the Durand Line) and took Kabul on October 10, 1929. Six days later the eldest of the Musahiban brothers was proclaimed King Nadir Shah. The Tajik Habibullah fled Kabul, was captured in Kohistan, and was executed on November 3, 1929, despite promises of reprieve.

King Muhammad Nadir Shah, 1929-33

The new ruler quickly abolished most of Amanullah's reforms, but despite his efforts the army remained weak while the religious and tribal leaders grew somewhat in strength. There were uprisings by the Shinwari and another Tajik leader in 1930, and in the same year a Soviet force crossed the border in pursuit of an Uzbek leader who had been harassing the Soviets from his sanctuary in Afghanistan. He was driven back to the Soviet side by the Afghan army in April 1930, and by the end of 1931 most of the country had been subdued.

Nadir Shah named a 10-man cabinet, consisting mostly of members of his family, and in September 1930 he called into session a Loya Jirgah of 286 men to confirm his accession to the throne. At the king's direction, the Loya Jirgah chose 105 members to make up a National Council. This body, with which the king was supposed to consult on legislation, automatically approved decisions by the cabinet. In 1931 the king promulgated a new constitution. Dupree's analysis of the 1931 constitution concludes that although it incorporated many of the ideals of Afghan society and appeared to establish a constitutional monarchy, in fact the document created a royal oligarchy, popular participation being only an illusion.

Although Nadir Shah placated religious elements with a constitutional emphasis on orthodox religious principles, he also worked to modernize Afghanistan in material ways, although far less obtrusively than his more impulsive cousin, Amanullah. He worked on the construction of roads, especially the Great North Road through the Hindu Kush, and improved the means of communication. Commercial links were also forged with the foreign powers with which Amaullah had

established diplomatic relations in the 1920s, and, under the leadership of several leading entrepreneurs, a banking system and long-range economic planning were started. Schools, which had been closed during the chaos of the Tajik interregnum, were reopened. Although his efforts to improve the army did not bear fruit immediately, Nadir Shah, who had inherited virtually no national army at all, created a 40,000-strong force before his death in 1933, and he also established a military school and an arsenal. Except for a gift of rifles and a small sum of money from Britain, Nadir Shah's reintegration of the Afghan nation was carried out with no external assistance.

Nadir Shah's reign was brief and ended in violence, but he accomplished a feat of which his illustrious great-great-uncle, Dost Mohammad, would have been proud: He reunited a fragmented Afghanistan. Nadir Shah fell prey to assassination by a young man whose family had been carrying on a feud with the king since his accession to power. Only six months after his brother, Muhammad Aziz Khan, had been assassinated in Berlin by a young Afghan, Nadir Shah was shot and killed by the young son (or adopted son, according to some scholars) of a man whom he had had executed a year before. As Dupree comments, if the classic pattern of Afghan royal politics had prevailed, the 19-year-old crown prince would have been displaced by one of his uncles, one of whom was in Kabul and in command of the army. Remarkably, a new attitude prevailed in the royal family, and the uncles of the new king, Muhammad Zahir Shah, were content to remain the power behind the throne on which they placed their nephew.

King Muhammad Zahir Shah, 1933-73

Zahir Shah, the last king of Afghanistan, was a patient man. For 30 of his 40 years on the throne he accepted the tutelege of powerful advisers in the royal family—his uncles for the first 20 years and his cousin, Mohammad Daoud Khan, for another 10 years. Only in the last decade of his reign did Zahir Shah rule as well as reign.

Zahir Shah and his Uncles, 1933-53

Three of the Musahiban brothers were still alive after Nadir Shah's death, and they exercised decisive influence over decisionmaking during the first 20 years of Zahir Shah's reign.

The eldest, Muhammad Hashim, who had been prime minister under the late king, retained that post until 1946, when he was replaced by the youngest of the Musahiban brothers, Shah Mahmud.

Hashim is described by Fraser-Tytler as a statesman of great administrative ability and high personal integrity who devoted all of his energy to his country. In the months immediately following Nadir Shah's assassination, while the tribes remained quiet and the followers of ex-king Amanullah remained disorganized and impotent, Hashim began to put into practice the policies already planned by the Musahiban brothers. Internal objectives of the new Afghan government, up to the outbreak of World War II, were focused on improving the army and developing the economy (including transport and communications). Both goals, however, required external assistance. Seeking to avoid involvement with the Soviet Union and Britain, Hashim turned to a far-off nation that had both the interest and the technical expertise required—Germany. By 1935 the Afghan government had invited German experts and businessmen to help set up factories and build hydroelectric projects. Lesser amounts of aid were also accepted from Italy and Japan, but these two countries did not achieve Germany's level of prominence in Afghanistan's foreign relations. By the beginning of the 1940s Germany was Afghanistan's most important foreign friend.

Afghanistan joined the League of Nations in 1934, the same year that the United States accorded Afghanistan official recognition. Regional ties to nearby Islamic states were reinforced by the conclusion in 1937 of friendship and nonaggression pacts with Turkey and Iran. Although never implemented because World War II intervened, Dupree notes that the pacts laid the groundwork for coordination among the three states in later periods. The relationship with Turkey was especially close.

A few relatively minor uprisings along the Afghan border, including one on behalf of ex-king Amanullah, occurred late in the 1930s, but these were overshadowed by the outbreak of World War II. The king issued a proclamation of Afghan neutrality on August 17, 1940, but the Allies were unhappy with the presence of a large group of German nondiplomatic personnel. In October the British and Soviet governments demanded that Afghanistan expel all nondiplomatic personnel from the Axis nations. The Afghan government considered this an insulting and illegitimate demand, but it undoubtedly found

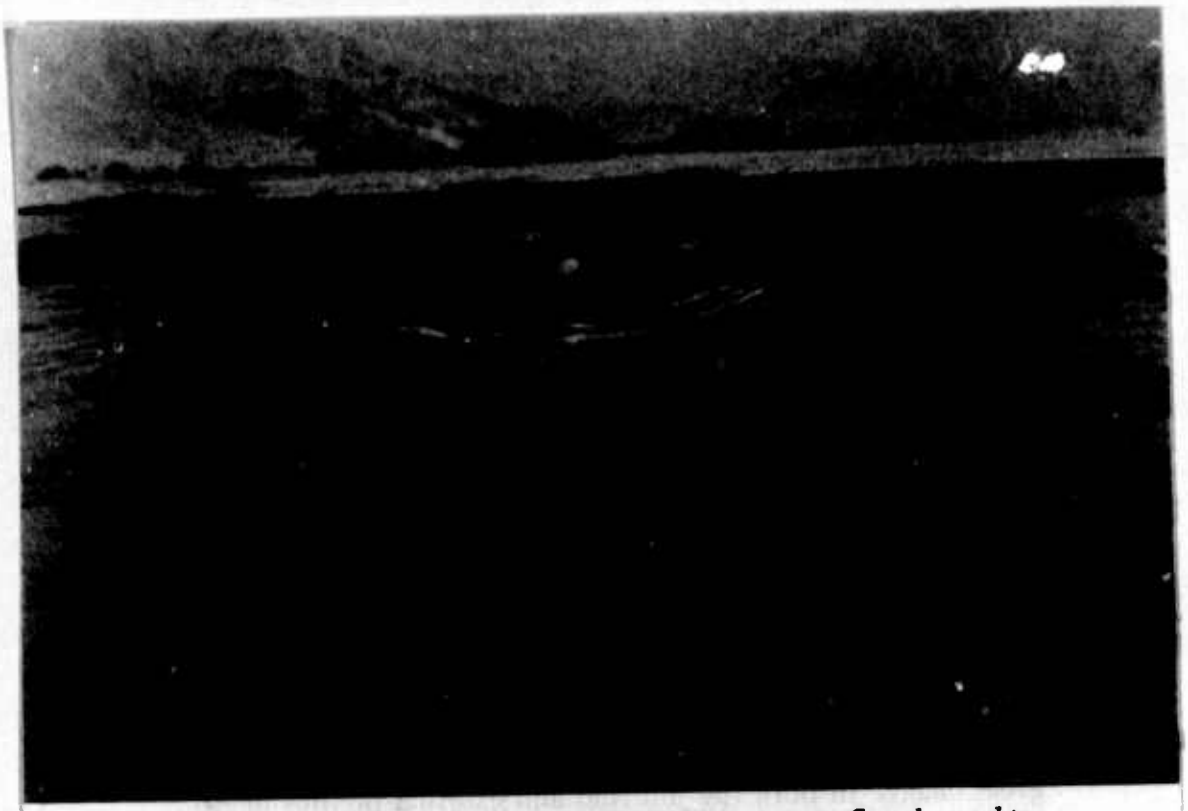
instructive the example of Iran, which Britain and the Soviet Union had invaded and occupied in August 1941 after the Iranian government ignored a similar demand. Zahir Shah and his advisers found a face-saving response, ordering all nondiplomatic personnel from the belligerent countries out of Afghanistan. A Loya Jirgah called by the king at this time supported his policy of absolute neutrality. Although World War II disrupted Afghanistan's incipient foreign relationships and to some extent the government's domestic goals, it also provided larger markets for Afghan agricultural produce (especially in India). By the war's end the government had exchanged official missions with both China and the United States, and the latter had replaced Britain as the major market for Afghanistan's principal export, karakul skins.

Shortly after the end of the war, Shah Mahmud replaced his older brother as prime minister, ushering in a period of great change in both the internal and external politics of Afghanistan. Among other things, the new prime minister presided over the inauguration of the giant Helmand Valley Project (which brought Afghanistan into a closer relationship with the United States) and the beginning of relations with the newly created nation of Pakistan, which inherited the Pashtuns on the side of the Durand Line formerly ruled by Britain. The issue of Pashtunistan (or Pakhtunistan)—agitation for an independent or semi-independent state to include the Pashtu and Pakhtu speakers within Pakistan, whether officially joined with Afghanistan or not—would have a resounding impact on Afghanistan politics, as would the political liberalization inaugurated by Shah Mahmud.

The Helmand Valley Project, inaugurated in 1945 with an agreement between the Afghan government and an American company, was designed to harness the irrigation and hydroelectric potential of the Helmand. There were myriad problems with the project, and although parts of it were completed before 1953, it was not until Daoud became prime minister in 1953 that the project began to move toward completion.

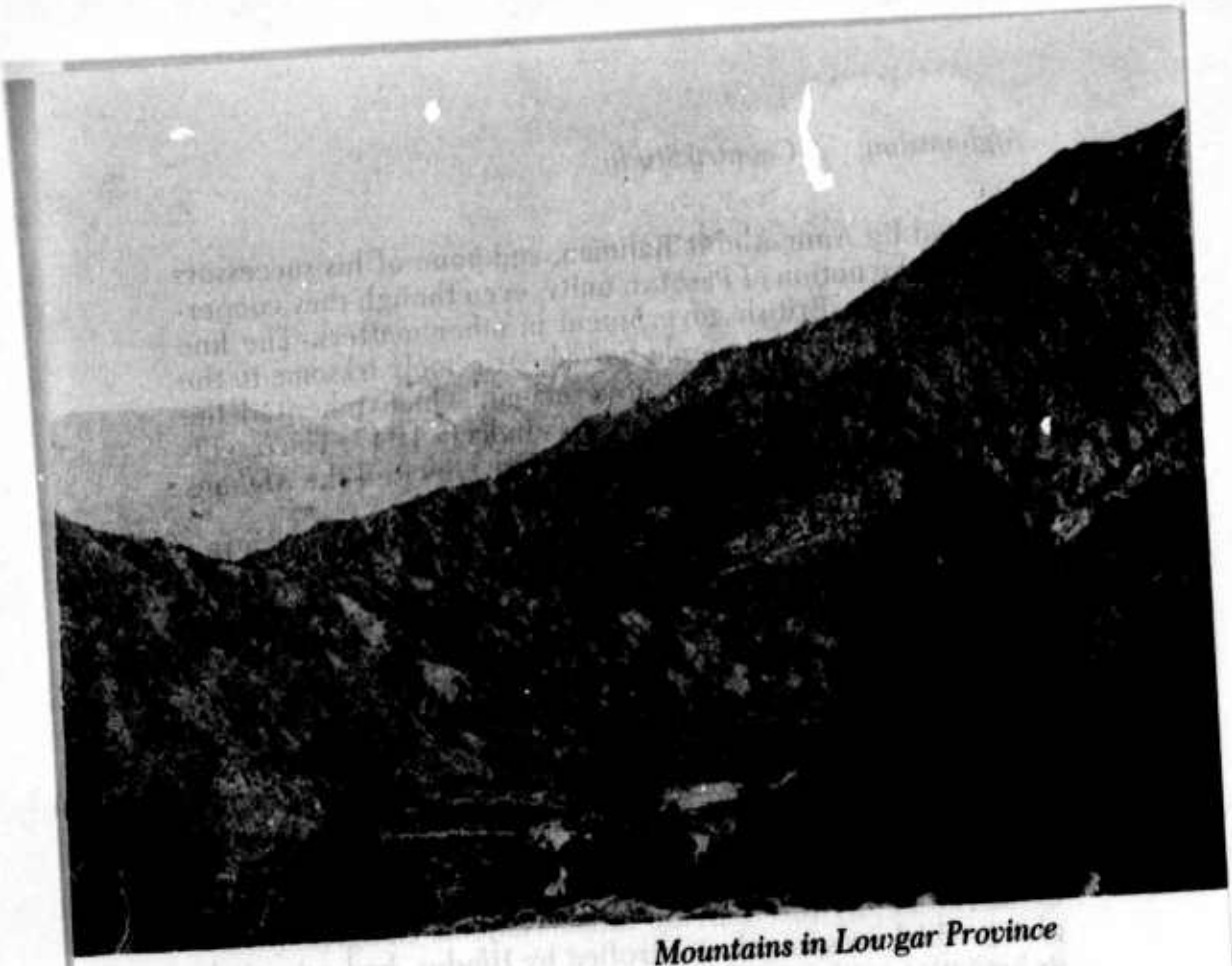
The Pashtunistan Issue

In their colonial period, European nations created frontiers throughout Asia and Africa that left legacies of bitterness, and often of war, for the independent nations that emerged from colonial rule. Although it was never colonized, Afghanistan was no exception. The Durand Line had been bitterly

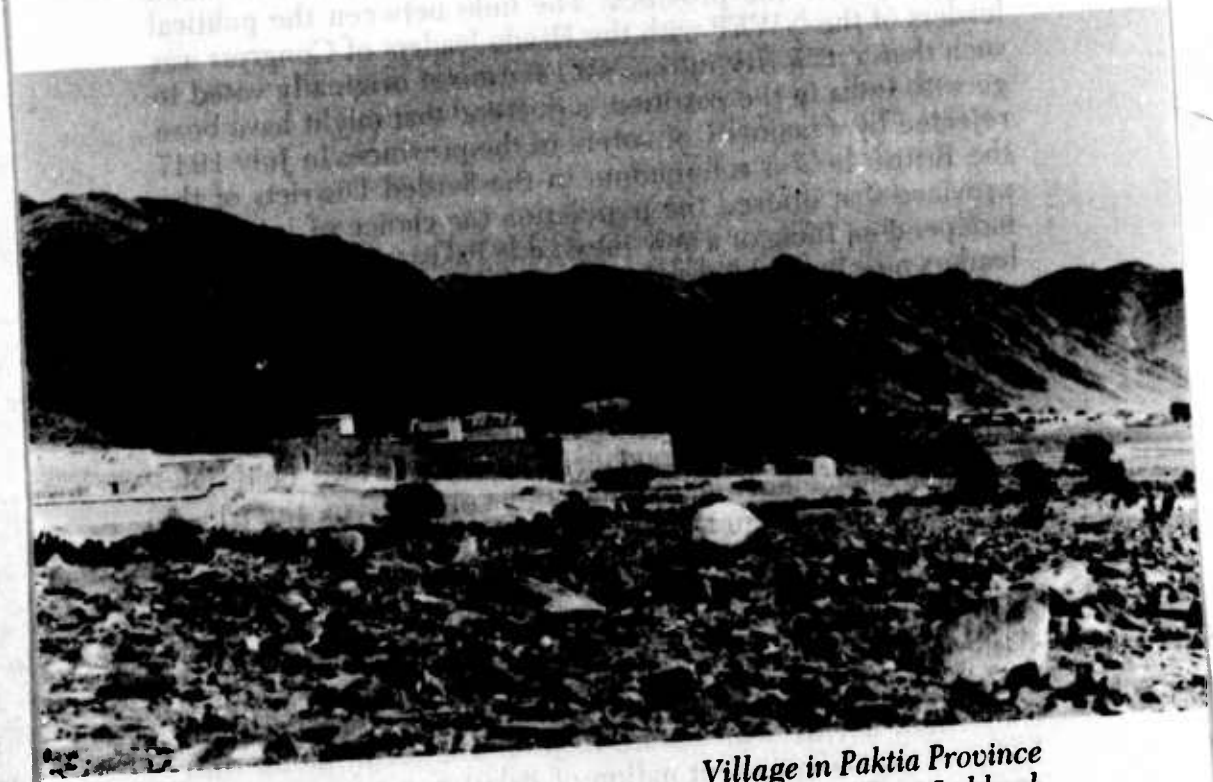


Crossing Kabul River on inflated cowskins

Elderly mujahid holding Enfield rifle, World War I vintage



Mountains in Lowgar Province



Village in Paktia Province
Photos courtesy Kurt Lohbeck

resented by Amir Abdur Rahman, and none of his successors gave up the notion of Pashtun unity, even though they cooperated with the British government in other matters. The line dividing the Pashtun people became extremely irksome to the Afghans and the Pakistani government, which inherited the frontier upon the partition of British India in 1947. The fragility of the new nation of Pakistan may have incited the Afghans to reassert the concept of Pashtunistan in 1947.

Although the issue became most vexing at the time of the partition, British policy in the area before 1947 also contributed to the development of the Pashtunistan problem. In 1901 they had created a new administrative area, the NWFP, which they detached from the Punjab, and had divided the new province into Settled Districts and Tribal Agencies, the latter ruled not by the provincial government but by a British political agent who reported directly to Delhi. This separation was reinforced by the fact that the experiments in provincial democracy inaugurated in 1919 were not extended to the NWFP.

In the 1930s Britain extended provincial self-government to the NWFP. By this time the Indian National Congress (Congress), which was largely controlled by Hindus, had extended its activities to the province. The links between the political leaders of the NWFP with the Hindu leaders of Congress was such that a majority in the NWFP cabinet originally voted to go with India in the partition, a decision that might have been rejected by a majority of voters in the province. In July 1947 the British held a referendum in the Settled Districts of the province that offered the population the choice of joining an independent India or a now-inevitable Pakistan. Although local leaders now leaned toward independence, a position officially supported by the Afghan government, this was not an option offered in the vote. Although these leaders advocated a boycott of the referendum, an estimated 56 percent of the eligible voters participated, and of these over 90 percent voted to join Pakistan. In the Tribal Agencies a Loya Jirgah was held. Offered the choice between joining India or Pakistan, the tribes declared their wish for the latter.

Both the Afghan and Indian leaders objected to both procedures, declaring that, because the tribes had the same kind of direct links to the British as the princely states of India, the Pashtun tribes should be treated the same way, i.e., they should be offered a third option of initial independence until they could decide which state to join. The birth, along with India, of the independent nation of Pakistan, accompanied by

massive dislocation and bloodshed, was thus further complicated by the agitation for independence or provincial autonomy by a significant minority, and perhaps a majority, of the residents of the NWFP. This issue poisoned relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan for many years. The conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan over the Pashtunistan issue was manifested not only in bitter denunciations but also by such actions as Afghanistan's casting of the sole negative vote on Pakistan's admission to the United Nations (UN) and Pakistan's meddling with the transit of commodities to its landlocked neighbor.

Although both Afghanistan and Pakistan made conciliatory gestures—including Afghanistan's withdrawal of its negative UN vote and the exchange of ambassadors in February 1948—the matter remained unresolved. In June 1949 a Pakistani air force plane bombed a village just across the frontier in one of the government's attempts to suppress tribal uprisings. In response, the Afghan government called into session a Loya Jirgah, which promptly proclaimed that it recognized "neither the imaginary Durand nor any similar Line" and declared void all agreements—from the 1893 Durand agreement onward—related to the issue. There was an attempt to set up an independent Pashtun parliament inside the Pashtun areas of Pakistan, which was undoubtedly supported covertly by the Afghan government. Irregular forces led by a local Pashtun leader crossed the border in 1950 and 1951 to back Afghan claims. The Pakistani government did not accept the Afghan government's claim that they had no control over these men, and both nations' ambassadors were withdrawn. Ambassadors were exchanged once again a few months later. In March 1952 the assassination of the Pakistani prime minister by an Afghan citizen living in Pakistan was another irritant in bilateral relations, although the Pakistani government accepted Afghan denials of any involvement on its part.

The Pakistani government, despite its preoccupation with many other problems, adopted from the beginning a very conciliatory attitude toward its Pashtun citizens. The residents of the Tribal Agencies were permitted to retain virtual autonomy, expenditures on health and other services in the NWFP were disproportionately higher than in other areas of the country, and only a few units of a locally recruited Frontier Corps were left in the Tribal Agencies (in contrast with the 48 regular army battalions that had been kept there under British rule). The government also continued to pay subsidies to hundreds of *maliks* (chiefs or leaders) in the tribal areas.

The issue of the international boundary through Pashtun areas was of the greatest possible importance to the policymakers in Kabul, just as it had been in the days of Amir Abdur Rahman. The beginning in recent times of Afghanistan's ties to the Soviet Union grew at least partially from the Pashtunistan and related issues. By the 1950s the United States—which had replaced Britian as the major Western power in the region—had begun to develop a strong relationship with Pakistan. When in 1950 Pakistan stopped vital transshipments of petroleum to Afghanistan for about three months, presumably to retaliate for the attacks across the border by Afghan tribes, the Afghan government became more interested in offers of aid from the Soviet Union and, in July 1950, signed a major agreement with the Soviet Union.

Early Links with the Soviet Union

Although Afghanistan had established diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union in one of its earliest gestures of independence in 1919 and although extensive bilateral trade contacts had come into being by the late 1930s, the cutoff of petroleum by Pakistan over the Pashtunistan issue and the consequent trade agreement between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union were major watersheds in bilateral relations. As Dupree states, the 1950 agreement was far more than a barter agreement to exchange Soviet oil, textiles, and manufactured goods for Afghan wool and cotton; the Soviets offered aid in construction of petroleum storage facilities, oil and gas exploration in northern Afghanistan, and permission for free transit of goods to Afghanistan across Soviet territory. The new relationship was attractive to the Afghans not only because it made it difficult for Pakistan to disrupt the economy with a blockade or a slowdown of transshipped goods but also for a political purpose traditionally dear to Afghan rulers, i.e., it provided a balance to American aid in the Helmand Valley Project. In the years following the 1950 agreement, Soviet-Afghan trade increased sharply, and the Afghan government welcomed a few Soviet technicians and a Soviet trade office.

Experiment with Liberalized Politics

The third major policy focus of the immediate postwar period in Afghanistan was the experiment in political liberalization implemented by Shah Mahmud. Encouraged by young,

Western-educated members of the political elite, the prime minister allowed national assembly elections that were distinctly less controlled than ever before, resulting in the "liberal parliament" of 1949. He also relaxed strict press censorship and allowed opposition political groups to come to life. The most important of these groups was Wikh-i-Zalmayan (Awakened Youth), a movement made up of diverse dissident groups founded in Qandahar in 1947. As the new liberal parliament began taking its duties seriously and questioning the king's ministers, students at Kabul University also began to debate political questions. A newly formed student union provided not only a forum for political debate but also produced plays critical of Islam and the monarchy. Newspapers criticized the government, and many groups and individuals began to demand a more open political system.

The liberalization clearly went further than the prime minister had intended. His first reaction was to ride the tide by creating a government party, but when this failed, the government began to crack down on political activity. The Kabul University student union was dissolved in 1951, the newspapers that had criticized the government were closed down, and many of the leaders of the opposition were jailed. The parliament elected in 1952 was a large step backward from the one elected in 1949; the experiment in open politics was over.

The liberal experiment had an important effect on the nation's political future. It provided the breeding ground for the revolutionary movement that would come to power in 1978. Nur Muhammad Taraki, who became president following the 1978 coup d'état claimed in his official biography to have been the founder of the Wikh-i-Zalmayan and the dissident newspaper, *Angar* (Burning Embers). Writer Beverley Male notes, however, that the claim appears exaggerated. Babrak Karmal, who became president after the Soviet invasion of December 1979, was active in the Kabul University student union during the liberal period and was imprisoned in 1953 for his political activities. Hafizullah Amin later claimed to have also played a role in the student movement, although his activities were apparently not so noteworthy as to bring about his imprisonment by the government.

The government crackdown in 1951 and 1952 suddenly ended liberalization and alienated many young, reformist Afghans who may have originally hoped only to reform the existing structure rather than radically transform it. As Male suggests, "the disillusionment which accompanied the abrupt

termination of the experiment in liberalism was an important factor in the radicalisation of the men who later established the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan."

Daoud as Prime Minister, 1953-63

In the wake of the failed political reforms of the 1949–52 period came a major shakeup within the royal family. Fraser-Tytler notes that since the advent of Nadir Shah to the throne in 1929, Afghanistan had been ruled by the royal family as a united group. By mid-1953, however, the younger members of the royal family (including perhaps the king himself) had challenged the dominance of the king's uncles, and in September 1953 the rift became public when the king's first cousin and brother-in-law, Daoud (son of the third Musahiban brother, Muhammad Aziz, who had been assassinated in Berlin in 1933), became prime minister. The king's uncle, Shah Mahmud, left his post, but he continued to proffer his support and advice to the new leaders. The change occurred peacefully, entirely within—and apparently with the consent of—the royal family.

Prime Minister Daoud was the first of the young, Western-educated generation of the royal family to wield power in Kabul. If the proponents of the liberal experiment hoped that he would move toward a more open political system, they were disappointed. Daoud was, as Fraser-Tytler puts it, "by temperament and training...of an authoritarian habit of mind." By all accounts, however, he was a dynamic leader whose accession to power marked major changes in Afghanistan's policies, both domestic and foreign.

Although Daoud was concerned to correct what he perceived as the pro-Western bias of previous governments, his keen interest in modernization manifested itself in continued support of the Helmand Valley project, which was designed to transform life in southwestern Afghanistan. Another area of domestic policy initiative by Daoud included his cautious steps toward emancipation of women. At the fortieth celebration of national independence in 1959, Daoud had the wives of his ministers appear in public unveiled. When religious leaders protested, he challenged them to cite a single verse of the Quran that specifically mandated veiling. When they continued to resist, he jailed them for a week. Daoud also increased control over the tribes, starting with the repression of a tribal war in the contentious Khost area adjacent to Pakistan in Sep-

tember 1959 and the forcible collection of land taxes in Qandahar in December 1959 in the face of antigovernment demonstrations promoted by local religious leaders.

Daoud's social and economic policies within Afghanistan, reformist but cautious, were relatively successful; his foreign policy—which was carried out by his brother, Mohammad Naim—although fruitful in some respects, resulted in severe economic dislocation and, ultimately, his own political eclipse. Two principles guided Daoud's foreign policy: to balance what he regarded as the excessively pro-Western orientation of previous governments by improving relations with the Soviet Union but without sacrificing economic aid from the United States, and to pursue the Pashtunistan issue by every possible means. The two goals were to some extent mutually reinforcing because hostilities with Pakistan caused the Kabul government to fall back on the Soviet Union as its trade and transit link with the rest of the world. Daoud believed that the rivalry between the two superpowers for regional clients or allies created the conditions in which he could play one off against the other in his search for aid and development assistance.

Relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union in the 1953–63 period began on a high note with a Soviet development loan equivalent to US$3.5 million in January 1954. Daoud's desire for improved bilateral relations became a necessity when the Pakistani-Afghan border was closed for five months in 1955. When the Iranian and American governments declared that they were unable to create an alternate Afghan trade access route of nearly 5,800 kilometers to the Persian Gulf or the Arabian Sea, the Afghans had no choice but to request a renewal of the 1950 transit agreement. The renewal was ratified in June 1955 and followed by a new bilateral barter agreement: Soviet petroleum, building materials, and metals in exchange for Afghan raw materials. After a December 1955 visit to Kabul by Soviet leaders Nikolay Bulganin and Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Union announced a US$100 million development loan for projects to be mutually agreed upon. Before the end of the year the Afghans also announced a 10-year extension of the Soviet-Afghan Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression, originally signed in 1931 by Nadir Shah. Afghan-Soviet ties grew throughout this period, as did Afghan links with the Soviet Union's East European allies, especially Czechoslovakia and Poland.

Despite these strengthened ties to the Soviet Union, the Daoud regime sought to maintain good relations with the Unit-

ed States, which began to be more interested in Afghanistan as a result of the efforts by Dwight D. Eisenhower's administration to solidify an alliance in the "Northern Tier" (Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan). Adhering to its nonaligned stance, the Afghan government refused to join the American-sponsored Baghdad Pact, although Eisenhower's personal representative was courteously welcomed when he came to discuss regional issues in 1957. These rebuffs did not deter the United States from continuing its relatively low-level aid program in Afghanistan. Its other projects in the 1953-63 period included the Qandahar International Airport (which became obsolete with the advent of jet aircraft), assistance to Ariana Afghan Airlines, and continuation of the Helmand Valley Project.

The United States was reluctant to provide Afghanistan with military aid, and the Daoud government successfully sought it from the Soviet Union and its allies. These nations agreed to provide Afghanistan with the equivalent of US$25 million worth of military matériel in 1955 and also undertook the construction of military airfields in Mazar-e Sharif, Shindand, and Bagrami. Although the United States did provide military training for Afghan officers, it made no attempt to match Soviet arms transfers. Dupree points out that eventually the United States and Soviet aid programs were bound to overlap, and when they did there developed a quiet, de facto cooperation between the two powers.

All other foreign policy issues faded in importance, given Daoud's virtual obsession with the Pashtunistan issue. His policy disrupted Kabul's important relationship with Pakistan and—because Pakistan was landlocked Afghanistan's main trade route—the dispute virtually cut off development aid, except from the Soviet Union, and sharply diminished Afghanistan's external trade for several years.

In 1953 and 1954 Daoud simply applied more of the same techniques used in the past to press the Pashtunistan issue, i.e., hostile propaganda and payments to tribesmen (on both sides of the border) to subvert the Pakistani government. In 1955, however, the situation became more critical from Daoud's point of view. Pakistan, for reasons of internal politics, abolished the four provincial governments of West Pakistan and formed one provincial unit (like East Pakistan). The Afghan government protested the abolition of the NWFP (excluding the Tribal Agencies), and in March 1955 a mob in Kabul attacked the Pakistani embassy and consulate and tore down

their flags. Retaliatory mobs attacked the Afghan consulate in Peshawar, and soon both nations recalled their officials from the neighboring state. Despite the failure of mediation by a group of Islamic states, tempers eventually cooled, and flags were rehoisted above the diplomatic establishments in both countries. This incident left great bitterness in Afghanistan, however, where interest in the Pashtunistan issue remained high, and the closure of the border during the spring and fall of 1955 again underlined to the Kabul government the need for good relations with the Soviets to provide assured transit routes for Afghan trade.

Although the Afghan side was not resigned to accepting the status quo on the Pashtunistan issue, the conflict remained dormant for several years, during which relations improved slightly between the two nations. Nor did the 1958 coup that brought General Mohammad Ayub Khan to power in Pakistan bring on any immediate change in the situation. In 1960, however, Daoud sent Afghan troops across the border into Bajaur in an unsuccessful and foolhardy attempt to manipulate events in that area and to press the Pashtunistan issue. The Afghan forces were routed by the Pakistan military, but military skirmishes along the border continued at a low level in 1961, often between Pakistani Pashtun (armed by the Afghans) and Pakistani regular and paramilitary forces. The propaganda war, carried out by radio, was more vicious than ever during this period.

Finally, in August 1961 Pakistan used another weapon on Afghanistan: It informed the Afghan government that its subversion made normal diplomatic relations impossible and that Pakistan was closing its consulates in Afghanistan, requesting that Afghanistan follow suit. The Afghan government, its pride severely stung, responded that the Pakistanis had one week to rescind this policy, or Afghanistan would cut diplomatic relations. When the Pakistanis failed to respond to this, Afghanistan severed relations on September 6, 1961. Traffic between the two countries came to a halt, just as two of Afghanistan's major export crops were ready to be shipped to India. The grape and pomegranate crops, grown in traditionally rebellious areas, were bought by the government to avoid trouble. The Soviet Union stepped in, offering to buy the crops and airlift them from Afghanistan. What the Soviets did not ship, Ariana Afghan Airlines airlifted to India, so that in both 1961 and 1962 the fruit crop was exported successfully. Dupree notes that although the loss of this crop would not have been as

disastrous to the average Afghan as observers generally suggest, the situation did provide the opportunity for a fine public relations gesture by the Soviets. At the same time, although the United States attempted to mediate the dispute, it was clearly linked closely to Pakistan.

More than the fruit crop was jeopardized by the closure of Afghanistan's main trade route. Much of the equipment and material provided by foreign aid programs and needed for development projects was held up in Pakistan. Another outgrowth of the dispute was Pakistan's decision to close the border to nomads (members of the Ghilzai, variously known as Powindahs or Suleiman Khel), who had been spending winters in Pakistan and India and summers in Afghanistan as long as anyone could remember. Although the Pakistani government denied that the decision was owing to the impasse with Afghanistan, this claim appeared disingenuous, and the issue added weight to the growing conflict between the two countries. Afghanistan's economic situation continued to deteriorate. The nation was heavily dependent upon customs revenues, which fell dramatically; trade suffered, and foreign exchange reserves were seriously depleted.

It became clear by 1963 that the two stubborn leaders, Daoud of Afghanistan and Ayub Khan of Pakistan, would not yield and that one of them would have to be removed from power to resolve the issue. Despite growing criticism of Ayub among some Pakistanis, his position was strong internally, and it was Afghanistan's economy that was suffering most. In March 1963 King Zahir Shah, with the backing of the royal family, asked Daoud for his resignation on the basis that the country's economy was deteriorating because of Daoud's Pashtunistan policy. During the decade that Daoud was prime minister, the king, who was his peer in age, had become better known by the public and more influential in the royal family and the political elite. Because he controlled the armed forces, Daoud almost certainly had the power to resist the king's request for his resignation, but he did not do so. Daoud bowed out, as did his brother Naim, and Zahir Shah named as the new prime minister Muhammad Yousuf, a non-Pashtun, German-educated technocrat who had been serving as the minister of mines and industries.

The King Rules: The Last Decade of Monarchy, 1963–73

The decision to ask Daoud to step down had been reached

not only within the royal family but also with the involvement of other members of the Afghan political elite. This set the tone for the 10 years to follow, in which Zahir Shah ruled as well as reigned but with a broad base of support within the political elite. The reaction to the dramatic change in Kabul was subdued. Although some Afghans attributed Daoud's fall to covert American intervention (because of Daoud's friendship with the Soviets), others were delighted that the unnatural strain in relations with Pakistan could be ended. A thriving black market trade had continued across the border, but the hostility had weighed heavily on the daily life of many Afghans, especially city dwellers, who had experienced a doubling of prices for many essential commodities since the 1961 border closing. Dupree observes that devout Afghans expected an end to Daoud's secularization, intellectuals anticipated social and political reforms, and the population in general seemed to feel that while Daoud's economic reforms had benefitted the nation, his stubbornness on the Pashtunistan issue made his departure necessary. He notes that only three groups were unhappy over Daoud's resignation: the Pashtunistan fanatics, royal family members who worried about giving nonfamily members any power in decisionmaking, and pro-Soviet Afghans.

Although it could not provide the immediate transformations the public expected, the new government clearly both represented and sought change. The prime minister and at least one other cabinet member were non-Pashtuns; only four of the new cabinet were Durrani, and none was a member of the royal family. Before the end of May the government had appointed a committee to draft changes in the constitution, had ordered an investigation into the abysmal conditions of Afghan prisons, and had reached agreement with Pakistan on the reestablishment of diplomatic and trade relations.

The single greatest achievement of the 1963–73 decade was the 1964 constitution. Only two weeks after the resignation of Daoud, the king appointed a committee to draft a new constitution. By February 1964 a draft document had been written, and within a few months another royal commission, including members of diverse political and ethnic backgrounds, had reviewed and revised the draft. In the spring of 1964 the king ordered the convening of a Loya Jirgah—a national gathering that included the members of the National Assembly, the Senate, the Supreme Court, and both constitutional commissions. One hundred seventy-six members were

elected by the provinces, and 34 members were appointed directly by the king. As Dupree notes, Afghan monarchs had abused the mechanism of a Loya Jirgah in the past by allowing only their own supporters to attend. Although the assemblage of 452 persons (including six women) that met in September 1964 was composed predominantly of officials who could be expected to support the royal line, the Loya Jirgah also included members elected from the entire nation. Dupree notes that the government did screen out many potential dissidents but concludes that "on the whole. . .delegates to the Loya Jirgah appeared to represent the full range of social, political, and religious opinion."

The 10-day deliberation of the Loya Jirgah produced heated debates and significant changes in the draft constitution. On September 20 the constitution was signed by the 452 members, and on October 1 it was signed by the king and became the constitution of Afghanistan. The constitution—and the deliberations that produced it—demonstrated several interesting changes in political thinking. It barred the royal family, other than the king, from politics and government—a provision that was viewed as being aimed at keeping Daoud out of politics. Individual, as opposed to tribal, rights were strongly championed by provincial delegates, and most conservative religious members were persuaded to accept provisions that they had previously suggested were intolerably secular. The succession issue within the royal family was settled to common satisfaction. The most interesting aspect of this discussion was one delegate's query as to why the throne should not go to the king's eldest daughter if there was no qualified male heir. Although some delegates were horrified and the question was not seriously considered, Dupree notes that the mere fact of its being asked was a sign of growing political sophistication among Afghans. Although there was lengthy debate over the use of the word *Afghan* to denote all citizens of Afghanistan (many people regarding it as a reference to Pashtuns alone), it was agreed by the Loya Jirgah that this term should refer to all citizens. The constitution provided that state religious rituals be conducted according to the Hanafi rite and identified Islam as "the sacred religion of Afghanistan," but it was still necessary to persuade many conservative religious members of the group that Islam had been enshrined in the constitution. Although Article 64 provided that there be no laws that were "repugnant to the basic principles" of Islam, Article 69 defined laws as resolutions passed by the houses of parliament and

signed by the king, with sharia to be used when no such law existed. The constitution's provisions for an independent judiciary gave rise to heated debate among religious leaders, many of whom supported the existing system of religious laws and judges. The new constitution incorporated the religious judges into the judicial system, but it also established the supremacy of secular law.

The new constitution provided for a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral legislature, but predominant power remained in the hands of the king. Despite the difficulties imposed by widespread illiteracy, low voter turnout, attempts by some government officials (especially in the outlying areas) to influence the results, the lack of political parties, and the fact that Afghanistan was a tribal society with no tradition of national elections, most observers described the 1965 election as remarkably fair. The 216-member Wolesi Jirgah, the lower house of parliament, included representation by not only antiroyalists but also by both the left and right of the political spectrum. It included supporters of the king, Pashtun nationalists, entrepreneurs and industrialists, political liberals, a small leftist group, and conservative Muslim leaders who still opposed secularization. In heated early debates some members castigated the members of Yousuf's transitional cabinet. A student sit-in in the lower house of parliament was followed by demonstrations in which government troops killed three civilians, shocking many Afghans. The king nominated another prime minister, Mohammad Hashim Maiwandwal, who quickly established a firm but friendly relationship with the students. There were, of course, rumors in Kabul about outside support for these and subsequent demonstrations. Dupree, who was in Kabul at the time, finds it unlikely that they were the work of outside agitators but rather resulted from "homegrown dissatisfaction with the ministerial clique which had played musical chairs during the Daoud regime and the succeeding interim regime."

On January 1, 1965, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) was founded. This was not an orthodox Marxist party but an entity created out of diverse leftist groups that united for the principal purpose of gaining parliamentary seats in the elections. The fact that four PDPA members won parliamentary seats suggests that government efforts to intervene in the balloting to prevent the success of its leftist opponents were halfhearted.

The press was semicontrolled. Starting in 1966, as many as

30 newspapers were established and, although some were short-lived, they provided the focus for the many political groups in Kabul that now began to make their views known. Taraki, one of the four PDPA members elected to parliament in 1965, started the first major leftist newspaper, *Khalq* (Masses), which lasted little more than a month before being banned by the government.

Student unrest continued and escalated into violence, which included police beatings of student and faculty demonstrators. For a month and a half in 1969 there was a citywide student strike in Kabul, but the government refused to give in to student demands, and the university was peacefully reopened in November.

The Afghan political system remained suspended between democracy and monarchy, though much closer to the latter. Political parties remained banned because the king refused to sign legislation that had passed the parliament allowing parties. The lower house of parliament engaged in free and often insulting criticism of government policies and personnel. Although unorganized as a legislative body, the Wolesi Jirgah was able to exert some influence on the royal administration.

By 1969 the PDPA had already undergone an important split, the faction of Babrak Karmal parting company ideologically with Taraki (see Evolution of the PDPA as a Political Force, ch. 4.) The new group's newspaper, *Parcham* (Banner), operated from March 1968 until July 1969 when it was closed. It was not long before other divisions within the PDPA began to occur.

The 1969 parliamentary elections (in which voter turnout was not much greater than that of 1965) produced a parliament that was more or less consistent with the real distribution of power and population in the Afghan hinterland; conservative landowners and businessmen predominated, and many more non-Pashtuns were elected than in the previous legislature. Most of the urban liberals and all female delegates lost their seats. There were few leftists in the new parliament, although Karmal and Hafizullah Amin (a mathematics teacher educated in the United States) had been elected from districts in and near Kabul. Former prime minister Maiwandwal, a democratic socialist, lost his seat because of government interference.

The years between 1969 and 1973 saw a critical downturn in Afghan politics. The parliament—on which hopes for democracy in Afghanistan had depended—was lethargic and

deadlocked; Griffiths reports that it passed only one minor bill in the 1969–70 session. Public dissatisfaction over the lack of stable government reflected the fact that there were five prime ministers in the decade starting in 1963. There was a growing polarization of politics as the left and the right began to attract more and more members. The king, although still personally popular, came under increasing criticism for not supporting his own prime ministers and for withholding support from legislation passed by the parliament (such as the political parties bill). Some critics of the government blamed not the king but his cousin (and son-in-law) General Abdul Wali, a key military commander, or other members of the royal family. Abdul Wali, commander of the Kabul region and of the palace guard, was especially hated by leftists for having ordered troops to fire on demonstrators in October 1965. Other disruptive elements were two successive years of drought followed by a tragic famine in 1972 in which as many as 100,000 Afghans may have perished. Relief efforts and foreign donations were mishandled, and there were accusations of speculation and hoarding that eroded public confidence in government administration. Finally, the Indo-Pakistani War and the secession of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971 was closely watched in Afghanistan, where interest in Pakistani politics was great and where the Pashtunistan issue always lurked near the surface of politics.

It was in this atmosphere of external instability and internal dissatisfaction and polarization that Daoud executed a coup d'état that he had been planning for more than a year in response to the "anarchy and the anti-national attitude of the regime." While the king was out of the country for medical treatment, Daoud and a small military group took power with strong resistance only from the regent, Abdul Wali. The stability Zahir Shah had sought through limited democracy under a constitution had not been achieved, and there was a generally favorable popular response to the reemergence of Daoud, even though it meant the demise of the monarchy established by Ahmad Shah Durrani in 1747.

Daoud's Republic, 1973-78

The welcome Daoud received upon returning to power on July 17, 1973, reflected the popular disappointment with the lackluster politics of the preceding decade. Daoud was a par-

ticularly appealing figure to military officers. It had been under his leadership in the 1950s and early 1960s that the military had been modernized and expanded. The more conservative upper echelons of the military—most from leading Pashtun families—were reassured by the fact that in addition to his assiduous attentions to the army when he was prime minister, Daoud was a prominent member of the royal family. The coup may have been accepted by some conservative elements both within and outside the army in the same way that their ancestors had allowed the throne to change hands among royal brothers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, Daoud's strong position on the Pashtunistan issue had not been forgotten by conservative Pashtun officers.

Western journalists speculated that the Daoud coup was procommunist not only because of his good relationship with the Soviets during his decade as prime minister but also because of the evident support of the coup by elements of the PDPA. The important question of Daoud's relationship with the PDPA—especially with Karmal's Parcham faction—is viewed somewhat differently by the various scholars and journalists who have analyzed the 1973 coup. There is general agreement that Daoud had been meeting with various "friends" (in Daoud's own words) "for more than a year." Journalist Anthony Hyman suggests that although these meetings included liberals as well as left-wing civilians and officers, the coup was carried out by junior officers trained in the Soviet Union. Dupree believes that some Parcham members were integrally involved in planning the coup with Daoud. Male suggests that Daoud had entered into a temporary alliance with the Parcham faction solely for convenience because it was Parcham (rather than Khalq) who had focused recruitment efforts on the military between 1969 and 1973. An Afghan specialist in international affairs, writing under the pseudonym Hannah Negaran, believes that Khalq and Parcham were the "backbone" of the 1973 coup and that Daoud, who was asked to lead the movement because he was well-known, later removed them from power. Journalist Henry S. Bradsher notes that some Afghans suspected that Daoud and Karmal had been in touch for many years and that Daoud had used Karmal as his major source of information on the leftist movement. No strong evidence can be cited to support this, other than the fact that Karmal's father, an army general, was close to Daoud. Bradsher believes that Parcham's role in Daoud's coup could not have been very significant because by 1973 Parcham had

not, despite its efforts, built a strong network in the army. It is difficult to assess exactly which of the officers who took part in the coup were PDPA members and of which faction because, as Bradsher notes, there were changes in allegiance following the coup.

Although leftists had certainly played some role in the coup itself, and despite the appointment of two leftists as ministers (Faiz Mohammad as minister of interior and Pacha Gul Wafadar as minister for tribal affairs), the weight of the evidence suggests that the coup was Daoud's. The new president declared that his government had no "connection with any group" and refused to be linked with any faction, communist or other. Officers personally loyal to him were soon placed in key positions while young Parchamites were sent to the provinces, ostensibly to give them the opportunity to put their ideas into practice but probably to get them out of Kabul. They met with the sometimes violent resistance of rural Afghans. By 1974 Daoud felt he could begin to purge leftists and put relatives and other loyal figures in their place. By the end of 1975 Daoud had purged leftist officers, and the last Parchami left the cabinet when interior minister Faiz Mohammad was replaced by a former chief of police.

In 1975 Daoud established his own political party, the National Revolutionary Party, which was to be the focus of all political activity. In January 1977 a Loya Jirgah approved Daoud's constitution, which established a presidential, one-party system of government.

Resistance to the new regime from any quarter was repressed. A coup attempt by Maiwandwal, which may have been planned before Daoud took power, was put down shortly after Daoud's coup. In October 1973 the former prime minister—who was also a highly respected former diplomat—died in prison under circumstances that supported the widespread belief that he had been tortured to death. Bradsher reports that there were hundreds of arrests, five political executions (the first in more than 40 years), and failed coup attempts in 1974, 1975, and 1976.

Parcham's collaboration with Daoud had not provided them with any more power in the long run than Khalq's more cautious attitude. Despite Daoud's purge of leftists by late 1975, Parcham and Khalq were as bitter as ever toward one another, perhaps more so in the wake of a reported plan by Parchamites to assassinate the Khalq leadership. Taraki, in his later writings, reports that in 1976 Amin, organizer of the

PDPA's military arm, declared that the party was in a position to take power. Taraki refused to move, however. As Male points out, this decision had unfortunate repercussions for the Khalqis because the Parchami faction, which organizationally (if not wholeheartedly) rejoined the PDPA in July 1977, was in a position to share power when the PDPA took over the government in 1978.

Daoud still favored a state-centered economy, and three years after coming to power he drew up an ambitious seven year-economic plan (1976-1983) that included major schemes and would have required a major influx of foreign aid (see Growth and Structure of the Economy, ch. 3). Daoud's turn away from the left in domestic politics was matched by a move as early as 1974 to move away from the steadily increasing reliance on the Soviet Union for military and economic support. As early as 1974 Daoud had begun a military training program with India, and in the same year he began talks with Iran on economic development aid. The shah of Iran, under the impression that the recent quadrupling of his nation's oil revenues would make vast amounts of money available to influence regional politics, agreed in October 1974 to give Afghanistan a US$10 million grant to study the feasibility of several development projects, and some observers reported that the shah might provide as much as US$2 billion in aid over the next decade. Daoud turned not only to the conservative Iranian regime for aid but also to other oil-rich Muslim nations, such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait. The overheated Iranian economy showed signs of strain by 1975, however, and by 1977 it was clear that Iran could not provide the amount of aid envisaged earlier.

Pashtunistan zealots confidently expected that the new president would push this issue with Pakistan, and in the first months of the new regime bilateral relations were in fact poor. Efforts by Iran and the United States to cool a tense situation succeeded after a while, and by 1977 relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan improved notably. Visits between the heads of state of the two nations were exchanged, and during Daoud's March 1978 visit to Islamabad an agreement was reached, providing that President Mohammad Zia ul Haq of Pakistan would release from prison Pashtun and Baluch militants and that Daoud would reduce support for these groups and expel Pashtun and Baluch militants who had taken refuge in Afghanistan. Bradsher suggests that Daoud backed away from his previous stance on the Pashtunistan issue not only

because of Iranian and other foreign pressure but also because the Soviets would not support as tough a line as Daoud had once taken.

Daoud's ties with the Soviet Union, like his relations with Afghan communists, deteriorated during the five years of his presidency. Although, as Bradsher notes, Soviet aid during the five-year period amounted to more than Iranian, Saudi, and Western aid combined, the Soviets continually urged Daoud to include the PDPA in his government. Daoud's initial visit to the Soviet Union in 1974 was friendly, despite disagreement on the Pashtunistan issue, and the Soviets promised more aid and granted a moratorium on part of Afghanistan's bilateral debt. President Nikolay Podgorny of the Soviet Union visited Kabul in late 1975, but the official communiqués were somewhat less warm than those of the previous year.

By the time Daoud visited the Soviet Union again in April 1977, the Soviets were aware of his purge of the left that began in 1975, his removal of Soviet advisers from some Afghan military units, and his diversification of Afghan military training (especially to nations like India and Egypt, where they could be trained with Soviet weapons but not by Soviets). Despite the official goodwill, there were unofficial reports of sharp Soviet criticism of anticommunists in Daoud's new cabinet, of his failure to cooperate with the PDPA, and of Daoud's criticism of Cuba's role in the nonaligned movement. Bradsher cites reports by Afghans that Daoud responded to Leonid Brezhnev's bullying tactics either by slamming his fist on the conference table or by walking out of a meeting.

The Soviets could not have been happy with Daoud's more diversified foreign policy. He was friendly with Iran and Saudi Arabia; he had also scheduled a visit to Washington in the spring of 1978, and the administration of President Jimmy Carter was expected to increase the diminishing level of United States aid to Afghanistan.

By 1978 Daoud had achieved little of what he had set out to accomplish. Although there had been good harvests in 1973 and subsequent years, no real progress had been made, and the average Afghan's standard of living—which by UN standards was very low—had not improved. Most key political groups had been alienated by the spring of 1978. If intellectuals and liberals had hoped that Daoud's coup would break the power of the conservatives who controlled parliament and usher in a period of political progress, they were sorely disappointed. Daoud had simply gathered power into his own hands; dissent

was not tolerated. Muslim fundamentalists had been the object of repression as early as 1974, but their numbers increased nonetheless. Diehard Pashtunistan supporters (who were still numerous in the upper levels of the military) were disillusioned by Daoud's rapprochement with Pakistan, especially by what they regarded as his commitment in the 1977 agreement not to aid Pashtun militants in Pakistan.

Most ominous for Daoud were developments among Afghan communists. Whether under Soviet pressure or through the efforts of some other communist party, in March 1977 Khalq and Parcham had reached a fragile agreement on reunification. The two groups remained mutually suspicious, and the military arms of each faction remained uncoordinated because, by this time, Khalqi military officers vastly outnumbered Parchamis and feared that the latter might betray them to Daoud. Plans for a coup had long been discussed, but according to a statement by Amin afterward, the April 1978 coup was carried out about two years ahead of time. As Male suggests, Daoud's own actions in 1978 made the PDPA act sooner than planned.

On April 17, 1978, Mir Akbar Khyber, a key ideologue of the Parcham faction, was murdered in Kabul. This was the third political assassination in nine months and, like the killing of a strike leader in August and of the minister of planning in November 1977, has remained unsolved. There were unconvincing reports that Khyber had been killed by Iran's Savak or by the Soviet KGB. He could also have been murdered by Khalqis or by someone in Daoud's government. Rumors of government involvement were current within hours of his death. His funeral on April 19 served as a major rally for Afghan communists. Estimates of the crowd ranged from 10,000 to 30,000. Taraki and Karmal both made stirring speeches, and Daoud, worried about this demonstration of communist strength, ordered the arrest of PDPA leaders.

Bradsher suggests that Daoud's policy toward the PDPA—which he knew was operating clandestinely—had been based on the notion that it was a small, ineffective organization like the Parcham faction that he had so easily purged in 1975. According to this analysis, communist strength manifested at Khyber's funeral shocked Daoud into taking the communists more seriously. Unfortunately for Daoud, his reaction was strangely sluggish. It took him a week to arrest Taraki, and Amin was only placed under house arrest. According to subsequest PDPA writings, Amin, from his home under armed guard

and using his family as messengers, sent complete orders for the coup. Bradsher also suggests that other factors might have precipitated the coup. The army had been put on alert on April 26 because of a presumed "anti-Islamic" coup. Given Daoud's repressive and suspicious mood, officers known to have differed with Daoud, although without PDPA ties or with only tenuous connections to the communists, might have moved hastily to prevent their own downfall. On April 27, 1978, the coup began with troop movements at the military base at Kabul International Airport. It developed slowly over the next 24 hours as the rebels battled units loyal to Daoud in and around the capital. Daoud and most of his family were shot in the Presidential Palace on April 28.

Two hundred and thirty-one years of rule by Ahmad Shah and his descendants had ended, but it was less clear what kind of regime had succeeded them. It was several days before it was known to outsiders whether the coup of April 27–28, 1978, was a move by the military, the PDPA, or some combination of the two.

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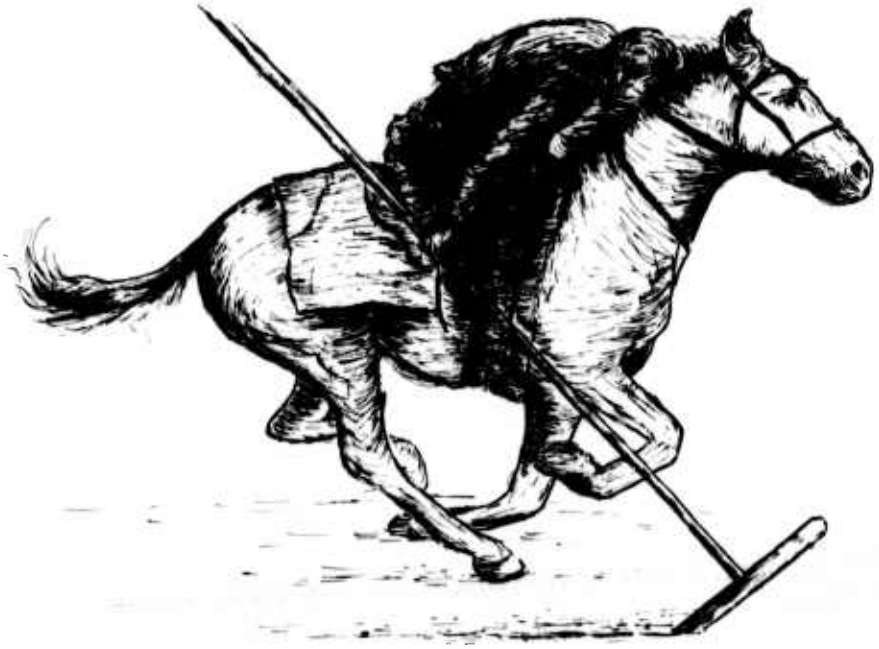
The indispensable book for exploration of Afghan history is Louis Dupree's monumental work, *Afghanistan*, which includes a wealth of information from the point of view of a scholar (historian, anthropologist, and archaeologist) who has spent many years in the country. The foremost British historian of Afghanistan, W. Kerr Fraser-Tytler, has also written from the perspective of years spent in the region, and his book, *Afghanistan: A Study of Political Developments in Central and Southern Asia*, has valuable insights into all periods of Afghan history but especially into the nineteenth century. Arnold Charles Fletcher's *Afghanistan: Highway of Conquest* provides useful insights as well and is written in a pleasant, narrative style but without the scholarly references of Dupree. In the twentieth century there are more detailed studies of specific subperiods. Leon B. Poullada's *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan, 1919–1929* is a fascinating and well-written scholarly study of the reign of King Amanullah. It includes insights applicable to other periods of Afghan history as well. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 2. The Society and Its Environment



Tent-pegging, a popular equestrian sport, especially among Pashtuns

THE REACTIONS OF the Afghans to the invasion of their country by Soviet military forces in December 1979 were in keeping with Afghan responses to numerous earlier invasions. The almost universal resentment of the populace has been expressed in widespread, bitter, and costly guerrilla warfare against the Soviets and the Afghan government.

Although the cultures of Afghanistan are varied, complex, and often poorly understood, perhaps the most interesting question about the country in the mid-1980s was why the population responded to the invasion with determination, tenacity, and pugnaciousness. The answers to this question lie in many aspects of the country: its physical environment, population structure, religious traditions, tribes, and ethnicity; the nature of the Afghan family and kin groups; and gender roles.

The people of Afghanistan have adapted to an arid, rugged terrain, extreme climatic conditions, periodic droughts, and successive invasions. Afghans have coped with these difficulties by showing diversity, ingeniousness, and flexibility in subsistence strategies, technology, and religious and social organization. As they may move from one subsistence strategy to another to meet changing environmental and economic conditions, so they may change from one religious sect to another or expand or contract the boundaries of ethnic group, tribe, or lineage to adapt to the changing social environment. Despite this plasticity, certain values and shared identities endure. These include membership in the patrilineal family, with strong family loyalties and squabbles; gender separation, with bellicose males and secluded women; and membership in the Muslim community (*umma*), with reliance on charismatic religious figures, such as Sufi shaykhs, *pirs*, and *miyans*.

The Afghans' guerrilla war affected not only their own country but the entire region as well. By late 1985 the country was severely depopulated; about one-third of the population had departed, and the war had claimed many lives. The dramatic drop in population within Afghanistan, coupled with the influx of Afghan refugees to Iran and Pakistan (where they reportedly had one of the highest birth rates in the world), had created a tremendous labor shortage within the country and a potentially volatile situation in the entire region.

The Natural Environment

Historically and contemporarily, Afghanistan's rugged terrain and often harsh climate have impeded but not deterred foreign invaders. Afghanistan is an extremely mountainous country with dramatic and often spectacular scenery. Yet the land is not generally lush, and a dearth of water has been and continues to be one of Afghanistan's most pressing problems (see Agriculture, ch. 3). Afghans have adapted ingeniously to the land, only 22 percent of which is arable. For example, through the millennia they have developed elaborate underground irrigation systems in many areas. This technology has had the added benefit of being relatively inaccessible to hostile invaders until the recent invasion; intensive bombing reportedly has damaged many of the underground irrigation systems in some regions.

On the map, the country resembles an irregularly shaped leaf hanging from the Wakhan Corridor at its stem. It encompasses approximately 637,397 square kilometers and is completely landlocked, surrounded by the Soviet Union, Iran, and Pakistan (see fig. 1). China also shares a bit of border with Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor. The nearest seaport is Karachi, Pakistan, almost 1,170 kilometers away. The country's extreme length from west to east is about 1,240 kilometers, including Wakhan. Its greatest width from north to south is approximately 565 kilometers.

Mountains traverse the center of the country, running generally in a northeast-southwest direction. Of the total land area, over 49 percent lies above 2,000 meters. Geographers disagree on the division of these mountains into systems. They are in accord, however, that the Hindu Kush, the most important of the mountain systems, is probably an extension of the Himalayas. Louis Dupree, an American anthropologist whose experience in Afghanistan spans decades, describes the Hindu Kush as "young rugged ranges . . . with sharp peaks, deep valleys, and many almost impenetrable barriers." The point of origin of the Hindu Kush is a matter of some dispute. Scholar Mohammad Ali and geographers Ramamoorthy Gopalakrishnan and W.B. Fisher describe the point of origin of the Hindu Kush as the Pamir Knot, which implies that the Hindu Kush runs from east to west. Conversely, in 1959 geographer Johannes Humlum fixed the point of origin in Iran.

The origin of the unusual term Hindu Kush (which translates as "Hindu Killer") is also a point of contention. Dupree

discusses three possibilities: that the mountains are a memorial to the Indian slaves who perished in the mountains while being transported to Central Asian slave markets; that the name is merely a corruption of *Hindu Koh*, the pre-Islamic name of the mountains that at the time divided Hindu southern Afghanistan from non-Hindu northern Afghanistan; and finally, that the name is a posited Avestan appellation meaning "water mountains."

The highest peaks are over 7,000 meters above sea level and are found in the eastern part of the country. In comparison, Mount Everest, which has the highest elevation in the world, stands 8,853.5 meters above sea level. The mountains of the Hindu Kush diminish in height as they stretch westward. Toward the middle of the range, near Kabul, they extend from 4,500 to 6,000 meters above sea level. In the western portion of the range they attain heights of 3,500 to 4,500 meters and at the extreme western border are lower still. The average altitude of the Hindu Kush is 4,500 meters (see fig. 4). The Hindu Kush runs about 966 kilometers laterally, and its median north-south measurement is about 240 kilometers.

Other mountain ranges, usually considered to be offshoots of the Hindu Kush system, form part of the central highland's westward thrust but spread out from the central core. These mountain ranges include the Koh-i-Baba, Salang, Paghman, Safed Koh, Salt, Suleiman, Khwaja Amran, Siah Koh, Doshak, and Paropamisus (also referred to as Safid Kuh). Also included are the Hindu Kush range proper; only a portion of the Hindu Kush system is included in the Hindu range, while the rest of the mountain system is classified as part of these other ranges.

Afghanistan's mountains are transected by a number of passes that have been, and continue to be, of great strategic importance. These include the Kowtal-e Shebar, where the Hindu Kush range proper merges with the Koh-i-Baba northwest of Kabul; eight to 10 passes in the eastern part of the Hindu Kush, such as the Killik (4,755 meters) and Wakhjir (4,923 meters); and the Baroghil (3,798 meters) and Kachin (5,639 meters) passes that join Chitral, Pakistan, to the Wakhan Corridor. Other passes leading from Afghanistan to Chitral are the Dorah (4,511 meters), Sad Eshtragh (5,319 meters), Agram An (5,069 meters), and Afsik (3,749 meters). Several important passes are located farther west—the Molla Khak (3,548 meters), Bazarak, the important Bamian pass (2,713 meters), and Hajji Gak. The passes of the Paropamisus in the west are relatively low—in general about 610 meters

above sea level. Among the most famous passes in Western historical perceptions of Afghanistan are those leading to the Indian subcontinent. They include the Khyber Pass (1,027 meters) and Lateh Band Pass (also found at a relatively low elevation) leading to Kabul. The difficulties faced by any invader, as well as by Afghan refugees seeking asylum in Pakistan, become evident when the heights of the mountain passes are compared with the highest elevation in the continental United States, Mount Whitney, which at 4,420.7 meters is much lower than some important Afghan passes and not much higher than most.

In addition to its mountains, the country also possesses many rivers, river basins, lakes, and desert areas. Rivers take on a very special significance in an arid, landlocked country. The major rivers are the Amu Darya (or Oxus; length at least 800 kilometers), Helmand (length 1,000 kilometers), Harirud 850 kilometers), and Kabul (length 460 kilometers). In addition, four important rivers flow northward: the Balkh, Morghab, Koshk, and Qonduz. The last two rivers flow into the Amu Darya. Many additional rivers and streams flow only seasonally, drying to a trickle or becoming totally dry during part of the year. Most rivers simply empty into arid portions of the country, spending themselves through evaporation without emptying into another watercourse. The most important river basins in the view of Gopalakrishnan are the Amu Darya, Kabul, Helmand, and Harirud.

Using geographical features, geographers divide Afghanistan into several regions. As with other facets of the geography, scholars disagree over the definition of regions and what and how many regions there are. Dupree's paradigm is most revelant because he bases his divisions on human geography and ecology. Using Humlum's 1959 work as a basis, he divides the country into 11 geographic zones: the Wakhan Corridor-Pamir Knot, Badakhshan, Central Mountains, Eastern Mountains, Northern Mountains and Foothills, Southern Mountains and Foothills, Turkestan Plains, Herat-Farah Lowlands, Sistan Basin-Helmand Valley, Western Stony Deserts, and Southwestern Sandy Deserts. The first six zones are connected to the Hindu Kush system. The rest of the zones comprise deserts and plains "which surround the mountains in the north, west, and southwest."

Geologically, the country is notable for the richness of its mineral and oil resources and for its numerous earthquakes. American geographer John F. Shroder, Jr., stresses the munificence of Afghanistan's mineral wealth and suggests that Russia

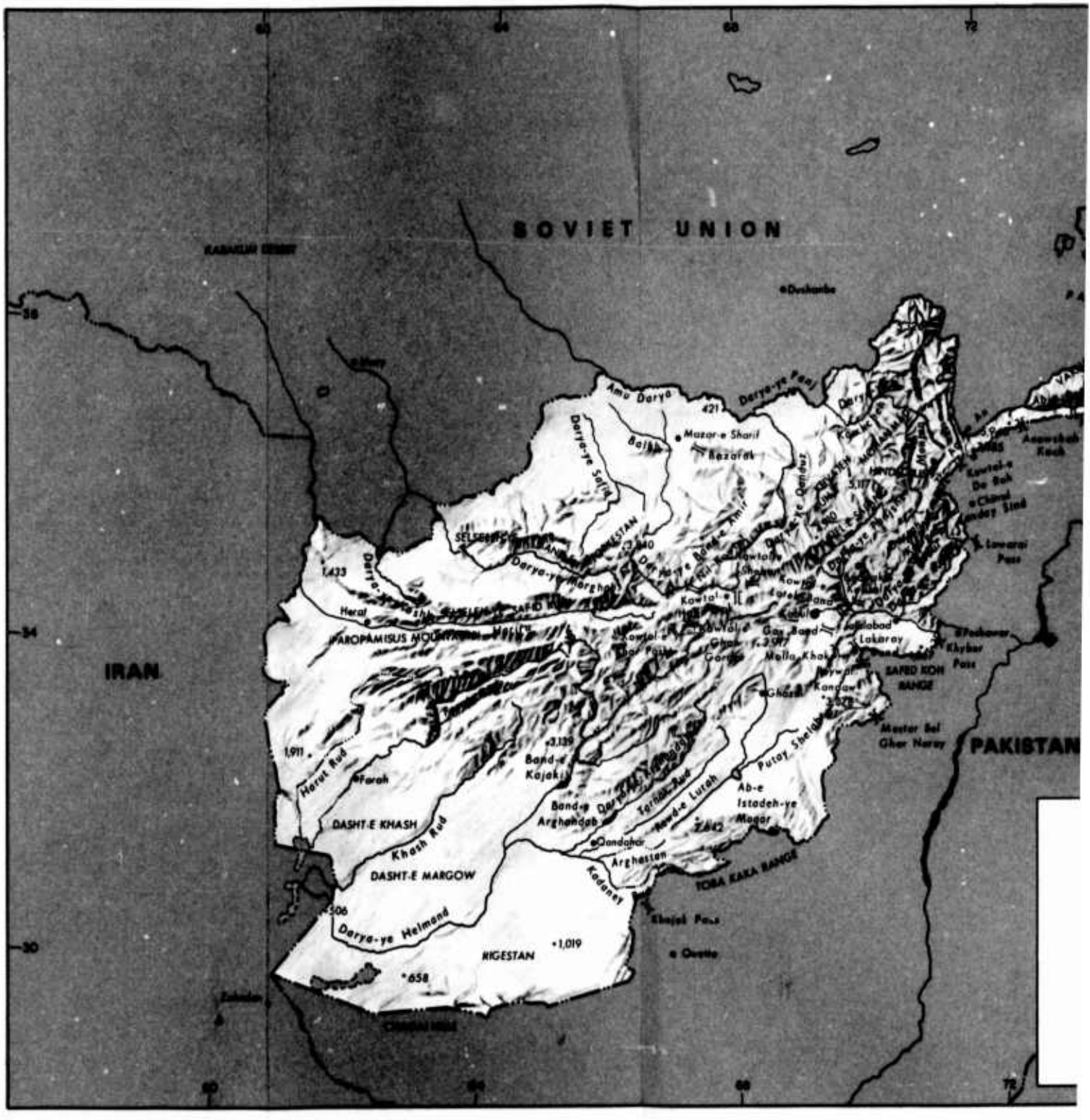
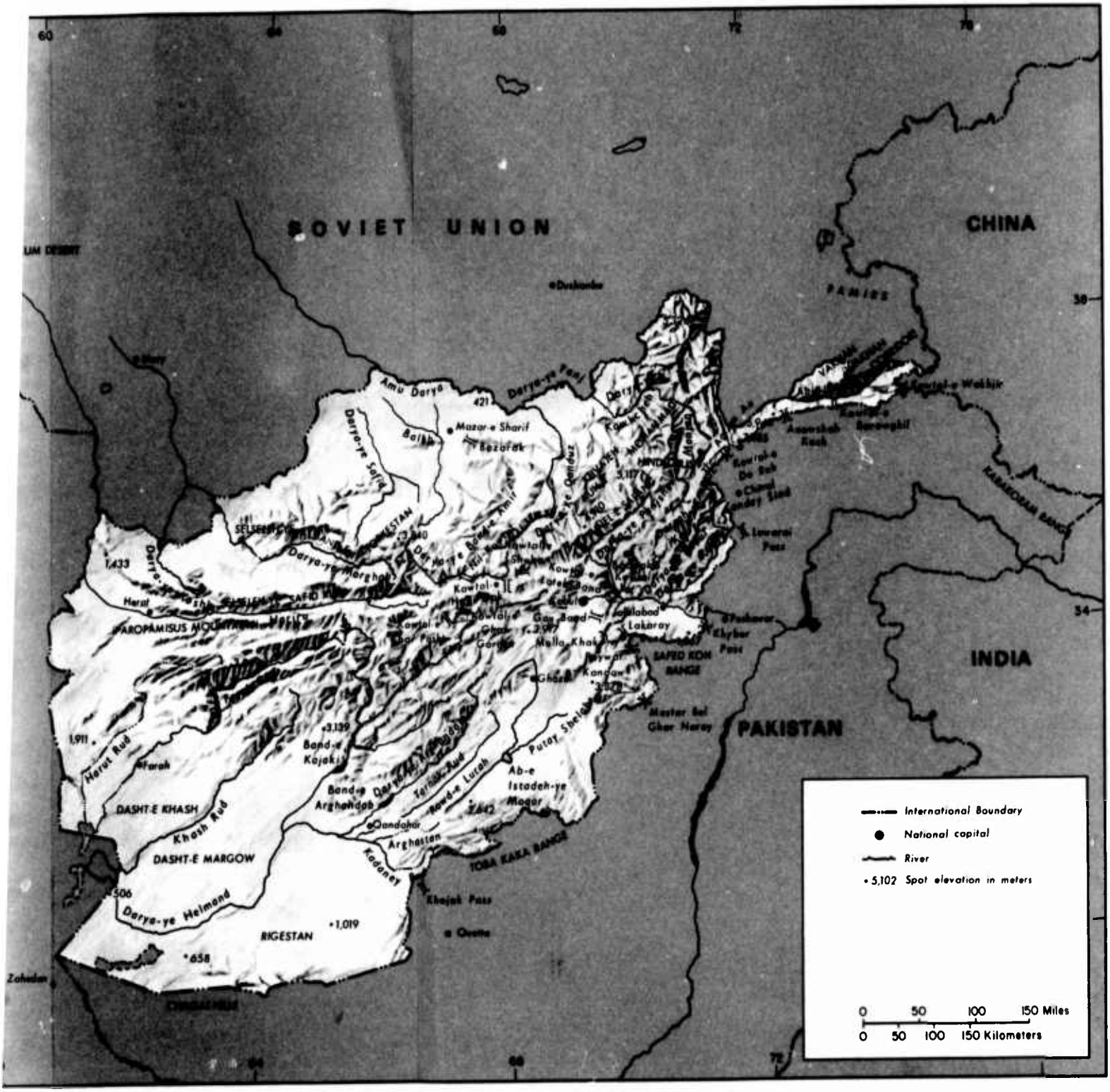


Figure 4. Topography


SOVIET UNION
CHINA
INDIA
PAKISTAN
Dushanbe
Amu Darya
Mazar-e Sharif
Balkh
Bazarak
Darya-ye Kunduz
Darya-ye Panj
Darya-ye Safed
Darya-ye Morghab
Herat
Harirud
Farah
Khash Rud
DASHT-E KHASH
DASHT-E MARGOW
Darya-ye Helmand
REGESTAN
Zahedan
Kandahar
Arghastan
Kadaney
Khojak Pass
Quetta
TOBA KAKA RANGE
Band-e Kajaki
Band-e Arghandab
Ab-e Istadeh-ye Mogor
Kowtal-e Salang
Kowtal-e Khyber
Kowtal-e Lowarai
Kowtal-e Do Rah
Kowtal-e Barowghil
Jalalabad
Lakaray
Peshawar
Khyber Pass
Master Sal Ghar Naray
SAFED KOH RANGE
HINDU KUSH
PAMIRS
KARAKORAM RANGE
Asmarshah Rock
Chiring Landay Sind
Lowarai Pass
Gaz Band
Mella Khak
Ghazni
Kandaw
Putay Sheikh
1,911
1,433
3,139
2,842
506
1,019
658
International Boundary
National capital
River
• 5,102 Spot elevation in meters
0 50 100 150 Miles
0 50 100 150 Kilometers

has coveted the natural riches since tsarist times. The outstanding mineral resources include copper, iron, lead, zinc, mercury, tin, chromium, lithium, tungsten, niobium, gold, and uranium (among others), as well as a variety of precious stones. Afghanistan also boasts deposits of combustible hydrocarbons, including coal, lignite, peat, and oil (see Mining, ch. 3).

About 50 earthquakes are reported each year. As of mid-1985 the most recent was reported to have occurred on July 29, 1985, at 12:25 P.M. local time, lasting four minutes and 45 seconds. Its strength on the Richter scale was reported at 5.6 (possibly at the point that it was measured rather than at the epicenter) by the Afghan Seismological Institute of the Natural Science Center of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan Academy of Sciences. French scientists recorded a measurement of 7.3 on the Richter scale at the epicenter, which was located in the Hindu Kush range. Such a strong earthquake is not unusual for Afghanistan, although most are relatively mild. The earthquake activity is a result of the considerable differential earth movements occurring in the region. As might be expected, there are fault lines and overthrust zones.

The general climate of the country is typical of arid or semiarid steppe, with cold winters and dry summers. A subarctic climate with dry and cold winters dominates the mountain regions of the northeast. In the mountains bordering Pakistan a divergent fringe effect of the Indian monsoon, coming usually from the southeast, brings maritime tropical air masses that determine the climate in that area between July and September. At times these air masses advance into central and southern Afghanistan, bringing increased humidity and some rain.

On the intermontane plateaus the winds do not blow very strongly, but in the Sistan depression there are severe blizzards during the winter. In the western and southern regions a northerly wind blows with much force and persistence during the summer months. Known as the "wind of 120 days," it is usually accompanied by intense heat, drought, and sandstorms and brings much hardship to the inhabitants of the desert and steppe lands. Dust whirlwinds frequently occur during the summer months on the flats in the southern part of the country. Rising at midday or in the early afternoon, they advance at velocities ranging between 97 and 177 kilometers per hour, raising high clouds of dust.

Temperature and precipitation are controlled by the exchange of air masses. The highest temperatures (over 35°C) and the lowest precipitation (less than 15 centimeters annual-

ly) prevail in the drought-ridden, poorly watered southern plateau region, which extends over the boundaries with Iran and Pakistan.

The Central Highlands, with its higher peaks ascending toward the Pamir Knot, represents another distinct climatic region. From the Koh-i-Baba Range to the Pamir Knot, January temperatures may drop to -15°C or lower in the highest mountain area, whereas July temperatures vary between 0° and 26°C, depending on the altitude. In the mountains the annual mean precipitation, much of which is snowfall, increases eastward and is highest in the Koh-i-Baba Range, the western part of the Pamir Knot, and the Eastern Hindu Kush.

Precipitation in these regions and the eastern monsoon area is about 40 centimeters a year. The eastern monsoon area encompasses patches in the eastern border area with Pakistan and irregular areas from north of Asmar to just north of Darkhe Yahya and occasionally as far east as the Kabul Valley. The Wakhan Corridor, however, which has temperatures ranging between 9°C in the summer to below -21°C in the winter, receives less than 10 centimeters of rainfall annually. Permanent snow covers the highest mountain peaks. In the mountainous region adjacent to northernmost Pakistan, the snow is often more than two meters deep during the winter months. Valleys become snow traps as the high winds sweep much of the snow from mountain peaks and ridges. Precipitation generally fluctuates greatly during the course of the year in all parts of the country. Surprise rainstorms often transform the episodically flowing rivers and streams from puddles to torrents, and an unwary invading army has been trapped in such flooding more than once in Afghanistan's history. Nomadic and seminomadic Afghans have also succumbed to the sudden flooding of their camps.

The climate of the northern plains represents a transition between mountain and steppe climates. Aridity increases and temperatures rise with descending altitudes, becoming the highest along the lower Amu Darya and in the western parts of the plains (see table 2; table 3, Appendix).

The natural environment is, in fact, so forbidding that at first glance it seems an unlikely site for invasion by so many hostile armies. The reason lies in the country's location at the crossroads of Central Asia, South Asia, and West Asia. In more recent times Afghanistan has been recognized as a land of unexploited mineral and hydrocarbon wealth as well as a geo-

graphical buffer between various political systems, rendering its desirability even greater.

Population

By the mid-1980s millions of refugees had fled their rural homes to reside in cities or had left Afghanistan entirely for Pakistan, Iran, and other countries. In late 1985 two world situations produced large numbers of refugees—famine in Sub-Saharan Africa and insurgencies in Latin America. Nevertheless, it was the conflict in Afghanistan that produced the largest refugee population in the world. Estimates of the number of refugees in Pakistan, the home of most exiled Afghans, varied widely, and no reliable figure existed in 1985. Many experts accepted the figure of 2.5 to 3 million refugees in Pakistan and up to 1.9 million Afghans in Iran. Possibly 150,000 Afghans had emigrated to other countries, including the United States. The lack of accurate censuses of the refugee population, however, makes these figures extremely problematic (see Refugees, this ch.).

Before the Soviet intervention, there had been only one official census, which was carried out in 1979. Some scholars have raised questions about the validity of this census because it was conducted in three weeks, from June 15 to July 4, and only 55 to 60 percent of the settled population was counted because of armed conflict in the remainder of the country. The census reported a settled population of 13 million and estimated an additional 2.5 million nomads, for a total population of 15.5. million. The Afghan *Statistical Yearbook* published in 1983 provides a total population figure of 15.96 million for the 1981–82 year, based on projections from the 1979 census figures. This figure presumably includes those citizens who have left the country. The authors estimate that 13.8 million, or 84 percent of the population, were settled, and 2.16 million, or 16 percent of the population, were nomadic in 1981–82. They estimate that only 15.8 percent of the population lived in urban areas and that about 48 percent of that urban population lived in Kabul.

The population projections were calculated using a growth rate of 2.6 percent for the total population. The growth rate for the urban population was estimated to be 4.7 percent and the growth rate for the rural population 2.3 percent, reflecting migration to urban centers. The estimated sex ratio

(number of males per 100 females in the population) was about 106 males in the total population, 109 in the urban population, and 105 in the rural population.

An earlier unofficial census was carried out in 1972–74, for which the interviewing occurred during 1972–73, in cooperation with the Afghan government. The census was sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (AID) and was conducted jointly through the State University of New York (SUNY) at Buffalo and The Johns Hopkins University. Although this survey is generally well respected, it did not cover the entire country but relied on careful sampling techniques. The reported 1972–73 figures were 10,020,600 settled people; the nomadic population was not surveyed. The sex ratio was 116 males per 100 females.

The overall sex ratio in most countries of the world gives females a slight advantage over males. The high ratio of males to females in Afghanistan is startling, even given the expected underreporting of females in a conservative Islamic society. Graham B. Kerr, SUNY Buffalo demographer, accounts for the skewed gender distribution in two ways: a higher than usual underreporting of females and a high rate of maternal mortality. An interesting datum of this survey was the reported trend of increasing migration to cities from the countryside, which antedates the advent of a Marxist-Leninist government in 1978.

The AID survey found the crude birth rate (number of births per 1,000 people) to be 20.8 and the infant mortality rate (number of deaths per 1,000 infants) to be 184.0. The mortality figures are extraordinarily high, and it is not surprising that the survey's authors calculated the average life expectancy at birth to be an astonishingly low 34.6 in 1973–74. Finally, the research team calculated the annual growth rate at 2.2 percent.

Experts in 1985 provided various estimates of the country's population; all of these estimates were, of course, based on the earlier censuses. The Population Reference Bureau, a respected nonprofit agency in Washington, D.C., estimated the population at 14.7 million people, including refugees, whereas the United States Bureau of the Census used the same figure of 14.7 million but excluded refugees. The Population Reference Bureau's figure is significantly lower than the Afghan government's 1983 estimate of 15.5 million (see table 4, Appendix).

In 1985 the United States Bureau of the Census and the

Population Reference Bureau provided other current demographic figures for Afghanistan. Both groups, however, cautioned that the figures were based on data so unreliable as to constitute little more than educated guesses. The life expectancy at birth cited by the Population Reference Bureau was among the lowest in the world, and the infant mortality rate was the highest in the world. These figures reflected not only the political situation but also the lack of adequate health care facilities in most of the country.

Figures for population movement within the country were also unreliable. Kabul seems to have received the largest number of refugees from the countryside, but other major cities, such as Jalalabad, also absorbed many refugees. In the 1979 census report the population of Kabul was listed at 913,164 people. By mid-1985 unconfirmed reports placed the population of Kabul at over 2 million. The sudden influx of rural dwellers who sought to share residences with urban relatives resulted in overcrowding and pressure on city-provided services.

Religion

The population is fragmented into myriad ethnic, linguistic, religious, kin-based, and regional groupings. One of the few commonalities in this diverse country is Islam. Even in the matter of religion, however, sectarian differences and differences over Quranic and legal interpretations divide Afghans. In addition, minorities of Hindus and Sikhs (originally traders from India) and Jews have lived in the country for generations. Islam, however, appears to be one of the few factors crosscutting virtually all other groups.

In late 1985 all resistance groups striving for a pan-Afghan constituency appealed to Afghans on the basis of their common Muslim identity. Indeed, the term used for the resistance fighters, *mujahidiin*, translates as "those waging jihad." Jihad is a duty of Muslims and refers to the struggle for the predominance of God's will, both within oneself and between people. As of 1985 Islam had been a most effective rallying point.

Afghan society, with its fragmented groupings, has often been composed of a congeries of warring factions. Although themes common to the many groups resident in the country (such as honor or family loyalty) ramify throughout the country, these more easily serve to divide than to unite Afghans into

multitribal and multiethnic groups. Islam, however, represents a common and potentially unifying symbolic system. The potency of Islam as a unifying factor lies partly in the essence of Islam itself, partly in the meaning of Islam to Afghans, and partly in the fact that religion is one of the few shared symbolic systems in the society. Before proceeding to a discussion of what Islam means in Afghanistan in the mid-1980s, it is necessary first to understand Islam as a religion and then to comprehend how Islam is practiced in Afghanistan.

Tenets of Islam

In A.D. 610 Muhammad (later known as the Prophet), a merchant belonging to the Hashimite branch of the ruling Quraysh tribe in the Arabian town of Mecca, began to preach the first of a series of revelations granted him by God through the angel Gabriel. A fervent monotheist, Muhammad denounced the polytheism of his fellow Meccans. Because, however, the town's economy was based largely on the thriving pilgrimage business to the Kaabah shrine and numerous polytheist religious sites located there, this vigorous and continuing censure eventually earned him the bitter enmity of the town's leaders. On September 24, 622, he and a group of followers were invited to the town of Yathrib, which came to be known as Medina (from Madinah al Nabi—The Prophet's City) because it became the center of his activities. The move, or hijra, known in the West as the hegira, marks the beginning of the Islamic era and of Islam as a force on the stage of history; the Muslim calendar, based on a 354-day lunar year, begins in 622. In Medina, Muhammad continued to preach, eventually defeated his detractors in battle, and consolidated both the temporal and the spiritual leadership of all Arabia in his person. He entered Mecca in triumph in 630 and returned there to make the pilgrimage shortly before his death in 632.

After Muhammad's death his followers compiled those of his words regarded as coming directly and literally from God as the Quran, the holy scripture of Islam; others of his sayings and teachings and precedents of his personal behavior, recalled by those who had known him during his lifetime, became the hadith. Together they form the Sunna, a comprehensive guide to the spiritual, ethical, and social life of the orthodox Muslim.

The majority of Afghan Muslims are Sunnis and adhere to the tenets of the Sunna. The Shia, however, differ in some respects. The *shahada* (literally, testimony or creed) succintly

states the central belief of Islam: "There is no god but God (Allah), and Muhammad is his Prophet." This simple profession of faith is repeated on many ritual occasions, and its recital in full and unquestioning sincerity designates one a Muslim. The God preached by Muhammad was not one previously unknown to his countrymen, for *Allah* is Arabic for *God* rather than a particular name. Instead of introducing a new deity, Muhammad denied the existence of the many minor tribal gods and spirits worshiped before his ministry and declared the omnipotence of the unique creator. God exists on a plane of power and sanctity above any other being and to associate anything with him in any visual symbol is a sin; events in the world flow ineluctably from his will, and to resist it is both futile and sinful.

Islam means submission (to God), and one who submits is a Muslim. Muhammad is the "seal of the prophets"; his revelation is said to complete for all time the series of biblical revelations received by the Jews and the Christians. God is believed to have remained one and the same throughout time, but humans had strayed from his true teachings until they were set aright by Muhammad. True monotheists who preceded Islam are known in Quranic tradition as *hanifs*; prophets and sages of the biblical traditions, such as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus (known in Arabic as Ibrahim, Musa, and Isa), are recognized as inspired vehicles of God's will. Islam, however, reveres as sacred only the message, rejecting Christianity's deification of the messenger. It accepts the concept of guardian angels, the existence of jinn, the Day of Judgment (last day), general resurrection, heaven and hell, and eternal life of the soul.

The duties of the Muslim form the five pillars of the faith. These are the recitation of the creed (*shahada*), daily prayer (*salat*), almsgiving (*zakat*), fasting (*sawm*), and pilgrimage (*haj*). The believer is to pray in a prescribed manner after purification through ritual ablutions each day at dawn, midday, midafternoon, sunset, and nightfall. Prescribed body movements, including genuflections and prostrations, accompany the prayers, which the worshiper recites while facing toward Mecca. Whenever possible, men pray in congregation at the mosque under a prayer leader and on Fridays are obliged to do so. The Friday noon prayers provide the occasion for weekly sermons by religious leaders. Women may also attend public worship at the mosque, where they are segregated from the men, although most frequently those who pray do so at home. A special functionary, the *muadhdhin*, intones a call to prayer

to the entire community at the appropriate hour; those out of earshot determine the proper time from the sun. Daily prayer consists of specified glorifications of God. Prayers seeking aid or guidance in personal difficulties must be offered separately.

In the early days of Islam, the authorities imposed *zakat* as a tax on personal property proportionate to one's wealth; this was distributed to the mosques and to the needy. In addition, freewill gifts (*sadaka*) were made. Many properties contributed by pious individuals to support religious and charitable activities or institutions have traditionally been administered as inalienable religious foundations (waqfs). Such endowments support various charitable activities.

The ninth month of the Muslim calendar is Ramadan, a period of obligatory fasting in commemoration of Muhammad's receipt of God's revelation, the Quran. Throughout the month all but the sick; the weak; soldiers on duty; menstruating, pregnant, or lactating women; travelers on necessary journeys; and young children are enjoined from eating, drinking, smoking, and having sexual intercourse during daylight hours. Those adults excused are obliged to endure an equivalent fast at their earliest opportunity. In many places in the Muslim world a festive meal breaks the daily fast and inaugurates a night of feasting and celebration. The pious well-to-do usually do little or no work during this period, and some businesses close for all or part of the day. Because the months of the lunar calendar revolve through the solar year, Ramadan falls at various seasons in different years. Though a considerable test of discipline at any time of year, a fast that falls in summertime imposes severe hardships on those who must do physical work. Frayed tempers and poor work performances are annual concomitants of the fast.

Finally, all Muslims at least once in their lifetime should if possible make the *haj* to the holy city of Mecca to participate in special rites held there during the twelfth month of the lunar calendar. Those who have completed the *haj* merit the honorific *haji*. The Prophet instituted the requirement, modifying pre-Islamic custom to emphasize sites associated with Allah and Abraham, founder of monotheism and father of the northern Arabs through his son Ismail. In Islamic belief Abraham offered to sacrifice Ismail, son of the servant woman Hagar, rather than Isaac, son of Sarah, as described in the Torah.

The permanent struggle for the triumph of the word of God both within oneself and between people, the jihad represents an additional general duty of all Muslims, construed by

some as the sixth pillar. In addition to specific duties, Islam imposes a code of ethical conduct encouraging generosity, fairness, honesty, and respect for oneself and others and forbidding adultery, gambling, usury, and the consumption of carrion, blood, pork, and alcohol.

A Muslim stands in a personal relationship to God; there is neither intermediary nor clergy in orthodox Islam. Those who lead prayers, preach sermons, and interpret the law do so by virtue of their superior knowledge and scholarship rather than because of any special powers or prerogatives conferred by ordination.

Early Development

During his lifetime Muhammad held both spiritual and temporal leadership of the Muslim community; he established the concept of Islam as a total and all-encompassing way of life for humanity and society. Islam teaches that Allah revealed to Muhammad the immutable principles governing decent behavior, and it is therefore incumbent upon the individual to live in the manner prescribed by revealed law and upon the community to perfect human society on earth according to the holy injunctions. Islam traditionally recognized no distinction between religion and state. Religious and secular life merged, as did religious and secular law.

Islam recognizes that the Prophet Muhammad was the last of the line of prophets that includes Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and others from the Jewish and Christian traditions. The Prophet, however, was also the spiritual and secular leader of the Muslim community *(umma)*. After Muhammad's death it was necessary to select a successor to administer the *umma* and to lead prayers and decide questions on which the Quran was not explicit. The Prophet neither designated his successor nor decreed how a successor should be chosen, and as a result there was some difficulty in agreeing upon a new leader. Some members of the *umma* felt that Muhammad's successor should be a close blood relative of the Prophet, i.e., Ali, who was a member of the Hashimite line, the Prophet's father's brother's son, and the husband of Fatima, Muhammad's sole surviving daughter. Other Muslims believed such kinship was not a necessary prerequisite and held that the caliph (from *khalifa*—successor) should be chosen by the community. A split in the ideally egalitarian and harmonious *umma* developed over this issue; the rift would in time enlarge and generate the two

major divisions of Islam: Shia, from Shiat Ali (the party of Ali), and Sunni, from men of the Sunna and Jamaa (i.e., those who favored a leader chosen by the community).

Some of the reasons for the divisiveness were political. Aisha, Muhammad's favorite living wife, was the opponent of both Fatima, Muhammad's daughter by a different wife, and Ali. Aisha supported the election of her father, Abu Bakr (also one of the Prophet's earliest followers and closest friends), to succeed her late husband. She and her allies won the political battle, and Abu Bakr was chosen caliph by the consensus of the leaders of the *umma*. S. Husain J. Jafri, an Islamic scholar, contends that the as yet minor rupture in the *umma* antedated Islam and had its roots in the north-south religious, political, and tribal differences within the Arabian Peninsula—the Adnani and Qahtani. Abu Bakr was apparently quite popular, and Ali and his supporters recognized Abu Bakr's legitimacy. Historical events after Abu Bakr's death tended to solidify the Sunni-Shia political and ideological differences.

Umar, who succeeded in 634, and Uthman, who took power in 646, enjoyed the recognition of the entire community. Dissatisfaction with the rule of Uthman, however, began to mount in various parts of the Islamic empire. For example, the codification of the Quran, which took place under Uthman, hurt the interests of the professional Quran reciters. Some, such as those at Al Kufah in what is present-day Iraq, refused to go along with this reform. Others accused Uthman of nepotism. Although himself an early Muslim, Uthman came from the Banu Umayyah lineage of the Quraysh, who had been Muhammad's main detractors in Mecca and had resisted him for a long time. The appointment of many members of this house to official posts naturally caused resentment among those who had claims based on earlier loyalty. Still others objected to corruption in financial arrangements under Uthman's caliphate.

Ali, with his frustrated claim to the caliphate, became a perfect focus for dissatisfaction. In 656 disgruntled soldiers killed Uthman. After the ensuing five years of civil war, known to most Muslims as *fitnah* (the time of trials), the caliphate finally devolved on Ali. Aisha, continuing her earlier rivalry, objected, demanding that Uthman's killing be avenged and his killers punished by the Hashimites.

The killers insisted that Uthman, by ruling unjustly, had relinquished his right to be caliph and deserved to die. Ali, whose political position depended on their action and their

support, was forced to side with them. From his capital at Al Kufah he refused to reprimand the killers.

At this point Muawiyah, the governor of Syria and a member of the Banu Umayyah, refused to recognize Ali's authority and called for revenge for his murdered kinsman, Uthman. Ali attacked, but the Battle of Siffin was inconclusive. Muawiyah's soldiers advanced with copies of the Quran on their spears, thus symbolically calling God to decide or submitting the question to arbitration. Ali agreed to this settlement, and each side selected an arbitrator. Some of Ali's supporters rejected the notion that the caliph, the Prophet's successor and head of the community, should submit to the authority of others. By so doing, they reasoned, he effectively relinquished his authority as caliph. They further argued that the question of Uthman's right to rule had been settled by war. When Ali insisted on his course, the group seceded and came to be known as the Kharajites; they withdrew to Haura, near Al Kufah, and chose their own leader.

The arbitration went against Ali in 658. He refused to accept the decision but did not renounce the principle of arbitration. At this point the Kharajites became convinced that personal interest, not principle, motivated Ali. His support dwindled, and he tried unsuccessfully to attack Syria. Muawiyah gained in battle, and in 661 a Kharajite murdered Ali.

His death ended the last of the so-called four orthodox caliphates and the period when the entire community of Islam recognized a single head. Muawiyah then proclaimed himself caliph from Damascus. The Shiat Ali, however, refused to recognize Muawiyah or the Umayyad line. They withdrew, and in the great schism of Islam proclaimed Hassan, Ali's son, the caliph. Hassan, however, eventually relinquished his claim in favor of Muawiyah and went to live in Medina, supported by wealth apparently supplied by Muawiyah.

The breach between supporters of the Alid (an adjective derived from Ali) claims and Sunnis was by this time too wide to be repaired by Hassan's actions. In 680 Yazid I, Muawiyah's son, succeeded to the caliphate with the support of his father, who was still alive. Ali's younger son, Husayn, refused to recognize the succession and revolted at Al Kufah. He was unable to gain widespread support, however, and was killed along with a small band of soldiers at Karbala in Iraq in 680. To the Shia, Husayn became a martyred hero, a tragic reminder of the lost glories of the Alid line, and the repository of the Prophet's

family's special right to the caliphate. The political victor of this second period of *fitnah* was Marwar of the Umayyad line, but Husayn's death aroused increased interest among his supporters that was enhanced by feelings of guilt and remorse and a desire for revenge.

The Shia founded their objections to the Umayyad and later non-Shia caliphs on a notion that members of the house of Muhammad, through Ali, were the most appropriate successors to his positions both as political leader and, more important, as prayer leader. Many believed that Ali, as a close associate, early had a special insight into the Prophet's teachings and habits. In addition, many felt that he deserved the post because of his personal merits and, indeed, believed that the Prophet had expressed a wish that Ali succeed him. In time, for many Shia, these views became transformed into an almost mystical reverence for the spiritual superiority of Ali's line. Some Shia also believe that Muhammad named Ali his successor in a written will that was destroyed by Ali's enemies, who then usurped leadership.

Because the correct selection of the Imam (see Glossary) was the crucial issue over which the Shia departed from the main body of Sunni Islam, the choice of later successors also became a matter of conflict. Disagreements over which of several pretenders had the truer claim to the mystical power of Ali precipitated further schisms (see Ismailis, this ch.).

The early political rivalry remained active as well. Shiism eventually gained numerical dominance in Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, and the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen). Shia are also numerous in Syria and Afghanistan and are found in varying numbers in most present-day Muslim countries.

The early Islamic polity was intensely expansionist, motivated both by dedication to the new religion and by economic and social factors. Conquering armies and migrating tribes expanded from Arabia, spreading Islam by military triumph and by suasion. By the end of Islam's first century, Islamic armies had reached far into North Africa and eastward and northward into Asia.

Muhammad enjoined the Muslim community to convert polytheists, but he also recognized the special status of the People of the Book, Jews and Christians, whose revealed scriptures he considered perversions of God's true word but which nevertheless contributed to Islam. These peoples, approaching but not yet having achieved the perfection of Islam, were spared the choice offered the polytheists—conversion or

death. Jews and Christians in Muslim territories could live according to their own religious law and in their own communities if they accepted the position of dhimmis, or tolerated subject peoples. This status entailed recognition of Muslim authority, special taxes, prohibition of proselytism among Muslims, and certain restrictions on social, economic, and political rights. Although communities of native Afghan Christians have never existed, Jews have lived in the country for centuries. By 1985, however, virtually all Jews had departed. Afghan Jews, like Afghan Sikhs and Hindus, were traditionally traders.

The first centuries of Islam saw the Muslim community grow from a small and despised cult to a powerful empire ruling vast domains. They also saw the evolution of sharia, a comprehensive system of religious law to regulate life within the community. Derived from the Quran and the hadith by various systems of reasoning, four schools of religious law—the Hanafi, Shafii, Maliki, and Hanbali—are generally recognized; each Sunni Muslim theoretically acknowledges the authority of one of them. Afghan Sunnis follow the Hanafi school. Over the centuries Islam gradually absorbed influences from sources other than the prophetic revelation. Pre-Islamic practices reappeared; people resumed venerating trees and stones but maintained their identification with the Muslim community. Various holy men, especially those who claimed descent from the Prophet, established reputations for having exceptional spiritual or magical powers. Pre-Islamic beliefs in the inheritance of special spiritual powers in certain family lines blended smoothly into popular Islam. Stories of miracles circulated, and people began visiting those individuals or their graves to seek cures, the fulfillment of wishes, or other favors.

Sunnis of the Hanafi School

Islam is a legalistic religion with no clerical hierarchy. Muslims, like Jews, were presented with a set of God-given laws and pronouncements that they then had to apply to everyday life. The two religions differ, however, in that the code was presented to an established, well-defined people in Judaism but in the case of Islam was given to any who would accept it. Nevertheless, the problems confronting the two groups of believers were similar; the law was not specific to every situation, but all human behavior was expected to comply with God's will. How could the often general Quran be extended to particular situations? Islam resolved the issue by including the

hadith, which expanded the number of specific circumstances in which God's will was known. Still, the problem remained largely unresolved. Furthermore, during the course of time new situations arose in which a judgment based on God's will was required. Arguments about how the information in the Quran and hadith should be extended were based on *qiya* (analogy) and *ijma* (consensus).

Abu Hanifa, who died in Al Kufah, Iraq in 767, was one of the earliest Muslim legists and the founder of the school of Islamic jurisprudence that bears his name, the Hanafi. In the mid-1980s about 60 percent of the world's Muslims followed the Hanafi school. Abu Hanifa's original thinking was elaborated by two of his disciples and then by later followers. Abu Hanifa's interpretation of Muslim law was extremely tolerant of differences within the Muslim community. He also separated belief from practice in Islam and accorded primacy to belief. This was, indeed, an important contribution. Because of the difficulty in deciding legal matters based on the Quran and hadith, many different opinions existed. Proponents of the various positions often accused those who disagreed with them of being infidels (*kafirs*), which is still a common practice among the mullahs of Afghanistan and elsewhere, Hanafi jurisprudence notwithstanding.

The Hanafi school of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) achieved preeminence under the Abbasid caliphate (750-945), spreading east from Iraq to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Followers of the Hanafi school also existed at the time as far from Iraq as North Africa. Hanafi dominance fell with the fortunes of the Abbasid caliphate. With the rise of the Ottomans, who favored Hanafi interpretation, this school of *fiqh* once again dominated jurisprudence in a great empire. In the late twentieth century, Hanafi Sunnis predominated not only in Afghanistan and the rest of Muslim Central Asia but also in Egypt, Turkey, Pakistan, and India, and in Tunisia it was equal in influence to the Maliki school.

Twelver or Imami Shia

"Twelver," or Imami Shias, are a minority in predominantly Sunni Afghanistan. Anthropologist Robert L. Canfield writes of Imami Shia distribution in Afghanistan: "The most numerous rural Imami groups are the Hazara-Sayyed Imamis dwelling in the inaccessible mountain massif of central Afghanistan, the Hazarajat, and the Tajik Imamis of Herat Province."

Religious succession is at the base of Shia/Sunni differences, although through time Shia have developed their own rituals and legal traditions. All Shia acknowledge Ali as the legitimate successor of the Prophet and believe that the male descendants of Muhammad (and Ali) are uniquely qualified to lead the Muslim community. Twelver Shia view Husayn's martyrdom as the most heinous symbol of their persecuted minority status in a largely Sunni world. The anniversary of Husayn's martyrdom is the most important Shia celebration and is marked in many parts of the Shia Muslim world by mourning processions where participants engage in acts of self-flagellation, by the performance of plays ritually reenacting the events surrounding Husayn's death, and by other memorial rituals.

Leadership of the Shia community is held by the Imam, a lineal male descendant of Ali. A son usually inherited the office from his father. In the eighth century, however, succession became confused when the Imam, Jafar al Sadiq, first named his eldest son, Ismail, his successor, then changed his mind and named a younger son, Musa al Kazim. Ismail died before his father and thus never had an opportunity to assert his claim. When Jafar died in 765, the Imamate devolved on Musa. Those Shia who followed Musa are known to Western scholars as the Imami or Twelver Shia. The portion of the community refusing to acknowledge Musa's legitimacy and insisting on Ismail's son's right to rule as Imam became known to others as Ismailis. The appellation "Twelver" derives from the disappearance of the twelfth Imam, Muhammad al Muntazar, in about 874. He was a child, and after his disappearance he became known as a messianic figure, Al Mahdi, who never died but remains to this day in occultation. The Twelver Shia believe his return will usher in a golden era.

Ismailis

The Ismailis are Shia known as Seveners because for them Ismail was the seventh Imam. There are fewer Ismailis in Afghanistan than Imami Shia. Afghan Ismailis, in the words of Canfield, "follow the contours of the Hindu Kush Mountain range from its southern extremity in Besud northeastward into the Pamirs, even into Russian Central Asia and Northern Pakistan."

The dichotomously divided Ismaili sect contains the Mustalian branch, found primarily in North Yemen, and the Nizari branch, to which Afghan Ismailis belong. Nizari Ismailis are

also found in the Iranian district of Salamiya, Soviet Central Asia, India, the Chitral and Gilgit areas of Pakistan, and East Africa. In Islam, when a sect diverges from a larger group of believers the split is virtually always rooted in a dispute of succession to leadership of the community. Ismailis bifurcated into two branches over such a disagreement. At first, unlike other Shia, all recognized Ismail's son Muhammad as Imam. But in 1094 the Ismaili Imam died after having designated his son Nizar to succeed him. Nizar's brother, Mustali, usurped Nizar's position, captured him, and put him and his son to death. The majority of Ismailis remained loyal to the murdered Nizar. Nizaris believe that Nizar's other son, Muhtadi, who was still an infant at the time of his father's and brother's deaths, was smuggled to Iran. He was raised there in great secrecy. Upon Muhtadi's death in 1162, his son revealed himself as the true imam and became the recognized Imam of the Nizari Ismailis. Later in history it once again became necessary for the Imams to go into hiding. When conditions grew more favorable for the Imams to reveal themselves, they again emerged from hiding. The current Nizari Imam is a revealed, not occultated ruler, and is well known, even in the West, as the Agha Khan.

Ismaili beliefs are complex and syncretic, combining elements from the philosophies of Plotinus, Pythagoras, Aristotle, gnosticism, and the Manichaeans, as well as components of Judaism, Christianity, and Eastern religions. Ismaili tenets are, in fact, unique among Muslims. Ismailis place particular emphasis on *taqiyya*, the practice of dissimulation about one's beliefs to protect oneself from harassment or persecution. Their beliefs about the creation of the world are idiosyncratic, as is their historical ecumenism, toleration of religious differences, and religious hierarchy. Furthermore, the secrecy with which they veil their religious beliefs and practices (together with their practice of *taqiyya*) makes it extremely difficult to establish what their actual religious beliefs are. What is clear is that there is a division of theology into exoteric (including the conservative sharia) and esoteric (including the mystical exegesis of the Quran, which leads to *haqiqa*, or the ultimate reality and truth). Their conceptions of the Imamate also differ greatly from those of other Muslims.

Sufis

In the beginning of the eighth century, bands of mystics,

or Sufis (from *suf*, wool, of their rough clothing), sprang up in various countries, claiming to achieve communion with God through various ecstatic means. In most regions people fell away from the austere cult preached by Muhammad and adopted practices that made it more personal and emotional. Sufi orders gradually arose among both Sunnis and Shias, their leaders teaching particular mystic ways to God. Sufism gained acceptance in large parts of the Islamic world. Sufism tends to be more widespread among Sunnis, however, because most Shia sects embrace mysticism and encourage emotional responses to God and to Shia martyrs. Thus, members of Shia groups may not feel the need for the additional ecstatic experience provided by Sufism.

Sufi religious life generally centers on orders, or brotherhoods, that follow a leader, or shaykh, who teaches a mystical discipline known as a *tariqa*(way). Sufism places great emphasis on a verse from the Quran (7:172) that recounts a long-standing covenant between God and all humans, even, the verse implies, those humans not yet born: God cherishes and sustains humans, while humanity recognizes this and agrees to submit to God's will. Peter Awn, a scholar of Islam, asserts that "the goal of every mystic is to reestablish the living intimacy between the Lord of the world [sic] and the human soul proclaimed at that moment of the covenant." To achieve such an ecstatic state of intimacy and union with God, Sufis have recourse to a variety of methods, including repeated rhythmic movements, bodily gyrations, whirling, dancing, and music. Sufism has considerable influence in Afghanistan.

Meaning and Practice

Descriptions of sharia, Sunna, and formal ideology, while a necessary basis for understanding Islam, contribute little to a knowledge of how most Muslims live their lives. In his sophisticated analysis of religion among the Ghilzai Pashtun, anthropologist Jon W. Anderson demonstrates that Afghan Islam consists of three components—*qawm* (tribe), *tariqa*, and sharia—and that these interweave to form a texture of meanings and social structure encompassing personnel, practice, ideology, and meaning. Religion permeates Ghilzai life, and God's name is invoked routinely. Indeed, this is true not only among the Ghilzai Pashtun but also in all Muslim communities. Several ethnographers who have studied other Afghan tribal and eth-

nic groups, while not carrying their analysis to the extent of Anderson's, have observed common themes.

Among the Ghilzai a sense of, and membership in, the *umma* is conferred by tribal membership because, unlike other groups in Afghanistan, the Pashtun believe that they became Muslims at the time of the Prophet. Their apical ancestor, Qays, journeyed to Mecca and accepted Islam from Muhammad. Their long association with Islam leads Ghilzai to conceive of tribal membership as synonymous with membership in the Muslim community. Therefore, tribal solidarity is equated with the solidarity of the *umma*, and Ghilzai perceive anything that threatens tribal solidarity as evil and associated with the devil.

Historically, khans have arisen as tribal leaders with the ability to unite the tribe. Their role had both religious and political aspects because the harmonious Ghilzai tribe is equivalent to the harmonious *umma*. As political leaders their realm is the social; in their role as khans they do not dabble in the individual's relation to God, nor do they attempt to authoritatively interpret sharia.

Mullahs, however, are paid religious teachers who are supposed to be learned in Quran, hadith, and sharia, i.e., the Sunna, and are the qualified arbiters of disputes in religious interpretation. Their role is also part of the social aspects of Islam, for they must ensure that their community is knowledgeable in the fundamentals of Islam and must rule on religious questions for the community. In reality, Afghan mullahs may be barely literate—only slightly more educated than the tribesmen they serve. Furthermore, their role as religious arbiters forces them to take positions on religious issues; these positions have political ramifications. They must also insist on the correctness and righteousness of their stand, lest their position as religious savant be jeopardized. Mullahs often disagree with each other, pitting different communities of the same tribe against each other. It is in such instances that the mullah's accusations of *kafir* may fly all too frequently. Sharia and its mullah interpreters often serve to divide the politico-religious *qawm* community. Ghilzai tribesmen, in fact, perceive mullahs as disruptive, as do tribesmen from some other parts of the country.

In contrast to the community mullahs and tribal khans, Sufi shaykhs, *pirs*, *miyans* (or *mians*), and *malang* (or *fakirs*) preoccupy themselves with the individual's relationship to God. "Around such figures [as *pir*, *miyan*, etc]," Anderson

writes, "form networks of loyalties whose most organized expression is the Sufi *tariqa*". *Malang* focus their being on their own relationship to God, eschewing home, family, and property to wander the countryside "sleeping in graveyards", especially those containing saints' shrines (see table 5, Appendix). In a culture where family, territory, and property are of utmost importance, a man relinquishing these is viewed as both extremely devout and crazy. These figures have passed out of the social realm almost entirely to better forge links with the divine.

Miyans and *pirs* (i.e., saints), as well as Sufi shaykhs, are part of the social world while representing and/or espousing the individual's relationship to God. As such, their function is opposed to the spirit of sharia, which ideally stresses uniformity in Muslim behavior. Saints and shaykhs collect followings. Generally those from the same region and ethnic group will follow the same *pir*, although this is a matter of individual choice. Members of the same *pir* network or Sufi brotherhood form ties among themselves as well as to the religious leader, although the relationship to the leader remains paramount. *Pir* networks, primarily composed of kin or people with similar ethnic, sectarian, and regional loyalties, also serve to unite rather than to disrupt social relations. Mullahs are often opposed to such religious figures and the loyalties they engender because their brand of Islam does not strictly follow sharia. Despite the mullah's teaching among tribesmen, Anderson observed that "sheikhs [of Sufi orders] with *pir* and *miyan* (saints) in general have a reputation of men of peace whose interest in God makes them disinterested in mundane conflicts—in contrast to mullahs who, as purveyors of learning, often involve themselves in escalating conflicts into Islamic ones". For, according to sharia, people must act according to God's will in all situations. Hence all events have religious overtones, and those whose job it is to decide God's will according to sharia must necessarily render every political situation religious. Because they are "men of peace", saints as well as sayyids (descendants of the Prophet) are often called upon to act as mediators in tribal disputes.

Sufism is not for everyone, unlike *pir* networks. Anderson notes that disgruntled Ghilzai, "particularly second sons and younger brothers who have reason to feel shortchanged in tribal society, may be more or less secretly occasionally drawn to Sufi devotions". This redirects hostile energies that might otherwise be disruptive to the *qawm*.

While Anderson's analysis may be unique, the elements he reports are not. Canfield carried out research in Bamian Province, a heterogeneous area with respect to ethnicity and religion. Before the 1978 revolution Sunnis lived in the central lowlands of the Bamian Valley, and Twelver Shia resided in the highlands to the west, south, and east of the valley. Ismailis, Canfield notes, were interspersed among the other Shia in highland valleys in the east of the region. Canfield found *pirs* and mullahs in opposition in Bamian, and he observes that "mullahs all over the Islamic world have opposed or at least distrusted pirs and the Sufi tradition which provides the conceptual basis for the pir's authority."

In Bamian the role of *pirs* is very similar to their role among the Ghilzai, but Canfield adds that *pirs* have *karamat*, "a spiritual or moral essence attributed to people especially close to God." He cogently explains the logic behind the *pir* figure: "All the sects [of Islam present in Afghanistan] generally shared the belief that God's favor was passed to believers through *walis*, friends or vice-regents (i.e., the pirs); indeed without walis there would be no blessing at all in the world . . . This belief in walis was the ultimate cultural basis for the pir's influence." *Pir* networks in Bamian are highly politicized and are simultaneously both political and religious coalitions, although, as among the Ghilzai, the dyadic tie to the *pir* is preeminent.

The Durrani Pashtun were the subject of research by British anthropologist Richard Tapper. In a 1984 article he describes Sufism among the Durrani. Like the Ghilzai Pashtun, Sufism attracts only Durrani who are thwarted within their social system, for example, barren women and improverished men. Durrani do not despise Sufism by any means, although it can be in conflict with mullah and mosque Islam; Durrani religious and political leaders exercise control over the Sufi form of Islam so that it is integrated into the broader Durrani religious and political system. Sufi shaykhs are called *aghas* by the Durrani and "are respected by all, [because they] have the power to curse if authority is flouted."

Yet another anthropologist, Bahram Tavakolian, worked with nomadic Sheikhanzai in the northwest of the country. This group also belongs to the Durrani Pashtun. His descriptions of the role of *pirs*, shaykhs, and other such leaders agree with other accounts. Unlike other researchers, however, he observed that Sheikhanzai accord mullahs a great deal of respect for their learning and religious participation.

The multifaceted phenomenon of Islam in Afghanistan is rich in meanings and plays multiple roles in the society. It lends meaning to the lives of individuals, comforts and channels the ire of the deprived, forms a structure for political coalitions, is inseparable for some from tribal identity, and is included in all Muslim Afghan's most basic personal identity (even if, as the Ghilzai state, they consider themselves "bad Muslims" with regard to the Sunna). No Afghan is less of a Muslim for failing to adhere to sharia, for this contributes only a part to the role and meaning of Islam.

Traditionally, then, throughout the country Islam is a politico-religious entity and a deeply felt belief system. As such it is ideally suited to the needs of a diverse, unorganized, often mutally antipathetic citizenry wishing to wage war against a common enemy. *Mujahidiin* leaders, as is the case with Sufi shaykhs or *pirs*, are charismatic figures with dyadic ties to followers. Followers select their leader based on personal choice and precedence among others from the region, sect, ethnic group, or tribe. Theirs is a politico-religious war against an anti-Muslim enemy threatening the politico-religious sanctity of their group and hence the personal identity of Afghans. Competing aspects of Afghan Islam still exist, and the mullah leader is not necessary to wage jihad. Given the tripartite division of Islam, as Anderson notes, "it does not detract from their sincerity as Muslims, nor does it make them fanatics, that these tribesmen do not need mullahs for theirs to be a Muslim combat. Rather, it points to the depth of that sincerity that national liberation can be cast as a combat for religion in extremis because that religion is so essentially a part of what they conceive themselves to be."

The marriage of religion and politics in Afghanistan has not gone unnoticed by the Afghan government. The government strived to enlist the support of mullahs and the country's ulama (Islamic scholars) to secure the support of the populace (see the Search for Popular Support, ch. 4). The Soviet Union invited groups of such people to tour areas of Soviet Central Asia and experience, firsthand, Islam under the Soviet state. In addition, it appeared in late 1985 that units and companies of the Afghan army had their own imams. The government held seminars for the imams, the "spiritual personalities," and "religious ulama." Although it was difficult to assess the effectiveness of such campaigns, American journalists traveling the country felt that such governmental strategies met with little

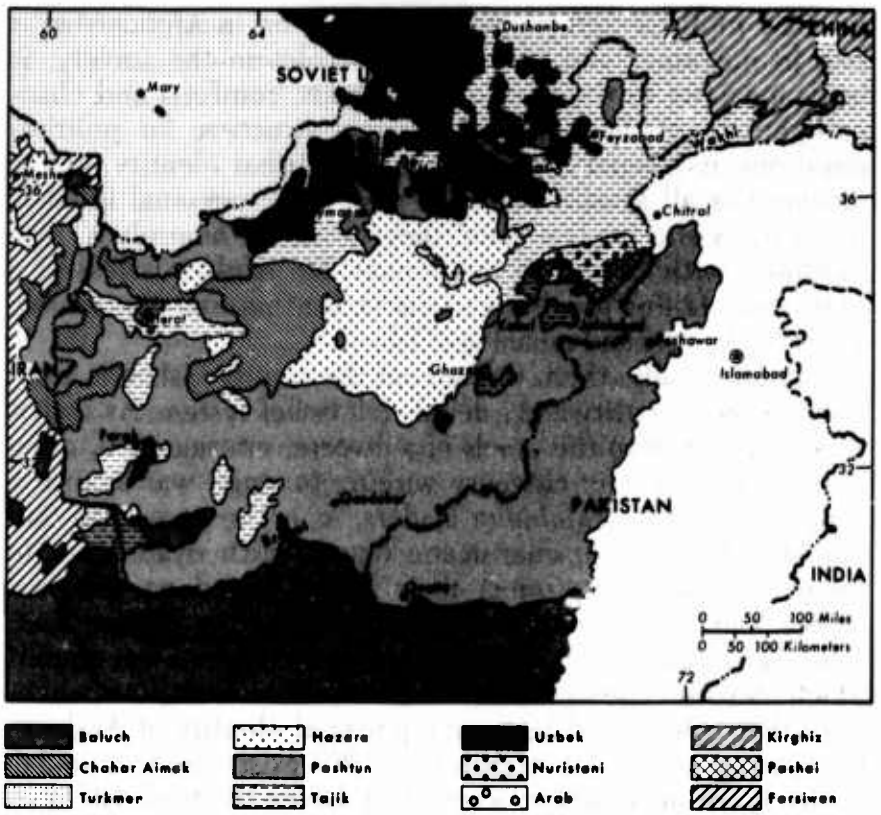


Figure 5. Ethnic Groups in Afghanistan and Adjacent Areas

success in converting religious figures to a progovernment position.

Ethnicity and Tribe

Afghanistan is home not only to several religious sects but also to a host of different ethnic, linguistic, and tribal groups. Rivalry and even armed hostilities have traditionally been common between and within many of these groups. Historic and geographic factors have led to the creation and preservation of diversity. The relationship between tribe and ethnicity is complex, and by no means do all Afghans, even all rural Afghans, consider themselves tribal members.

In addition to social diversity, many different phenotypes may be found in the population, including blond-haired, blue-eyed Afghans; those with darker features and epicanthal folds;

tall, olive-skinned, mustachioed tribesmen; and those who combine these features. Although it may be tempting to associate certain physical features with certain ethnic groups, scholars recognize that because all human populations are capable of interbreeding and do so with great regularity, there are more physical differences found within ethnic groups than between them. Canfield has observed that in Bamian, "some Hazaras [who are thought to have "Mongolian" features], especially those from the chiefly families, do not have clearly defined Mongoloid features. Instead, some have heavy beards and lack the typical Mongolian eyefolds and high cheek bones. Conversely, some persons calling themselves 'Tajik' have rather strong Mongoloid features. I consequently doubt that the relationship between phenotype and ethnic identity is very close."

Afghanistan's rugged physical environment serves to isolate residential communities and to create microenvironments. Members of the same ethnic group and tribe who reside in different locations must adapt to their own microenvironment, which may result in different kin-based groups within the same tribe and ethnic group using different modes of production. For example, the Durrani Pashtuns that Tapper studied were primarily agriculturalists, while the Sheikhanzai Durrani Pashtuns, who were the subject of Tavakolian's research, were primarily pastoralists. Many Durrani also live in cities, where they may have lost their tribal identity.

Distribution

The largest and most powerful ethnic group is the Pashtun (see fig. 5). The Pashtuns are primarily Pashtu speaking, although those residing in Kabul are often Dari speaking. Both Pashtu and Dari belong to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family. In 1980 Dupree estimated that there were about 6.5 million Pashtuns in Afghanistan. This ethnic group, like most others in the country, is not limited to the borders of Afghanistan but also constitutes a major ethnic group of about 10 million in Pakistan. Pashtuns are generally Sunni, but there are Twelver Shia Pashtuns as well. In Afghanistan Pashtuns traditionally have resided in a large semicircular area following the Afghan border from north of the Darya-ye Morgab east and southward to just north of 35° latitude. Enclaves of Pashtuns live scattered among other ethnic groups in much of the rest of the country, particularly in the northern

regions and in the western interior owing to Amir Abdur Rahman's policy of Pashtun resettlement (see Abdur Rahman Khan, 1880–1901, ch. 1).

The Tajiks are also numerous. A problem in discussing this ethnic group lies in the tendency of some non-Tajik groups to classify anyone who is Dari speaking as a member of this group. Some also categorize any urbanite who has become "detribalized" as Tajik. This is particularly true for Kabulis. Tajiks generally live in the west in the area around Herat, in the northwest interior, and (primarily) in the northeast of the country, although not in the Wakhan Corridor. Tajiks speak Dari and Tajik dialects of Dari. Some Tajiks are Sunni, while others (particularly those in the north of the country) are Ismaili. In 1980 Dupree estimated that there were 3.5 million Tajiks resident in the country.

Farsiwans (or Persians) are also Dari speaking. They live in western Afghanistan near the Iranian border; their area extends to almost 66° north longitude. Farsiwans, like the majority of Iranians, are Twelver Shia. In 1980 Dupree believed there to be about 600,000 Farsiwans in the country.

Qizilbash are remnants of the old Iranian presence. They are Twelver Shia, although Dupree asserts that some use *taqiyya* to pass as Sunni. They are a very small group found in Afghan urban centers. They are, of course, Dari speakers.

Hazaras speak a dialect of Dari and live primarily in central Afghanistan. Among Hazaras are members of every Muslim religious sect in the country—Ismaili, Twelver Shia, and Sunni. Dupree put their number at 870,000 in 1980.

Altaic languages are also represented in the country by speakers of Turkic languages. The Uzbeks are Sunni who speak Uzbek, a Turkic dialect. Turkic languages are not in the same family as Indo-European languages (such as Dari and Pashtu). Uzbeks live in a large semicircular area roughly following Afghanistan's northern borders, from Faryab Province almost to Feyzabad. Dupree's 1980 estimate was about 1 million people resident in the country. Turkmen are another Sunni Turkic-speaking group found scattered throughout the northernmost portion of Afghanistan along the Soviet border.

The Kirghiz are also Turkic speaking and, until recently, lived in the Pamir mountains of the Wakhan Corridor. In 1985 there were unconfirmed reports that this area was inhabited solely by Soviet and Afghan army soldiers and that the indigenous population had fled or been exiled. The Kirghiz lived in the high mountain valleys of this region, while another ethnic

group, the Wakhi, occupied lowland areas. The Kirghiz are Sunnis.

The neighboring Wakhi, or Mountain Tajik, are speakers of Iranian dialects. They are often Ismaili but, according to Dupree, some Wakhi Twelver Shia and Sunni exist. They generally live in the same regions as the Kirghiz but at lower altitudes.

Nuristanis are Sunni who speak dialects of Dari and often also Pashtu. They live in the Konarha, Nangarhar, Laghman, and Parvan areas of eastern Afghanistan. The area where the Nuristanis live, Nuristan, was the scene of the first armed opposition to the Khalq government (see Political Bases of the Resistance, ch. 4; Resistance Forces, ch. 5).

Arabs are a Sunni group living in northeastern Afghanistan, primarily "in an arc extending from Maimana to Kunduz." Here they speak a dialect of Farsi that is mixed with Uzbek vocabulary. Some scholars report that Arabic-speaking Arab communities exist in the area of Balkh.

The selection of major ethnic groups in Afghanistan is somewhat arbitrary, as is a classification by language and location. Ethnicity is extremely complicated in the country, and any simple classification is bound to have many exceptions. Furthermore, there are many more ethnic groups than those listed here. Ethnicity has been extensively explored by scholars studying Afghanistan, and they often disagree, further complicating an already labyrinthine phenomenon.

Anderson points out the futility of attempting to locate Afghan ethnic groups on a map because "boundaries are not all of a piece . . . they vary according to the situation." Scholars disagree about what constitutes an ethnic group. Richard F. Strand, an ethnologist, and Anderson describe ethnicity as a process emerging "in situations where people of different traditions and organizations come together or are brought together in contexts set by terms external to themselves." Anthropologist Hugh Beattie defines ethnic groups as "loose collectivities of people who classify themselves and others for the purposes of social interaction on the basis of varying criteria such as language, ideology of patrilineal descent, origin and history and custom in general." These two definitions need not conflict if the processual nature of social interaction is kept in mind. Patrilineal descent is also notoriously malleable and to some extent may be defined and redefined situationally. Canfield introduces a further complication. His experience in Bamian leads him to assert, unlike many other scholars, the

importance of religious sectarian differences which, he contends, take precedence over ethnicity.

Ethnicity, then, is based on shared kinship traced through the father, shared customs, tradition, and language. It is most obvious and is to a large extent formed when different groups come into contact in alien situations. The importance of ethnicity as a behavioral and cognitive category is generally extremely important in Afghanistan but, in some areas, at least, may take a backseat to religious sectarianism. Finally, ethnicity, religious sect, tribe, family, and mode of subsistence intermesh and are to some extent indistinguishable.

The largest and most politically powerful ethnic group, the Pashtuns (or Pakhtuns, in northern Pakhtu dialects), is very diverse. It is composed of at least seven tribal groups: the Durrani, Ghilzai, Jaji, Mangal, Safi, Mamund, and Mohmand. The Pashtuns have been the subject of several scholars' research.

Anderson reports that because Pashtuns have historically dominated government, other ethnic groups have had to learn to deal with them on the Pashtuns' own terms. He refers to the "Pashtunization" of the country's public behavior. Being a Pashtun, at least a male Pashtun, centers around Pashtunwali, or "doing Pashtu." "Doing Pashtu" connotes adherence to a code of behavior stressing honor (*namus*) and its defense, autonomy, bravery, self-respect, and respect for others. It is probable that Pashtunwali is shared by all male Pashtuns. A man's *namus* is expressed through his ability to dominate and defend his property, including his household and his wife and female relatives. A Pashtun who has suffered a blow to his honor is expected to seek revenge in the form of physical retaliation or compensation in property or money. Such a code of behavior is often in opposition to strict interpretation of sharia. When a conflict occurs, Pashtuns tend to "do Pashtu" instead of following Sunna, believing as they do that Muslim and Pashtun are equivalent.

In matters other than Pashtunwali, there may be regional differences. Richard Tapper reports that to be classified as Pashtun in the Saripul district, a man must speak Pashtu, be a Sunni, trace his ancestry to Qays, and marry his sisters and daughters to other Pashtuns. Most Pashtuns in the country tend to follow this marriage pattern. It is a form of hypergamy and is also practiced by other ethnic groups, i.e., a woman may marry within her ethnic status group or above it, but she may not marry below it. Males may marry within or below their

group. Because ethnic groups in Afghanistan are ranked in terms of their status and all Pashtuns consider themselves the top-ranked ethnic group, Pashtun women marry only other Pashtuns.

Pashtuns practice various modes of subsistence. In the past, many were government bureaucrats and, of course, the monarchy came from the Durrani Pashtun (see Ahmad Shah and the Durrani Empire, ch. 1). Some Pashtuns were nomadic herders. Others practiced mixed herding and farming, while others were primarily agricultural. Still others lived in cities and pursued urban occupations. Although the government has been Pashtun for many years—Babrak Karmal is no exception—Pashtuns have not always received good treatment at its hands. The often forced resettlement of Pashtuns by Amir Abdur Rahman in the late nineteenth century is only one example. Pashtuns, like other groups, have traditionally responded to central government intervention with hostility. The difference between Pashtuns and other ethnic groups' interaction with government is that local government officials were often Pashtuns and might, at a local level, be more sympathetic to fellow ethnic group members. In the 1980s Pashtuns continued to dominate government. In 1981 Karmal's cabinet was composed of 16 members, 12 of whom were Pashtuns.

Uzbeks reside not only in Afghanistan but also in the southern parts of the Soviet Union, especially in the areas of Bukhara, Samarkand, and Tashkent. Many Uzbeks living in Afghanistan at the time of the Soviet intervention were originally from the Soviet Union but had fled to Afghanistan shortly after the Russian Revolution or in subsequent years to escape Soviet government control.

Some Uzbeks are agriculturalists, while others practice crafts or are tradesmen. In the recent past some Uzbeks have migrated to the city and have received university educations. Although Beattie's definition of ethnicity includes patrilineal descent, in areas of the country where tribal organization is unimportant or absent, such as among Uzbeks in north-central Afghanistan, residence tends to determine ethnicity. If, for example, an Uzbek family moves to a Tajik or Aymaq area, it may assume the ethnic identity of its neighbors. In other parts of the country, Uzbek ethnic and tribal affiliations are more important. Audrey C. Shalinsky, an ethnologist who studied Uzbeks who had migrated from the Soviet Union to Konduz, found that patrilineal descent was extremely important to Pashtuns in the area but not to Uzbeks. For Uzbeks marriage

ties were the most important kinship expression of ethnicity. In the words of one of her Uzbek informants, "I would prefer that my sister marry one of our people, a poor man with no job for 5,000 afs. [bride-price], than a Pashtun who is rich and had attended Kabul University for 100,000 afs." Shalinsky also found that the Uzbek language, which unlike Dari and Pashtu was not taught in school, galvanized feelings of ethnic identity. In the past, other ethnic groups had reason to fear Uzbeks, for they conducted slave raids on the Hazaras in Bamian and probably elsewhere as well.

Hazaras are the largest, predominantly Shia group in the country, although some Hazaras are Sunni. Twelver Shia Hazaras occupy Hazarajat, the central mountain massif in the midsection of the country; Ismaili Hazaras are associated with the Hindu Kush. Hazaras are reportedly ranked very low in relative ethnic status. Many Hazaras immigrated to Kabul from rural areas in the second half of the twentieth century. These migrants have been very successful in keeping their ethnic identity intact, perhaps because their low status prevented other groups from marrying them. Hazaras in Kabul tend to follow the same unskilled labor occupations, so that some jobs have come to be known as Hazara occupations.

Canfield reports that among the Hazaras he studied in the Shebar region of Bamian, generosity—giving to agnatic and affinal kin—is highly valued. Men usually build their reputations on their generosity, although other factors are also important. These factors include possessing a good government job or being gifted at Quranic or poetry recitation. To establish a reputation or "big name," a man must be able to dispose of considerable wealth. He also notes that in the past Hazaras "seemed constantly embroiled in feuds and internecine raiding."

Canfield observed the interesting phenomenon of sect changing by Hazara families, from Ismaili Shia to Twelver Shia or vice versa. These sect changes resulted from feuding within the sectarian community. They occurred in Hazara areas that depended on rainfed land instead of irrigated fields (so that no major community cooperation was required) and where members of the other Shia sect lived in close proximity. Such "conversions" are based on political alliance. Canfield even observed one instance of a family from one of the Shia sects that converted to Sunnism. Wealthy families may ally themselves with Sunnis to win a court case. The courts, as the rest of government, are dominated by Sunnis. That religious fluidity

between Shia and Sunni is rare is easily understood, given Hazara history. Under Abdur Rahman, jihad was declared against Shia Hazaras and other Shia of the area. The war between the Kabuli Sunni regime and the Hazaras of central Afghanistan was extremely violent, but it served to unite Hazaras for the first time.

Anthropologist Thomas J. Barfield conducted research among Arabs living in Konduz Province. They are pastoralists—nomads who practice transhumance and migrate from river valleys to mountains. They raise fat-tailed sheep for most of their subsistence, but wealthier men also raise the karakul sheep that yield karakuli lambskins, for which Afghanistan is renowned. They also farm, producing cotton and wheat. The Arabs are Dari speakers, although they identify themselves as Arabs. Historically, the Central Asian Arabs lived within the old Bukhara khanate and in the plains in the north of that part of Turkestan that lies within Afghanistan. Barfield also relates that these Arabs have not had any contact with Middle Eastern Arabs since the time of Timur (Tamerlane). Most Arabs view geneologies as unimportant; nonetheless, they possess 13 clans (*taifa*).

Kirghiz living in the Pamir Mountains of the Wakhan Corridor were the subject of anthropologist M. Nazif Shahrani's research, as well as a study conducted by André Singer, an anthropologist who worked for British television. In 1985 there may well have been no Kirghiz remaining in the Pamirs, so that only their lives before the Soviet occupation may be described.

About 3,000 Kirghiz lived in the Pamirs, practicing high-altitude pastoralism. Kirghiz kept fat-tailed sheep, yaks, goats, camels, and horses. As citizens of Badakhshan Province, the Kirghiz inhabited one of the most remote areas of the country, with no roads that were open year-round. Because of the very high altitude, Kirghiz had to adapt to a fearsome climate. They managed this in a variety of ways, including ingenious housing styles and multilayered clothing. Kirghiz possessed two kinds of houses. Traditionally they lived in yurts, which are a kind of Central Asian round tent that can be heated with a fire to produce a very comfortable refuge from the cold. Wealthier Kirghiz might build a stone and mud house.

Patrilineages were important, and Kirghiz often married within lineage groups. Wealthy Kirghiz men might practice polygyny. They also followed levirate marriage customs, i.e., a widow who had borne at least one child was entitled to a

husband from the same lineage as her deceased spouse. Contrary to sharia, women traditionally did not inherit property, and sons inherited on the basis of their birth order rather than the equality prescribed by Islam. Although lineages might have elders, the Kirghiz khan served as judge, mediator, and political and economic leader. Lineage elders contributed their opinions, to which the khan listened before arriving at important decisions.

Nuristanis in eastern Nuristan in Konarha Province practice a mixed economy of agriculture and pastoralism in the mountains and less fertile valleys. Strand worked with the Kom tribe of Nuristanis, which he describes as having the reputation for being the "wildest" Nuristani tribe. It was among the Nuristanis, including the Kom, that the first rebellion against the Marxist regime occurred (well before the Soviet military presence).

Interethnic Relations

Scholars studying Afghanistan quip that if Afghans were not fighting the soldiers of another country, they would be fighting each other. Relations among Afghan ethnic groups have tended to bear this out. Groups that live in close proximity often have complex and hostile relations, a situation that is exacerbated by the fact that a multiplicity of ethnic groups may reside in the same region. Furthermore, when Pashtuns have trespassed on the property of other ethnic groups, these groups have been able to do little. The Pashtun-dominated government generally sided with Pashtuns, regardless of the merits of the case. Examples of interethnic conflict abound. Two examples will suggest the complexity of interethnic relations.

In Nuristan the Kom Nuristanis have been subject to the encroachments of the Gujars (another ethnic group). The Kom let some of their pastures to the Gujars in return for payment in livestock. In the late 1940s the Gujars began to renege on this agreement. Strand reports that "since then hostilities have become perennial with occasional shootings and rustlings on both sides." Government officials attempting to mediate have almost always been biased against the Kom. The Kom leaders feel that this reflected the desire of the government to promote disunity among Nuristani tribes so that it could manage them more easily. This kind of raiding was widespread among

many ethnic groups in the country. Occasionally it has erupted into open warfare.

Historically, stronger groups have attempted to dominate weaker ones. The weaker groups have had the choice of moving to a harsher, more marginal environment or paying tribute to the more powerful groups. Such has been the case in the Wakhan Corridor. Both Wakhi and Kirghiz occupy this region. The Ismaili Wakhi farm and herd in the lower valleys. In addition, there are Pashtuns and Tajiks in the area who are traders supplying market goods. The traders choose their wares carefully and consciously or unconsciously foster a dependence on tea, opium, and other luxury goods. Their customers, particularly the Kirghiz, are often indebted to them. Shahrani observes that relations between Sunni Kirghiz, who inhabit the high, frigid mountain valleys, and relatively lowland Wakhi are tense. "The Kirghiz refer to Wakhi as *sart* (a derogatory term) and regard them as "nonbelievers." Feelings of contempt are mutual, yet both groups have developed increased economic dependence on each other." The Kirghiz cannot grow grain in their inhospitable environment and consequently must purchase this from the Wakhi. The Wakhi resort to the Kirghiz for animals and animal products, which they employ for their own use or use to pay traders. Shahrani writes that these two groups "have achieved a successful economic exchange system in a situation filled with social tensions."

Ethnic groups are perceived to be ranked in terms of status, although members of the groups in question may not always agree with members of other groups about their own status ranking. Virtually everywhere, Pashtuns are the most prestigious ethnic group, both in their own eyes and usually also in the eyes of others. The subsequent rankings vary by region, but Hazaras are almost always ranked as one of the lowest ethnic groups. They are often placed directly above the despised gypsies. Tapper reports that other groups in north central Afghanistan regard the gypsies (Jats and Juggis) "as blots on the ethnic landscape."

In many parts of the country ethnicity is indicated by house style, clothing, and cuisine. Shalinsky notes that "elements of material culture are used by all ethnic groups in Afghanistan as ethnic markers . . . the wearing of the *chapan*—the loose open quilted coat of cotton or silk worn by adult men—indicates that the wearer is from the north . . .different patterns and colors of stripes on the *chapan* reflect smaller regional indicators." Foods, such as the distinctive

round bread that Uzbek women bake, clearly demarcate ethnicity, as does the style of food preparation even when different groups make the same food. The consumption of either black or green tea is also governed by ethnicity.

Tribe

The concept of tribe merges with ethnicity and with kinship groups within the tribe. Before proceeding to a discussion of tribes in Afghanistan, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of "tribe." In theory, tribes view themselves as consisting of the descendants of a common ancestor, whose name often provides the name of the group. The internal divisions of the tribe are seen as consisting of the descendants of intermediate descendants of the founder. Thus an entire tribe may see itself as descended from a man 10 or more generations in the past. Smaller segments composed, for example, of the grandsons of the same grandfather or the great-grandsons of the same great-grandfather form the units of residence and strongest personal loyalty. Despite the theoretical importance of genealogy as an organizing principle, however, authorities believe that tribal genealogies reflect the reality of politics rather than of history. And, although they endorse the principle of genealogy, tribesmen also recognize this fact.

Tribesmen may rally to the aid of ever more distant relatives, forming ever larger segments of the tribe at higher and higher levels of organization. Thus the grandsons of the same grandfather might oppose one another on a certain issue but join together if necessary to oppose the descendants of the brother of their common great-grandfather.

The concept of tribe is denoted as *qawm*, the Arabic term for tribe. *Qawm* connotes much more than tribe, however. Canfield defines *qawm* in Hazarajat as the "common local term for a spatially and socially united group of people . . . The central intent of the word *qawm* is that members are united by agnatic kinship, have a common home territory, and enjoy warm social fellowship." Political action is taken by the *qawm* as a unit, and it constitutes a unit for religious rituals. The term may also be used for affinal (related through marriage) kin or friendly families who may eventually become affines, thus invalidating the notion that *qawmi* (members of the same *qawm*) are only agnates. "In practice," he writes, "the word qawm is applied to a group, whoever they are, who functionally carry

on the activities that express kinship unity, even if this usage masks certain aberrancies in the actual kinship connections."

Anderson has extensively described the meaning of *qawm* to the Ghilzai Pashtuns. His observations have theoretical significance for the meaning of tribe elsewhere. Among the Ghilzai the term *qawm* "can be applied to any category of common patrilineal descent that persists through time as a group identity from a particular community to the totality of Pashtun. Informants emphasize, however, that most applications are metaphorical and comparative; that the idea refers to any larger category of common patrilineal descent; but that it usually designates the outer limit of common interest and sympathy, or at least the one with greatest salience." Anderson also highlights the corporate nature of tribal responsibility. Fellow tribesmen share in the responsibility for offenses committed by members of the tribe. Revenge may be taken on any tribe member, although usually liability is greatest for those most closely related to the offender. Nevertheless, "involvement in distant or minor affairs is all too imaginable and too often experienced to discount." Tribesmen also share the burden for revenging a wronged tribal member. Tribes stereotype themselves and each other in terms of customs, dress, appearance, and language.

Anderson also addresses the issue of tribal-state relations. The Ghilzai are historically a collection of tribes. They view their relation to the state not as an opposition of government to tribe, per se. Instead, they oppose seats of government with their hierarchical organization where there are rulers and ruled, to tribal lands where all are ideally equal and political organization is acephalous (without a paramount chief). Ideally, there are no differences among the members of a Ghilzai tribe. Within the Ghilzai tribes are patrilineages that are segmentary and may be acephalous or may be headed by a leader whose position "amounts to an office."

Tribalism in Afghanistan, then, is not a feature of every ethnic group but is extremely important to Pashtuns, particularly to those who live in rural areas, and is essential among certain other groups as well. It is a meaningful concept to those Afghans who are tribal members, but the concept of tribe is plastic and to some extent depends on circumstance and affective relationship. *Qawm* is an extension of family, as all *qawmi* are ideally related agnatically. *Qawm* may also be indistinguishable from ethnic group, which is also based on an extension of family.

Ethnicity and tribalism have both served to divide Afghans of different groups from each other and to unite Afghans with similar backgrounds. Neither tribe nor ethnic group is always a harmonious entity, however, and internecine warfare has been common in the country's history. Because both tribe and ethnic group are extensions of family, in order to unite Afghans from divergent groups it might be useful to extend the concept of family as far as it will go in order to include all the citizens in the same group. This is precisely what the *mujahidiin* have done in appealing to the community of believers (i.e., all Muslims regardless of sect). Although there is no belief that Muslims share a common descent, the shared goals, opposition to other groups (i.e., nonbelieving atheists), affective ties, and group liability of *mujahidiin* are reminiscent of familial, tribal, and ethnic group construction. As such, the appeal of the *mujahidiin* must be strongly familiar.

Family

Although great variation exists between ethnic groups and groups practicing different modes of subsistence, families of virtually all Afghan groups are characterized by their patrilineal organization, low incidence of polygyny, even lower incidence of divorce, and relatively high birth rate. In patrilineal kinship descent is traced through males, and almost all property is inherited through men. People in patrilineal societies recognize that they are related to the mother and her relatives, but ties with these kin are somewhat different. Major property is not transmitted through them, and relationships with them tend to be primarily affective rather than economic or political. For example, anthropologist Bernt Glatzer observed that among Durrani Pashtun nomads in the western part of the country, patrilineally related kin provide social security and political support, but relations with them may be strained. They are competitors for authority in the kin group and in inheritance. He remarks that as property is passed patrilineally, so are feuds about previous inheritance. Relations with maternal kin and affines tend to be marked by "cordiality and helpfulness," for these relatives are not competitors in the political or economic arenas unless they are also members of the same patrilineage. Barfield explains the low incidence of polygyny among the Arabs he studied both as a result of Arab

women's vocal opposition to the practice and as a possible consequence of sedentarization.

The smallest kinship unit is the household—the basic unit of production and reproduction. Households may consist of a nuclear family (a woman and her children or a married couple and their children), an extended family (a multigenerational family unit), a fraternal joint family (two or more brothers with their wives and children), or a compound family (two or more cowives and their husband).

The nuclear family is the most commonly reported household unit. It is the predominant household form among the Hazaras of Bamian, the Durrani Pashtun nomads in western Afghanistan, and the Kirghiz in Wakhan. Among the Durrani nomads who have traditionally lived a pastoralist existence, herds are owned only by the household and individuals. Nuclear families are usually headed by the senior male. The Kirghiz household head is usually the senior male, but households may be headed by a widow if she has young unmarried or married sons and daughters. In Kirghiz households an important decision requires consensus among all adult household members. The head does not impose her or his will. The head is responsible for representing the household in public, executing agreed-upon decisions, and managing the family's affairs.

The Hazara household head is the husband (or wife, in the event of the husband's death). Hazaras may form compound families, in which case the senior wife succeeds to the husband's position until the oldest son reaches maturity. Relations within the nuclear family may be quite intense. Louis Dupree notes that fathers and daughters bond closely; they exhibit much love and concern for each other. Sisters and brothers are often emotionally intimate. These patterns of relationships are common in other parts of the Middle East and South Asia and are owing to complex psychological and social factors.

Nancy Tapper, an anthropologist who has studied Durrani Pashtun women, found the extended family to be both the ideal and common household form of the Durrani in the Saripul region of Jowzjan Province. In other parts of the country, extended households often fission after the father's death. The married brothers then go their own way in a limited fashion, often retaining some property in common. If an extended family consisting of aged parents and two or more married sons and their families does not split at the father's death, it becomes a fraternal joint family. Such families rarely last more than 10 years without separating to form nuclear families. Re-

ports from Afghanistan in 1985 indicated that in urban areas, particularly in Kabul, nuclear family households were becoming rarer. With the great influx of country relatives fleeing rural fighting, many nuclear families found it necessary to share dwellings with country kin.

The next most inclusive unit of kinship is the agnatic (patrilineal) minimal lineage. This consists of relatives descended from a common ancestor and may include several to a large number of households. Minimal lineages exhibit great variation. Among the Kirghiz, for example, this unit is relatively stable, while among the Ghilzai Pashtuns it is quite fluid.

The Kirghiz minimal lineage is an independent political actor and is the most significant agnatic kin unit. Its members form a corporate unit sharing camping grounds and pasturage. The political power of the Kirghiz minimal lineage depends on its ownership of property and the willingness of its members to cooperate as a group. The lineage head is the senior male of one of the component households whose personal qualities make him an obvious candidate. His choice is based on consensus by other lineage household heads. His duties include mediation of disputes within his lineage and between his and other lineages. He has no authority, however, to enforce his decisions.

Ghilzai lineages are diverse; some are organized with an institutionalized leadership position, while others coalesce around a charismatic male relative. Groups of related households unite and divide, depending upon which ancestor they choose to trace their ancestry. Lineage members have mutual obligations to assist each other and mutual liabilities. They are all fair game for retaliation should a feud erupt with another lineage or should a relative commit a crime.

Kin groups expand to become ever more inclusive. The next level above the minimal lineage is the maximal lineage, followed by the tribe and, finally, by the entire ethnic group. All these units are extensions of the nuclear family. All are based on real or reputed agnatic kinship. Tribes segment into smaller, sometimes mutually hostile, units, such as minimal or maximal lineages, depending on the purpose for which the unit is needed. Such smaller units are termed segmentary lineages. The principle of segmentation is succinctly summed up by the Arab proverb, "I against my brother. My brother and I against my cousin. My cousin, my brother, and I against the world." The potential for tension with agnatic kin is expressed in the Afghan adage, "Do you have an enemy? I have a cousin."

Competition for the same mates and inheritance of property cause much of the hostility between close agnates. Longtime Middle East specialist John Gulick explains kin relations in the Middle East as an expression of the "peril and refuge mentality." He observes that the kin who provide a person with social, emotional, and, if necessary, armed support are also competitors for the same resources. In the case of women, the same brothers and father with whom they are so close and who are their protectors are also their executioners, should the males doubt the daughter's or sister's chastity. These are also the relatives who know the person best and to whom he or she is consequently most vulnerable.

Kin relations are expressed spatially in agnatic local descent groups, i.e., a region, town, village, hamlet, or camp whose residents are agnatically related. Local descent groups appear among many Afghan ethnic groups. Anthropologists Canfield and Anderson have described these groups in detail among the Hazaras and Ghilzai (respectively). Among the Hazaras *qawm* indicates a shared territory as well as shared agnatic descent. *Qawmi* form residential units of various sizes and agnatic inclusiveness—from a small hamlet consisting of a handful of related households to a large piece of territory embracing the entire ethnic group. The Hazaras' local descent group is capable of assimilating a man who intermarries into the group. They also allow certain "interlopers," Canfield reports, to live among them, e.g., sayyids or craftsmen. Unlike the Hazaras, Ghilzai Pashtuns do not tolerate unrelated people in their kin communities. Should an impoverished Ghilzai man find it necessary to sell his patrimonial land, he should first sell to his closest neighbors (as should a Hazara). Among the Ghilzai, however, kin apply sanctions to punish relatives who sell to non-kin.

Property is, of course, inherited patrilineally. Islam specifies the heirs' share in the deceased relative's property. The wife receives one-third of her sons' share, sons receive equal shares, and daughters receive half as much as a brother. This policy is seldom followed in Afghanistan. In practice, daughters rarely inherit anything from their fathers, and widows are cared for in other ways. Daughters in many Muslim countries dare not claim their inheritance for fear of losing their brothers' future financial, social, and emotional support. Many Afghan groups accord special shares to the eldest and youngest sons, so that inheritance among brothers is unequal. Among the Kirghiz, for example, the oldest son usually inherits the

father's prestige, political standing, and pasturelands, while the youngest son inherits the family yurt and most of the herd at the time of the father's death. By the early 1970s the government had forced families in some areas, such as Bamian, to follow Muslim regulations more carefully. By the late 1970s the Kirghiz of Wakhan elected to follow religious inheritance prescription. Other areas continued to follow tribal custom instead of Muslim injunction.

Heirs may receive their inheritance at the time of their relative's death or may come into their share before his death, i.e., anticipatory inheritance. Many pastoral groups practice anticipatory inheritance. They give their children animals as presents on important occasions either to instill in them a feel for animal care or to test the child's ability in animal husbandry. In addition, a man may receive his patrimony upon marriage in the form of cash or animals or both. Women may also be given animals upon marriage, although this is often an informal gift. Not all pastoralist groups share this custom. The pastoral Afghan Arabs, for example, do not practice anticipatory inheritance.

Marriages are generally arranged between families, not by the two young people themselves. In arranging a marriage families take several factors into account: sectarian membership, ethnic group, family status, kin relationship, economic benefits, the children's happiness and welfare, and (in obtaining a bride) industriousness and ability to cooperate with the groom's female relations. In much of Afghanistan and the Middle East, the preferred mate is a close relative.

Pashtuns of the Nahrin area, for example, prefer to marry their children to close cousins related through either the mother or father. Most marriages occur within the lineage, and among those marriages outside the minimal lineage, most occur between members of the local descent group. The Kirghiz of Wakhan denied to Shahrani any preference for cousin marriage. He observed their behavior and found, however, that Kirghiz in fact tend to marry first cousins (either related through the mother or father), members of the same minimal lineage, and members of related minimal lineages. Canfield reports that the Hazaras he studied also preferred first cousin marriage with sister exchange to avoid payment of a bride-price. Sister exchange refers to the custom of two men agreeing to marry each others' classificatory or actual sisters, often to avoid paying a large bride-price.

Bride-price is the transfer of a sum of money and/or prop-

erty from the groom's family to the bride's family in order to obtain sole rights to the bride's economic, sexual, and reproductive services. The custom is common worldwide among patrilineal, male-dominated societies. Islam does not prescribe a bride-price, but it enjoins Muslims to give the *mahr*—property and/or money bestowed upon the bride herself for her own personal use—to ensure her immediate financial welfare in the event of divorce. The bride-price in most Muslim societies far transcends the simple Quranic injunction, and in many cases the bride does not actually receive any portion of the bride-price.

Barfield notes that the Afghan Arabs' and their neighbors' bride-prices vary by ethnic group. They are paid in cash unless otherwise negotiated. Among Arabs, the groom must pay for two enormous feasts (engagement and wedding), in addition to the large bride-price. Barfield comments that Turkmen brides require the largest bride-price because "Turkmen bride-prices reflect the high value of female labor in carpet production where a wife has a skill of direct cash value." He also reports a much higher level of polygyny, presumably for economic reasons, among Turkmen men.

The often exorbitant cost of marriage has long been of concern to the central government. Abdur Rahman, Habibullah, and Amanullah all attempted to abolish the high bride-prices. In 1924 Amanullah also instituted measures to allow women to choose their own mates. These reforms were not popular. In October 1978 the Taraki regime issued Decree No. 7. Its main purpose was to reduce indebtedness caused by bride-price and to improve women's status. The decree had three parts: prohibition of bride-price in excess of a *mahr* of 300 afghanis (for value of the afghani—see Glossary), provisions of complete freedom of choice of marriage partner, and fixation of the minimum age at marriage at 16 for women and 18 for men. In addition, it imposed the penalty of imprisonment for three months to three years for violation of the decree. This decree, very similar to Amanullah's 1924 measure, was also extremely unpopular. Women viewed themselves as devalued if they were "given away free." Men feared losing their honor if they no longer had legal control over their daughters and sisters. Nancy Tapper comments that bride-price is deeply embedded in the surrounding cultural matrix and that such a great change would disrupt many parts of the culture. In return, Marxists would argue that the parts of the culture disrupted by reduction of bride-price are better off

being disrupted. There were indications in late 1985 that most Afghans ignored Decree No. 7, as they had previous decrees.

Because of high bride-prices, men must work for five to 10 years in order to garner sufficient economic resources to obtain a bride. Women, therefore, are usually much younger than their husbands. Brides are usually in their mid- to late teens, while grooms are in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties. Under these circumstances, cases of widowhood might be expected to be common. Many groups make provision for this eventuality by practicing levirate marriage. The Durrani that Beattie studied, the Kirghiz, and the Hazaras all practice this form of marriage.

Modes of Subsistence

Afghans have developed a number of different strategies to wrest a living from their difficult, often marginal environment. Some pastoralist groups live a primarily nomadic existence, while in other herding communities migration is less frequent. Often groups combine animal husbandry with farming. Other agriculturists rely much less heavily on livestock. These subsistence patterns are to some extent fluid, pastoralists changing their degree of reliance on agriculture and agriculturists moving toward pastoralism, depending on ecological, economic, and political factors.

Pastoralism

Pastoral nomads have long been subject to romantic stereotyping. Barfield, in a satiric vein, offers a description of pastoral nomads: "In good legendary style, the pure Central Asian nomads eat only meat, marrow, and milk products (preferably fermented). They despise farmers, farming, and grain, and move great distances with their portable dwellings, wreaking havoc and destruction everywhere, but always with great elan. They are always hospitable and never pay taxes." In fact, few if any nomadic pastoralists in Afghanistan are "pure" nomads; pastoralists usually farm for at least a small portion of the year. Because nomadism is also only one available subsistence strategy and families and groups often move from pastoralism to agriculture and vice versa, the stereotype is seldom, if ever, valid. In late 1985 it was unknown how warfare had affected

migration routes and to what extent pastoral nomadism continued to be a viable subsistence strategy.

The nomad-agricultural continuum appears to allow movement in either direction, and scholars have reported on groups all along the continuum, as well as on the processes of nomadization and sedentarization. Barfield describes Afghan Arabs as relying heavily on nomadism in the past. The Wakhan Corridor Kirghiz also practice nomadic pastoralism. Other nomads include the Durrani in the western and north-central portions of Afghanistan. In the past the Gardez Khel Ahmadzai Pashtuns in the eastern part of the country were nomads, although many have become fully sedentary since the early 1970s as a result of changing political and economic factors. Groups invest heavily in the nomadic-pastoralist adaptation for a reason: Usually circumstances preclude agriculture. The high altitudes at which the Kirghiz live, for example, render farming impossible. The poverty of the soil in the Durrani nomads' area will not sustain rain-fed farming. The agriculturists in the area practice irrigation and do not welcome nomads' intrusions into irrigated oases.

Pastoral nomads herd animals and produce animal products. The nomads' diet includes grain and other agricultural products, but they must purchase or trade for these from agriculturists. There is, therefore, always contact between sedentary or semisedentary farmers and nomads. Nomads have often supplemented pastoralism with other economic activities suited to their migratory life-style, e.g., trading, smuggling, and transporting animals and goods.

Migration routes, with the exception of the Kirghiz, take nomads through various ecozones so that pasture is available for the animals year-round. Pastoralists' migrations make them ideal disseminators of news, for they cover long distances and pass among many different groups. Governments have always distrusted such citizens who live a peripatetic life because this makes them difficult to control. Moreover, nomads tend to seek pasturage irrespective of national borders. Scholars note that before the borders of countries in the region were closed in 1961, the migration routes of pastoralists in the southern part of the country took them into Pakistan and, in earlier days, to British India. Those in the north regularly traveled to and from China and the Soviet Union. In 1985 unconfirmed reports suggested that nomads smuggled guns for the *mujahidiin*.

Among pastoralists, men and boys herd large animals. Children are often responsible for caring for immature ani-

mals. Women's duties include milking and making milk products, such as yogurt, butter, clarified butter, curds, and dried curds. They may also be responsible for feltmaking. Because the duties of both sexes are indispensable to an independent nomadic existence, the married couple is the nucleus of nomadic adaptation. Unlike settled agricultural groups, where a parent and her or his children is an uncommon but feasible household unit, such a family does not constitute a productive unit in nomadic pastoralist society.

Mixed Subsistence Patterns

Mixtures of pastoralism with limited migration and agriculture are very common. The Nuristanis, the Gardez Khel Ahmadzai (since the early 1970s), some Durrani, the Lakenkhel Pashtuns of northeastern Afghanistan, and the Hazaras studied by Canfield all practice such a subsistence strategy. Several possible options exist for pursuing mixed subsistence modes. In some groups virtually everyone moves from their agricultural village or "winter camp" to a summer camp where they reside in tents and devote themselves to animal husbandry. Elsewhere, the mixed economy is an intrafamilial adaptation. These groups tend to be arranged in extended or fraternal joint families that constitute one unit of production. One or more brothers and their wives and children will live the life of the nomadic pastoralist with the family's livestock, while the other brother(s) will remain in the village or winter camp to farm the family land. An agricultural pastoralist strategy increases options in difficult times, such as periods of drought or disease.

Pastoralism, as well as the mixed alternative, may sometimes be unstable. Several authors comment on the sedentarization of nomadic populations with whom they lived. Fredrik Barth, a Norwegian anthropologist, proposed a now classic theory to explain the sedentarization of nomads. According to Barth, the wealthiest and the poorest nomads will settle on the land, dropping out of the nomadic migratory cycle. The well-off invest their surpluses in land, which they eventually must oversee as they acquire more and more acreage. Those with little or no surplus go into debt during times of crisis or when sudden expenses must be met. Eventually they may lose their herds in the process of repaying debts. They then have no recourse but to become dependents of wealthier

nomads or to settle on the land. Observers in Afghanistan have noted both processes at work.

Glatzer describes processes of nomadization as well as sedentarization among the Durrani in western Afghanistan. Sedentarization proceeds largely according to Barth's model. Nomadization of the sedentary population also occurs. Farmers practice a mixed subsistence strategy, keeping some livestock. Only irrigated land is arable in the region because of dryness and the poor quality of the soil, and irrigated land is at a premium. Therefore, farmers producing a surplus tend to invest this in increasing their stock. Livestock soon overgraze the arid land surrounding the irrigated oases and must be kept moving so that they have new sources of food. Farmers often contract with nomads to shepherd their herds, but for a sizable herd this is unsatisfactory. Nomads must oversee their own animals as well, and this takes precedence over their duties to the contracting farmer. Agriculturists with relatively large herds will then assign nomadic pastoralist duties to a younger brother and his family, who form part of the farmer's joint household (or to a son in the case of an extended family). In time, the ties between nomadic and settled relatives weaken as the pastoralist and settled brothers come to have different interests. When the head of the household dies, the pastoralist component of the household often elects to remain nomadic and to relinquish inheritance of land in favor of livestock ownership. Similarly, those who have remained on the land may have little interest in retaining control of the family herd. A new nomad family is thus born, although the process may take more than one generation. Former nomads may also return to nomadism if, after being forced through poverty to give up herding, they manage to earn enough to start another herd. Both pastoral nomadism and sedentary agriculture, then, are not necessarily permanent adaptations. The extremely varied ecology helps to determine which option is most viable in a given place at a given time.

Agriculture

Anderson details the fully agricultural subsistence pattern of the Ghilzai. In most areas the Ghilzai water their fields through an irrigation system dependent upon underground water channels that are dug and maintained by hand. These channels carry water from the mountains surrounding the plain on which the Ghilzai live. Settlements may locate only where

the channels surface. Such an elaborate adaptation is extremely labor-intensive and requires a sedentary life.

All producers, whether nomads or farmers, are tied to a market economy. Animals and animal products, such as wool, are sold for cash, as are agricultural products. Improved roads have facilitated access to markets (see Infrastructure, ch. 3). Reports in late 1985 indicated that foodstuffs from northern Afghanistan reached Kabul markets by truck, but the situation in the remainder of the country was largely unknown.

Urban Subsistence Patterns

Little appears in the literature on urban subsistence patterns. Cities have never been as important in Afghanistan as they have been in the Middle East or in South Asia. Erika Knabe, an observer of Afghan women, notes that in the late 1970s upper-and middle-class urban women were employed in the wage labor force in kabul. She reports that in the late 1970s the state was the largest employer in the country. With the influx of so many Soviet citizens and the migration of well over 1 million Afghans to the capital, urban modes of subsistence must have changed greatly since 1979.

Gender Roles

Historically, gender roles and women's status have been tied to property relations. In Afghanistan property includes livestock, land, and houses or tents. Women and children tend to be assimilated into the concept of property and to belong to a male.

Islam enjoins believers to maintain as much difference as possible between the sexes; Muslims must not, for example, don clothing typically worn by members of the opposite sex. In Afghanistan the genders are not only differentiated but also separated through the veiling and seclusion of women. Scholars agree that the practice of seclusion rests on the conception of women as property and the belief, long current in the Middle East, of the inherent danger and irresistibility of sex. Women are thought to have less moral control and capability for physical restraint than men and therefore must be placed out of harm's way. The extent of seclusion varies by ethnic group, region, mode of subsistence, social class, and family. Unfortunately, few accounts of how and to what degree women veil

exist. Among Ghilzai, women veil or are secluded from men to whom they could be married. Men also avoid women who stand in the relationship of potential mate to them.

Male Afghans often view women as disruptive to the social order. Louis Dupree articulates the male Afghan perspective: "Traditionally, out-group Afghan and Pakistani feuds involve *zan* (women), *zar* (literally gold, symbolizing portable property), and *zamin* (land, and other immovable property)." Canfield writes that among Hazaras "men typically believe the women to be violent or fierce." They also regard women as untrustworthly. Women all over the Middle East are believed to require supervision by relatives to ensure that they are virgins until marriage and chaste throughout their entire lives. In some groups, such as the Pashtuns studied by Beattie, a bride who does not exhibit signs of virginity on the wedding night may be murdered by her father and/or brothers. Beattie reports that among two other ethnic groups he studied, the Paghmanis and Absarinas, the consequences for the bride would not be so deadly: "The groom and his family will feel insulted and the marriage will begin on the wrong footing."

Most research on Afghanistan has been conducted by males so that, given gender separation, there is a paucity of studies of Afghan women. Fortunately, there have been a few female scholars who have examined women's lives. They present a very different picture of gender stereotypes (based on the Afghan female perspective) than the male Afghan viewpoint. Danish scholar Inger W. Boesen reports that women resent male control of their sexuality and rebel. They pursue extramarital affairs and cover up each others' activities. Such rebellions, however, do not challenge gender status ranking. Shalinsky lived with Uzbeks who immigrated to Konduz from the Soviet Union. Among these Uzbek immigrants, women viewed their own sexuality very positively, while denigrating men's sexuality. They might speak contemptuously about men on this and other issues. Nancy Tapper distills Pashtun nomad women's aim in life to a simple wish, which is probably shared by a majority of the country's women: "The principal goal in life is a successful marriage with many sons." Based on Shalinsky's data of mother-daughter love and rapport, women may also wish for many daughters.

Men are expected to be leaders, protectors, and disciplinarians (although women serve as disciplinarians to those in their charge). Men must also be brave. They are expected to support their parents in their old age, but Shalinsky's research

reinforces the common Middle Eastern perception that daughters are more reliable in a crisis. Boys are circumcised in accordance with Quranic prescription. Among Uzbek migrants this procedure takes place between the ages of three and seven. Men are expected to be sexually incontinent. They gain prestige through having illicit sex with women in other men's charge and lose prestige by men having illicit sex with women in their charge.

The effect of Decree No. 7 on women's status was not known as of 1985. The Democratic Women's Organization of Afghanistan (DWOA) was organized by Dr. Anahita Ratebzad after the foundation of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). Its function was to educate women, bring them out of seclusion, and initiate social programs. It was still functioning and growing in the mid-1980s.

PDPA leaders employed Kabul youths' dissatisfaction with the constrictions of traditional gender roles for recruiting purposes. Open dating was not acceptable in Kabul in the late 1960s and early 1970s, yet many young people desired the opportunity to mix more freely with agemates of the opposite sex. Ratebzad, a leading physician and PDPA official, and her lover, Babrak Karmal, recruited youth to the PDPA in the late 1960s and early 1970s by following up mixed-sex party meetings with disco parties. Discos at the time existed in Kabul but were expensive and considered immoral by middle-class families. They were only the province of the elite; PDPA parties provided the disco option to middle-class young people.

In 1985 women were admitted to militias on a volunteer basis. They were encouraged to enlist, and female "martyrs" were glorified in the Afghan press.

Health

The country's high death and infant mortality rates were caused by a variety of infectious diseases, including measles, tetanus, diarrheal dehydration (for children), malaria, tuberculosis, gastroenteritis, and malnutrition. In addition, chronic liver disease, probably caused by hepatitis B virus, was endemic. In 1978 Barbara Pillsbury, an AID consultant, noted several categories of traditional healers: barbers who circumcised, let blood, pulled teeth, cauterized, and performed other curing procedures; traditional midwives; and mullahs and sayyids who wrote curative and protective amulets. Traditional herbalists

prescribed and sold herbs for many different ailments and physical problems. Although some foreign and domestic health experts have decried traditional health beliefs and practices, a 1983 study of mothers in Kabul reported that breast-feeding was nearly universal.

Before the revolution cosmopolitan health care services were woefully inadequate. In 1981 about 80 percent of the country's physicians still practiced in Kabul, where the physician/patient ratio was one to 1,000. The estimated ratio for the country as a whole was one to 13,000, and some isolated northern districts reported a ratio of one to 200,000. Furthermore, 60 percent of the country's hospital beds were in Kabul.

In mid-1985 the government reported an 80-percent increase in hospital beds and a 45-percent increase in the number of doctors since the revolution but asserted that health care provision still lagged far behind need. To attack the massive public health problems, the government has initiated mobile medical units composed of nurses and physicians and has instituted medical brigades of women and young people. In 1985 problems with public health programs and health care were discussed openly in the Afghan press. The news media reported attempts on the part of the government to expand health care into the provinces, but it seemed that most new clinic construction occurred in Kabul.

Two additional public health problems demanded attention in 1985. War casualties, often children, were killed or severely wounded and had no source of nontraditional medical aid. Injured *mujahidiin* and their supporters also had difficulty in securing medical assistance and usually had to be transported back to their bases in Pakistan. Foreign humanitarian organizations, such as Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières), operated clinics in the country that were open to all, including *mujahidiin*. The small number of volunteers, while commendable, was inadequate to create much of an effect. The second public health factor, drought, threatened to produce a very serious food problem. Drought is a continuing problem in arid Afghanistan. In the severe 1970–71 drought scores of thousands of people died. With the additional disruption brought to agricultural production and distribution by the war, the 1984 drought was expected to cause great suffering.

It appeared that the government was trying to ameliorate the terrible public health situation. The deluge of Afghan government propaganda, matched by an equal amount of

mujahidiin and Western propaganda, made it impossible to assess the situation accurately in 1985.

Education

Before the April Revolution Afghanistan had one of the world's highest rates of illiteracy. The new government ranked education high on its list of priorities. The revolutionary regime initiated extensive literacy programs, especially for women, because as of 1978 few women who lived outside of Kabul could read. The school system, which before 1978 had consisted of eight years of primary school and four of secondary, was changed. In 1985 primary school included grades one through five, and secondary education comprised grades six through 10. Textbook reforms were also instituted. The content of the books was changed to include the concept of dialectical materialism, and the number of languages in which the texts were printed was expanded, reflecting Karmal's stated policy that children should be able to learn in their mother tongue. Books were printed in Dari, Pashtu, Uzbek, Turkic, and Baluchi. The government trained many more teachers, built additional schools and kindergartens, and instituted nurseries for orphans.

The Afghan and Soviet governments signed several education cooperation agreements whereby Afghan students could pursue higher education in the Soviet Union, the Soviets would establish 10 professional and technical schools in Afghanistan, and the Soviets would provide the schools with technical assistance. In addition to voluntary higher education for Afghan citizens in the Soviet Union, reports abounded in 1985 that parents of young Afghan children were coerced into volunteering their offspring to attend school in the Soviet Union. Some sources asserted that children were kidnapped while attending school or walking to or from school and shipped to the Soviet Union to be educated.

In 1985 the government announced that since the April Revolution 1,150,000 people had graduated from literacy courses. On July 19, 1985, government figures put the number of students currently enrolled in literacy courses at 400,000.

In addition to primary and secondary schools, Afghanistan boasted two universities. Kabul University had been a respected center of learning before the 1978 revolution. In 1962 the University of Nangarhar in Jalalabad was established

Child injured by land mine

Seven-year-old boy
who kicked a butterfly mine
Photos courtesy Anne Hurd

by faculty from Kabul University's faculty of medicine. In 1983 there were seven professional and technical colleges in addition to the two universities. Although it was difficult to assess the veracity of the figures, which may have been inflated, it appeared in the mid-1980s that the government was seriously attempting to expand education in the country.

Refugees

Little was known in late 1985 of the situation of internal refugees; however, much had been written on the refugees in Pakistan. Information on Afghan refugees in Iran amounted to little more than rumors. Poorer Afghans seeking asylum in Pakistan were assigned to camps by the Pakistani government. The camps were usually arranged by village and ethnic group and sect. If there was more than one ethnic group in a camp, the groups arranged their living space so that members of the same group lived only among like group members. Accounts of one camp report that it is composed solely of women and children from the same Afghan village whose husbands and sons had been killed.

Dupree, who together with Nancy Dupree has spent much time in Pakistan since the Afghan Revolution, reports that the first Afghan refugees were members of the royal family and their associates. By April 1979, he reports, 85,000 Afghans had fled the country. The influx of refugees to Pakistan swelled after the Soviets sent troops into Afghanistan and, in the mid-1980s, the flow of refugees continued unabated. Most refugees in Pakistan were not the urban Kabuli literati (some of whom supported the PDPA government) but rather rural, nonliterate pastoralists and farmers.

Dupree reports that as of February 1, 1985, there were 235 refugee tented villages (RTVs) in the NWFP, as well as 61 in Baluchistan Province, and 10 in Punjab Province. Journalists observed that the Pakistani government in 1985 initiated the policy of sending refugees to Punjab, where camps were mixed with various regional, ethnic, and sectarian groups, unlike the camps in the north of the country. Although the term for the camps, RTVs, suggests impermanent dwellings, some of the older camps in 1985 represented mud-brick villages "with individual walled compounds."

Social life continued in the RTVs. Dupree reports that in 1985 marriages still occurred, although with a greatly dimin-

Classrooms for refugees in Peshawar
Photos courtesy Anne Hurd

ished bride-price. The birth rate in refugee camps was reportedly very high. Because many men are away from the camps fighting with the *mujahidiin*, some women and girls attended literacy classes that educated Afghan women volunteered to teach. In some cases the seclusion of women had increased because the Afghan village was an extension of the family, where veiling and seclusion were not rigorous. Women in camps lived among strangers, and seclusion and veiling became more intense. Not all Afghans lived in RTVs. Pakistan allowed the refugees to live where they wished, and urbanites from Afghanistan chose to live in urban areas if at all financially possible. Finally, sources observed that the mullahs had become much more powerful in the RTVs than they had ever been in their homeland, filling a power vacuum caused by gravitation of the charismatic religious figures toward political leadership. The mullahs' rise to power was apparently accompanied by increased restrictions on women's freedom of movement as mullahs sought to control the women and children who formed a large portion of the camps' inhabitants.

Warfare and Culture

A foreign military presence on Afghan soil was not a new phenomenon in the country's history. The novelty consisted of the lethal technology used by the government and its foreign ally, for the capability for disruption and destruction was exponentially greater than that of any previous invader. Different, too, was the goal of the government and its supporters, which included social revolution as well as physical disruption. Afghans exhibit flexibility and practicality in their adaptions. Why, then, has much of the male population elected to oppose a superpower with their vintage weapons?

In the past, Afghanistan has been invaded by powers with very different worldviews than indigenous Afghans. Eastern religions such as Buddhism and Hinduism are, after all, not particularly similar to Islam. Nor has it been very long since part of the country was pagan, not Muslim. Why was it that the same Nuristanis who such a short time ago bitterly fought the imposition of Islam were among the first to rebel against the Marxist regime, even before the Soviets entered the country?

The answer lies both in the plasticity and enduring aspects of Afghan cultures. Social boundaries may be flexible and circumstantially defined, but they often divide hostile, feuding

Nuristani girl in a refugee camp

Young women learning to read in a refugee camp
Photos courtesy Anne Hurd

groups. Raiding and warfare are based on such divisions. The propensity to armed conflict along such social boundaries provides a cultural basis for armed opposition.

By attempting to ameliorate women's position, by seeking to collectivize landholdings, by being reputedly anti-Muslim and atheist (although it has attempted to include Islam), and by attempting to extend government control, intentionally or unintentionally, the Afghan regime has attacked the few commonalities shared by all Afghans. If government policies were carried out, cultural and ecological adaptations would be disrupted. An overwhelming majority of the populace viewed the government's policies as inimical to a patrilineal, familial, tribal organization. Furthermore, the malleability of social boundaries has not fit in with the Soviets' own national minority policies, which have formalized ethnic boundaries. This has resulted in dividing groups that sometimes define themselves as different and sometimes define themselves as the same. The imposition of an alien ideology on Afghans has always stirred enormous resentment. The intrusion of a foreign power with an alien culture and with a history of imposing this culture on its own citizens belonging to the same groups as some of Afghanistan's residents mobilized sentiment even more forcefully.

The Soviet presence represented another invasion by a foreign power, yet there were differences. Previous invaders had imposed alien belief systems, but never had the entire country shared the same belief system. Islam could mobilize different groups to fight together because it formed part of every Afghans' personal identity. Furthermore, no previous invader or Afghan government had attempted to interfere with the fabric of Afghan ecological adaptation or to undermine the basis of family and tribal organization. The intense reaction of Afghans is understandable under these circumstances, and it is not unique in Afghan history.

The reaction of the Nuristanis both to the imposition of Islam and to the perceived imposition of atheism represents a microcosm for the reaction of the entire country. It is not merely that Afghans have previously opposed domestic and foreign intrusions; it is that a power has never before angered all Afghans.

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Children in a refugee camp in Pakistan
Photos courtesy Anne Hurd

Louis Dupree's book, *Afghanistan*, represents the only anthropological overview of the entire country. It also provides the reader with an excellent initiation into the geography of the area. M. Nazif Shahrani's and Robert L. Canfield's edited volume, *Revolutions and Rebellions in Afghanistan*, is essential for those wishing to understand events leading up to the revolution and the people's responses to them, as well as subsequent Afghan actions and reactions. As a book devoted to anthropological analysis of national political events, particularly on the local level, it is both unusual and extremely informative. *Buzkashi: Game and Power in Afghanistan*, by G. Whitney Azoy, presents a fascinating account of both the traditional Afghan horseman's game and the meaning and structure of Afghan political relations. Several excellent ethnographies of various Afghan groups exist. These include Shahrani's *The Kirghiz and Wakhan of Afghanistan*, Thomas J. Barfield's *The Central Asian Arabs of Afghanistan*, and Canfield's *Faction and Conversion in a Plural Society: Religious Alignments in the Hindu Kush*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 3. The Economy

A Turkmen merchant

AFGHANISTAN'S ECONOMY SUFFERED markedly after the April 1978 coup d'état and the subsequent direct Soviet intervention in December 1979. The already relatively slow pace of economic development was halted as agricultural and industrial production declined and trade was disrupted. Per capita gross national product fell from an already low Af7,370 in 1978 to Af6,852 in 1982. In 1981 the gross national product was Af154.3 billion, 37 percent greater than the 1976 figure of Af115 billion. Inflation, however, was far greater than this, and therefore in real terms, i.e., discounted for inflation, economic output was depressed. As the war and its effects extended throughout the country in the early 1980s, two separate economies could be seen emerging. The Kabul government and its Soviet backers held control of the urban areas with their financial and industrial facilities. These sectors were becoming increasingly dependent on the Soviet Union as the continued fighting cut their links with the rural areas not subject to government control. The countryside was reverting to a subsistence agriculture economy unaffected by government decrees and regulations emanating from Kabul.

The tradition of isolated and autonomous agricultural communities was already well established in Afghanistan because of the country's imposing geography. The fragmentation of the economy was a serious weakness in the country's efforts at development. In 1985, however, that fragmentation was a major strength to the resistance in the face of the bitter war dominating most of the country. A better developed economy composed of more interdependent sectors would have suffered proportionally far worse than has the existing economy.

The low level of internal trade and integration among the different regions of Afghanistan had been a target of Afghan national planners after World War II. The first development plans after the war focused on building infrastructure, such as roads, power stations, and banks. These moves to modernize and boost the country's output allowed Afghanistan to achieve a slow but steady rate of growth in the two decades before 1978. Although many communities remained virtually unaffected, most regions that had formerly relied solely on barter trade became commercialized, and internal trade grew rapidly. Afghanistan's development drive was spurred by large foreign aid receipts, but poor domestic resource mobilization

slowed economic progress. Large amounts of arable land remained uncultivated, and the nation's mineral resources were marginally exploited, with the exception of natural gas. Skilled labor was in constantly short supply despite underemployment in the countryside. The budget remained dependent on foreign aid, and domestic revenue sources went untapped.

In spite of these obstacles, Afghanistan had achieved some notable progress by 1978. The country's solid internal transport infrastructure handled ever larger volumes of goods, at least between the cities. The economy remained dependent on the primitive agriculture sector, but fledgling industries such as textiles, cement, and electric power recorded steady production increases. The trade balance showed repeated surpluses, foreign exchange reserves grew, and the currency, the afghani, appreciated in value. Afghanistan remained one of the world's poorest countries by any standard, but there was tangible progress.

The continued fighting after the April Revolution set back the progress achieved, although it was difficult to know precisely how much. Economic data, always suspect in Afghanistan, were scarce in 1985 and of dubious reliability. Nonetheless, a dramatic decline in agricultural output was observed after the revolution, and this made for an ominous outlook for millions of Afghan peasants. Some industrial production, dependent on the agricultural sector for its raw materials, also declined. Only sectors deemed essential by the Soviet Union, such as natural gas, maintained their levels of production. Foreign aid from the West ceased. These factors combined to make the new regime heavily dependent on the Soviet Union for imports of food, manufactures, and capital and caused it to be subject to what many observers felt was the economic integration into the Soviet economy.

Growth and Structure of the Economy

By 1985 Afghanistan had developed little, in that it still relied on traditional agriculture as the mainstay of its economy, while modern industry contributed a relatively small portion of national output. Despite the relatively low level of development, there had been major changes in the previous 60 years, resulting in new industries and new links between formerly autonomous economic units and regions. In the 1930s, when economic modernization began, most Afghans were engaged

in the cultivation of small plots of land or tending orchards. Traditional and primitive farming methods provided the population with a subsistence standard of living. In addition, many nomadic peoples raised livestock as they moved between summer grazing pastures in the highlands and winter feeding grounds in the lowlands (see Mixed Subsistence Patterns, ch. 2). The subsistence level of existence in the villages and the constraining geography discouraged trade between villages. Nomads were the sole trading partners of the isolated mountain people. What trade there was within and between villages was conducted by barter, with wheat and sheep often the media of exchange. Commercial money was virtually unknown to the majority of Afghans outside of the towns. In the towns there were some small-scale handicrafts, such as rugs and sheepskin coats. Two currencies, the afghani and the Kabuli, both silver coins, circulated among urban merchants in the town bazaars. Transport of goods was almost always by camel, donkey, or horse, for there were few roads and none for year-round travel. Electricity was nowhere to be found.

In the 1920s several wealthy merchants invested their profits in a handful of small-scale industrial complexes to produce soap, leather goods, and seed oils for local consumption. The growth of industry was led by an entrepreneur, Majid Zabuli, and his Bank-i-Melli (National Bank), the country's first bank, which was established in 1932. Zabuli found a clever solution to the Islamic prohibition against interest on loans that had hindered the establishment of banking in the country. His bank made interest-free loans, but the borrower was obliged to buy a stamp to be attached to each repayment receipt, thereby giving the bank a profit rather than interest. Bank-i-Melli became a center for capital accumulation and acted as an investment bank. The bank was given currency issue rights, and paper money was introduced in 1938. Funds from the bank flowed mainly into northern Afghanistan and spurred the creation of most of the prewar industrial development in Pol-e Khomri, Konduz, and Kabul. Bank-i-Melli was also an integral part of the expansion of trade in the 1930s, for it granted loans to traders and set up joint stock companies to engage in trade. Companies were established for the export of wool, skins from karakul sheep, and cotton. The cotton industry was a major recipient of Bank-i-Melli investment. The bank financed the draining of swampy, malaria-infested lands in the north and their cultivation with cotton. It also financed the construction of a ginning plant and a pressing mill in Konduz.

Bank-i-Melli and the major industrial concerns operated under a government monopoly concession called a *sherkat*. Under the *sherkat* system the government could control 40 to 45 percent of each firm's capital, although it rarely invested so much. Private interests usually invested all the capital and owned 55 to 60 percent of the company. The system controlled production and safeguarded the invested capital while guaranteeing good profits for the investors. Many members of the royal family and high government officials held blocks of stock in the various *sherkat*, so that government cooperation was assured. The country's elite made large profits from the arrangement. The *sherkat* system greatly contributed to industrialization because most profits were reinvested in the expansion of facilities or in the development of new industries.

Foreign trade grew markedly in volume in the 1930s. The country's principal export was karakul pelts, which were auctioned in London. Fruits were exported to British India, and cotton was sent to the Soviet Union. The cotton exports had grown rapidly in the wake of the economic disorder in Soviet Central Asia after the Russian revolution. When the government began a major development policy under King Muhammad Nadir Shah to improve irrigation and communications and to explore the country's natural resources, it was understood that foreign assistance would be absolutely necessary. Afghanistan imported machinery and foreign expertise from Europe and Japan. Seeking to maintain neutrality between Britain and the Soviet Union, Afghanistan developed close economic relations with Germany. Germany provided 150 advisers, as well as financial credit to assist in the establishment of the cotton and sugar industries. The Germans built a hydroelectric plant at Wardak, which still operated in 1985. Through German offices, Afghanistan found European markets for its exports of fruits and skins. Faced with a persistent trade deficit, the Afghan government sought to boost exports while holding the level of imports to a manageable level.

Economic ties with the Soviet Union were of special concern to Nadir Shah and his son Zahir Shah. During the reign of King Amanullah, trade had grown rapidly with the Soviet Union, and by 1932 it accounted for a third of Afghanistan's total trade. Apprehensive of Soviet intentions, the government introduced controls on trade with the Soviet Union and refused permission for the Soviets to open a trade office in Kabul. As a result of government efforts, the value of exchanges with the Soviet Union remained constant until the 1950s. Afghanistan

thus avoided economic integration with the Soviet Union, though with a high degree of trade dependence.

The Afghan economy, to the extent that it could be considered a national system, experienced only moderate growth during the decade before World War II. The agriculture sector grew slightly, and industrial growth, though rapid, represented just a small part of the total economy. The slow rate of growth and development was halted by the advent of the war. Development projects with Germany came to an end and, under British and Soviet pressure, German expatriates were forced to leave the country. Karakul exports declined drastically, but other Afghan exports rose to record levels because the country could sell all the foodstuffs available to the Allied forces in British India. There was, however, little to import in return because of the interdiction of the flow of goods from Europe. The government accumulated a large surplus of British pounds sterling and United States dollars, but its development efforts could not resume until the war ended.

The economy resumed its slow growth after the war, but its structure began to change, especially under the administration of Mohammad Daoud Khan from 1953 to 1963 (see Daoud as Prime Minister, 1953-63, ch. 1). Before Daoud, the economy was oriented around the private sector, and the government assisted private entrepreneurs and organizations, such as Bank-i-Melli, with credit infusions and monopoly concessions. When Daoud came to power, he was dissatisfied with the slow rate of industrial growth, which he blamed on the private sector's lack of funding and its poor technical and management capabilities. Observing the economic successes in Soviet Central Asia, India, and Turkey, the new prime minister decided that direct state intervention was necessary to hasten economic growth. Daoud discarded the old approach to economic development through a partnership of the private sector and the royal family and turned toward a state-managed economic system.

The key element in Daoud's etatist policies was the supervision of the country's development through centrally administered plans. The government had drawn up development plans as early as 1930, but the first plan formally adopted by the government was the Five Year Development Plan (FYDP) of 1956–61. Two more five-year plans followed, and the idea took hold that the government in Kabul was responsible for the country's economic progress. From the beginning, however, Afghan development planning was hindered by a series of in-

nate constraints that limited its effectiveness. The administrative and technical capabilities of the government were minimal. The government created the Ministry of Planning in 1956, but personnel deficiencies prevented the ministry from playing a constructive role in the planning process. The five-year plans reflected the wishes of the different ministries but did not attempt to lay down foundations for overall economic policies. The plans provided no priorities, nor did they give detailed descriptions of the ways stated targets would be achieved. They were, in fact, mere lists of projects designed to solicit foreign aid. These projects were marked by an absence of cost-benefit analysis. The Ministry of Planning did not perform individual project evaluations, nor did it require any other ministry to do so. Many of the project schedules were hopelessly unrealistic, and the cost projections were only rough estimations. The ministry could not supervise ongoing projects, and it was unable to coordinate projects sponsored by different foreign donors. The shortage of technical manpower also forced Afghanistan to rely on the efforts of foreign advisers in drawing up the plans. The first plan, for example, was largely prepared by Soviet advisers. The projects in the various plans were poorly formulated, in part because their foreign designers were ignorant of the Afghan environment.

Afghanistan's low level of fiscal effort also weakened its development plans. Government funding for projects was always lacking because tax collections were so poor. Agriculture, the economy's largest sector, was slightly taxed. Land and livestock taxes had been set as fixed sums long before and were not revised, despite inflation. In 1926 these taxes constituted 63 percent of government revenue but by 1972 made up just 1 percent. Collecting taxes was no simple matter, and in many regions taxes were not collected at all, either because of corruption or because of poor administration capabilities. In 1959, for instance, when the government insisted that rural landowners in Qandahar pay their land taxes, there were antigovernment riots, and the taxes remained unpaid. The government was left with only taxes on exports and imports, and domestic revenue grew far more slowly than did development expenditures. Despite the government's sizable budget deficits, inflation after the war remained moderate, in large part because of the subsistence level of living for most of the population.

Afghanistan was able to finance its development budget with foreign aid. During the 1950s and 1960s Afghanistan

received one of the highest levels of aid on a per capita basis of any country in the world. Foreign aid in the forms of commodity assistance, project aid, and technical assistance totaled nearly US$1.2 billion during the first three plans, extending from 1956 to 1972. Without this massive foreign aid the development effort would not have been possible. Foreign assistance provided 89 percent of the first FYDP expenditures, 76 percent of the second, and 72 percent of the third.

The Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union provided an important stimulus for this largesse. The two superpowers were the largest suppliers of aid to Afghanistan as they competed for influence in the country. After World War II the United States government began providing aid for a massive land reclamation project in the Helmand Valley. In 1954 the Soviets gave a large loan for two grain silos and bakeries in Kabul and Pol-e Khomri. The Soviets also offered barter-trade agreements that guaranteed higher prices for Afghan exports of wool and raw cotton. In response to Soviet aid, the United States increased its own assistance levels, and aid transfers from both countries then rose into the early 1960s. By the end of 1971 the Soviet Union had given US$672 million, while the United States total amounted to US$412 million. During the two decades from 1950 to 1970, the Soviets accounted for 50 percent of Afghanistan's aid, and the United States, 30 percent. While most of the American aid was in the form of grants, Soviet aid consisted of loans to be repaid in commodities.

As a result of the superpower rivalry, Afghanistan was in a relatively comfortable financial situation during the period of the first two five-year plans. The principal constraints during that time lay in project identification and preparation and in the country's poor capacity to undertake projects without foreign technical supervision. The foreign aid flow, however, began to diminish when donors became increasingly disillusioned with the small contributions that the Afghan government gave to its development budget. This seemed to indicate a lack of commitment to the projects and plans on the part of the government. There was also growing concern about project implementation capabilities. The gross volume of aid, therefore, which had risen from US$245 million in the first plan to US$463 million in the second, fell to US$380 million in the third plan.

Afghanistan's first two development plans concentrated on the creation of transport and telecommunications infrastruc-

ture to link formerly isolated regions. The two superpowers built asphalt road nets that reflected their own strategic concerns. The United States built roads linking Afghanistan with Pakistan, whereas the Soviets built roads leading down from the north. By the end of the second plan period, Afghanistan had 1,900 kilometers of paved roads that connected all the major cities and regions of the country with Soviet and Pakistani railheads. Output of electric power increased substantially during the period as hydroelectric plants came into operation.

While infrastructure construction was the main accomplishment of the first two development plans, agricultural development proceeded far more slowly. There were two prominent regional agricultural projects, both of which suffered from poor planning and implementation. Both were, therefore, subject to constant delays and cost overruns. The largest of these, the Helmand Valley Project, was started after World War II in association with the American engineering firm Morrison-Knudsen. The Afghan government had long wanted to irrigate the southwestern desert from the Helmand River (see fig. 4). Shortcuts taken at the behest of the Afghan government, however, undercut the project's success. Against the advice of the American engineers, a number of soil and groundwater surveys were dispensed with in order to cut costs. Although the American firm finished the Arghandab and Kajaki dams and the Boghra Canal ahead of schedule, it underestimated the technical problems associated with the construction and maintenance of the irrigation canals and drainage systems. Because of serious waterlogging and soil salinity problems in the fields, agricultural production in the region declined from that of the initial years of the project. Inadequate extension services plagued settlers who were moved to land often found unsuitable for farming. In addition, the Afghan bureaucracy proved unable to manage the system's operation or maintenance, and the project's total cost skyrocketed. By 1970 the area had attained an output of 100,000 tons of wheat annually, about 4 percent of total wheat production. The project had, however, consumed a third of the total public investment in agriculture to achieve this figure. Similar difficulties plagued the smaller, Soviet-backed Nangarhar Valley Project in eastern Afghanistan (see fig. 1). Dam and canal construction were to have created new irrigated lands for cultivation. Costs again soared because, well into the work, it was discovered that a large part of the project area was rocky soil. Consequently, huge quantities of topsoil had to be trucked in.

Recognizing the central role of agriculture in the economy, the Afghan government sought to shift emphasis in its third plan (1967–72) from infrastructure projects to smaller, more productive projects in agriculture. The redirection of resources proved practically impossible, however, because of delays in the large ongoing projects, which preempted scarce local expertise and labor as well as domestic funds. Furthermore, foreign donors did not want to start new projects while difficulties still hindered existing ones. Over half of the plan's eventual expenditures finally went to carryover projects, and achievements fell far short of targets for irrigation of new land and irrigation rehabilitation. During the first three plans, the Afghan government channeled over 70 percent of the agricultural sector's development funds into large irrigation projects. This left little funding for cheap credit to farmers for the modern inputs of the Green Revolution, such as fertilizers and improved seeds. Agricultural productivity, therefore, remained extremely low, and agricultural production limped forward.

Daoud's policies also stressed industrial development, and the public sector was made responsible for the formation and operation of national industries. The government already had some experience with public enterprises. At the turn of the century it built a munitions factory, and by the end of World War I it also owned and operated a textile plant and a shoe factory. Expanding on this theme in the 1950s, the government set up, with foreign assistance, a number of state-owned and state-operated companies that produced textiles, cement, sugar, and metal products. Public-sector expenditures on industry and mining increased rapidly and took nearly all available resources, both financial and physical. In addition, beginning in the 1950s the government began to acquire control of private companies. Bank-i-Melli was forced to sell majority stockholdings in some of its companies and as a result ceased investing in the economy. In the 1960s this trend accelerated as more state ventures were established, some of which were takeovers of long-established but ailing private enterprises. By the end of the 1960s nearly three-quarters of the total capital investment in large-scale industry was located in government-owned factories. The government then controlled all major activities in slaughtering, grain mill products, printing, cement, power production, and mineral extraction.

By the mid-1960s these public enterprises were usually perceived as inefficient, and their production capacity was be-

lieved to be underused. After Daoud stepped down in 1963, the new government believed that the private sector could play a large role in the country's industrialization and acknowledged that the sector operated under a variety of constraints. The traditionally wealthy and powerful landowning and trading interests had previously seen a threat in the growth of a new group of industrialists and had supported those who advocated the dominance of government enterprise. The tariff policy had militated against local industry because customs duties had taxed intermediate goods to be assembled by local private industry more heavily than the imported finished goods sold by the traders. In addition, the government expended only minute proportions of its development budgets on private ventures. By the 1960s, therefore, private investors had become primarily interested in real estate and bazaar banking, where they dealt with foreign exchange and moneylending. Compounding the problem was the extremely limited state of the banking system. With government aid virtually nil and private- and institutional-venture capital lacking, most private industrialists had to rely on suppliers' credits for capital loans. The bazaar rate, usually about 24 percent or more per annum, was a last resort. The exorbitant cost of credit limited private-sector industry to little beyond handicrafts and small-scale industry.

In order to foster private investment in industry, the government passed the Foreign and Domestic Private Investment Law (FDPIL) in 1967. The law provided entrepreneurs a variety of incentives, including tax and tariff exemptions. The law spurred capital investment by the private sector and slightly lowered the proportion of the government's share in total industrial capital. Some 84 firms had been set up by 1973 under the law and were aimed primarily at the domestic market rather than at exports. Foreign investment in private industry remained very small: only 21 of the 108 projects approved by 1975 involved foreign capital, and the total foreign investment came to only US$5.5 million in 1973. Foreigners' hesitance stemmed from uncertainties about the government's future industrial policies and also from the high transport costs. For foreigners it was still easier to export to Afghanistan than to set up small plants for the local market. Another problem with the program was the small number of jobs created. Because private industrialists preferred imported machinery, capital-intensive production lines were established. Only 6,000 new jobs accompanied the investment.

Even though the 1967 FDPIL led to an expansion of private industry, the public-sector industry continued to grow, from 23 percent of the total number of plants in 1961 to 42 percent in 1971. After Daoud returned to power in 1973, his statist policies were greatly intensified. All banks were nationalized during 1975-76, and the state gained control of many more industries previously held by Bank-i-Melli. By 1975 most industrial concerns were state owned. After 1973 the pace of private investment under the FDPIL slowed dramatically because of reluctance by private entrepreneurs and the slowness of the government to approve new projects. The new constitution in 1977 stated that large industries, energy, mines, and banks were all national property. The constitution also said private enterprise in small industries was to be encouraged and protected (see Daoud's Republic, 1973-78, ch. 1).

Despite the government focus on developing heavy industries based on local minerals and agricultural products, small-scale private industry maintained a greater role in Afghanistan's economy. This sector, which included the important handicrafts industries, continued throughout the postwar period to employ the bulk of industrial workers, contributing far more to domestic output and providing more exports than did the organized large-scale industries. The output of state-owned industries, however, which had been stagnant during the late 1960s, rose in the 1970s, especially in cement, coal, sugar, and vegetable oils.

By 1971, after 15 years of etatist economic policies, the record was one of only mixed success. The rate of growth of domestic output scarcely kept pace with population growth. The gross national product (GNP) per capita was Af5,062 (for value of the afghani—see Glossary) in 1961, compared with Af5,028 in 1971. The relatively large amount of foreign aid led to a disappointingly low rate of growth in economic production for several reasons. Above all, investment was persistently channeled toward major infrastructure projects that had long gestation periods and little direct productive output. These facilities were unable to spur rapid growth in the agricultural and industrial sectors by themselves. As domestic industrial and agricultural production stagnated, the economic benefit from the infrastructure remained minimal and resulted in underuse of the existing facilities.

Capacity utilization in the large-scale industries was, by the beginning of the 1970s, still estimated to be less than 30 percent. Modern industry had only a modest role in the econo-

my at the beginning of the 1970s. The primitive agriculture sector was still the preponderant sector of the economy, contributing well over half of gross domestic product (GDP) and employing nearly 80 percent of the labor force. Its output grew slowly between 1956 and 1972 and then declined with the onset of a crippling drought in 1971, when wheat production fell about 20 percent. Livestock herds were also devastated. The drought caused a small drop in GNP with a concomitant decline in per capita income. The mediocre performance of the economy and the perceived slowdown in development were causes of Daoud's coup of July 1973.

After all the emphasis on infrastructure and industry during the preceding 20 years, agriculture remained the engine of the Afghan economy. During the mid-1970s it recovered from the drought with several good harvests and provided adequate food and industrial raw materials. Afghanistan finally attained food self-sufficiency, provided that the weather was favorable. The country's foreign exchange reserves rose as exports of cotton climbed and as food imports dropped. The country's balance of payments picture was further improved by natural gas sales and by the export of labor to the oil-rich Persian Gulf states. The afghani rose relative to other currencies during this period.

Although the situation was improved, when the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) came to power in April 1978, it inherited one of the poorest countries in the world. Afghanistan was still at a very early stage of development. Traditional activities in agriculture and handicrafts still dominated an economy in which many people lived right at the subsistence level. Modern industry and mining contributed less than half of handicrafts' share of GDP. Agriculture was dependent on the weather, and productivity remained low because of the slow introduction of modern technology. The unequal distribution of land and water and the inequitable tenurial system also discouraged efforts to raise productivity. The PDPA's politics in response much resembled those of Daoud. He too had called for agrarian reform and had fostered national industry, price subsidies, and higher direct tax yields.

Role of the Government

Under the PDPA, the central government controlled the public sector, which consisted of about 85 enterprises, the

banks, and government ministry operations. The government sought to directly affect and shape the path and pace of the entire economy's development through these institutions. Development planning was one of the primary mechanisms by which the government directed the economy. Just four months after the April Revolution, a new five-year plan for 1979-84 was announced. The newly formed State Planning Committee, however, quickly dispensed with it in favor of annual social and economic development plans, the first beginning in 1980. The government in the mid-1980s was still using annual plans, but it had commenced studies to prepare a new five-year plan.

The annual plans indicated where the PDPA wished to move the economy. Although the government claimed to give the agricultural economy high priority in its new development strategy, it allocated proportionally smaller amounts to the sector than had any previous government. In the 1982 plan, agriculture received just 10 percent of the allocations, even though agriculture provided nearly two-thirds of GDP in 1981. The new government effectively reversed the trend in Afghan development plans in the late 1960s and 1970s, which had targeted larger shares of the development budgets on agriculture. During those planning periods agricultural investment was maintained at 25 to 35 percent of the plan total. The PDPA's annual plans for 1981 and 1982 had a different thrust. The government aimed at increasing the state's share of national income, but the agriculture sector, where private ownership prevailed, did not lend itself to this goal. Much of what funding there was for agriculture in the 1980s went to state-owned irrigation projects. The traditionally state-owned mining and industry sectors were perceived as more appropriate for state support. These received investment funding twice the size of agriculture in 1981 and over three times the size in 1982. The mining sector was also important because the government in Kabul wanted to increase bilateral trade with the Soviet Union. Its 1982 plan called for a significant increase in natural gas exports to the north.

The transport and communications sectors also received increased funding after the April Revolution. The higher levels of investment did not go to new road construction, for only 60 kilometers were added in 1981 and only 47 kilometers of new roads were called for in the 1982 plan. Rather than build more roads in the countryside, the government's investment went to forming state-owned transportation organizations equipped with Soviet- and Czechoslovak-built trucks. The government

also raised the allocation for social services to a quarter of the entire development budget, twice the proportion of the previous decade. Most of these educational, cultural, and health projects were located in Kabul or other major cities, and they had little effect on the rural populations. The overall goal of the PDPA plans in the 1980s was to improve significantly the quality of life in the cities while for the most part ignoring the countryside. In the wartime conditions prevailing in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the government had to place its emphasis on the territories and economic sectors it could control. The rural areas were not under the authority of Kabul. In any case, implementation of the plan was highly problematic, for the Afghan resistance frequently congested highways, disrupted traffic, and even controlled other major cities, such as Herat and Qandahar. Development projects were concentrated in the northern provinces of Konduz, Balkh, and Jowzjan, where government control was more secure.

In the 1980s the government continued to suffer severe institutional deficiencies, which also hindered its development planning process. The planning authorities of the central and sectoral ministries still lacked the qualified personnel and information resources to design and implement large development programs. Both the sectoral ministries, such as agriculture or mines and industry, as well as the Ministry of Planning and the State Planning Committee, were short of technically qualified staff. The government did not have detailed statistical information on which to base its plans and policies. In addition, after the 1979 Soviet intervention, Soviet advisers were placed in key positions throughout the government to direct the planning of projects and their implementation.

In 1985 the government budget was divided into two categories of expenditures—ordinary and development. Total government expenditures rose steadily after World War II, accelerating in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The sharp rises in government spending were attributable to continued hikes in ordinary and recurring outlays, which had increased by nearly 800 percent between 1968 and 1983. In the decade between 1968 and 1978, total government spending increased by 420 percent, spurred in part by a 140-percent rise in recurring outlays. In the first six years under the PDPA (1978-84), total outlays rose by 165 percent as recurring expenditures more than tripled. The large increase in the ordinary budget was owing mainly to increases in defense spending. Expenditures on general administration and public order also rose nearly

fourfold. This stemmed from the establishment of new administrative bodies, higher salaries, and larger appropriations for the police. There were additional large increases in expenditures for education, health, and a variety of economic services, including pensions and subsidies. The distribution of ordinary government expenditures changed little after the 1978 revolution. The share of defense dropped from 28 percent in 1977 to 23 percent in 1982; public administration and order rose from 15 percent to 17 percent. The share of education and health fell from 23 to 20 percent during the same period. By the mid-1980s the government was seeking to slow the growth of its ordinary expenditures by adopting such measures as reduced purchases of materials and supplies and a drawdown of accumulated stocks. Government employees received a general cost-of-living increase, but overtime pay was abolished. Subsidy and transfer payments were expected to rise because of anticipated hikes in fuel subsidies and in retired civil servants' pensions.

Development expenditures also rose rapidly from 1968 to 1982 but consumed less of the total amount of government outlays. Between 1968 and 1978 development outlays nearly doubled, but the rate of growth slowed dramatically after the 1978 revolution. Between 1978 and 1982 development expenditures increased by only 32 percent. With ordinary expenditures soaring, the share of development spending in the total government outlay fell from 52 percent in 1977 to 23 percent in 1982. Development expenditures in the first five years of PDPA rule fluctuated considerably, as they did before 1978, because to a large degree they were dependent on foreign aid inflows.

Afghan development spending continued to rely on foreign assistance because of the consistently low level of domestic revenue collected by the central government. Revenue generation had always been a problem for the government. Between 1939 and 1972 revenue grew by only 26 percent after discounting for inflation. Although revenue grew much more quickly between 1978 and 1982, the 170-percent increase in revenue could not keep pace with the hike in spending. Afghanistan's ratio of total domestic revenues—both tax and nontax—to GNP was about 19 percent, considered by observers to be relatively low. Government revenues remained comparatively small because of the low level of taxation. The country's tax administration depended, as did that of all central governments, on a monetized tax base. In Afghanistan, how-

ever, much of national production was subsistence agriculture production largely beyond the reach of tax collectors.

The public administration's efforts to raise revenue were also undercut by widespread corruption, a problem aggravated by the low salaries of civil servants. The government was left, as it always had been, to rely on foreign trade taxes as a major tax base. These were administratively easier to collect. The bazaar traders were always too weak politically to avoid taxation as the large rural landowners were able to do. Taxes on imports became the greatest single source of tax revenue, far outdistancing income taxes. Corporate and income taxes accounted for 15 percent of tax revenue in 1972 and 12 percent in 1982; foreign trade taxes provided 71 percent and 51 percent, respectively. The revenues generated from foreign trade taxes were slow to rise, and in nine years, from 1974 to 1982, these grew only 8 percent. The importance of trade taxes diminished in the 1970s. Trade taxes provided 56 percent of total revenue in 1974 but only 15 percent in 1982. The slow increase in trade tax revenue was largely the result of an active smuggling trade. The quantity and variety of goods smuggled responded to the opportunities for profit. When tax authorities raised duties on specific items, there was a corresponding shift of the trade in these goods into smuggling.

Government collections of nontax revenue have grown substantially, increasing tenfold in the 1968-82 period. This is the principal factor in the large hike in government revenue. Between 1968 and 1982 the share of nontax revenue in total revenue increased from 45 to 65 percent. The most important nontax revenue source was the sale of natural gas to the Soviet Union. Beginning in 1967, income from these sales grew slowly but rose dramatically after 1979. By 1982 natural gas exports contributed 44 percent of all government revenues, compared with 17 percent in 1978. The Afghan government benefited greatly from the worldwide energy shortage and higher unit prices, in that its sales receipts rose after 1979 even though the volume of gas exports declined. In addition to the natural gas industry, other public enterprises contributed to the national treasury with profit transfers and capital revenues. These funds continued to be small relative to the revenue generated by natural gas sales. Transfers from public enterprises actually fell by nearly 50 percent after 1981 because of the declining profitability of public sector firms, such as the Ghori Cement Company, the Balkh Cotton Ginnery and Press, and the Fertilizer and Electricity Company. Revenue contribu-

tions from public enterprises were also reduced by a 1983 law that authorized them to retain 30 percent of their profits for distribution as bonuses for workers' productivity and another 20 percent for reinvestment.

Since 1940 the government had run a fiscal deficit that had grown steadily in size. From 1968 to 1977 the budget deficit grew from Af1.5 billion to Af6.8 billion. After the PDPA takeover, the deficit fell initially to Af3 billion. But with higher defense and social service outlays, the deficit soared up to Af1.6 billion in 1982. The rise in the deficit greatly concerned the government, and Prime Minister Soltan Ali Keshtmand noted in April 1983 that tax collections were inadequate in view of the increased state spending. The security situation in the country, however, prevented the government from improving its tax collections. The fighting and exodus of refugees from the country seriously disrupted tax collection. Observers noted that when farmers paid taxes in the countryside, it was to local resistance groups rather than to government officials. Even in the larger cities, such as Qandahar and Herat, where the government maintained provincial offices, there was no effort to conduct such normal administrative duties as tax collection.

In the face of a growing budget deficit, the government was becoming more dependent on foreign assistance for its development program. During the 1970s the share of foreign aid in development plans was lower than in the previous two decades, but it never fell below 38 percent. In some years it rose to as high as 61 percent. Immediately after the 1978 revolution, the Afghan government usually had larger amounts of revenue to cover the slow-growing development expenditures. Because of natural gas sales, the share of foreign aid dropped initially as low as 10 percent in 1979, as aid from the West dried up. By the 1980s, however, ordinary expenditures, especially defense, consumed larger amounts of government revenue, and foreign aid was again financing over half of the country's development budget. The 1984 budget projected that 57 percent of the country's development program would be financed with foreign aid. Actual inflows of foreign aid were in fact much greater, but their value to the government was largely negated by the high level of foreign debt repayments coming due. Where project aid could not fill the gap between domestic resources and development expenditures, the government borrowed from Da Afghanistan Bank, the country's central bank.

Banking and Monetary Policy

The formal banking system in Afghanistan was established during the country's initial economic modernization in the 1930s. Bank-i-Melli was the first bank of any kind and used its resources to develop several profitable industrial enterprises. Following Bank-i-Melli's success, in 1939 the government set up Da Afghanistan Bank, the central bank. It quickly became the country's leading commercial bank and, like its predecessor, opened branches in the major cities. The banking system was never well developed, however, and up to the 1978 coup neither bank's branch offices could approve loans. All loans were made by the banks' head offices in Kabul. By the mid-1970s interest rates had remained virtually unchanged in two decades, despite inflation. The poor collection rate of the commercial banks forced them to adopt stringent collateral requirements, and most credit stayed in the form of short-term loans. Because the rights and obligations of borrower and lender were not well defined, neither banks nor private borrowers could use the country's credit resources. As a result of these conditions, banking stagnated during the 1960s, despite the government's establishment of a series of specialized banks, beginning in 1948 with a housing and construction bank. During 1975-76 the government nationalized all Afghan banks.

In 1985 the banking and financial system revolved around a government-directed formal banking system and the long-standing private money traders. The organized banking sector comprised Da Afghanistan Bank, which had the dual role of central bank and commercial bank, three commercial banks, and three specialized banks. Da Afghanistan Bank, the largest in the country, was the center of the formal banking system. The key roles of its directors indicated its critical role. In March 1982 the central bank was made independent of the Ministry of Finance; the governor of the central bank was designated general president and given the rank of a cabinet minister. In addition, the central bank's Supreme Council was reorganized under the deputy prime minister, who was also director of the State Planning Committee. The general president of the central bank and the ministers of finance, agriculture and commerce, and industry were the other members. As the central bank, Da Afghanistan Bank had the sole right of currency issue and acted as a lender of interest-free funds to the government and municipalities. It also exercised the government's control over foreign exchange transactions and de-

termined the afghani's official exchange rate. The central bank also dominated the commercial banking sector, where it accounted for over 60 percent of all nongovernment deposits in 1983.

Of the remaining commercial banks, Bank-i-Melli was the largest. Its loans consisted primarily of credits to a few large enterprises in which it held participation interests and short-term foreign trade financing. Bank-i-Melli has branches in New York, London, Karachi, Peshawar, and Hamburg. Another commercial bank, the Pashtany Tejaraty Bank, was founded in 1954. Much smaller than Bank-i-Melli, its operations were concentrated in foreign trade finance. The third commercial bank, the Export Promotion Bank, was established in 1978 to assist small- and medium-scale public and private enterprises seeking to export their products. The interest rate payable by commercial banks was fixed by the Ministry of Finance at 9 percent on savings deposits. This rate was essentially unchanged from 1977 and was well below the rate of inflation. It therefore acted as a disincentive to savings and the flow of remittances from abroad. The rate on loans was 6 to 12 percent. This low rate favored speculative stockbuilding and capital investment projects. The rate on lending was also occasionally reduced to encourage imports of essential commodities in short supply. Furthermore, Da Afghanistan Bank provided low-rate loans to the specialized banks so that those institutions could offer credit at preferential rates.

The largest of the three specialized banks was the Agricultural Development Bank, founded in 1959 to assist public and private activities in the agrarian sector. It also sold and serviced machinery. In the mid-1970s its lending increased rapidly, and thousands of loans were made to farmers for the purchase of fertilizer as part of the government's decision to increase its use. There were many defaults on the early loans, but the government compensated the bank for the uncollectible debts on this account. During the early 1980s the bank's outstanding loans declined because some loans to landlords affected by land reform had to be written off. This trend was apparently reversed later as the government sought to finance the acquisition of modern machinery and other inputs. In 1985 the bank's operations were concentrated in areas where land reform measures had been taken.

The other two specialized banks, the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) and the Mortgage Construction Bank (MCB), were relatively small. Established in 1973 as a privately owned

bank with 40 percent of its share capital held by foreign banks, IDB was nationalized in 1976. Its total loans outstanding grew steadily during the 1978-82 period through loans to larger enterprises and credit to small-scale industry through the Development Assistance Fund, set up in 1977. The smallest specialized bank, MCB could lend only to government employees for short- and medium-term home loans. It became inactive in the mid-1970s because of difficulties in collecting debts from government employees. In the early 1980s, however, the amount of its outstanding loans showed an increase as more people qualified for loans.

The formal banking system in 1985 was still poorly developed. Its operations were confined mainly to urban areas. Observers noted several underlying problems. The extreme centralization of banking activity in Kabul ignored the provinces. Banking activity of necessity involved reading and writing, which limited the number of people who could use banks. The unsettled security situation also reduced the amount of deposits and the scope of lending activities.

Money Bazaars

The formal banking sector was augmented by the money bazaars, which played an important role in both internal and external trade finance. Moneylending and foreign exchange dealings had been major activities in the bazaars of Kabul and other cities for centuries, dating back to the era when the great overland trade routes between the Mediterranean and the Orient passed through Afghanistan. Until the 1930s, when Afghanistan established banks, all foreign exchange transactions were handled by private dealers located primarily in Kabul and Qandahar. Even the Afghan government's foreign exchange requirements were purchased from these dealers. Through Bank-i-Melli and later Da Afghanistan Bank, the government tried to assert a monopoly of its own over foreign exchange transactions. Despite foreign exchange surrender regulations and occasional prohibitions of free market dealings, the bazaars survived so successfully that Bank-i-Melli and Da Afghanistan Bank had to keep their own dealers in the bazaars. The 1960s were a period of renaissance for the money bazaars even as the formal banking system's growth stagnated. The volume of business and the number of dealers grew; technical improvements, such as electronic calculators, appeared. Among the money traders a specialization of activities occurred. By

the 1970s dealers normally traded in either rupees (Indian and Pakistani), convertible currencies, or East European currencies. The money bazaars maintained close telecommunications links with correspondent banks around the world and handled both currencies and foreign bank drafts. By the 1970s they could provide nearly all the services of a commercial bank, giving loans for foreign trade finance, consumer loans (especially for weddings), working capital for farmers and entrepreneurs, housing, and longer term industrial undertakings. Because of the bazaars' high interest rates, businessmen saw them as a last resort for credit. The centralization of loan extension in Kabul, however, raised the relative importance of the bazaars' role for finance in the provinces. The authorities in Kabul in 1985 continued to follow a policy of noninterference with operations in the money bazaars, but the bazaars' legal position remained dubious.

Owing in part to the dealers' suspicions of the government, information and detailed data on the volume of business in the bazaars were scarce. The share of the bazaars in foreign exchange turnover was very large; one observer estimated it to be 65 percent in 1972. In view of the war, Western analysts in the mid-1980s believed that without the free-market trade of the bazaars, the afghani would more seriously depreciate. There was also brisk trade in rubles in the bazaars as Soviets sought to buy hard currencies.

Prices

By 1985 Afghanistan was suffering from a markedly higher rate of inflation than it had experienced during the previous decade. During the early 1970s there was a sharp rise of 50 percent in price levels as a result of the severe drought that crippled agricultural production. When weather conditions and agricultural output improved, the price index rose at a slower 6-percent annual rate during the middle of the 1970s. This inflation-rate decrease occurred despite the fact that the money supply more than doubled between 1973 and 1977. The huge growth in the money supply was in part a result of a 50-percent increase in government borrowing from Da Afghanistan Bank to pay for development expenditures. Two factors moderated the price increase during the mid-1970s. The afghani appreciated in value against other currencies. This kept the prices of imports down and encouraged hoarding by currency speculators, thus removing much currency from cir-

culation. This hoarding of currency spread to the countryside during the 1970s as the subsistence economy became increasingly monetized and rural households found greater uses for currency.

During the early 1980s the rate of inflation soared. According to government officials, prices more than doubled between 1979 and 1983. Defectors and resistance leaders claimed inflation was in fact much greater. Food prices were said to be especially hard hit, as prices for meat, vegetables, and tea rose by over 500 percent between 1979 and 1984. The prices of cereals, the essential element of the Afghan diet, were said to have doubled. The rate of inflation varied throughout the country, but the rural areas were said by both the resistance and Western observers to be suffering far worse from rising prices than were the cities.

After the 1978 revolution, two of the factors holding down the country's inflation began to erode. After appreciating by more than 100 percent between 1973 and 1978, the exchange rate of the afghani plummeted between 1979 and 1983. At the bazaars the value of the afghani dropped from Af39 to Af99 per US$1. The government's official exchange rate fell from Af45 to Af52.6 during the same period. This raised the prices of all imported goods not covered by bilateral trade assistance agreements. A second factor pressuring prices was the fall in domestic production of goods, above all in the agriculture sector. This closely resembled the situation during the drought of 1971-72 when food prices soared.

The decreased availability of goods and the higher prices of those available were also in part a result of skyrocketing transport costs. The national marketing system, which had never been well developed, was crumbling as commercial travel within Afghanistan declined as a result of the war. According to observers, the cost of moving goods between Kabul and Mazar-e Sharif rose by 600 percent between 1980 and 1984; in Hazarajat the cost of moving 199 tons of wheat was seen to equal the purchase price. Meanwhile, the money supply continued to grow, although at a slightly slower rate of 17 to 18 percent annually, compared with 20 percent per annum in the 1970s. This increase in the money supply was caused by government borrowing, in part for war-related expenditures, such as defense and repairing damaged infrastructure.

In order to ease the hardship of soaring prices, the government instituted a system of price controls and consumer subsidies. The prices of such items as wheat flour, tea, and vegeta-

ble oil—as well as other goods, such as soap, toothpaste, shirts, cloth, and notebooks—were held low. This was usually made possible through bilateral supply agreements at the official, rather than the bazaar, exchange rate. The government also influenced prices of private traders through its competitive sale of domestic goods at government-sponsored consumer cooperative shops. By 1985 there were 140 cooperative shops around the country, according to the government. Prices of essential goods and commodities were said to be 20 percent cheaper than on the free market.

The government also provided direct cost subsidies to consumers on food and particular utility services through the Food Procurement Department (FPD) and several public utilities. The FPD obtained wheat and sugar from both domestic and foreign suppliers on both commercial and concessionary terms. Public sector employees received coupons allowing them to purchase wheat flour at much reduced prices. This was estimated to cost the government Af600 million in 1984. Government employees were also able to buy vegetable oil at reduced prices. In addition, retail bread prices were fixed at below-cost levels for all citizens. Electricity, water, and bus transport prices were held at below-cost levels, with government funding for the public enterprises covering the difference between costs and revenues from customers. Until 1984 the price of imported petroleum products had also been fixed at a low level. This cost the government Af2 billion in 1983 alone. In June 1984, however, prices were raised so high that there was in effect a tax on gasoline consumption.

The government did not try to direct the economy through an active monetary policy. The lack of detailed statistical data hampered any effort to analyze the money supply and its effects. Instead, the government set out broad guidelines for the operations of its banks. After 1981 all banks had to follow annual credit plans prepared at the beginning of the fiscal year. These credit plans determined the credit to be made available based on projected public and private sector requirements for production and for domestic and foreign trade. The annual budget determined the government's borrowing requirements. Although the government's needs occasionally exceeded projections, little adjustment was made in the credit plan. The banks were not allowed to borrow from Da Afghanistan Bank, except for short periods to keep them within the credit plan guidelines (see table 6, Appendix).

Infrastructure

Afghanistan's networks of transport and power-generating facilities were built mostly after World War II. Before the major development projects under Daoud, an observer wrote that "the economic organization of Afghanistan resembles a wide sea dotted with islands of economic activity, each one more or less limited to its own local market, primarily because of inadequate transportation." The first motorable road over the Hindu Kush was finished only in 1933. The first two development plans of 1956–66 prepared the basic grid of paved, all-weather roads that integrated the nation's economy to a limited extent. The production and distribution of electricity also grew rapidly during this period, although only a fraction of the urban population had access to it. By 1985 the war was seriously reducing the capacity of the country's transport and power sectors. At the same time new transport and power projects planned by the government promised to link Afghanistan more closely with its neighbor to the north (see fig. 6).

The dispersion of the Afghan population required mainly low-cost, low-volume roads. The physical features of Afghanistan made this difficult because the rocky, mountainous terrain and the harsh climate raised road construction and maintenance costs. Nonetheless, with substantial foreign assistance, by 1966 Afghanistan had installed a relatively well-developed major highway system that joined together the country's major commercial centers and also linked the country to the outside world. The two superpowers built roads to tie Afghanistan into their own respective commercial and economic spheres. Soviet assistance completed a road linking Jabal os Saraj with Dusti on the Soviet border in 1964. Along this road was located the 1.7-kilometer Salang Tunnel at an altitude of over 3,300 meters above sea level. The tunnel eliminated about 200 kilometers from the previous roundabout route between the Soviet border and Kabul. In 1965 the Soviets finished the road between Jabal os Saraj and Kabul and completed the highway joining the Soviet border town of Kushka with Qandahar. By 1971 the Soviets had also built a road extending from Pol-e Khomri through Mazar-e Sharif to Sheberghan. While the Soviets were linking Afghanistan with their border towns, the Americans put in roads to join Afghanistan to Pakistan and Iran. Two roads were completed in 1964 and 1965 extending from Pakistan up to Qandahar and Kabul. In 1965 the Americans also finished surfacing the road between Qandahar and Kabul. In 1967 they

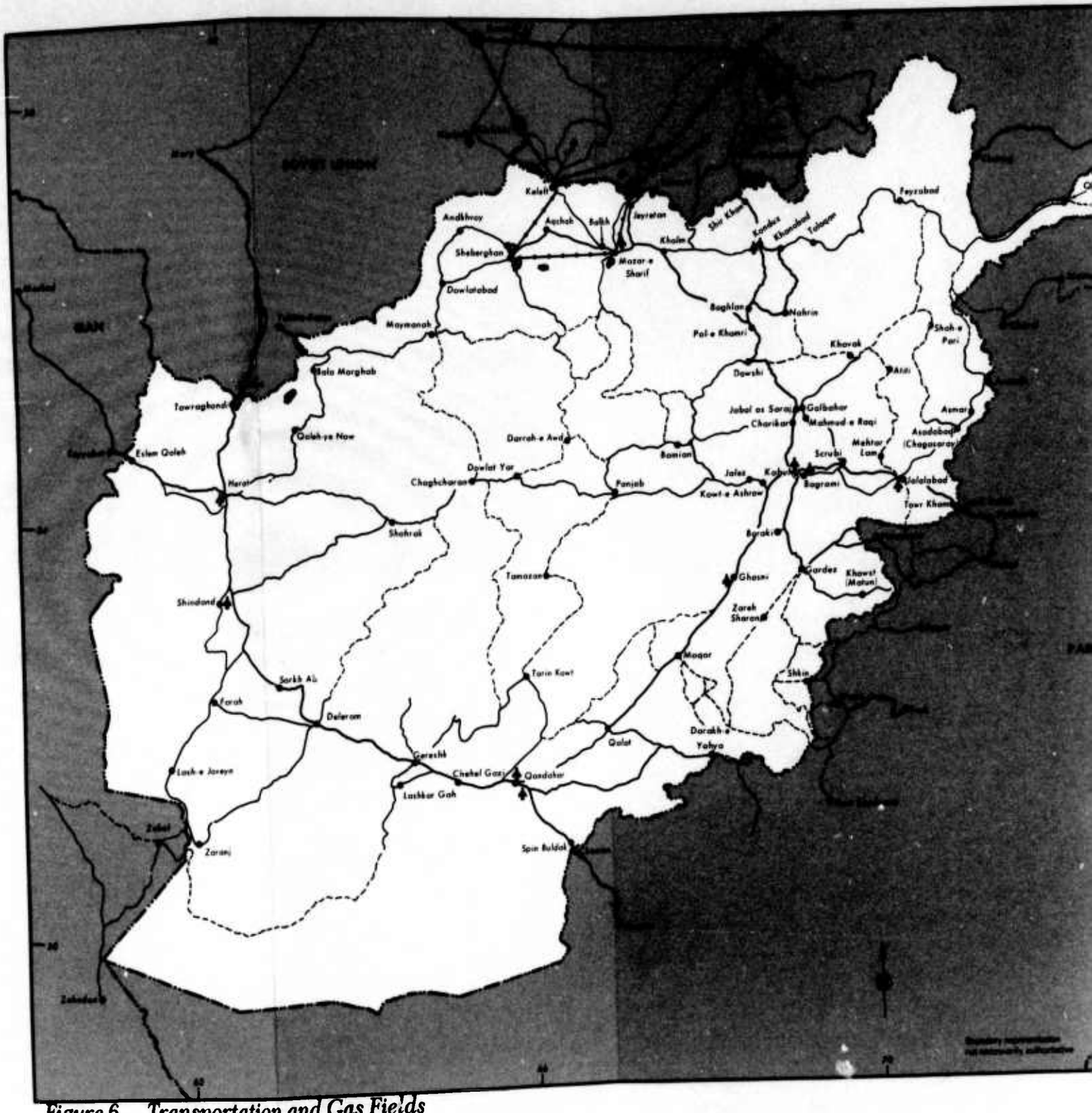
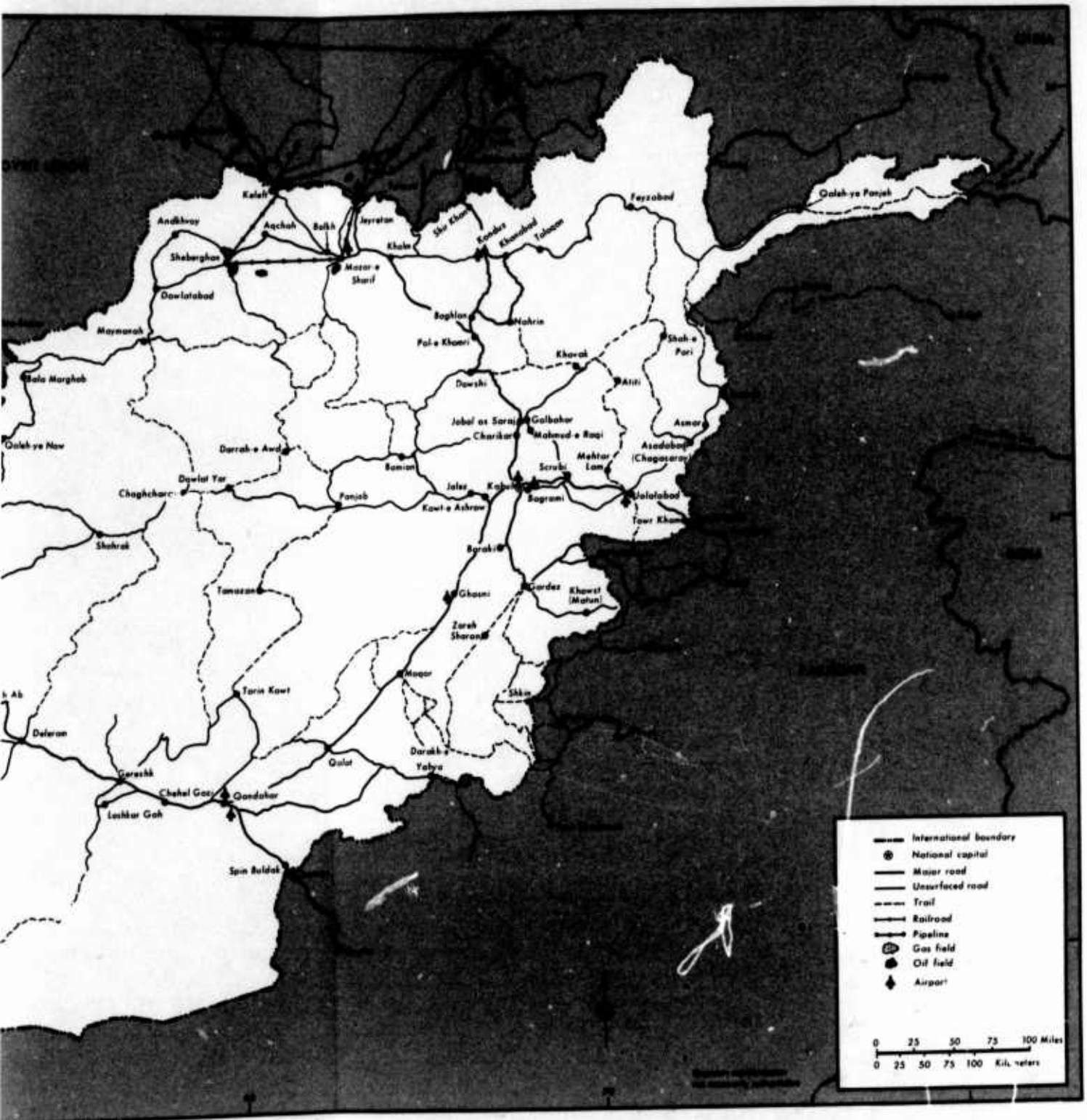


Figure 6. Transportation and Gas Fields



nd Gas Fields

completed the road between Herat and Eslem Qaleh on the Iranian border. By 1975, when all the major road projects were completed, Afghanistan had 17,000 kilometers of roads, of which 9,200 kilometers were all-weather roads. There were still only 2,500 kilometers of paved highways, primarily running in a great loop from Sheberghan to Herat via Kabul. Trunk roads extended from this circular network to major population centers, such as Konduz, Jalalabad, and Gardez, as well as points on the Soviet, Pakistani, and Iranian borders.

The establishment of this transportation infrastructure rapidly had an effect on the country's economy. Before its construction there had not been a national distribution system but rather autonomous regional markets. Surplus local production could not be traded nationally because of prohibitive transport costs. The new road network quickly reduced transport costs, increased domestic trade between regions, and thus promoted the integration of the national economy. One of the indications of this trend in the late 1960s and early 1970s was the sharp decrease in price differentials between regions. In 1960 prices of the principal commodity traded, wheat, varied as much as 150 percent between regions; by 1966 the variations dropped to approximately 30 percent, and by 1977 prices were roughly equivalent, except for transport costs. This was a result of the road network that increased market sizes for many Afghan producers so that they had incentive to increase their production.

Although the creation of the road network was the main success of the Soviet and American development programs in Afghanistan, there were limits to the economic benefits. Because the country's agriculture and industry surpluses were so small, the level of domestic trade was relatively low. The principal beneficiaries of the road network were traders and transport entrepreneurs, rather than the great majority of people, who lived in the rural areas. The government put little emphasis on secondary and tertiary roads joining the rural provinces, towns, villages, and farms with the major highways. The few roads that were built were usually substandard and necessitated higher transport costs. Some major towns and surrounding regions, such as Maymanah and Feyzabad, were not linked with the major highway system and did not share in the benefits of greater trade opportunities. One detailed analysis of the Afghan economy even explained the famine of 1971 as resulting from the country's inability to move surplus grains into the remote regions of Badakhshan and Hazarajat. The transport

sector, therefore, continued to constitute a serious bottleneck to the economic development of the hinterlands. The majority of Afghans were located in these areas, and they still had poor access to outside markets as well as to government services. They had little incentive to produce at more than a subsistence level, and their level of productivity remained very low.

After the 1978 coup the new government gave renewed priority to the transport and communications sector in its development funds allocation—over 22 percent in 1981 and over 27 percent in 1982. Despite the relatively large share of the total development expenditures, the government built few new roads. Instead, spending was concentrated on the creation of five state transport enterprises, each with 300 imported Soviet Kamaz-type trucks. Another organization was established for the transport of petroleum products and was equipped with Tatra and Maz trucks from Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. Along with the creation of these state enterprises, the number of trucks operated by the public and mixed sectors was projected to rise from 13,200 in 1981 to 13,770 by the end of 1982. Before the establishment of these state enterprises, the transport sector was dominated by private entrepreneurs, most of whom owned only one or two trucks of generally small load capacity.

The road network was augmented by 41 airports or airfields for domestic and international travel, again established with substantial Soviet and American aid. The largest and most important airport was Kabul International Airport, where traffic doubled to over 100,000 passengers annually between 1969 and 1976. Topographical conditions limited the airport's capacity to handle wide-bodied jets, and the government had long wanted an alternative site for a large airport. The Soviets undertook several expansion projects at the Kabul airport and also built jet airstrips at Mazar-e Sharif, Bagrami, and Jalalabad. In 1985 the government was engaged in an Af1.6 billion program to upgrade Kabul airport facilities. The runway was to be lengthened for use by larger aircraft, and a new terminal and hangars were to be built. Passenger movement rose to 127,000 in 1982, up from 106,000 in 1976. The United States had helped build Afghanistan's other international airport, at Qandahar, beginning in 1956. It was initially conceived as a refueling stop for piston engine aircraft on the long flights across South Asia and the Middle East. The introduction of jet aircraft, however, quickly turned the project into a white elephant, and Karachi became the preferred stopover site. The

US$15-million, 3,030-meter airstrip and its airport facilities were little used after their completion in 1963. Only 6,000 passengers went through the airport in 1976. The Qandahar airport was operated mainly as an alternative to the Kabul airport when Kabul was fog- or snow-bound. During the mid-1960s the United States also completed smaller regional airports in Herat, Mazar-e Sharif, Konduz, and Jalalabad. By 1978 several smaller towns located far off the main highway belt, such as Maymanah and Feyzabad, also had airports.

In an effort to preclude Soviet influence, the United States also provided technical assistance when Afghanistan established Ariana Afghan Airlines in 1955. In 1957 the Afghan government took a 51-percent share of the company, while Pan American World Airways held 49 percent. The United States Export-Import Bank later helped Ariana buy two Boeing 727s for its flights to Western Europe. After the Soviet invasion, however, Ariana landing rights in Western Europe were revoked. It then flew to Moscow, Prague, Dubai, and New Delhi, but by late 1985 it either had gone out of business or was about to do so. In 1985 only two foreign carriers served Kabul International Airport—Aeroflot and Indian Airlines. Also serving as an internal carrier within Afghanistan was the state-owned Bakhtar Airlines. It had a fleet of two Antonov 24s, three Canadia Twin Otters, and two Yak 40s. In September 1985 the government admitted the loss of one of the company's aircraft in a crash at Qandahar, in which 52 passengers were killed. The government blamed a resistance surface-to-air missile.

River traffic along the Amu Darya increased rapidly as trade expanded between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. River ports unloaded 215 tons of cargo in 1975; by 1981 the government gave a figure of over 400,000 tons. Jeyretan was the principal river port, handling 86 percent of the cargo, with Shir Khan and Towraghondi the other major river ports. All three of these ports were scheduled to be enlarged during the 1980s to handle increased traffic.

Railroads

Afghanistan's difficult terrain made the construction and operation of a railroad extremely expensive. The decision to build a railroad was further impeded by the problem of choosing a track gauge. The Soviet Union, Iran, and Pakistan each operated railroads with different gauges. Despite these obsta-

cles, the Afghan government had long wanted to build a railroad because of the boost it would provide for the establishment of heavy industry, especially in the minerals sector. The seven-year plan of 1976-83 had envisioned building a railroad linking Kabul with both Iran and Pakistan. The railroad was to have followed the main highway's circular path with an extension to Eslem Qaleh on the Iranian border. An Iranian loan was to have paid most of the estimated US$1.2 billion cost. The project died when the Iranian financing collapsed in the wake of the revolution there. After their intervention in Afghanistan, the Soviets began a new railroad capable of both military and merchandise movements across the Amu Darya. In 1982 they completed the first road and rail bridge over the river at Jeyretan. By 1985 they were in the midst of the first stage of the project, which aimed at putting down tracks as far as Pol-e Khomri, an industrial center and military supply depot. The second stage of the project was to extend the railroad on to Bagrami, a major Soviet air base and supply depot. From there it would go on to Kabul. Because of the extremely difficult terrain it would have to traverse, the 3.1 billion-ruble railroad was not expected to be finished for many years.

Electric Power

Afghanistan's electric power-generating capacity increased steadily before the 1978 coup, from 59 megawatts at the end of the first FYDP to 318 megawatts by 1978. Electric power production also steadily rose from 127 million kilowatt-hours in 1961 to about 840 million kilowatt-hours in 1978. Despite the continued growth in capacity and production, only 5 percent of the population, all in the main urban centers, had access to electricity in 1978. The Afghan Electricity Authority (Da Afghanistan Breshna—DABM) suffered from high levels of energy losses because of the lack of substations and transmission and distribution lines. Low tariff rates and these power losses made DABM a consistent money loser after its establishment in 1966.

After the 1978 coup the formerly autonomous DABM was made a department of the Ministry for Water and Power. The government launched an expansion program that planned to increase the country's generating capacity to over 600 megawatts. By 1983 the government claimed that installed capacity totaled 394 megawatts, a figure unchanged in four years. Hydroelectric dams, most notably at Kajaki, accounted for 260

megawatts, but this represented only about 5 percent of the country's total hydroelectric potential. Thermal plants, fired by oil and coal, provided another 134 megawatts of capacity. The number of people with access to electricity remained low, estimated officially at 10 percent of the population in 1982. As part of the expansion program, which foresees 1,000 kilometers of new transmission lines being built, in the mid-1980s the Soviet Union was extending power lines over the border toward Kabul. The lines were planned to connect Balkh, Samangan, Baghlan, Parvan, and Kabul provinces into a national grid. Another set of lines linking the Ghowr region to the Soviet Union was also being built.

Despite government efforts to increase electricity output, the ongoing war took a severe toll on the country's power facilities. Power stations and transmission lines were frequent targets of the resistance. The government claimed output rose from 840 million kilowatt-hours in 1978 to 1,025 million kilowatt-hours in 1983, an increase of 22 percent. These success claims contrasted sharply with reports coming from inside the country, which told of serious power shortages. In Kabul, for example, there were frequent blackouts, and in the city's poorer neighborhoods, homes averaged only four to five hours of power per week. More affluent neighborhoods received some power each night, and foreign embassies and the homes of upper-echelon party leaders were reported to receive power regularly, except during major stoppages. Outside Kabul the electric power supply was described as far worse. In Qandahar and Herat power was erratic, if available at all.

Labor Force

As the economy developed, the labor force grew steadily, from an estimated 4.2 million in 1966 to 5.1 million in 1975. Despite the exodus of millions of refugees in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the government claimed that the labor force surpassed 5.2 million in 1982. Were the security situation to calm, the pool of manpower would be expected to grow more quickly, given the relative youth of the population and the increasing monetization of the economy. Labor statistics, however, especially those after the outbreak of fighting, were inexact at best and useful only for indications of trends. A 1975 national demographic survey showed that almost a quarter of the labor force consisted of nomadic people. The survey also showed that only 14 percent of the settled population's work

force was composed of women, and almost three-quarters of these women were engaged in either agriculture or handicrafts (see table 7, Appendix).

During the 1960s and 1970s the patterns of employment changed noticeably with the economy's initial industrialization. The share of agriculture in total employment dropped from 70 percent in 1966 to 55 percent in 1982. Agriculture dwarfed industry in terms of employment, but the industrial labor force grew quickly. The number of people engaged in industry, including handicrafts, approximately doubled between 1966 and 1982, and this sector's share of total employment rose from about 0.5 percent in 1966 to 10 percent in 1982. Still, agricultural workers outnumbered their industrial counterparts six to one. Labor in industry was often seasonal, composed of agricultural workers who went to factories during the winters to earn supplemental income. The shares of both trade and construction grew slightly between 1966 and 1982 and by 1982 employed 7 and 3 percent of the labor force, respectively. The unemployment rate conceded by the government was about 15 percent during the 1980s, compared with about 6 percent admitted in the previous decade. Underemployment was probably more widespread and included industrial workers idled by work stoppages resulting from war shortages.

In a paradoxical situation common to developing countries, Afghanistan had a large pool of unemployed and underdeveloped manpower at the same time the economy suffered from a continuing and acute shortage of administrators, technicians, and skilled manpower. This was not surprising in view of the prevalence of illiteracy and the low levels of education widespread throughout the society (see Education, ch. 2). Lack of skilled labor delayed implementation of development plans and forced the government to rely on foreign advisers. In the 1980s there were reports of Soviet advisers holding key positions in all of the country's ministries. Although the political overtones were different, Afghanistan had traditionally relied on foreign experts to direct the country's economic development, and Americans and Soviets had been heavily involved since the end of World War II, and Germans before them. Afghan civil servants frequently lacked adequate training. The war exacerbated the shortage of skilled labor in several ways. Many members of the relatively small professional class fled the country. Security in the cities deteriorated so seriously that merchants and ministry staffs also left the country. Meanwhile,

the government instituted compulsory conscription, calling up many skilled workers for military service. As a result, the Afghan minister for mines and industries said in a 1983 interview that "the question of skilled labor for our developing economy is . . . more pressing than ever." In response, the government adopted several measures to ease the shortage. Technical workers from certain key industries, such as coal mines and textile mills, were exempted from military service. The government also sought to reorient the education system toward vocational training and guaranteed jobs to university students in technical fields before other students.

The petroleum boom of the 1970s and the Persian Gulf states' need for labor attracted many skilled Afghans, further aggravating the skilled manpower shortage in Afghanistan. Many experienced Afghan civil servants, lured by the much higher wages in countries such as Iran, took leaves of absence without pay to work abroad. During the late 1970s a laborer in Iran earned three times the salary of an Afghan school director. Other skilled laborers left Afghanistan upon completion of the large development projects, such as the Helmand Valley Project, where they had learned their skills.

Not only technical workers and professionals left the country. Hundreds of thousands of unskilled workers, who were more subject to at least seasonal unemployment, also went to the oil states. The total number of Afghans who worked in the Gulf was unknown; estimates ranged from 250,000 to 700,000. The largest number appeared to be located in Iran, but Afghans also worked in Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Saudi Arabia. The construction industry in those states was the principal employer of Afghans. The relatively unguarded state of the borders between Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan easily allowed employment bureaus in Pakistan to smuggle unskilled Afghan migrant workers into Iran.

During the 1970s the Iranian and Arab authorities seldom questioned the immigration status of Afghan workers. For its part, the Afghan government did not officially encourage the migration. The remittances of earnings back home, however, significantly reduced the economy's balance of payments problems. By 1979 the remittances sent to Afghanistan were estimated to be about US$20 million per month. The flow of unskilled labor also eased the problem of unemployment in rural areas and improved the well-being of thousands of rural families who received money sent from the Gulf. After several years in the Gulf, Afghan workers usually returned home with

the money they had saved. They paid off debts, bought modern consumer goods and real estate, and often tried to set up their own shops. There was little investment in modern industry. However, by the mid-1980s the declining oil market left the future of Afghan guest workers in jeopardy, as Gulf development budgets shrank and construction projects slowed.

Agriculture

Despite the low level of technical development and the slow growth rate of its output, agriculture dominated the economy throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The share of agricultural output in GDP remained about 60 percent between 1961 and 1980. These figures were probably too low, for a great deal of agricultural output remained on the farms as subsistence production. The economy's overall growth, therefore, depended largely on this sector. Rapid growth was not forthcoming. From 1965 to 1976 total agricultural output rose only 25 percent. On a per capita basis, output fell 4 percent during this period. The sector's rate of growth slowed after the Soviet invasion, with increases averaging just 1.4 percent annually between 1981 and 1983. By the 1980s output was rising faster than the size of the agricultural labor force, indicating improved productivity, although it was still very low. The government statistics indicating these trends had to be regarded with some skepticism, however. Agriculture employed the majority of the work force, although its share was decreasing, from 64 percent in 1977 to 56 percent in 1982. Agriculture was the foundation of the economy not only because of its large contribution to GDP and national employment but also because it provided many of the materials upon which much of the country's industry and trade depended. Cotton was the critical raw material for the textile industries and a valuable export; wool was the main input for the important carpet industry and was also an important export commodity. Cottonseed was the key input for the extraction, refining, and soap industries. The sugar beet crop was refined domestically, and there was also fruit and nut processing and packaging for export. Hides and skins, such as karakul, were key inputs for much of the local handicrafts industry and were also major export items. Agricultural products constituted 75 percent of the country's exports in 1977, but this fell to 43 percent in 1984 as natural gas exports increased.

After the drought of 1971–72 and the subsequent famine in parts of the country, self-sufficiency in food, especially wheat, became a major goal of the government. Production of cereals rose just enough during the 1970s to obviate the need for imports during years when the precipitation was normal. During dry years, however, such as 1977, the country had to import wheat and other staples. With the disruption of agriculture caused by the fighting after the coup, the government had to buy wheat from foreign suppliers to avoid scarcities. In 1982 Afghanistan imported over 200,000 tons of wheat from the Soviet Union, and estimates of imports in 1983 and 1984 rose to twice that figure.

Land Use Patterns

Of Afghanistan's surface area of 63 million hectares, only 8 million were arable, the remainder being high mountain land and arid wasteland. The arable land was scattered throughout the country, primarily in valleys along rivers and other water sources. The total irrigable area was about 5.3 million hectares, of which half was irrigated annually while the other half remained fallow. Only 1.4 million hectares of the land irrigated in sequence had sufficient water throughout the year to allow double cropping. Before 1978 the irrigated land area provided Afghanistan with 85 percent of all food and industrial crops produced. Another 1.4 million hectares of cultivated rain-fed land supplemented the irrigated areas. Thus, about 4 million hectares of land were cultivated annually before 1978 by 1.2 million farm families.

The most serious constraint on agriculture before 1978 was the scarcity of water. The cultivation of the soil depended on the farmers' ability to use water from the spring floods as the winter snows in the mountains melted. Traditionally, Afghan farmers developed a variety of systems to control the water supply and distribute it to their fields. Where the land was fairly flat, as in the northern plains, diversion dams of brush, mud, and stone were built to divert water into irrigation canals. A finely branched network of canals running side by side then channeled the water to the usually small plots of land set on terraces in the narrow river valleys. Throughout eastern, southern, and southwestern Afghanistan, farmers also used another traditional irrigation system, developed centuries ago by the Persians, called the *karez*, or *qarez*. The *karez* is an underground tunnel connected by vertical shafts. The underground

canal intercepts the rising water table as the land slopes upward away from the riverbed and brings the water from the hillsides down to the cultivated land on the plains. These irrigation systems require considerable labor-intensive maintenance. The diversion dams are often washed away in the spring floods, and the irrigation canals are frequently blocked by silt and branches. The repair of the dams and canals may require hundreds of workers, depending on the size of the system. The irrigation system is entirely dependent on the weather, as was demonstrated during the drought of 1971–72 when the country's agricultural output sagged considerably. Even below-average snowfall, as occurred in 1977, can cause serious problems for dryland crops. In contrast, above-average precipitation, as occurred from 1972 to 1976, leads to very good harvests.

In response to the shortage of water, nearly all of the government's agricultural investment funds went into large-scale irrigation projects, such as in the Helmand Valley. The large investments did not realize higher crop yields immediately because of problems with land development and local farming techniques. There were also serious difficulties with soil salinity as a result of faulty drainage systems in areas brought under irrigation.

The government's emphasis on large irrigation projects maintained the traditional farming techniques. The average farmer still followed the farming practices of his forebears, and his productivity remained very low. His equipment was rudimentary, often little more than wooden ploughs and hand sickles. The soil itself lacked basic nutrients and key trace elements, having been developed under arid conditions. The soil's natural deficiencies were exacerbated by traditional farming practices and the cultivation of soil-depleting crops, such as wheat, barley, rice, and corn. Little of the land was fertilized because animal manure was used for fuel. There was little crop rotation. In addition, farmers used old seed strains and had only limited access to chemical fertilizers and pesticides. For a Green Revolution, such as occurred in India and Pakistan, short-term credit was required for farmers to start using these expensive inputs. The large irrigation projects tied up most of the sector's funding, and as a result there was little financing available. Starting in the 1960s, modern inputs were available to Afghan farmers, and they responded well, but the instances remained few until the 1970s. Further aggravating the problem was the country's shortage of technical and agricultural

specialist skills that limited the availability of extension services. It was also difficult to convince farmers of the value of producing surpluses when access to roads and cities was so limited. The continued isolation of so many villages fostered the belief in and the need for self-reliance in basic food production, which was reflected in the priority given to subsistence wheat farming.

By the mid-1970s, however, the country's agricultural sector was making modest achievements. The weather was more favorable, and the use of fertilizers and pesticides was expanded. Fertilizer use increased from 9,000 tons in 1967 to over 100,000 tons in 1978. In the 1960s the United States Agency for International Development (AID) began a program that was designed to raise wheat output through higher yielding varieties—notably Mexipak—so that wheat output would rise enough to achieve basic self-sufficiency. New varieties of rice, sugarcane, sugar beets, and cotton were also introduced into the country. Average yields rose during the decade before the PDPA coup. Wheat production, for example, increased from 867 kilograms per hectare in 1966 to 1,131 kilograms in 1978. Rice and sugar beets recorded similar yield increases. The higher wheat yields allowed farmers to grow larger amounts of cash crops, and in the 1970s increasing acreage was devoted to crops such as cotton, sugar beets, and fruit. During the same period the government raised prices of cotton and sugar relative to wheat, and farmers produced more of these cash crops.

Crops

Cereals, such as wheat, rice, corn, and barley, dominated the cropping pattern and occupied most of the arable land. Fruits and vegatables, such industrial crops as sugar beets and cotton, and forage crops occupied the remaining irrigated cultivation. Wheat was the main staple and was grown throughout Afghanistan. Before the outbreak of fighting, wheat took half of the irrigated land for a double cropping in winter and summer. It also occupied most of the rain-fed land for a summer crop, so that in the years before the Soviet invasion wheat cultivation occupied 2.4 million hectares. Production rose slowly before the invasion, peaking at over 2.9 million tons in 1976. Corn, the second most important crop, was grown throughout the country over an area comprising around 800,000 hectares. It was consumed by both people and ani-

mals. Barley cultivation took up 300,000 hectares in rain-fed highland areas. Production in the mid-1970s stayed near 400,000 tons annually. Rice was grown primarily in the north around Baghlan and Konduz, as well as Herat and Nangarhar. In the mid-1970s around 200,000 hectares were devoted to rice production, and output was over 400,000 tons per annum.

Cotton, the most important cash crop, competed with wheat for use of the irrigated land. The price of cotton was set by the government, and its profitability varied in relation to wheat. Before the outbreak of fighting, farmers were very responsive to prices when allocating land to cotton cultivation. In his study of the inhabitants of Konduz Province, anthropologist Thomas J. Barfield noted that farmers grew little cotton until its price rose to twice that of wheat; once the price ratio of cotton to wheat was two to one or greater, cotton farming became widespread because of its high cash value. Farmers did not, however, completely abandon wheat farming, because they saw no dependable alternative supply source. Rather, they grew enough for subsistence while using the rest of their land for cotton. Before 1978 cotton production increased steadily, from 71,000 tons grown on 55,000 hectares in 1968 to 165,000 tons from 112,000 hectares in 1976. Konduz, Takhar, and Baghlan provinces produced most of Afghanistan's cotton, but observers thought areas in western and southern Afghanistan, such as Herat and Helmand, were also favorable for cotton farming.

Sugar beets provided about two-thirds of domestically grown sugar, and sugarcane the rest. Sugar beet was grown primarily in the vicinity of the processing plant at Baghlan. It competed with cotton and wheat for available land, but its lower procurement price limited production before 1978, even though Afghanistan had to import 85 percent of its sugar needs in 1976. At that time Afghan sugar beet production was about 100,000 tons annually from 5,000 hectares cultivated. Sugarcane production was about 60,000 tons from 3,000 hectares farmed in the Jalalabad region.

Afghanistan was well known regionally for its variety of fruits and vegetables. The country's grapes, raisins, and melons were famous export commodities, and grapes constituted 30 percent of the total fruit production. Mulberry, however, was the most widely grown fruit, and its dried berries were an important element in the local diet. There were also many deciduous fruits, such as citrus and olives. The country's fruit output in 1976 amounted to around 900,000 tons produced

from about 140,000 hectares. Nut trees, including walnut, almond, and pistachio, were also cultivated. Vegetable production reached 900,000 tons in 1976 from a cultivated area of 139,000 hectares. Potatoes constituted 40 percent of the country's vegetable output. Oilseed production was concentrated in linseed and sesame. It amounted to 62,000 tons in 1976 from an area of 106,000 hectares.

Developments after 1978

There continues to be a sharp divergence of views concerning the situation in the agriculture sector after the PDPA came to power. The Afghan government claimed that by 1984 farm output was near or at all-time highs for output of cereals, vegetables, and fruits. The government said that wheat production in 1983 totaled 3.75 million tons, an increase of more than 27 percent from the high mark recorded in 1976. The 1983 rice crop was said to be 650 million tons, a 45-percent improvement over the record 1976 harvest. Overall, the government boasted that the level of total agricultural output was more than 15 percent greater than the levels of the mid-1970s. It admitted to the notable exception of cotton, which fell from 155 million tons in 1976 to 45 million in 1983.

The government gave several reasons for the agricultural growth, chief among them that the area of cultivation was expanded. The government claimed that in 1983 wheat farming extended over 3 million hectares, an area over 25 percent greater than that used in the mid-1970s. The area for rice cultivation fell at the same time. The government's statistics showed that the quantity of irrigated land had increased by nearly 400,000 hectares from 1976 to 1984 and that the area devoted to orchards also rose slightly over that of the mid-1970s. Moreover, the government claimed improved yields per unit of land cultivated. The average yield of wheat, for example, rose from 1.34 tons per hectare to 1.40 tons. The government conceded, however, that the yields per hectare of other crops, notably rice and cotton, declined by 18 and 45 percent, respectively. This appeared consistent with the acknowledged 14-percent drop in the average use of fertilizer per unit of land. National consumption of nitrogenous and phosphate fertilizers decreased by about 15 percent between 1978 and 1982. Despite these difficulties, the Afghan government claimed in late 1984 that the sector's output was high enough to provide for self-sufficiency and lower food prices.

Other observers sharply disagreed with the Afghan government's generally upbeat assessment of the state of agriculture. These analysts noted the crippling effect the war was having on the rural areas. The United States Department of Agriculture projected cereals production to be only 1.23 million tons in 1983, far less than the Afghan claim of 4.50 million tons. In a 1983 study an Afghan agronomist in Pakistan estimated that the agricultural output of Afghanistan fell dramatically between 1979 and 1982. According to Professor Azam Gul, wheat production declined by about 80 percent; corn, about 77 percent; rice and barley, each about 74 percent; and cotton, 88 percent. Although these rough estimates could provide only the basic outlines of the situation inside the country, they were congruous with information available concerning high levels of food imports and higher price levels.

In an effort to curb armed resistance activities in the countryside, the Afghan government and the Soviets pursued a "scorched earth" strategy that was seriously disrupting the rural economy in many regions. In the wake of government attacks and mass reprisals, entire regions that once were fertile became areas of barren waste. Various tactics were employed to spread terror and to destroy both food supplies and the means of food production. According to a broad range of reports from inside the country, farmers working in their fields were frequently targets of air assaults. Those peasants who did not flee the country often had to reverse the traditional working day and work in their fields only at night. The Soviets also targeted food supplies on which the guerrillas depended for sustenance. Many offensives and reprisal operations included the burning of wheat fields. Professor Louis Dupree noted there were two types of incendiary bombs in use in Afghanistan. One exploded on contact with the ground so that it destroyed wheat gathered for threshing, drying, or milling. The other exploded in midair, scattering phosphorous pellets over a wider area; this kind was employed against fields. Even more serious for the sector's longer term prospects were the attacks against the agricultural infrastructure. In many areas the local irrigation system had less capacity as a result of bombing attacks and the reduced levels of maintenance. Dams had not been rebuilt after the spring runoffs, and water canals had filled with sand and mud. This had serious effects. In Qandahar, for example, resistance sources said that many of the fruit orchards were dying for lack of water. Qandahar had been the source for 75 percent of Afghanistan's dried fruit

output, and in 1983 Indian traders observed a sharp decline in the supply of dried fruit coming out of Afghanistan while prices doubled. These orchards would take years to replace.

By 1985 the harsh assaults on villages suspected of harboring guerrillas had depopulated large portions of the Afghan countryside. Entire families fled either to the larger cities or to neighboring countries to escape the fighting. Others fled to the hills to escape the government's forced enlistment of men for the army. Large numbers of the male farm labor force were fighting with the resistance, although their number was impossible to ascertain. This depopulation of the countryside reduced Afghanistan's agricultural capacity. In his study, Azam Gul stated that the shortage of labor in farming regions was the biggest single problem facing agriculture. Based on his surveys of refugees in Pakistan, he estimated that over half of the labor force in the countryside had disappeared. The average farm unit, therefore, which had had 4.6 workers in 1978, had only 2.2 in 1982.

The loss of manpower forced Afghan farmers to cultivate less land than they had before the onset of fighting, Azam Gul concluded. He estimated that by 1982 wheat acreage had fallen by two-thirds nationally. This directly contrasts with the government's claims. He noted that provinces with large farms, such as Farah, Qandahar, and Nimruz, had proportionally larger decreases in wheat acreage than provinces containing smaller farms. In addition to wheat, Azam Gul found that corn acreage dropped by two-thirds, barley by half, rice by 80 percent, and cotton by 85 percent. Government statistics agreed that cotton and rice acreage declined, but the official statistics admitted to only a fraction of the decreases estimated by Azam Gul. Acreage declines were also attributed to large price increases and lack of availability of equipment, seed, and gasoline. Wheat seed, for example, rose from Af62.6 per seer in 1978 to Af154 in 1982. (In Afghanistan a seer is equivalent to about 7.08 kilograms.) Generally, the price hikes reflected increasing scarcity. The labor shortage made mobilizing the large work crews to repair the irrigation systems far more difficult, and the higher prices came at a time when agricultural credit was severely curtailed.

Not only was the cultivated area reduced after 1978, but the crop yield per unit of land also fell, according to this study. Nationally, wheat output was 50 percent lower in 1982 than the 1978 figure. Similarly, rice yields fell by 65 percent, barley 40 percent, corn 63 percent, and cotton 70 percent. Sever-

al factors combined to reduce agricultural productivity. High-yield seeds were less available, and fertilizer use declined dramatically, according to refugee farmers. The damage to the irrigation system caused water supply problems. Finally, there was direct damage to crops from the fighting. The resultant combination of smaller cultivated acreages and lower yields drastically lowered farm production. As a result, by 1982 there were reports of hunger and severe malnutrition in parts of the country. A 1984 report by a British anthropologist, Frances D'Souza, estimated that half a million Afghans were starving or malnourished because of the smaller harvests and the disruption of internal trade. The food shortages were concentrated in Badakhshan, which had suffered during the 1971-72 famine. Parwan, an area of intense fighting, was also said to be food deficient, and Hazarajat was also sometimes mentioned as an area of particular food shortages. The national reduction in cash cropping showed a reversion to the local subsistence economy in response to uncertain transport and food supplies. In 1983 the winter snows were below average, heightening fears about potential famine inside the country. One of the new manifestations of reduced harvests was the plea by resistance groups in 1984 for food supplies rather than arms.

Not all observers, however, feared widespread famine, and they pointed out that the threat of famine was largely diminished by the depopulation of the country. There were few people in the countryside in the 1980s, and less food was required to maintain those still in the rural areas. Nor was the disruption of agricultural activities and the threat of hunger universal within Afghanistan. Northern provinces were said to have generally adequate food stocks. These northern regions were among the areas where the Soviets allowed trade and farming to flourish so they could provide supplies to Kabul and Soviet Central Asia. Regions along the borders of Iran and Pakistan were in less danger of famine because food supplies were smuggled across the borders. The higher prices, however, made it difficult for the rural poor to buy food.

To stabilize the deteriorating food situation, resistance groups began to intervene more often with community agricultural operations. The *mujahidiin* (literally, holy warriors; freedom fighters) increasingly took on the role of local governments and were responsible for providing greater security from both attack and food shortages. In the Panjsher, for example, they established stringent rules governing which crops were to be grown, how much of the harvest could be marketed

and for what prices, and when animals could be sold. They even determined when farmers could leave. By 1984 the resistance often sought to prevent people from abandoning their farms for refugee camps. The resistance set up cadres of troops whose sole duty was to help with food production and distribution. They sought to prevent the transfer of food to government-controlled areas and tried to persuade people to hold on to their food stocks rather than participate in the inflationary money economy. The government countered by dispatching agents who secured as much grain as possible from village markets.

Land Tenure and Land Reform

The need for land reform had long been recognized, and both the Daoud and the PDPA governments sought to redistribute significant quantities of land to poorer rural families. Little was known about the prevailing landholding patterns before 1978, but the best study, a 1967 agricultural census, showed the average size of farm holdings was 3.5 hectares. Over 70 percent of the holdings were smaller.

A 1979 PDPA study put this figure at 82 percent and said that four-fifths of the population owned only a third of the country's total arable land. According to this study, another 5 percent of the rural landholders owned more than 45 percent of the total arable land, having holdings of at least 10 hectares. In general, Afghanistan was a land of small farmers, with a majority of farms owner operated. About a third of the rural dwellers were thought to be landless laborers, sharecroppers, or tenants. The size and nature of farm holdings varied greatly between different regions of the country. According to the 1967 survey, the largest average landholdings were in the northern and western parts of the country where dry farming was frequently found. Even in the Helmand Valley, landholdings were large, and sharecropping predominated. In the central and eastern regions, where there was more irrigable land, holdings were smaller than the national average. This stemmed from the large ratio of people to irrigable land and from inheritance laws that subdivided land into smaller parcels. The structure of farm ownership was considered an economic problem by analysts in and out of the government. The large landholdings were farmed by tenants and sharecroppers who traditionally received a fifth of the harvest for their labor. Often the crop was divided evenly if the tenant contributed other inputs,

such as seed or fertilizer. Tenants and sharecroppers had reduced incentive to develop the land or use the best inputs. On the other side of the spectrum, a large number of small-scale holdings were often not productive because farmers could not afford to use the expensive modern inputs.

In addition to the inequalities of landownership, the high costs of credit in the countryside burdened peasants further. Debts were a regular feature of rural life. The small farmers needed annual credit in the form of cash, seeds, or livestock. They obtained these either from wealthier neighbors or from nomad creditors. Under the prevalent *gerau* system, a borrower could receive a loan up to the full value of his land. He was then obligated to turn over half his crop to the lender every year until the debt was repaid in cash. Because the borrower needed most of his remaining harvest for his family, there was rarely much surplus left for sale, and loans took years to pay back. If the borrower died, his family inherited his debt, although they technically still owned the land. The *gerau* gave the lender, in effect, very high interest rates. The effect was somewhat mitigated, for the borrower usually claimed a very low harvest and the lender seldom got his full share. Still, peasants frequently lost their land de jure to creditors when they proved unable to liquidate the debts.

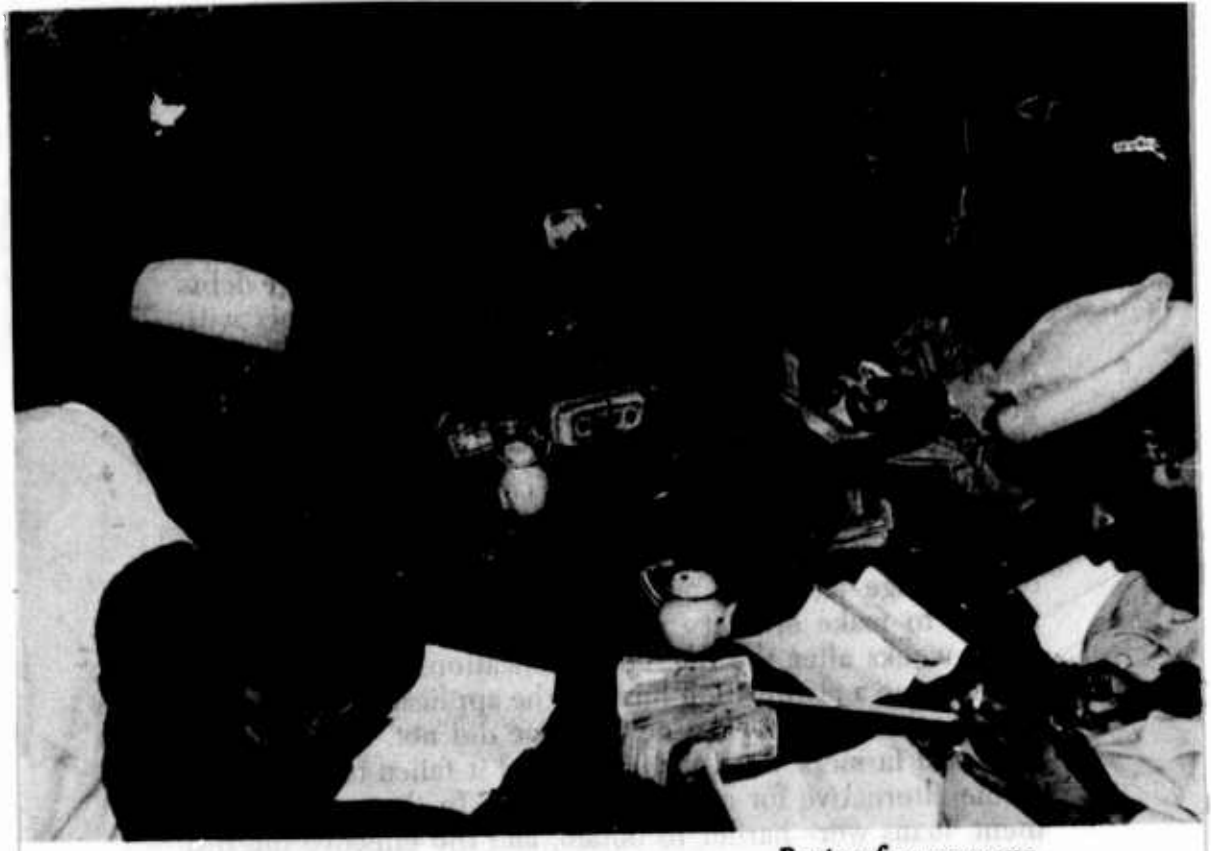
The Daoud government responded to the inequities of the existing land tenure conditions by issuing a Land Reform Law in 1975. In order to ease the social and economic problems connected with the skewed distribution of landownership, the government limited individual holdings to a maximum of 20 hectares of irrigated, double-cropped land. Larger holdings were allowed for less productive land. The government was to expropriate all surplus land and pay compensation. To prevent the proliferation of small, uneconomic holdings, priority for redistributed lands was to be given to neighboring farmers with two hectares or less.

Landless sharecroppers, laborers, tenants, and nomads had next priority. Despite the government's rhetorical commitment to land reform, the program was quickly postponed. Because the government's landholding limits applied to families, not individuals, wealthy families avoided expropriation by dividing their lands nominally between family members. The high ceilings for landholdings restricted the amount of land actually subject to redistribution. Finally, the government lacked the technical data and organizational bodies to pursue the program after it was announced.

When the PDPA took power, it quickly moved to remove both landownership inequalities and usury. The first step was Decree No. 6, which canceled *gerau* and other mortgage debts of agricultural laborers, tenants, and small landowners with less than two hectares of land. The cancellation applied only to debts contracted before 1973. The government decided that, given the high interest rates, the lenders had received enough to repay the principal and still have a small profit. The government claimed that 81 percent of the country's peasant families would benefit from this relief. The new government immediately encountered administrative difficulties with the millions of mortgage and debt agreements. Many documents were forged to make ordinary private debts look agrarian. Only three weeks after the decree's publication, the government had to issue a clarification limiting the applicability of the law to agricultural loans. The new regime did not, however, end the small farmers' need for credit, and it failed to establish a viable alternative for agricultural loans. In the new environment, loans were harder to obtain, and the effective interest rates on credit rose. As a result, financial conditions in the countryside deteriorated.

A more important element of the government agrarian reform was its Decree No. 8 of November 1978, establishing new landholdings from the 20 hectares of prime irrigated land in the 1975 law to just six hectares. It divided all land into seven classes and again allowed for larger holdings of less productive land. Nor was there to be any compensation for government-expropriated surplus land. The government projected that there would be about 1 million hectares of surplus cultivable land available for redistribution to landless or nearly landless peasants. The PDPA planners acted on the assumption that there was a high concentration of landownership in large estates. They estimated that only 4 percent of the landowners would be affected by redistribution measures. Decree No. 8 also established categories of farmers who had priority for redistributed land; sharecroppers already working on the land had highest priority. The government lacked hard data on which to base its reform, as had its republican predecessor. By the mid-1980s there had never been a thorough cadastral survey of all the rural areas. The government's projections of the area of land, its fertility, the numbers of existing and deserving landowners, and the initial distribution of land were all guesstimates.

The land redistribution program was not, however, the



Paying for weapons

Arms cache in Paktia Province;
Commander Zamir Khan (far left)

Arms depot

Arms depot
Photos courtesy Kurt Lohbeck

easy success the regime initally claimed it to be. The central government immediately found that the scarcity of cultivable land, and especially irrigable land, made it practically impossible to grant one-hectare plots of first-grade land or its equivalent to every land-hungry peasant. Instead there was a shortage approaching 350,000 hectares of first-grade land. Later the government realized this deficit was even greater when the nomadic population was considered. The government also found that providing formerly landless peasants with plots of low-yield dryland was of little value without other resources, which were also unavailable. Part of the government's problem with the land reform project stemmed from the haste with which it began the program in order to gain political strength. President Babrak Karmal noted the government's inadequate planning in a 1984 speech:

> With courage we can say that Decree No. 8 and the start of its implementation took place in an extremely hurried situation. This is an important and major point. A great step was taken without careful and profound study or collection of information from all corners of the country, without scientific study of land questions, national and historic characteristics, characteristics of the situation of peasants in the country, or the nature of the land question, although the aim of this step was lofty and sacred.

Once the program began, it created social disorder in rural areas, which fueled the opposition already under way against the regime. Under the uncertain security conditions, the land reform program was even harder to implement. There was less land redistributed in central and eastern Afghanistan not only because of the prevailing tenure structure of smaller plots but also because those regions were controlled by the *mujahidiin* and were not subject to any authority of the central government. Farmers often proved unwilling to work redistributed land because of uncertainties of ownership. The land reform measures were one of the causes for the decline in agricultural output after 1978.

By 1981 outside observers believed the government had quietly shelved the land reform program. In 1985, however, the government claimed that land reform had continued apace after the onset of "the new development stage of the Sawr (April) Revolution." According to the government, between 1978 and July 1985 about 688,520 hectares had been redistributed among 319,538 families. In March 1984 the government had announced several amendments to Decree No. 8 to

enhance its acceptance in the countryside. These amendments exempted peasants from several property taxes. The modifications also called for the organization of village farm councils with broad jurisdiction to oversee land and water reform.

In addition to land redistribution, the government's agrarian reform program called for the collectivization of farmers into various kinds of cooperatives and the establishment of large-scale, state-owned mechanized farms. Farmers who were members of agricultural cooperatives were to have easier access to improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and equipment as well as better marketing facilities. The government claimed steady success in attracting farmers into the cooperatives. In 1979 the government claimed there were 959 agricultural cooperatives with 125,000 members; in 1981 the figures had grown to 1,211 cooperatives with 191,000 members. A German researcher doubted that these cooperatives had significant value to their members because the working capital was only Af300 per member. He also noted the lack of skilled expertise among cooperative members, a problem the government sought to rectify by establishing a cooperative institute with Soviet help. The government also set up agricultural mechanized stations in Kabul, Balkh, Jowzjan, Baghlan, and Herat provinces. These stations were to rent Soviet-made equipment to neighboring farmers. There were also by 1985 mechanized farms scattered throughout the country to produce cereals, cotton, sugar beets, and high-yield seeds. These were presumably set up on some of the 3,000 hectares reserved by the government in 1979, concentrated primarily in the northern provinces.

Livestock

Almost all of the rural population was connected in some way with animal husbandry, for either income, food, or draft power. Animal products, including meat, milk, skins, hides, and wool, contributed 7 percent of GDP and about 15 percent of exports in 1976. In addition, there were unofficial exports of live sheep to Iran before the war, involving 1 million head valued at around US$3 million annually. The importance of animal husbandry was all the greater because without it there would be little use for the 40 million hectares of remote, harsh rangelands it used. All the meat and milk consumed in the country were produced domestically, except for donated milk products, usually powders. Before the fighting, per capita meat

consumption was 11.5 kilograms annually, although the average for rural and urban poor was far less—around four kilograms per capita. The supply of meat was seasonal, with peaks in late spring and late autumn. Milk consumption was 60 kilograms. Fresh milk was mainly available to families who owned cows; sheep's milk was available in the country for only about two months in the spring after lambing. There were no collection, storage, and marketing facilities for dairy products.

Animal husbandry consisted primarily of extensive sheepherding and goatherding. The nomadic population owned about 80 percent of the sheep and goat flocks, thought to number 20 million and 3.3 million, respectively. These flocks moved annually between winter grazing in the semiarid plains and summer grazing in high mountain pastures in the Hindu Kush. In areas with irrigated farming, 3.6 million cattle were maintained, primarily for draft oxen and dairy products and occasionally for meat. Camels were kept for transport, milk, and meat. Horses and donkeys were also used for transport. There was also some poultry production, but it was highly irregular and was mainly backyard scavenging.

The livestock sector suffered from very low productivity for a variety of reasons. As with crop production, the scarcity of water was the most serious constraint. The lack of water reduced the available feed supply. Because of the high ratio of animals to forage, there was widespread animal malnutrition, especially in winter. The rangelands over which the nomadic flocks roamed were considered community property, and there was inadequate care taken to prevent overgrazing. Only the crop residues, mainly wheat and barley straw, were available on a cash basis for supplementary winter feeding. During periods of drought the animal herds suffered badly, with a decrease of 40 percent estimated in flocks during the 1971-72 drought. In addition, there were high disease and mortality rates, in part because of poor nutrition and lack of veterinary services.

A particularly important segment of the livestock subsector was the karakul sheep, whose pelts were highly valued. Afghanistan was one of only three important karakul-producing countries, the others being South Africa and the Soviet Union. During the 1970s Afghanistan was not the largest producer, but it was the largest exporter of the high-priced gray pelts. Karakul pelts were always a prime agricultural export and an important source of foreign exchange, although their share of foreign exchange receipts fell steadily as other exports

rose in volume and value. During the 1970s annual exports averaged 1.3 million pelts. The afghani value of pelts rose in the decade before 1978, climbing from Af442 in 1968 to Af950 in 1977, an increase of 215 percent.

In 1979 the number of karakul sheep was estimated at about 4.8 million, or approximately a quarter of the total sheep population. Karakul production was centered in the north and northwestern provinces, among both sedentary and nomadic flock owners. The best quality pelts were produced under harsh conditions, and production was therefore susceptible to droughts and feed shortages. During the relatively moderate drought of 1976, the karakul population decreased by nearly 25 percent. In addition to pelts, the sheep produced milk and meat. Mature karakul produced a coarse, multicolored wool. Karakul lambs were slaughtered for their pelts in spring, and the flock owners sold the salted pelts to dealers, who sent them to curing houses. The government's Karakul Institute, established in 1946, received the cured pelts and, after grading them on the basis of color, curl, and quality, arranged for selling and shipping. In 1983 auctions in London continued to sell most of the pelts; Leningrad was the other main auction site. The government was seeking to diversify the markets for karakul into the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. There were also reports that it was building a new garment factory in Kabul to use the lower grade pelts for clothes for export to Europe. Further pelt-processing capacity was scheduled for 1985 in Kabul using Czechoslovak equipment.

The effects of the fighting on Afghan livestock were hard to evaluate in any statistical sense. The government claimed that by 1983 the numbers of sheep, cattle, and goats all equaled or surpassed their prewar figures. It also claimed increases in 1982 of 14 percent and 26 percent in beef and mutton production over the 1978 figures. The numbers of animal hides and skins were also said to have risen slightly. According to wartime visitors to Afghanistan, the war generally had a cruel effect on animal stocks because of direct attacks and mines scattered in fields. The director of Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières), a French medical assistance organization, observed that injured animals lacked any veterinary care and died from secondary infections. In the exodus of rural refugees, many animal owners took their livestock with them. In early 1981 the refugees were estimated to have taken 1.25 million cattle with them to Pakistan. There

were also reports of a large number of sheep being moved to Iran after the outbreak of fighting. The karakul pelt industry was disrupted. In 1984 about 1 million pelts were produced, compared with 1.3 to 1.5 million a decade earlier. The much higher prices for meat in Afghanistan would also correlate with projections of significant drops in meat production.

Industry

Afghanistan's industrial sector was still at an infant stage at the time of the Soviet invasion. The bitter fighting that ensued disrupted the emerging industrial structure and hurt many industries. In comparison with agriculture, industry made relatively small contributions to GDP and employment—about 21 and 10 percent, respectively, in 1982. These figures were up slightly from the 1966 levels of 20 percent and 6 percent. The public sector dominated the industrial scene, but private enterprise still flourished in handicrafts and small-scale concerns. Afghan industry was primarily concerned with processing local agricultural raw materials and mining local mineral resources. Unlike many other less developed countries, there were few import-substitution industries, and before 1978 there was considerable freedom to import industrial goods, especially consumer goods. Aside from the difficult security situation, the economy confronted substantial constraints impeding rapid industrial growth. These related to the country's very poor income level, poor investment infrastructure, and geography. Transport remained costly and slow, and the domestic market was still fractionated and traditional. There was little experience in management and a serious shortage of technical skills. Outside observers, however, felt that Afghanistan still had some comparative industrial advantages because of its low labor costs and the potentially large supplies of agricultural raw materials as well as mineral resources. The Afghan government placed a very high priority on industry. Industrialization was perceived as a means of improving the physical quality of life and also transforming the social relationships of the country.

Mining

In 1985 Afghanistan produced large amounts of natural gas and was preparing to exploit further other natural resource deposits. Natural gas was the most important mineral resource

and industrial product. The country was thought to possess 110 to 150 billion cubic meters of total reserves. With Soviet assistance, production began in 1967 at the Kwoja Gugerdak field, 15 kilometers east of Sheberghan in Jowzjan Province. The field's reserves were thought to be 67 billion cubic meters. The Soviets also completed in 1967 a 100-kilometer gas pipeline, 820 millimeters in diameter, linking Keleft in the Soviet Union with Sheberghan. Other fields were discovered at Kwaja Bolan, Yatim Taq, and Jousik, with reserves of about 2.5 billion cubic meters. Gas production rose from 1.68 billion cubic meters in 1968 to 2.8 billion in 1980. In 1982 a new field at Jarquduk, also in Jowzjan, started production, again with Soviet aid. In spite of the new field, gas production slumped somewhat after the record year in 1980. In the mid-1980s the country was producing about 2.5 to 2.6 billion cubic meters annually. The government attributed this decrease to reduced pressure in the gas fields (see table 8, Appendix).

The government placed a high priority on expanding the country's natural gas industry. In 1985 the Afghans, with Soviet assistance were trying to restore pressure in the existing fields. In 1978 a gas desulfurization plant was completed by the Soviets at Jarquduk with a capacity of 2 billion cubic meters annually. The plant could also produce 15,000 tons of condensate annually. Geologic exploration intensified in the early 1980s with the key assistance of Soviet experts, despite hazards to their physical safety. Satellite photos were also used. In 1984 two new gas fields were found at Bashikor and Jangal in Jowzjan. Work on a second gas pipeline to the Soviet Union was also under way in the mid-1980s.

The Soviets had long exhibited interest in the natural gas deposits across the Amu Darya in Afghanistan. They began geologic exploration in earnest in 1957 with the conclusion of a technical assistance agreement. From the beginning, Soviet aid was designed to promote large exports of natural gas to the Soviet Union. Although production started in 1967, there was no Afghan gas consumption until 1975, when about 2 percent of the output was diverted to a thermal power plant at Mazar-e Sharif. The value of these gas reserves jumped with the advent of the Iranian Revolution. In late 1979 a dispute over prices caused Tehran to halt gas exports to the Soviet Union. It was, as a result, a cold winter for many citizens of the Soviet Central Asian republics. After their intervention in Afghanistan, the Soviets secured control of the Afghan gas facilities, whose production aided the development of the Turkmen, Uzbek, and

Tadzhik republics. By the mid-1980s gas exports to the Soviet Union represented 90 percent of total production and constituted a vital element in the Afghan budgetary and trade picture. The Soviets, however, paid Afghanistan a very low price for gas; in 1981 it was only half the price of Soviet gas piped to Western Europe. These relatively low prices dated back to the initial Afghan gas exports. Whereas world gas prices varied according to calorific value, Afghanistan received prices far below those of any major world exporter. In addition, Afghan officials were unable to verify the actual amount of gas pumped to the Soviet Union because the meters were on the Soviet side of the border, and Afghan officials had no access to them.

Afghan gas consumption was concentrated in the city of Sheberghan, where in 1982 a local distribution network was finished. About 3,000 homes had access to the network. In 1980 the thermal electricity plant at Mazar-e Sharif was converted to operate on coal rather than gas. Gas still powered the thermal plants providing electricity for Balkh and Mazar-e Sharif, and the fertilizer plant at Mazar-e Sharif used gas as a production input.

Petroleum exploration in Afghanistan began before World War II when an American firm, American Inland Oil Company, undertook field surveys. In the late 1930s the Americans withdrew because of the unsettled international situation and the declining world oil market. After World War II the Afghans invited the French to develop potential petroleum resources in the north. The Soviets protested operations of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization country beside their border, and Afghanistan therefore replaced the French with a Swedish team in 1954. In 1956 the Afghans had their first oil find, and, with further Soviet help, the oil reserves were evaluated. The country was estimated in 1978 to have petroleum reserves totaling some 70 to 100 million barrels located in Faryab and Jowzjan provinces. In late 1984 there were reports of seven new oil fields discovered with Soviet aid. By 1984, however, Afghanistan was not producing oil, but fields in the Saripul region of Jowzjan were being prepared. Another indication of significant petroleum discoveries was the government's plan to build a petroleum refinery in Jowzjan with an annual capacity of 500,000 tons after crude oil production commenced. Until Afghanistan starts its own petroleum production, it will remain dependent on Soviet refined products to meet its national needs.

In 1985 coal was Afghanistan's second major hydrocarbon resource. It was the oldest fuel industry, dating back to shortly after World War I. All Afghan coal production was consumed domestically, and official statistics did not show any imports of coal. The main user of the coal was the electric-power industry in thermal plants in the Mazar-e Sharif region. The emphasis on natural gas exports to the Soviet Union made coal the primary fuel for domestic industry. Despite labor shortage problems, production rose steadily during the 1970s but then slumped after 1979. Although it recovered somewhat, official figures show that in 1983 coal output was still 24 percent below the 1978 level. Other observers guessed the 1983 figure to be only a third of the 1978 level. Coal production was centered in three mines: Darra-i-Suf, south of Mazar-e Sharif, and the older Karkar and Ispushta mines near Pol-e Khomri. The latter two mines had been in operation since the 1950s and were thought to be nearly exhausted. The Darra-i-Suf coal was of very high quality, and some was suitable for coking. Opened in 1966, the field was Afghanistan's largest, possessing an estimated 60 million tons of high-quality coal reserves. The country's overall coal reserves were estimated to be about 400 million tons in 1975.

In January 1984 a report was published by the chief engineer of the Afghan Geological Survey Department of Soviet uranium mining in Afghanistan. It revealed that uranium production was begun in the mountains of Khawaja Rawash north of Kabul after the discovery of deposits in 1983. Soviet engineers were also said to be mining uranium at Koh Mir Daoud, between Herat and Shindand, and also in the Khakriz area of Qandahar province. The uranium projects were restricted to Soviet personnel in order to maintain secrecy and security. All production was sent to the Soviet Union.

Afghanistan has reserves of a wide variety of nonenergy mineral resources, including iron, chrome, copper, silver, gold, barite, sulfur, talc, magnesium, mica, marble, and lapis lazuli. By 1985 Soviet surveys had also revealed potentially useful deposits of asbestos, nickel, mercury, lead, zinc, bauxite, lithium, and rubies. The Afghan government in the mid-1980s was preparing to develop a number of these resources on a large scale with Soviet technical assistance. These efforts were directed primarily at the country's large iron and copper reserves. The iron ore deposits contained an estimated 1.7 billion tons of mixed hematite and magnetite, averaging 62 percent iron. These reserves, among the world's largest, are

located at Hajji Gak, almost 4,000 meters up in the Hindu Kush, northwest of Kabul in Bamian Province. Development started in 1983, and because the Afghan authorities had put forth no plan to establish an iron and steel industry, the output appeared destined for the Soviet steel mills in Tashkent.

Afghanistan's largest copper deposits were in Aynak, 50 kilometers southeast of Kabul. The reserves were thought to contain about 280 million tons of 0.7- to 1.5-percent copper ore. The Aynak deposits were being developed with considerable Soviet and Czechoslovak aid. Because the Afghan ore was of a grade notably superior to Soviet ore, the Soviet firm Machinoexport was preparing the infrastructure for a mine and mill having an annual capacity of 114,000 tons of copper concentrate. A smelter was being built near the Soviet embassy in Kabul to receive the mill's output. The US$600-million project was scheduled to start up in 1985.

The Soviets were also involved in chrome extraction in the southeastern part of Afghanistan. By 1985 two main deposits had been identified at Hesarak in Nangarhar Province and at Mohammad Agha in Lowgar Province. Another mineral produced in Afghanistan was barite. The Sangilayan mine, 65 kilometers northwest of Herat, had an output of about 12,000 tons annually during 1977-79; figures after that period were unavailable in late 1985. Reserves amounted to 867,000 tons, and there were another 300,000 tons of inferred reserves. Plants at Ghori, Jabal os Saraj, and Herat produced cement. Output fell sharply after the Soviet invasion but then rebounded to preinvasion levels by 1983. The Ghori plant was the largest producer of the three.

Before the 1979 Soviet intervention, precious and semiprecious stones were a major industry in Afghanistan. Eighty percent of the world's lapis lazuli had come from the country. These minerals came from Sar Sang, a remote region in the high ranges of the Hindu Kush. Production, thought to be 6,000 kilograms in 1979, fell sharply after the Soviet invasion. The extent of the decline, however, was unknown.

Manufacturing

By the 1980s the manufacturing sector was still at an early stage of development. Other than handicrafts, the importance of manufacturing to the economy was relatively slight compared with mining. Factories generally depended on local agricultural raw materials for production. The first industrial

plants were established by private entrepreneurs, led by Bank-i-Melli, and received government support in the form of monopoly concessions. By the outbreak of World War II, the bank had set up joint stock companies for cotton ginning, cotton textiles, edible oil extraction, and sugar refining. The war disrupted further progress, and private investment lagged.

In order to speed the pace, during the first two development plan periods, from 1956 to 1967, the government set up a number of industrial enterprises with foreign aid and technical assistance. Although the government sought to stir private investment with the 1967 FDPIL, the public sector became increasingly involved in industrial activities. The government took over weak or abandoned enterprises from the private sector, such as the Woolen Industries in Pol-e Charkhi, formerly owned by Germans. The nationalization of banks in 1975-76 made the government a majority shareholder in some of the largest manufacturing firms, such as Afghan Textiles, formerly owned principally by Bank-i-Melli. By the mid-1970s the public sector controlled nearly all large-scale industry, representing most of the country's industrial investment. This provided only a fraction of total industrial output and employment, however. The most important public sector industries were based on cotton and were usually located in the north and east of the country near cotton-growing regions. Other major public sector enterprises included cement and construction materials at Ghori, urea fertilizer at Mazar-e Sharif, and food processing, mainly in Kabul. Although the government sought during the 1970s to establish some import-substitution industries, domestic consumption of manufactured goods consistently equaled or surpassed the sector's capacity in the few areas where there was domestic production. In addition, the public sector lacked any capital goods production facilities, with the exception of the Jangalak Ironworks, which produced furniture, spare parts for Soviet-made vehicles, and related material. Nearly all industrial goods, therefore, had to be imported. After the PDPA took power, it assumed control of all heavy industrial enterprises. It then denied private enterprise any role in major industrial operations.

Private nonagricultural enterprise was usually small and family based. Private sector activities included services, such as internal and foreign commerce and transport. There was also a small private industrial sector, which included such operations as small machine shops and furniture-making establishments. Most of these shops were found in Kabul. The most

important private industrial activity was handicrafts production. In 1981 the government estimated that the handicrafts sector contributed 9 percent of GNP and employed 300,000 people, far more than the work force in heavy industry and mining combined. Most of the workers were women. Handicrafts production was scattered throughout the country but was specialized by region. Textile embroidery and leather goods were found mostly in the south around Qandahar. Wood and stone carving were concentrated in the northeastern provinces, while jewelrymaking was done primarily in the Kabul area. Carpet and rug weaving, the most important handicraft, came from the north and northwest. Carpets and rugs provided over 10 percent of export revenues in 1981 and were especially popular in Western Europe. In addition, a significant number of carpets were thought to go into Iran unofficially. Afghan carpets were made of pure wool and were hand-knotted. Apart from carpets, however, the quality of handicraft goods was often poor. Production techniques were simple and had scarcely changed for generations. Output was directed primarily to local markets and was limited in volume. Crafts were often disappearing from the larger cities because the small elite's tastes were changing. It was developing a preference for modern imported goods rather than traditional objects of wealth. Artisans retained markets in smaller towns that served a traditional hinterland. Except for the small elite, however, private industrial operations continued to serve most people's needs for clothing, furnishings, and building materials.

Effects of the War

The outbreak of fighting in 1978 curtailed the output of manufacturing, as it did for coal mining. Some production facilities, such as the Kabul bakeries, were damaged. Shortages of agricultural raw materials plagued certain industries, and there were also serious shortages of skilled labor. Many workers either fled the country, joined the resistance, or were drafted into the army. Internal transport difficulties prevented part of the available industrial crops from reaching the processing plants. The textiles and food-processing industries, particularly dependent on the hard-pressed agriculture sector for their inputs, were especially depressed. Even official statistics admitted a dramatic reduction in their output as supplies of industrial crops—cotton, wool, oilseeds, and sugar beets—declined. Ginned cotton production decreased by 73 percent between

1978 and 1982; cotton textile output fell 50 percent. Other textile production also decreased. The rayon industry, dependent on imported inputs, was hurt by transport difficulties, and production fell by 71 percent. Output from woolen textile plants also declined by a third during the period. In the food-processing industries, sugar production plummeted by 97 percent between 1978 and 1982, and vegetable oil production fell by 73 percent. The bakeries were able to use Soviet wheat imports to maintain their output. The output of carpets also fell during the period.

The government, however, claimed significant industrial success and said that greater wheat flour and bakery production were recorded in 1982 than in 1978. The fertilizer plant at Mazar-e Sharif was said to have increased its output by 6 percent during the first five years of PDPA rule. The government also claimed that coal and cement production were rising steadily after initial dramatic reverses in the early 1980s. Industries that exported heavily to the Soviet Union, such as natural gas, fertilizer, and cement, received substantial Soviet aid. Soviet assistance was a key factor in maintaining Afghan industrial output levels, even for bakeries dependent on Soviet wheat imports. According to the government in March 1984, 70 percent of state industrial production came from Afghan-Soviet projects. The overall industrial situation reflected a decline and a growing dependence on trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in general.

Foreign Trade

Foreign trade was critical to the economy, although historically the external sector had never been a large part of the national economy. After economic modernization began in the 1930s, foreign trade grew at a faster rate than the economy as a whole. Exports, however, remained relatively insignificant. Few Afghans perceived exports as a viable sector by itself; they looked upon exports as a way to dispose of excess production. Government trade statistics were extremely poor in quality, but they indicated that it was not until the mid-1970s that exports surpassed 10 percent of GNP. For a small developing country, that was a comparatively low figure. It was also admittedly understated because it never accounted for the existence of an active smuggling trade. Foreign trade was crucial because of the role of its imports in the economy. Imports by the

mid-1970s were somewhat greater in value than exports. More important was their composition. Virtually all machinery and equipment had to be imported, as were intermediate goods for agriculture and industry, including fertilizer and fuel. A large variety of consumer goods were also purchased from foreign suppliers. In years of poor harvests cereal imports were also vitally important. The PDPA was unable after its 1978 takeover to correct the country's historic merchandise trade deficits. Under its regime the trade picture worsened as imports grew very rapidly and foreign aid inflows slowed. This effectively reversed the trend of the 1970s, which had seen Afghanistan run steady balance of payments surpluses and accumulate foreign exchange reserves.

Exports

Until 1967, exports were agricultural products or agriculture-based products (see table 9, Appendix). There were practically no industrial exports aside from carpets. The value of exports rose during the 1970s, and by 1978 exports were nearly five times the value of those of 1968. At the same time, the composition of exports changed significantly. In 1966 dried fruits and nuts accounted for about a quarter of export receipts; cotton and karakul skins each contributed 18 percent, and carpets and rugs provided 12 percent. Fresh fruit, vegetables, wool, and animal hides and skins accounted for most of the other exports. In 1967 Afghanistan began exporting natural gas to the Soviet Union, and by 1978 natural gas accounted for 16 percent of export earnings. In the late 1970s-early 1980s natural gas prices rose sharply worldwide. Between 1978 and 1981 the export price of Afghan gas rose sevenfold, although it remained lower than gas prices elsewhere in the world. The higher gas export earnings provided most of the impetus behind the doubling of export receipts between 1978 and 1981. Higher gas revenues accounted for 60 percent of the higher export totals. By the 1980s natural gas became the primary Afghan export commodity. In 1981 it constituted 40 percent of export earnings. The other major commodity, dried fruits, still provided 25 percent of export receipts in 1981. The world demand for dried fruits in the late 1970s had also pushed up their prices significantly. Depressed production at home, however, caused cotton to fall to just 1 percent of exports in 1981, and karakul skins declined in significance to only 3 percent of exports. Carpets continued to earn 10 or 11

percent of the country's export revenues at the beginning of the 1980s.

Export volumes increased less rapidly in most cases than the 220-percent improvement in export earnings between 1978 and 1981. Natural gas exports, for example, remained steady at about 2.4 billion cubic meters. Dried fruit export volumes rose by 74 percent to 101,000 tons, according to government statistics. Fresh fruit exports rose by only 7 percent between 1978 and 1981. The volume of carpet exports nearly doubled, and wool export volume rose by 230 percent during the period. More important, as a result of the higher natural gas and dried fruit export prices, Afghanistan's terms of trade were significantly improved by the end of the 1970s. There were indications, however, that export volumes rose little after 1981 and that fruit and wool exports declined in both quantity and price.

The direction of Afghan exports also changed as the Soviet Union took a much larger portion of total exports after the PDPA takeover in 1978. During the mid-1970s exports to the Soviet Union accounted for a little more than a third of total exports, but by 1981 the Soviets took 60 percent. Correspondingly, the shares of other regional countries dropped sharply between 1978 and 1981. Pakistan fell from 13 percent to 9 percent, and India from 12 percent to 6 percent. Exports to Western nations also decreased in significance. The American share dropped from 4 percent to 1 percent, the British from 9 percent to 5 percent, and the West German's from 7 percent to 5 percent.

Most of the Afghan trade with the Soviet Union and other communist countries was carried out through barter deals in which the quantities of traded goods and their prices were determined in annual negotiations. Trade accounts were kept in "clearing dollars," which corresponded to the official Da Afghanistan Bank exchange rate for dollars. These dollars were not convertible into other nations' currencies. The barter trade penalized exporters, who earned only Af50 per export dollar in bilateral trade arrangements, whereas a convertible dollar earned over Af100 on the free market in 1984. In addition, the Soviets frequently offered low prices for Afghan commodities. Natural gas was the most obvious example, but Afghan exports of citrus fruit and olives from the Nangarhar Valley Project to the Soviet Union were also priced lower than the prices offered by nearby Pakistani companies. Afghanistan exported high-quality urea fertilizer and cement to the Soviet Union for

low prices as well. The Soviets were sometimes known to resell Afghan commodities, such as foodstuffs, in Eastern Europe at a profit.

Imports

Government statistics classified imports into three categories: project-aid financed, commodity-aid financed, and commercial. In constant dollars, project-aid imports rose from US$141.6 million in 1977 to US$152.9 million in 1982, and commodity-aid imports increased from US$20 million to US$89 million during the same period. These two forms of imports were not broken down by the government into specific commodities. Project- and commodity-aid imports were far fewer than commercial imports. Commercial imports constituted 64 to 72 percent of total imports during the 1977–82 period. These commercial imports doubled in value during this time, reaching US$695 million in 1982. The overall commodity composition changed little, unlike exports. Imports of manufactured goods, such as textiles, yarn, and paper products, increased in value steadily, but their share of the total commercial import bill fell from 28 percent in 1977 to 23 percent in 1982. At the same time imports of machinery and transport equipment quadrupled, and their portion of total imports rose from 11 percent to 32 percent. Imports of mineral fuels and lubricants more than doubled in value and represented 14 percent of commercial imports in 1981, up from 12 percent in 1977. Food imports more than doubled during the period, but their share of the total import bill remained about 14 percent. Much more food was brought into Afghanistan under commodity assistance. The value of chemical imports rose little, and thus these constituted only 4 percent of the 1982 commercial import bill, compared with 9 percent in 1978 (see table 10, Appendix).

These imports were vital to the Afghan economy. Most of the country's food consumption was supplied by domestic production, but wheat imports from the Soviet Union in the 1980s were thought to be at least 200,000 tons annually. They were averting serious shortages in the government-controlled cities. In addition, imports from the Soviet Union supplied most of the sugar consumed, and Indian tea met all domestic demand for tea. Imports also satisfied most of the country's nonfood consumer goods demands, and import laws were relatively liberal. Finally, imports provided almost all capital and interme-

diate goods upon which its nascent industry depended. All of the refined petroleum products came from the Soviet Union, as did transport machinery. Factory machinery came from all over Eastern Europe.

Afghanistan's gradual integration into the Soviet sphere was easily observable in the shift in the supply sources for its imports. During the mid-1970s bilateral trade agreements with members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) provided from 25 to 33 percent of Afghanistan's imports; of these the Soviet Union supplied 21 to 38 percent each year. After 1978, however, the share of the Soviet Union more than doubled, so that by 1981 it provided about 65 percent of Afghanistan's imports. Bilateral deals with Eastern Europe provided 68 percent of the total commercial and aid-financed import bill.

Meanwhile, imports from Afghanistan's Western trade partners declined, as did their share of the Afghan import market. Japan's share fell from 19 percent in 1977 to 9 percent in 1981, the Federal Republic of Germany's (West Germany's) from 7 to 2 percent, and Britain's from 4 to 2 percent. American imports, which had been as high as 12 percent in 1973, fell to less than 1 percent in 1981. At the same time, imports from Afghanistan's two main regional trading partners also declined in significance. In the mid-1970s Pakistani imports accounted for 3 to 5 percent of total imports into Afghanistan; in 1981 they constituted only 1 percent. India, which had supplied 5 to 10 percent in the 1970s, provided only 2 percent in 1981. By the 1980s Soviet products dominated the Afghan market for all sorts of goods ranging from tractors and vehicles to soap and fertilizer.

Smuggling

Official trade statistics never mention the active smuggling activities along the Iranian and, more important, the Pakistani borders. The real dimensions were unknown, but in his 1974 study Maxwell J. Fry estimated that illicit importing and exporting amounted to 20 to 30 percent of commercial foreign trade. Because trade taxes, especially import duties, represented such a large part of its revenue, the smuggling constituted a major revenue loss for the government. All sorts of Western consumer goods were illegally brought into Afghanistan from Pakistan, and they kept the bazaars of Kabul well supplied. The most important item smuggled out of Afghanistan into Pakistan

was opium. The importance of the Afghan opium crop increased in the 1970s. Before the war the Afghan opium was thought to have been grown in half the country's provinces, and with prices ranging up to US$100 per kilogram, it paid far better than any other cash crop. Production before the outbreak of the war was estimated at about 250 tons annually. Most opium cultivation was in the Pushtun areas of eastern Afghanistan, in Badakhshan, Nangarhar, and Paktia provinces. Every spring, poppy fields bloomed in profusion throughout the region, destined for markets in the United States, Europe, and the Middle East. Drug trafficking was thought to be worth between US$20 and US$100 million annually before the war. The other important items smuggled into Pakistan were lapis lazuli and lumber. Livestock was sold at a much higher price in Iran than in Afghanistan, and animals, therefore, constituted a major item smuggled into Iran, as was opium.

Balance of Payments

Up to 1978 Afghanistan had a steadily improving balance of payments and achieved a growing foreign exchange reserve. This was somewhat paradoxical because the country persistently ran a merchandise trade deficit. Merchandise exports rose from US$100 million in 1970 to US$326.7 million in 1977 as the prices and volumes of agricultural commodities and natural gas climbed. Concurrently, the value of imports rose from US$153 million to US$523 million, so that by 1977 the merchandise trade deficit reached a total of US$196 million. In the years after the PDPA takeover, the merchandise trade deficit rose even higher, up to US$251 million in 1982 after peaking at US$350 million in 1981. Throughout the period of PDPA rule, Afghanistan had larger trade deficits with communist countries than it did with Western nations. The problem of worsening merchandise trade deficits was aggravated by a sharp decline in the small Afghan tourism industry. Never well developed, its revenues totaled US$13 million in 1976. After the outbreak of fighting it dropped to practically nil. In the official statistics, therefore, Afghanistan had a large current account deficit (see table 11, Appendix).

The effect of constant and growing trade deficits on the balance of payments was alleviated by the flow of remittances from Afghans working in the Persian Gulf and by the steady inflow of foreign aid. The exact size of the capital inflow from remittances was unknown because it occurred in the money

bazaars, whose transactions were not officially recorded. During the mid-1970s capital inflow was estimated to be anywhere from US$50 million to US$200 million annually. The remittances were a major contributor to the upward surge of the afghani on the free market in the 1970s and helped establish the balance of payments surpluses in the 1970s through the bazaar's provision of foreign exchange to Da Afghanistan Bank. With the slowdown of the Gulf oil economies in the 1980s, the inflow of money through remittances was considered to be much reduced. The bazaar by then could no longer supply the government with such large quantities of foreign currency.

The Afghan government was, therefore, heavily dependent on official foreign aid to provide the foreign exchange credits to cover the merchandise trade deficit. This was not a new situation. Throughout its postwar history the economy had relied mainly on foreign government loans and grants to finance its trade deficit. These import finance funds were in addition to the large volumes of development project aid and commodity assistance provided to Afghanistan after World War II. The volume of these trade loans and grants grew from US$65.2 million in 1971 to US$218.4 million in 1977. This external financing assistance, usually on concessional terms, came from both Western and communist nations.

The Soviet Union was consistently the largest single trade assistance donor, and the United States, West Germany, and Czechoslovakia were also large aid donors. After 1978 all kinds of official economic assistance, including trade finance, dwindled from Western nations and international organizations. According to the government, by 1981 trade finance from the West totaled only US$36 million, compared with US$126 million in 1978. At the same time, financing increased from the Soviet Union and its allies, up from US$109 million to US$227 million. According to a March 1985 radio report from Kabul, all loans and grants amounted to US$1.37 billion between 1978 and 1984. During that period 69 percent came from the Soviet Union, which provided US$946.64 million, of which US$448.47 million was in grants. In 1985 the Afghan government said 95 percent of its aid would come from the Soviet Union. By the end of 1983 Afghanistan owed the Soviet Union over US$2.6 billion for its different credits and loans. This represented three-quarters of Afghanistan's total external debt. In March 1977 the Soviet debt had constituted only two-thirds of the Afghan foreign debt. This was another indication of the country's integration into the Soviet Union.

Despite the soft terms on foreign aid loans, the requirement to pay back interest and principal on these foreign debts was a constant strain on the Afghan balance of payments. Debt service payments absorbed about one-tenth of export earnings until 1975. In that year the Soviet Union again agreed to reschedule some of the Afghan debt, as it had done in 1972. The debt service ratio then fell to about 7 percent of exports in 1976. In the following years, however, the debt service ratio rose to around 13 or 14 percent annually. In 1980 the Soviets granted a one-year relief on interest payments, but the next year debt service payments more than doubled to reach US$118 million, as the grace period from the earlier debt rescheduling agreement ended. In 1981, therefore, US$118 million had to be subtracted from the official aid inflow of US$262.2 million. This problem looked even more threatening for the mid-1980s, for the debt service ratio promised to exceed 20 percent of export earnings. There were reports that Afghan gas export receipts were being used entirely to repay debts to the Soviet Union.

Foreign Exchange Reserves

Pushed by the massive inflow of capital in the foreign aid concessions, Afghanistan registered overall balance of payments surpluses in the early and mid-1970s. The surpluses led to growing holdings of convertible foreign exchange. The reserves of foreign exchange held by the government peaked in 1979 at US$411 million. With the outbreak of fighting in 1978, the general trade situation deteriorated seriously, and the balance of payments surpluses dwindled and then faded away. Da Afghanistan Bank had begun drawing down its foreign exchange reserves in 1980 to cover the payments deficits. By 1982 the country had recorded its second straight deficit, and foreign exchange holdings fell to US$246 million. At the same time Afghanistan had surpluses in its bilateral currency accounts with the Soviet Union and other East European nations, thanks to exports and foreign aid. These bilateral accounts rose from US$17 million to US$310 million by the end of 1982. The 1982 level of foreign exchange reserves combined with the bilateral accounts was thought to be able to cover seven months of imports. The credits with the Soviet Union, however, did the government little good outside of Eastern Europe. When the Afghan government sought to buy consumer goods outside of Comecon, it sometimes had to ask

the Soviet government for a special allowance of convertible foreign exchange so that it could pay for the items.

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Finding solid, reliable economic data on Afghanistan remained a difficult task in late 1985; it had been somewhat easier in the 1970s. Maxwell J. Fry's *The Afghan Economy* is a detailed study of the structure and problems of the economy up to 1972. Sections of Louis Dupree's *Afghanistan* and his series of American Universities Fieldstaff Reports deal with the Afghan economy. The Afghan government's *Afghan Agriculture in Figures*, which has an abundance of statistics, was published in 1978. There is also the government's series of economic plans, dating back to the 1950s. The government statistics are, however, of very dubious quality and, by the 1980s, very hard to locate. Such publications as the Food and Agriculture Organization yearbooks, the *U.N. Industrial Statistics Yearbook*, the *U.N. Energy Statistics Yearbook*, and the *U.N. National Account Statistics* report official government statistics. The State Planning Committee publishes its Socio-Economic Development Plan in English every year. The International Monetary Fund's *International Financial Statistics* has statistics on Afghanistan as well. There are numerous articles about the Afghan economy found in the Foreign Broadcast Information Service *Daily Report: South Asia* series and in the Joint Publications Research Service *Translations on Middle East and North Africa* series. Finally, academic journals, such as the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* and *Asian Survey*, have occasional pieces about the country's economy, as do *Far Eastern Economic Review* and *Middle East Economic Digest*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 4. Government and Politics

Mujahidiin on top of a downed Soviet helicopter

AFGHANISTAN'S GOVERNMENT in the mid-1980s was dominated and controlled by the Soviet Union. A facade of independence was maintained, but the regime of President Babrak Karmal was subject to the dictates of Soviet advisers who directed his government's ministries and Afghanistan's pervasive secret police. The population was fully aware of Afghanistan's loss of independence following the Soviet invasion of December 27, 1979.

As much as 80 percent of the countryside was outside government control. Although this reflected in part the traditional autonomy of local political leaders, antiregime guerrillas—the *mujahidiin*—made it virtually impossible for the regime to maintain a system of local government outside major urban centers. The *mujahidiin* also made their presence known in Kabul, the capital, by launching rocket attacks and assassinating high government officials.

Even Afghans not actively involved in the resistance tended to regard the Karmal regime with contempt. To devout Muslims, the regime's collaboration with an atheist power, the Soviet Union, was unforgivable. Regime attempts to enlist the support of ethnic minorities, women, youth, tribal chiefs, and the ulama (Islamic scholars) met with very limited success. Observers estimated that only about 3 to 5 percent of the total population actively supported the regime.

Karmal's difficulties in presiding over a government with virtually no popular support were compounded by the bitter and longstanding rivalry between the Khalq (Masses) and Parcham (Banner) factions of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). In 1967 the PDPA split into these two groups, headed by Nur Muhammad Taraki and Karmal, respectively. The split reflected deep ethnic, class, and ideological differences. The Soviets coaxed a reunification of the party in 1977; but when the party came to power in April 1978, the animosity deepened as Khalq leaders purged, imprisoned, and even tortured their Parcham rivals. In late 1985 Soviet advisers were still unable to prevent violent confrontations between Khalqis and Parchamis, which often ended in fatalities.

The Soviet Union has had a substantial interest in Afghanistan since the reign of King Amanullah (1919-29). After World War II, Moscow was the most generous donor of economic and

military aid. United States involvement in Afghanistan was substantially less, owing in part to Washington's support of Pakistan. Afghanistan and Pakistan were at odds over the issue of Pashtunistan, an Afghan-supported campaign for the creation of an independent or autonomous state for the Pashtu-speaking nationals of Pakistan. After military supporters of the PDPA seized power and then ceded it to the civilian Revolutionary Council headed by Taraki in April 1978, the Soviets became increasingly tied up in Afghan internal politics. Because the PDPA had close ideological affinities with Moscow, it could not remain a neutral observer. Radical measures enacted by Taraki in the summer and autumn of 1978—particularly decrees relating to the abolition of usury, changes in marriage customs, and land reform—created great resentment and misunderstanding among highly conservative villagers. Insurrection began in the Nuristan region of eastern Afghanistan and then spread to most other parts of the country. *Mujahidiin*, operating from bases outside the country, launched attacks against the government, while their ranks were swelled by desertions from the Afghan armed forces.

Although the Soviets increased drastically the volume of military aid, they were dissatisfied with the PDPA's radicalism. Top Soviet advisers attempted to pressure leaders to adopt a more moderate, united-front strategy, but with limited success. The chief obstacle was the brutal and ambitious Hafizullah Amin, Taraki's foreign minister and prime minister after March 1979. Taraki, with Soviet assistance, attempted to remove Amin on September 14, 1979; but Amin, turning the tables, arrested Taraki after a shootout at the House of the People (formerly the Presidential Palace), imprisoned him, and ordered his murder in early October. Relations between the Soviets and Amin grew distant. As the security situation deteriorated, Moscow ordered troops into the country. The plan, carried out on December 27, 1979, had been formulated over a period of several months. High-ranking Soviet military officers who had been involved in the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 played prominent roles.

The Soviets installed Karmal, exiled leader of the Parcham faction, as the country's new president and PDPA secretary general. Amin had apparently died fighting Soviet troops outside Kabul. Most observers believed that the principal factors in Moscow's decision to invade included the need to rescue a friendly scoialist regime from certain destruction and to thwart potential security threats to the Soviet Union itself. If a mili-

tantly Islamic regime, like Iran's, had been established in Afghanistan, it might have had destabilizing consequences for Soviet control of the Muslim populations of its Central Asian republics. Other observers interpreted the invasion as part of a comprehensive strategy to gain access to the Indian Ocean and a dominant position in South Asia and the Middle East. In the mid-1980s negotiations for the peaceful withdrawal of Soviet troops, sponsored by the United Nations, were under way. Few believed, however, that Soviet occupation of the country would be a short-lived phenomenon.

A Revolution Backfires

The regime of President Mohammad Daoud Khan came to a violent end in the early morning hours of April 28, 1978, when military units stormed the Presidential Palace in the heart of Kabul. Overcoming the stubborn resistance of the Presidential Guard, the insurgent troops killed Daoud and most members of his family. True to Afghanistan's militant traditions, Daoud refused to surrender and died fighting. The coup had begun a day earlier, the date commemorated by Afghanistan's new rulers as the beginning of the Sawr (April) Revolution. According to Louis Dupree, a seasoned observer of Afghan affairs, the coup was an "accidental" one in which the poor organization of the rebels was exceeded only by the ineptitude of the government ("Foul-up followed foul-up, and the side with the fewer foul-ups won"). There was a comical element as rebel tanks, rolling toward the Presidential Palace, were caught in a noonday traffic jam (a half-holiday had just begun a day before Friday, the Muslim Sabbath), and speeding taxis wove in and out of the armored column. Passersby stood around casually, watching the action. The fighting, however, was bitter. Dupree estimates that the siege of the Presidential Palace and engagements at other points around the city cost 1,000 lives (other estimates are as high as 10,000, though this is unlikely).

The coup d'état was touched off by leaders of the leftist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA—Jamiyat-e-demokatiqi-khalq-e-Afghanistan, in Dari) and was carried out by the party's cadres and sympathizers in the armed forces. Daoud's determination to establish an autocratic, one-party state had alienated numerous people, particularly in the capital, and leftists were alarmed at the rightward shift in his poli-

cies: the president had reneged on promises to implement progressive reforms, had purged his government of leftists, and in the last years of his rule had sought financial support from Iran, ruled by the shah, and Saudi Arabia in order to make Afghanistan less dependent on Soviet economic aid. The immediate cause of the coup, however, was the murder on April 17 of Mir Akbar Khyber, a Marxist ideologue associated with the Parcham faction of the PDPA (see Daoud's Republic, 1973-78, ch. 1). The identity of the murderer was never established. The PDPA claimed after its seizure of power that the perpetrator was an agent of Daoud, while other accounts suggest with varying degrees of credibility that the assassin was an Islamic militant, a member of SAVAK (Iran's secret police under the shah), or a member of a rival PDPA faction. Although the government issued a statement deploring the assassination, PDPA leaders apparently feared that Daoud was planning to exterminate them all. On April 19 the party organized a mass rally and march on the occasion of Khyber's funeral. As many as 30,000 demonstrators (although the most reliable estimates are between 10,000 and 15,000) marched through the streets of Kabul and shouted anti-American slogans in front of the United States embassy. This show of opposition strength unnerved Daoud, who, after an inexplicable delay of a week, ordered the arrest of seven top PDPA leaders.

Daoud committed a fatal error in not ordering the immediate imprisonment of PDPA Central Committee member Hafizullah Amin. Placed under house arrest shortly after midnight on April 26, Amin hurriedly stitched together a plan for a coup d'état and enlisted his children as couriers to communicate with PDPA cadres in the military. Because of police negligence, Amin's children were able to carry their father's messages through the streets of Kabul unimpeded; their task was made easier by the fact that most Afghan military officers lived with their families in the city rather than in separate military encampments. By the time Amin was taken off to jail late in the morning of April 26, the plan for the uprising had been disseminated.

The coup d'état's execution the following day, however, revealed the haste with which the plan had been composed. The insurgents, including infantry, armored, and air force contingents, were poorly coordinated. The population remained ignorant of developments because the rebels did not secure the Radio Afghanistan broadcasting station in Kabul until the late afternoon on April 27. PDPA leaders were clearly not in

command. It was not until 5:30 P.M. that they were liberated from a government prison. Some months after the April coup, Amin admitted at a press conference that it had occurred two years ahead of the PDPA's schedule for revolution. Daoud's determination to exterminate the left, Amin alleged, had forced the PDPA to act.

The contours of the new regime were at first very unclear. To outside observers, what had occurred was a conventional military coup. Two key figures were Abdul Qader, an air force colonel who had ordered air strikes against the Presidential Palace during the fighting, and Muhammad Aslam Watanjar, commander of a tank brigade who had led a column of tanks and armored cars into the capital from armored division headquarters on the city's outskirts. Both men had participated in the 1973 coup that had brought Daoud to power. At 7:00 P.M. on April 27, Qader made an announcement over Radio Afghanistan, in the Dari language, that a "revolutionary council of the armed forces" had been established, with himself at its head. Watanjar read a similar statement in the Pashtu language. The council's initial statement of principles, issued late in the evening of April 27, was a noncommittal affirmation of Islamic, democratic, and nonaligned ideals. The language of Marxist revolution was not conspicuous. The Soviet embassy in Kabul was ostensibly caught by surprise. The ambassador, Alexandr M. Puzanov, was enjoying a trout fishing holiday in the Hindu Kush at the time, although the Committee for State Security (Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti—KGB) and Soviet advisers posted in Afghanistan may have had a more active role than it appeared. As the month of April drew to a close, the Soviet news agency TASS referred to the coup simply as a military seizure of power.

Within two days of Daoud's fall, however, the armed forces' revolutionary council ceded power to a 35-member, PDPA-controlled civilian body, the Revolutionary Council (RC) of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. This chain of events bore some similarity to Daoud's coup d'état five years earlier. Although the military had lifted Daoud into power, they had a minimal political role once he formed a government. But the military's willingness to step aside also was testimony to the PDPA's success in transforming important sectors of the armed forces into an effective power base. Amin was principally responsible for this. As early as 1965, and certainly by 1973, he had devoted himself to building a cadre in the officer corps, "educating them on the basis of principles of the

working class ideology" (in the words of an official account of the coup) and convincing them of the need to eliminate the old regime.

A major factor contributing to PDPA support in the military was disaffection over Daoud's predilection for awarding top commissions to cronies and fellow Muhammadzai clansmen. Able and conscientious officers who were not well-connected were frustrated by an entrenched system of nepotism that blocked their careers. Despite promises made in 1973, this was essentially the same system that had existed under King Zahir Shah. It is unclear how many officers understood Marxist concepts or considered themselves leftist, although a large number had received training in the Soviet Union, but by 1978 Daoud had forfeited the loyalty of many—though not all—military officers posted in the capital region.

On April 30 the RC issued the first of a series of fateful decrees. The decree formally abolished the military's revolutionary council. This body disappeared down an Orwellian "memory hole"; the official history of the Sawr Revolution mal es no mention of it and describes PDPA leaders as having established the RC on April 27. The RC named PDPA secretary general Taraki as its president and prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. The decree also designated the RC as the highest government body, whose pronouncements would have the force of law. A second decree, issued on May 1, named Karmal vice president of the RC and senior deputy prime minister. The other members of the first cabinet were also named; they included Amin, Qader, and Watanjar. A third decree, issued two weeks later, nullified Daoud's 1977 constitution and replaced it with a document entitled "Thirty-two Basic Lines of Revolutionary Duties." It also established "revolutionary military courts" to dispense swift justice to enemies of the people. Two other decrees drawn up in the months following the coup declared the regime's commitment to the equality of Afghanistan's different ethnic groups and deprived the surviving members of the royal family of their Afghan citizenship.

In an official statement broadcast over Radio Afghanistan on May 10, President Taraki announced his regime's programs. These included land reform, development of both state and private sectors of the economy, universal free education, free health care facilities for all citizens, and promotion of the equality of the sexes. In foreign policy, Taraki affirmed the principles of nonalignment, peaceful coexistence, and support

for national liberation movements worldwide. Nothing in this rhetoric was a dramatic departure from pronouncements of the early Daoud era. The Marxist-Leninist component of PDPA ideology was a decidedly minor theme because leaders feared alienating groups within the country and Afghanistan's conservative neighbors outside the country. But through the summer and autumn of 1978, as more decrees were issued, Taraki and his associates put Afghanistan on the road to revolution. Amin expressed this most clearly on November 7, 1978, the anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik seizure of power in Russia, when he asserted that the Sawr Revolution was a continuation of the October Revolution. This revolutionary commitment was violently at odds with traditional Afghan values and interests, especially in the rural areas. As spring gave way to summer and autumn, however, the PDPA, wracked by internal rivalries, proved to be its own worst enemy.

Evolution of the PDPA as a Political Force

The history of leftist political movements in Afghanistan is a short one. The society is highly conservative and without bourgeois or working classes in the Western sense. The number of persons who can participate in Western-style politics is small; literacy in the years following World War II was around 5 percent, and the tiny handful of intellectuals receptive to Marxist ideas was concentrated in the urban areas. Because Afghanistan escaped exploitation by Western colonialists (one of the few Asian countries to do so), there was little or no stimulus for nationalist, anti-imperialist movements to develop.

Another factor in the slowness with which a leftist movement developed was the attitude of the Soviet Union. Soviet interests in the turbulent years following the October Revolution did not dictate the encouragement of a communist movement that would challenge the monarchy. King Amanullah established excellent relations with the Soviets as a means of asserting his independence from the British, and the Soviets found him a useful ally against both the British and Muslim conservatives, who challenged their control of what is now Soviet Central Asia. Marxist scholar Fred Halliday notes that, as far as can be determined, no Afghan communist party was formed under the auspices of the Communist International (Comintern). This contrasts sharply with Moscow's strategy in other Asian countries. As early as 1919, Lenin had encouraged

the formation of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party in one of the most backward places on earth, and during the early 1920s communist parties were being organized under the guidance of Comintern agents in Turkey, Iran, British India, China, Japan, and Korea.

Neither the conservatism nor the isolation of Afghanistan, however, was absolute. Amanullah's bold but disastrous attempt to transform the country along Kemalist lines in the 1920s was a vivid memory. Schools and colleges were being established with European curricula. Many Afghans were also aware of nationalist and leftist movements in British India. The Communist Party of India (CPI) had been founded in 1925, and some Afghans who had spent time in the subcontinent were introduced to Marxist concepts by Indians. Halliday suggests that the influence of the CPI on Afghan leftism was more formative than that of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU); nevertheless, the Soviet Union gained considerable prestige among educated Afghans for its postwar aid programs, and the CPI always faithfully followed the CPSU's initiatives on matters of policy.

The winds of political change blew faintly through the Hindu Kush, and after 1945 the government vacillated between tolerating and repressing liberals who were trying to make the system more open. The 1947–52 period witnessed the emergence of the Wikh-i-Zalmayan (Awakened Youth) movement, which engaged in harsh criticism of the royal family. A highly politicized student union was organized at Kabul University, and a handful of opposition newspapers—*Angar* (Burning Embers), *Nida-i-Khalq* (Voice of the Masses), and *Watan* (Homeland)—were published (see Zahir Shah and His Uncles, 1933–53, ch. 1). As criticism of the status quo grew sharper, the government reacted by banning dissident organizations and jailing their leaders. Many leftists received their first schooling in politics during this period.

Three PDPA Leaders

Three men—Taraki, Amin, and Karmal—played a central role in the evolution of the Afghan left and the fortunes of the PDPA. Taraki, the oldest, was born in 1917, the son of a livestock dealer and small-time smuggler. His family is described by Dupree and other observers as "seminomadic," traveling frequently between Ghazni Province and British India (see fig. 1). Despite his family's poverty, Taraki was able to attend a

provincial elementary school and a middle school in Qandahar and was the first member of his family to be literate. He was in Qandahar during the fall of the reformist King Amanullah in 1929. Leaving school at age 15, he went to the Indian port city of Bombay to work in the office of an Afghan company that exported dried fruit to the subcontinent.

He learned English at a night school and became acquainted with Indian Communists, although he apparently never became a CPI member. Returning to Kabul in 1937, Taraki attended a college of public administration and then assumed a series of posts in the civil service.

While serving in the remote province of Badakhshan in the northeast, Taraki began a writing career. He gained a reputation as a writer of short stories during the 1940s, describing the living conditions of Afghan peasants. Soviet critics approvingly described his work as expressing "scientific socialist" themes. One essay composed in the late 1940s or early 1950s about Maxim Gorky, the idol of literary orthodoxy during the Stalinist period, reveals his close affinities to the Soviet point of view.

Taraki's career, however, was a checkered one. He seems to have played a peripheral role in the Wikh-i-Zalmayan movement (contributing articles to *Angar* but avoiding imprisonment and even retaining his government job), lived briefly in Washington as a member of the Afghan embassy staff, and was recalled to Kabul because of his outspoken criticism of Prime Minister Daoud. He ran his own translation agency between 1958 and 1962 and in the latter year was hired by the United States embassy in Kabul as a translator. Journalist Henry S. Bradsher relates that by 1964 Taraki had close ties with persons in the Soviet embassy and facilitated contacts between its staff (presumably KGB agents) and young Afghans. The Soviets apparently subsidized his literary career and translated some of his works into Russian.

Amin was born in 1921 in Paghman, a town near Kabul. His father was a minor civil servant. Amin studied mathematics and physics at Kabul University and became a high school teacher and principal. In 1957 he won a scholarship to study at Teachers' College at Columbia University in New York, and on completion of his course he returned home to administer teacher-training courses. Returning to Columbia to complete his doctorate in 1962, Amin became involved in the politics of the Associated Students of Afghanistan, an overseas student group in the United States. It was apparently during his so-

journ in the student world of Morningside Heights on Manhattan's upper west side near Columbia's campus that he became interested in Marxism, although Columbia had not yet encountered the radical tumult of the late 1960s. In 1965 he returned to Afghanistan without his doctorate and accepted a teaching post at a girls' high school. His sympathetic biographer, Beverley Male, notes the enthusiasm with which the students responded to his advocacy of social and political revolution. According to Male, "educated Kabuli women were later to be among the PDPA's most enthusiastic supporters."

Unlike Taraki and Amin, Karmal, born in 1929, was a member of the social and political elite. His father, General Muhammad Hussain Khan, had served as governor of Paktia Province and enjoyed close ties with the royal family. Karmal, an indifferent student in high school and in the law school of Kabul University, quickly gained a reputation as an orator and activist in the university's student union in 1951. For his part in the Wikh-i-Zalmayan movement, he was imprisoned for a time, and while in prison he met Mir Akbar Khybar, whose Marxist views had a formative influence on him. After release from jail in 1956, he held posts in the civil service. Anthony Arnold, a former United States intelligence officer, notes that Karmal was able to secure government employment despite his jail sentence because of his family connections: "Babrak was Establishment, representing the modishly far left wing of the wealthiest and most powerful Afghan families."

Formation of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan

Taraki, Karmal, and other leftists (Amin was still in the United States) had been planning to organize a party and took preliminary steps in this direction in 1963, though study groups on Marxist topics had been held since the 1950s. They postponed formally establishing one, however, in anticipation that King Zahir Shah would sign a law legalizing political associations, as guaranteed in the 1964 constitution. Although the king never ratified the party law passed by parliament and thus parties remained technically illegal despite the constitutional guarantee, the PDPA held its First Congress on January 1, 1965. Twenty-seven men gathered at Taraki's house in Kabul, elected Taraki PDPA secretary general and Karmal deputy secretary general, and chose a five-member Central Committee. They also approved a party program. This document, published in the newspaper *Khalq* (Masses) the follow-

ing year, advocated a national front of democratic and patriotic forces and progressive reforms. According to Arnold, the program's avoidance of Marxist-Leninist terminology reflected fears that its use would invite official repression. He claims that the PDPA First Congress adopted a "secret" constitution, replete with communist phraseology, that reveals its true character as "the party of the Working Class of Afghanistan." This document was allegedly unearthed by personnel of a Western embassy in 1978.

Relatively open elections were held for the Wolesi Jirgah (lower house of parliament) in September 1965. Four PDPA members were elected: Karmal, Anahita Ratebzad, Nur Ahmad Nur, and Fezanul Haq Fezan. Taraki and Amin also ran but were defeated; the latter lost by only 50 votes in his hometown of Paghman. From their seats in the lower house, the eloquent Karmal and his associates mobilized students to demonstrate against the government of Prime Minister Muhammed Yousuf. At least three demonstrators were killed and many more wounded when troops fired into a student rally near the prime minister's residence on October 25, 1965 (see The King Rules: The Last Decade of Monarchy, 1963-73, ch. 1). As an increasingly static and inflexible government reacted violently to growing opposition, the foundations of parliamentary rule were cloven.

The preoccupation with maintaining a low profile that dictated the PDPA's need for a secret constitution was in striking contrast to the outspokenness of *Khalq*, published by Taraki in April and May 1966. *Khalq* defined its mission in terms of relieving "the boundless agonies of the oppressed peoples of Afghanistan" and asserted that "the main issue of contemporary times and the center of class struggle on a worldwide basis, which began with the Great October Socialist Revolution, is the struggle between international socialism and international capitalism." The newspaper was highly successful, especially among students. Its first edition sold 20,000 copies, and later editions numbered around 10,000 (there were only six editions altogether). On May 23, 1966, the authorities closed it down on the grounds that it was anti-Islamic, anticonstitutional, and antimonarchical.

The Party Divided, 1967

In the spring of 1967 the PDPA formally divided into two factions, whose rivalry would be a decisive, and often deadly,

factor in the party's political fortunes and misfortunes. The banning of *Khalq* in 1966 prompted Karmal to criticize Taraki for being foolhardy because of the newspaper's open expression of class struggle themes. Arnold suggests that Karmal—and the Soviets—may have pondered the bloody fate of the Indonesian Communist Party, whose radicalism led to its annihilation by Muslim militants in October 1965. On the ideological level, Karmal and Taraki differed in their perceptions of Afghanistan's revolutionary potential. Taraki believed that revolution could be achieved in the classical Leninist fashion by building a tightly disciplined working-class party. Karmal felt that Afghanistan was too undeveloped for a Leninist strategy and that a national democratic front of patriotic and anti-imperialist forces had to be fostered in order to bring the country a step closer to socialist revolution. (This issue is a frequent theme in the history of Asian communism; the most famous instance is the disagreement between Stalin and Trotsky over the advisability of a united front or a revolutionary strategy for the Chinese Communist Party during the 1920s.)

Karmal sought, unsuccessfully, to persuade the PDPA Central Committee to censure Taraki's excessive radicalism. The vote, however, was close, and Taraki in turn tried to neutralize Karmal by appointing new members to the committee who were his own supporters. Karmal offered his resignation. This was accepted, apparently an outcome he did not expect. Although the split of the PDPA in 1967 into two groups was never publicly announced, Karmal brought with him about half the members of the Central Committee. Subsequently, the two groups operated as separate political parties, each with its own secretary general, central committee, and membership. Taraki's faction was known as Khalq, after his defunct newspaper, and Karmal's as Parcham (Banner), after a weekly he published between March 1968 and July 1969.

Ideology was only one factor—and probably not the most important—in the Khalq-Parcham split. Taraki and Karmal were men from two very different backgrounds. This was equally true of their followers, who formed self-consciously separate groups even before the 1967 breakup. Taraki appealed to a rural, lower-middle class constituency of Pashtuns, people like himself who had personal experience of poverty and the oppressiveness of the old order; they tended, however, to be conservative in matters such as the separation of the sexes. Their first language was Pashtu, rather than Dari, the dialect of Farsi spoken by Afghan city dwellers and govern-

ment officials. The Parcham constituency was urban-based, middle class or upper-middle class, and tended to speak Dari rather than Pashtu. They were graduates of the best and most expensive high schools and colleges and were generally more Westernized in their habits and styles of life than the Khalqis. Although both PDPA groups were concerned with changing gender roles and giving women a more active role in politics, women such as Ratebzad, one of the four PDPA members elected to the Wolesi Jirgah in 1965, were more prominent in Parcham. Anthropologist Nancy Hatch Dupree notes that during the late 1960s and early 1970s, Karmal and Ratebzad held party meetings that ended with disco music and dancing. Apparently many university students, chafing under the restrictions of their conservative parents, joined Parcham for recreation rather than to raise their political consciousness.

The Khalq-Parcham rivalry also reflected tensions that have characterized Afghan politics since the forceful unification of the country in the eighteenth century by Ahmad Shah Durrani (see Ahmad Shah and the Durrani Empire, ch. 1). The two leaders were both Pashtuns, but Taraki was a member of the Ghilzai tribal confederation that had been excluded from power by their old rivals, the Durrani. Afghan rulers had experienced limited success in promoting national integration. The result was that tribal sentiments, particularly in the Pashtun rural areas, remained intense. A majority of the Khalqis seem to have been Ghilzai Pashtuns, and their Marxism was often a vehicle for tribal resentments. Relatively few Ghilzai were members of the political, social, or economic elite. Durrani Pashtuns regarded them as a crude, rustic, and violent people who were nomads ("carrying their houses on their backs like snails") rather than settled farmers or townspeople. Since the political elite traditionally lived in towns, Ghilzai Pashtuns both envied and resented urban ways of life. In their eyes, the Durrani were effete and lacking in traditional Pashtun values. Amin, like Taraki, was a Ghilzai. After the fall of Daoud in April 1978, many Afghans recalled that a Muslim saint in the eighteenth century had cursed the Ghilzai, ordaining that they would endure seven generations of servitude. Taraki and Amin's rise to power seemed to mark the end of that period.

Parcham's ethnic composition was more diverse than Khalq's. Although the majority were apparently Dari-speaking Pashtuns from the Kabul region, Hazaras, Tajiks, and other minority groups were also represented. Karmal was neither a

Durrani nor a Ghilzai, but a member of another Pashtun tribe, the Kakars. Coming from an urban and elite background, he lacked a strong sense of tribal identity or allegiance.

The issue of tribal and ethnic identity played a role in the emergence of other leftist movements during the 1960s. In 1964 the surviving relatives of Abdur Rahman Mahmudi, a popular opposition politician who had languished in jail between 1953 and 1963 and subsequently died from the effects of his mistreatment in prison, founded Shula-i-Jawid (Eternal Flame); this was a "Maoist" group that drew support from an odd combination of alienated intellectuals and professionals and Shia Muslims, especially Hazaras, who suffered harsh discrimination at the hands of the majority Sunni Muslims (see Tenets of Islam, ch. 2). The Shula-i-Jawid looked to China as a model for revolution. Its anti-Soviet bias reflected the intense Sino-Soviet antagonisms of the late 1960s and early 1970s and appealed to Afghans who feared the power of their northern neighbor.

Another radical group was Settem-i-Melli (Against National Oppression). This was formed in the late 1960s by Taher Badakhshi, a Tajik who had been a member of the PDPA Central Committee. In its "Maoist" emphasis on militant class struggle and mass mobilization of peasants, Settem-i-Melli resembled Shula-i-Jawid. But it was also strongly anti-Pashtun, and it accused the Soviet Union of supporting "Pashtun colonialism." The group was well-organized, not only within minority communities in Kabul but also in the northeastern provinces where minorities were numerous.

Competition and Reconciliation, 1967-77

Although adept at rousing student passions, Karmal published in March 1968 a journal, *Parcham*, that was noticeably more moderate in its tone than Taraki's *Khalq*. His group earned the somewhat opprobrious nickname the "royal communist party" because of its willingness to cooperate with the authorities and its connections with the royal family. (Khalqis were irked by a speech Karmal had given in parliament in 1966 describing the king as "progressive.") *Parcham* was shut down in June 1969 on the eve of parliamentary elections, but the group had succeeded in getting some very powerful friends. The most important was Daoud. According to Arnold, Daoud, riding in his private car, was present at Parcham-sponsored student demonstrations, thus ensuring that the demon-

strators would not be handled violently by the police. In the August 1969 election PDPA members won only two seats; the successful candidates were Karmal and Amin.

Parcham profited, but also ultimately suffered, because of its association with Daoud. Despite their "royalist" reputation, Parcham leaders supported Daoud's plan to seize power, and Parcham sympathizers in the military played a key role in the relatively bloodless coup d'état that toppled the monarchy on June 17, 1973. Half of Daoud's first cabinet consisted of figures associated with Parcham. Khalq was excluded from the government because of its lack of good political connections and its go-it-alone policy on noncooperation. Taraki did sing a song of united fronts briefly after Daoud's takeover in an attempt to gain places in the government for his followers, but this effort was unsuccessful. Impressed by Karmal's success in infiltrating the armed forces, the Khalq leader abandoned his party's traditional emphasis on working-class recruitment and sought to build his own power base within the officer corps. He was aided in this endeavor by Amin, a brilliant organizer, whose work in the armed forces yielded fruit in April 1978. It is estimated that by the late 1970s Khalq had two or three times the membership of Parcham (the PDPA total was 4,000 to 5,000 persons). It recruited aggressively, whereas Karmal's hands were tied because of his government connections.

Daoud had little love for the left. He sent zealous young Parchamis off to the villages to promote social reforms, a kind of Afghan "Peace Corps," in order to get them out of the capital. After enduring the hostility of villagers for a while, most returned to Kabul disillusioned, only to be jailed by the regime for dereliction of duty. Qader, the air force officer who played such a central role in both the 1973 and the 1978 coups, was demoted and sent to manage the public slaughterhouses after he criticized the president for not implementing socialist reforms. When Daoud turned against leftists, purged them from his government, and instituted an authoritarian political system with his 1977 constitution, Parcham was most seriously exposed.

Both parties were consistently pro-Soviet. They accepted financial and other forms of aid from the Soviet embassy and intelligence organs. Taraki and Karmal maintained close contact with embassy personnel, and it appears that Soviet Military Intelligence (Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoye Upravleniye—GRU) assisted Khalq's recruitment of military officers. It is also apparent that Moscow played a major role in the reconciliation

of Taraki's and Karmal's factions in 1977. During the previous year, the publications of the pro-Moscow communist parties of India, Iraq, and Australia called for Khalq and Parcham to resolve their differences. Most instrumental in the negotiations that led to a reunified PDPA were members of the CPI and Ajmal Khattak, a Pakistani leftist (and a Pashtun), who lived in exile in Kabul. It is unlikely that they would have taken the initiative, however, without the encouragement of the Soviet Union. In March 1977 a formal agreement on unity was achieved, and in July the two factions held their first joint conclave in a decade. In light of Daoud's growing repression of the left at that time, one of the questions discussed was the removal of his "dictatorial regime." But the merger was a patchwork affair (perhaps a shotgun marriage at the Soviets' insistence) that did not resolve the deep social, ethnic, ideological, and personal differences that separated Khalq and Parcham. These became evident once the PDPA came to power in the spring of 1978.

The Soviet Role in the 1978 Coup d'État

The issue of Soviet involvement in the overthrow of Daoud is one that has divided Western observers of Afghan affairs. Some believe that the Soviet Union lost its patience with Daoud and used the PDPA and its cadres in the military to eliminate him. Arnold writes in *Afghanistan's Two-Party Communism* that "Moscow's decision . . . to try to heal the irreconcilable differences between Parcham and Khalq implies that it was actively promoting the Great Saur (April) Revolution"; it insisted on unity rather than simply backing one faction because the "coup would need the full strength and complementary capabilities of Parcham and Khalq." Ralph H. Magnus in a 1983 article quotes Karmal (in an interview with an Indian journalist) as saying that Daoud was planning to become the "Anwar Sadat of Afghanistan" and that the PDPA factions were united because "Russia wanted that there should be a revolution here."

Other commentators are less sure how formidable the Soviet role was. Bradsher suggests in *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union* that Moscow did not engineer the coup but knew beforehand that the PDPA was planning one and took no steps to thwart it. Soviet military advisers, always under tight political control, were in a position to know about crucial developments in the days leading up to April 27 and may have assisted the

insurgents in launching air and armored attacks. Rumors that Soviet pilots flew air strikes against the Presidential Palace began circulating because Westerners assumed, somewhat condescendingly, that Afghan pilots were incapable of firing rockets against their targets with the kind of accuracy displayed. Bradsher concludes that "Moscow authorized a Soviet role in helping the coup succeed while not becoming publicly committed in case it failed."

A third view, distinct from theses of Soviet maximal or minimal involvement, is that the coup d'état caught Moscow almost entirely by surprise. Soviet influence in Afghanistan was pervasive, and Moscow regarded the PDPA as a friendly, if not fraternal, party deserving support and encouragement. But, according to this view, they had no desire to eliminate Daoud. Probably the most convincing evidence in support of this view is the hurried and haphazard manner in which the coup was planned and executed. If Amin had not taken the initiative in the first crucial hours, Daoud might have succeeded in eliminating the party. Moscow's role in bringing Parcham and Khalq together in 1977, however, and alleged assistance given the insurgents by Soviet advisers on April 27 suggests that Bradsher's interpretation is the most plausible: Moscow knew what was going on and wished to leave all options open.

A crucial element is the relationship between Daoud and the Soviet Union in the months before the coup. Daoud clearly resented the Soviets, and he sought to reduce their influence by developing ties with the conservative Arab states of the Persian Gulf and, especially, with the shah of Iran. In the mid-1970s the shah, enriched by the quadrupling of oil revenues in 1973 and 1974, may have dreamed of drawing Afghanistan out of the Soviet and into a new Iranian sphere of influence. He promised Daoud as much as US$10 billion in aid. But by 1977 it was apparent that the shah's ambitious schemes would not materialize. Thus, it is unlikely that the Soviets regarded the shah as a threat at that time. During the 1973-78 period Afghanistan remained the second largest noncommunist recipient of Soviet aid, surpassed only by India.

In 1974 the Soviets pressured Daoud into agreeing to a Moscow-sponsored Asian collective security plan that affirmed the legitimacy of contemporary boundaries between Asian countries; Moscow's intention was to invalidate Chinese claims to territories taken from them by tsarist Russia. The president was reluctant to endorse the plan because it meant that his regime had to take a less assertive stance on the issue of Pash-

tunistan (see Daoud's Republic, 1973-78, ch. 1). He had, however, little choice, since the Soviets were determined to improve their relations with Pakistan in order to counterbalance Chinese influence in that country. By 1977 strains between Daoud and the Soviets were becoming apparent. In April of that year, he visited Moscow. CPSU secretary general Leonid Brezhnev apparently gave him a tongue-lashing over his exclusion of leftists from his government and his eagerness to find non-Soviet sources of economic and military aid. According to Afghan witnesses, Daoud exploded, retorting that Afghanistan was an independent country and he could govern it any way he wished. The meeting between the two heads of state either broke up or continued on a sour note. On his way back to Kabul, Daoud stopped over at Tashkent, but he walked out of an official reception with Soviet Uzbek dignitaries when they began extolling the common destiny of Afghanistan and the Soviet Central Asian republics.

Although the Soviets were doubtless displeased with Daoud's testy show of independence, they were also well aware of the weaknesses and divisions in the left in Afghanistan. It is unlikely that they intended to eliminate the president, a man they knew, in order to replace him with leaders such as Taraki and Karmal who had little popular support and might plunge the country into civil war. Daoud was, moreover, an old man (69 in 1978). The Moscow-sponsored union of Parcham and Khalq may have been in preparation for his peaceful passage from the scene in the near future. Insofar as one can make generalizations, Soviet behavior on the international scene has been cautious; they will not act unless they perceive a direct threat to their interests. It is unlikely that Daoud was regarded as such a threat in 1977 or 1978.

An actor of some importance in the Afghan drama was Ambassador Puzanov. He had been at his post since 1970, and, according to some observers, he had far more freedom of action in the field than most Soviet diplomats, in part because of his status as a member of the CPSU Central Committee. Magnus notes that he was "extremely active and ambitious," but Bradsher offers another perspective, describing Puzanov as an "alcoholic seventy-two-year-old castoff from Kremlin political struggles two decades earlier."

"The Revolution Devours Its Own," May-November 1978

Like the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution, the

PDPA and its supporters constituted only a tiny percentage of the total population when the PDPA's cadres in the military seized power. Unlike the Bolsheviks, the party lacked leaders of the caliber of Lenin and Trotsky to steer it through myriad crises. The merger of Parcham and Khalq rapidly became unglued, and before the year was over, populations in large areas of the country had revolted against the regime's hasty and ill-considered reforms.

The first cabinet was a careful balancing act of Parcham, Khalq, and military personalities. Taraki, as prime minister, and Karmal, as senior deputy prime minister, occupied the highest and second highest places in a well-defined hierarchy. The third-ranked position, minister of foreign affairs, was awarded to Amin, a Khalqi; Colonel Watanjar, an officer with Khalqi inclinations, was appointed to the fourth-ranked post, minister of communications, while Qader, a Parcham sympathizer, occupied the fifth-ranked position, minister of defense. Nur Ahmad Nur, a Parchami, was awarded the sixth-ranked position, minister of the interior.

To paraphrase Mao Zedong, in Afghanistan not only revolution but politics comes out the barrel of a gun. Parcham's control of the ministries of defense and interior (the latter having responsibility for the police), ostensibly placed Khalq in a distinctly disadvantageous position. But Qader seems to have been a bumbling incompetent, and Amin's pervasive connections within the officer corps enabled Khalq to turn the tables. Although there was no open violence of the kind that characterized Afghan politics in the months before the Soviet invasion, Parcham's fortunes began to ebb. During May and June 1978, press references to Parchami figures in the government became noticeably scarce. In late June and early July, however, Kabul newspapers announced the appointment of prominent Parcham figures as ambassadors abroad. Karmal was posted to Prague, Ahmad Nur to Washington, and Ratebzad to Belgrade. The conscription of Parcham leaders (10 altogether) into Afghanistan's foreign service followed a venerable precedent. Early oppositionist figures in Bolshevik Russia were not liquidated but were exiled to diplomatic posts. Because Amin was foreign minister, he was in a position to keep the exiles under surveillance while abroad.

Hard on the heels of the ambassadorial appointments was a reorganization of the PDPA and state leadership. The primary beneficiary of the changes was Amin, who became a party secretary and Taraki's sole deputy prime minister. He

had also assumed control of the newly organized political police, the Organization for Protection of the Interests of Afghanistan (Da Afghanistan da Gato da Satalo Adara, in Pashtu—AGSA; sometimes translated Afghan Interests Protection Service). Watanjar replaced the exiled Ahmad Nur as minister of interior. Parchamis in the schools, civil service, and military were fired and in some cases arrested. The newly built prison at Pol-i Charki outside of Kabul was soon filled beyond capacity with both old regime figures and Parchamis. Amin's police chief, Asadullah Sarwari, soon gained a reputation for brutality and sadism that earned him the unaffectionate nickname, "King Kong." On July 19 Taraki boasted that "there was no such thing as a Parcham party in Afghanistan, and there is no such thing now."

Every revolution seems to need a counterrevolutionary plot in order to focus its energies, and Afghanistan's was unearthed in August 1978. On August 17, Qader, still defense minister, was arrested for his part in a conspiracy that allegedly had been organized by the Parcham exiles abroad. Arrests of other cabinet ministers and high-ranking military officers followed. Karmal and the other Parcham ambassadors were expelled from the PDPA and ordered to return to Kabul. Naturally disinclined to commit suicide, they went into hiding in Eastern Europe and, according to Louis Dupree, ended up in Moscow. It is unclear whether they were really involved in an antiregime plot. According to the official account, they had concocted plans for a second military coup that was to be executed in early September during a major Muslim holiday. Karmal allegedly planned to return from exile, assume the reins of power, and force the Khalqis (disarmed in the coup) to accept a moderate, united-front strategy; this was supposed to include moderates and non-PDPA leftists in a new coalition government. The real motivation for this "anti-revolutionary network," however, seems to have been the disaffection of Muslim and nationalist military officers who feared that Taraki was making Afghanistan a Soviet satellite. A wave of political arrests continued August to November. The brutality—reminiscent of the bloodiest episodes of the European Middle Ages and the Holy Inquisition—intensified. Sarwari personally tortured many victims, including the former minister of planning, Soltan Ali Keshtmand.

On November 27, 1978, the PDPA Central Committee convened a meeting that published the details of the alleged plot. It also announced Amin's appointment as a member of the

Political Bureau (Politburo), the highest organ of the party. Amin was becoming a kind of Frankenstein's monster for Taraki. Officially described as the "loyal student" of the "great leader" Taraki, he was probably the most powerful man in Afghanistan by the close of 1978. The president, who according to some accounts lived in an alcoholic haze much of the time, had become little more than a figurehead.

Revolution and Popular Resistance

Revolution accelerated on both the symbolic and the substantial levels between June and November 1978. The ousting of Parchamis that occurred during the spring and early summer meant that there was no one within the regime who could act as a brake on Taraki's radicalism. In mid-June Afghanistan's new flag, a red banner with a gold emblem that bore suspicious resemblance to the flags of the Soviet Central Asian republics, was unveiled; the old flag had been black, red, and green, and the omission of green was regarded by Afghans as especially portentious since it is the color of Islam. Taraki was, of course, in no position to carry out a campaign of antireligious propaganda; but he wanted a reformed (tamed) Islam, and he asserted that "we want to clean Islam in Afghanistan of the ballast and dirt of bad traditions, superstition and erroneous belief. Thereafter, we will have progressive, modern and pure Islam." It is significant that while the first three decrees issued by the RC in April and May 1978 began with the conventional Islamic invocation "In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate", the fourth decree (issued on May 15 and declaring the regime's commitment to the equality of all ethnolinguistic groups) and the remaining four that followed it omitted this formula.

The sixth, seventh, and eighth decrees (proclaimed on July 12, October 17, and November 28, 1978) outlined comprehensive reforms designed to transform the countryside. The sixth decree aimed at eliminating usury. It abolished mortgages on land made before 1973; forgave the debts of tenants, landless laborers, and small landholders; and established fixed rates for the repayment of mortgages agreed to after 1973. The 1973 date was chosen as a watershed because the regime assumed that interest payments on earlier obligations were more than sufficient to pay the principal. An amendment to the decree established a system of provincial and district committees to arbitrate peasant disputes. But these measures had seri-

ous and unintended consequences. Moneylenders became extremely reluctant to extend loans at the new, low rates, and some debtors managed to have their obligations forgiven even though they were not covered by the decree, which dealt only with debts on land and crops. There were new opportunities for corruption, as provincial and district officials serving on the arbitration committees had the power to determine which mortgages could be forgiven (records were easily altered). According to Louis Dupree, the decree "struck at the heart of the reciprocal rights and obligations around which rural life in Afghanistan is organized." Because peasants depended on loans from year to year, the drying up of traditional sources of capital created many hardships.

The seventh decree attempted to promote equality between the sexes in married life. It fixed a maximum amount for the bride-price *(mahr)*, established a minimum age for marriage at 18 years for men and 16 years for women, abolished forced marriages, and established legal penalties of imprisonment for violating the decree's provisions. It also gave officials the power to confiscate all properties exchanged between the bride and groom's families in excess of the legal maximum. Like the decree on usury, this represented an unexpected and unwanted intrusion on the system of reciprocal exchanges that were basic to rural society (see Family, ch. 2). Excessive bride-prices, often bankrupting families, were an ancient evil, but they cemented alliances between families that were often vital for survival. Limiting them, moreover, deprived women of often their sole source of economic security if they were divorced or separated from their husbands. Although the PDPA leadership designed the measure to improve the lives of rural women, anthropologist Nancy Tapper suggests that they may in fact have suffered a loss in status, in places where the decree was effectively implemented, because they were now being given away "free" (thus, without honor) in marriage transactions by their families. Any government initiative redefining gender roles, moreover, was doomed to encounter the hostility of rural Afghan males whose sexism, in the words of one writer, is as massive as the Hindu Kush. The Khalqi policy of encouraging the education of girls, for example, aroused deep resentment in the villages. Local sensibilities were also offended by the secular character of new curricula and the practice of putting girls and boys in the same classroom.

The eighth decree dealt with land reform. It sought to redistribute arable land to "deserving persons," including agri-

cultural laborers, tenants, the smallest and poorest landholders, certain classes of nomads, and members of other categories who were perceived to be the least well-off in a society where suitable land is in short supply and its distribution unequal (see Land Tenure and Land Reform, ch. 3). Louis Dupree suggests that the object of the decree was to foster the development of a new class of small landholders who could be organized into cooperatives. On November 14, 1978, a "charter to form cooperatives" was promulgated that outlined the organization and membership of these bodies. Land reform was begun in January 1979. Haste and lack of planning, however, frustrated the attainment of its stated goals.

Although the sixth decree, abolishing usury, was an innovation, the measures relating to marriage and land reform had ample precedent in modern Afghan history. As early as 1884, Amir Abdur Rahman had sought to curb excessive bride-prices and improve the status of rural women. There had been limited experiments with land reform, and Daoud had announced a land reform program in 1975 (see Abdur Rahman Khan, 1880-1901; Daoud's Republic, 1973-78, ch. 1). Little in the experience of the PDPA and its leaders, however, had prepared them to deal effectively with rural problems. They were either impractical tea shop radicals, like Taraki, or urbanites with little understanding or sympathy for village life, like Karmal. The result was that their policies, while attacking the systems of rural inequality and poverty, ignored basic causes and provoked widespread resistance. Like Amanullah, the party intemperately challenged traditional patterns and ways of life. Its symbolic politics were perceived by many as attacks on Islam. Its growing reliance on the Soviet Union, moreover, earned it the contempt of the majority of Afghans, who had long felt hostility toward the intrusive, atheistic colossus to the north.

In May, a month after the coup, Burhannudin Rabbani, a professor at Kabul University, established the National Rescue Front composed of nine Islamic and anticommunist groups opposing the regime. There were occasional bombings in Kabul and a flood of antiregime *shabnamah* (night letters). But the country was relatively quiet in the period between the coup and the autumn of 1978. The first insurrection in the countryside flared up in the Nuristan region of eastern Afghanistan in September 1978 (see fig. 2). It was followed by uprisings in areas as widespread and ethnically diverse as Badakhshan Province in the northeast, Paktia and Ghazni provinces in the

east, Balkh Province in the north, Herat and Farah provinces in the west, and Parvan and Kapisa provinces near the capital. Louis Dupree notes that the insurrections did not conform to the traditional mode of intergroup and antigovernment resistance. Usually, the fighting season began in the fall after the gathering of the harvest; at that time there was sufficient leisure time to pick up guns and settle old scores. With the coming of spring, hostilities generally ceased as men occupied themselves with planting crops. This did not happen in the spring of 1979. The regime, aided by Soviet military advisers, met popular resistance with brutal tactics, such as the bombing and extermination of whole villages. The fighting continued through spring and summer as a large portion of the rural population and thousands of deserters from the Afghan army joined the rebellion (see Political Bases of the Resistance, this ch.).

Guerrillas began operating from neighboring Pakistan and, to a lesser extent, Iran. In March 1979 the city of Herat was convulsed by a popular uprising, supported by local garrisons, whose targets included Khalqis and Soviet advisers. As many as 100 Soviets were killed, sometimes tortured to death in horrible ways, by enraged Afghan mobs. Government forces recaptured the city, killing between 3,000 and 5,000 Afghans.

Growing Soviet Involvement

The Soviet presence in Afghanistan had always been substantial, but Moscow increased the volume of aid and the number of military and other advisers in the wake of the April 1978 coup. The Soviets also granted all-important recognition of the socialist nature of the regime, although they must have been aware of the weaknesses and idiosyncrasies of the PDPA. On May 18, 1978, Amin, in his capacity as foreign minister, visited Moscow on his way to the Nonaligned Movement conference in Havana. He was received warmly by Soviet foreign minister Andrey Gromyko. The language of their joining communiqué, identifying their party as well as state offices, signaled the CPSU's willingness to accept the PDPA as a fellow Marxist party. (In meetings with noncommunist dignitaries, the Soviets customarily mention only their state, but not party, titles.)

Taraki visited Moscow December 4-7, 1978. On December 5 he and Leonid Brezhnev signed a 20-year Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighborliness, and Cooperation between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Democratic

Republic of Afghanistan. This brief, 15-article document, similar in general outline to friendship treaties made by Moscow with such states as India, the Mongolian People's Republic (Mongolia), Vietnam, and South Yemen, includes promises to "strengthen and broaden mutually beneficial economic, scientific, and technical cooperation" and promote cultural exchanges (Articles 2 and 3); expressions of mutual respect for Afghanistan's "policy of nonalignment" and Moscow's "policy of peace" (Article 5); and a provision that the two countries "shall consult each other on all major international issues affecting the interests of the two countries" (Article 10). There is also a commitment to carry out a "consistent struggle against machinations by the forces of aggression" in order to achieve "the final elimination of colonialism and racism in all their forms and manifestations" (Article 9). In terms of future developments, however, Article 4 was the most portentious. It promises that the two states "shall consult each other and take by agreement appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence, and territorial integrity of the two countries" and will "develop cooperation in the military field on the basis of appropriate agreements concluded between them." This security clause, one of the most explicit agreed to by the Soviet Union and a non-Warsaw Pact state, provided the formal justification for the Soviet invasion in December 1979.

While Taraki was in Moscow, he also signed agreements providing expanded interparty relations between the CPSU and the PDPA and the establishment of a permanent Soviet-Afghan intergovernmental commission to promote economic cooperation. On the occasion of the signing of the friendship treaty, Brezhnev commented expansively that Soviet-Afghan ties "have assumed, I would say, a qualitatively new character—permeated by a spirit of friendship and revolutionary solidarity."

By early 1979 Soviet leaders had agreed on a proper characterization of the PDPA regime that placed it firmly in the socialist camp. In a speech on February 29, 1979, Mikhail A. Suslov, the CPSU's chief theoretician, included Afghanistan as one of the "states of socialist orientation" that had appeared in the Third World during the previous five years. Given Suslov's immense prestige and authority in matters of ideological importance, his imprimatur carried tremendous significance. There followed, from the official Soviet media, further affirmations of Afghanistan's having "chosen socialism."

Suslov's inclusion of Afghanistan in the category of social-

ist-oriented states may have been not only an assertion of Moscow's ideological stake in the country but also a signal to the PDPA to adopt more moderate and gradualist policies. According to a lengthy treatise on the subject by two Soviet writers, V. Chirkin and Y. Yudin (*A Socialist Oriented State*, published in 1983), such a state emerges in an underdeveloped society; other examples of socialist-oriented states are South Yemen, Angola, and Ethiopia. Tribal or feudal institutions may be widespread, and there is little mass participation in politics. Because the working class is not strong enough to have a viable political movement of its own, power is wielded by a bloc of "democratic patriotic forces" ("the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the people"), encompassing diverse class interests. Gradually, this may evolve into a Marxist-Leninist party or parties. This can occur, however, only after a process of social transformation. The socialist-oriented state is the instrument used by progressive leaders to promote the development of a modern working class and a working-class party. Part of Moscow's disenchantment with the Khalqis seems to have been its conviction that their radical zeal disregarded objective criteria that made the socialist-oriented state concept appropriate.

The Deepening Crisis

Like Brer Rabbit in Uncle Remus' tale of the Tar Baby, the Soviets found themselves getting more deeply—and inescapably—involved in a very sticky situation. The bloody Herat uprising elicited a commitment of hundreds and perhaps thousands of new military advisers. Women and children dependents of Soviet personnel were evacuated. In April 1979 Vasily S. Safronchuk, a diplomat who had served for a time as deputy permanent representative to the United Nations (UN) in New York, was posted to Kabul to serve as a kind of senior adviser to the PDPA leadership. Formally a subordinate of Ambassador Puzanov, he apparently acted independently of the embassy and maintained offices in the House of the People (formerly the Presidential Palace) and the foreign ministry. One of his tasks seems to have been to dampen the Khalqis' radical zeal. He persuaded Taraki and Amin to make highly visible trips to mosques in order to placate popular religious feeling, and he advised them to include Parchamis and noncommunists in the government to gain wider popular support. This latter suggestion, so much like Parcham's united-front strategy, was re-

jected. The unpopular land reform program, however, was halted in July 1979.

According to Male, whose account of events in her book *Revolutionary Afghanistan* is perhaps overly sympathetic to Amin but still highly informative, Amin was highly suspicious of the Soviets and struggled to preserve Afghanistan's independence and nonaligned status. As foreign minister he repeatedly emphasized the nonaligned theme and strove to preserve the United States presence in his country, modest though it was, as a counterweight to the Soviets. On several occasions he requested an increase in United States aid. Male notes that Amin enjoyed a "good working relationship" with the United States ambassador, Adolph Dubs. During the seven months that Dubs served in Kabul, he called on Amin 14 times (apparently most diplomats found Amin insufferable and avoided him).

On February 14, 1979, however, Dubs was kidnapped by three (some accounts say four) gunmen. Most observers agree that they were members of the Maoist extremist group Settem-i-Melli. They apparently announced that they were holding Dubs hostage for the release of several of their imprisoned comrades. Despite United States insistence that the crisis be settled through negotiation, Afghan security forces charged the hotel room where Dubs was held captive. The ambassador and two (or three) of his captors were killed. Rumors, largely unsubstantiated, that Soviet advisers had ordered the security force attack circulated in Kabul. Washington held the regime responsible for the ambassador's death.

Male suggests that the order to attack may have been given by Taraki. Dubs' murder remains shrouded in mystery, but in any event the incident resulted in the sharp reduction of United States operations in the country. The regime offered condolences but no formal apology, and an indignant President Jimmy Carter suspended all aid programs; conditions for their resumption were an apology and improving internal conditions. Diplomatic representation in Kabul was downgraded to the chargé d'affaires level. United States attention, moreover, was focused on Iran, where the shah, a major ally, had been forced out of power in January 1979. In Washington's eyes, dealing with chaos in Iran was a higher priority than dealing with chaos in Afghanistan. Even if Iran had been stable and Dubs' tragic death had not occurred, it is unclear that the United States presence would have deterred Soviet activities. Male argues, however, that "the assassination provided the

coup de grace to Amin's efforts to maintain relations with the US." The Soviets were left with a clear field.

Clear, that is, except for Amin himself. On March 27, 1979, he took over the office of prime minister from Taraki, although Taraki remained president of the RC and PDPA secretary general. The popular insurrection intensified, and more soldiers joined or attempted to join the rebels during the spring and summer months; there were major mutinies at Jalalabad in June and at the Bala Hissar, the old fortress overlooking Kabul, in August. Soviet advisers and civilians continued to be the targets of violence. Safronchuk and his superiors grew increasingly impatient with Amin, whom they blamed for the chaotic situation in the country. By midsummer the Soviets were virtually running the government, but Amin stubbornly refused to go along with their policy recommendations. In July he took over the post of minister of defense and reshuffled the cabinet. Three ministers were demoted to minor portfolios.

According to Indian communist sources, Parchamis still at large attempted unsuccessfully to seize power in the spring of 1979. There was a wave of arrests, and special courts sentenced many Parchami "counterrevolutionaries" to death; it was estimated that around 300 political prisoners had been executed in the year since the April 1978 coup. There was evidence that Moscow had been behind the Parchamis' plot. By summer United States intelligence sources in Kabul indicated that the Soviets were determined to get rid of Amin. Rumors circulated that the Soviets were holding talks with Yousuf and Nur Ahmed Etemadi, men who had each served as prime minister under King Zahir Shah. Etemadi, confined in the Pol-i Charki prison, allegedly was picked up at the prison several times by a Soviet embassy car.

Ultimately, the Soviets enlisted Taraki in their attempt to liquidate Amin. On his way back from the Nonaligned Movement conference in Havana in September, Taraki stopped over for a couple of days in Moscow. There Taraki and Brezhnev apparently agreed on broadening the regime's popular appeal by including noncommunist figures like Etemadi. Some sources say that the Soviets concocted a second reconciliation between Taraki and the emigré Karmal, although other observers deny this, saying that Karmal was living in Prague rather than Moscow at the time. The first step in the plan was Amin's assassination. Sarwari, head of the police and loyal to Taraki, arranged to have his men assassinate the prime minister as he made his way to Kabul airport to welcome Taraki back from

Havana and Moscow on September 11. But Amin was informed by his own man, Syed Daoud Taroon, a police commandant in Taraki's entourage, and replaced Sarwari's men with loyal army units as his escort to the airport. As Arnold notes, "Taraki's surprise at being greeted by a live and healthy Amin was obvious." Both men indulged in a comradely bear hug.

A second attempt was made on September 14. Taraki summoned Amin to his office in the House of the People. Puzanov assured the suspicious Amin over the telephone that Taraki meant him no harm and that the two men should seek a way to overcome their differences. Still suspicious, Amin brought along an armed escort. There was a shootout. Amin's associate Taroon was killed, but Amin left and returned with a contingent of soldiers and arrested Taraki.

On September 16 it was announced that Taraki had resigned his posts for "health reasons." Amin became both PDPA secretary general and RC president. On September 23 he claimed at a news conference that Taraki was "definitely sick." On October 10 the *Kabul Times* published a small back page announcement that Taraki "died yesterday morning of [a] serious illness, which he had been suffering for some time." The real illness, according to Arnold, "was lack of oxygen, brought on by the application of fingers to the neck and pillows over the nose and mouth by three members of the presidential guards service . . ."; to borrow the title of Akira Kurosawa's film version of *Macbeth*, Amin set atop a "throne of blood."

Soviet Preparations for Invasion

In April 1979, General Aleksey Yepishev, head of the Soviet Army's Political Directorate, visited Afghanistan with an entourage of generals and "political workers" to assess the training, morale, and political consciousness of the Afghan armed forces. His report back to Moscow was reputedly negative. The significance of his visit was suggested by the fact that he had performed a similar mission in Czechoslovakia in 1968 during the short-lived "Prague Spring" and had recommended Warsaw Pact intervention. In August another military delegation, led by General Ivan G. Pavlovskiy, arrived in the country. Whereas Yepishev's visit had lasted only a week, Pavlovskiy's lasted two months and was shrouded in secrecy. His delegation traveled around the country, assessing the security situation. Western observers noted with considerable consternation that

Pavlovskiy had planned and commanded the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia.

In the spring and summer of 1979, there was an unusual amount of military activity in the Soviet republics bordering Afghanistan. As early as March, the United States issued a warning to Moscow against intervention. But Afghanistan's inclusion in the socialist camp, a theme emphasized by Suslov and reiterated in the official press in early 1979, justified (from Moscow's perspective) armed intervention. The Brezhnev Doctrine, first unveiled after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, asserted the Soviet Union's right to intervene in friendly, socialist countries if reactionary forces threatened socialist construction.

The PDPA was apparently apprehensive about the possibility of a Soviet invasion. The media through 1979 appealed to traditional Afghan xenophobia by using the Dari word *farangi* to describe foreign enemies of the revolution. This word, literally meaning "Frenchman," generally refers to Westerners, although historically it was used to describe the British. Arnold suggests that in the context of 1979 it may have referred to Russians as well as British and Americans. In the face of social collapse and repeated military disasters, both Taraki and Amin repeatedly asserted the regime's ability to handle its own problems. There was also a pathetic insistence of Afghanistan's "nonaligned" status.

Although Soviet leaders Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin sent their congratulations to Amin on the occasion of his election as PDPA secretary general on September 16, he had no illusions about Moscow's intention to eliminate him. Relations between Amin and Puzanov were naturally hostile, given the latter's attempt to lure him into a death trap on September 14. He demanded Puzanov's departure. The Afghan leader's absence was conspicuous at the Soviet embassy's November 7 celebration of the anniversary of the October Revolution. Puzanov left Kabul on November 19; his replacement was Fikryat A. Tabeyev, who was still ambassador in late 1985.

Amin sought to leave his own mark on Afghan policy by establishing a 57-member constitutional committee to revise or rewrite the constitution. The inclusion of several Muslim clergymen on this body suggests that Amin was seeking a wider base of popular support. He established a special revolutionary court to review the cases of political prisoners confined since April 1978, with the result that several hundred were (he claimed) released. A critic of Taraki's "personality cult," Amin

stressed the importance of legality. He renamed the secret police, AGSA, the Workers' Intelligence Institute (Kargari Astekhbarati Muassessa, in Pashtu—KAM) and promised that its excesses would be curbed. KAM was placed under the command of his nephew, Asadullah Amin. In early December 1979 Amin established the National Organization for the Defense of the Revolution. This body was designed to mobilize popular support for the regime throughout the country.

On September 9, 1979, Amnesty International published a report claiming that since the April 1978 coup 12,000 political prisoners were being held without trial in the Pol-i Charki prison alone. There were also charges of widespread use of torture. Amin heatedly denied the charges.

Tensions with Pakistan were increasing because antiregime guerrillas, the *mujahidiin* (literally, holy warriors—see Glossary), used camps in Pakistan as bases from which to launch attacks into Afghanistan. In autumn of 1979 there were around 228,000 refugees and guerrillas on Pakistani soil, mostly in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) but also in Baluchistan Province (see fig. 1). The UN High Commissioner for Refugees calculated that an additional 9,000 crossed the border each week. On September 29 Amin's foreign minister, Shah Wali, extended an invitation to President Mohammad Zia ul Haq to visit Kabul to resolve differences. Amin wanted to persuade Zia to stop offering sanctuary to the *mujahidiin*, and he perhaps also hoped, unrealistically, that improved relations with Pakistan might deter Soviet intervention. Friendly overtures to Islamabad continued through December, with increasingly desperate insistence on a summit or foreign minister-level meeting.

In late November General Viktor S. Paputin, Soviet first deputy minister of internal affairs, arrived in Kabul. Paputin may have been involved in arranging a second attempt on Amin's life. Although he returned to the Soviet Union on December 13, it appears that there was a shooting at the House of the People four days later. Amin was reportedly wounded in the leg (Pakistani sources indicate two assassination attempts, on December 3 and December 19). On December 19 the president, with a contingent of loyal Afghan troops and a few armored vehicles, moved to the Darulaman Palace complex that Amanullah had built a few miles outside Kabul.

The Soviets drew their noose tighter. Troops from the elite 105th Guards Airborne Division were ferried from Fergana in the Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic to Bagrami air

base near Kabul. By early December they numbered 2,500 men. On December 20 a Soviet armored unit secured the vital Salang Tunnel on the major overland route from the Soviet border to Kabul. A week later, on December 27, 1979, the invasion plan switched into high gear. Although the center of Kabul was secured by Soviet troops by the evening, resistance continued at the Darulaman Palace, probably until the early hours of December 28. According to an official announcement, Amin was sentenced to death by a "revolutionary tribunal". Most sources agree, however, that Amin, remaining true to Afghan traditions, had died fighting the foreign invader.

The Soviets and Babrak Karmal

At 8:45 P.M. on December 27, 1979, a Soviet radio transmitter located in Termez, just across the Amu Darya from Afghanistan, broadcast a statement by Karmal castigating the "intolerable violence and torture by the bloody apparatus of Hafizullah Amin" and announcing a "national *jihad* . . . a holy war of the Afghan people for true democratic justice, for respect for the holy Islamic religion . . . for implementation of the aims of the glorious April revolution." The transmitter was broadcasting on the same frequency as Radio Afghanistan in Kabul but was more powerful. Further broadcasts, transmitted from Kabul once Soviet troops controlled Radio Afghanistan, named Karmal president of a new 57-member Revolutionary Council, prime minister of the government, and secretary general of the PDPA. Early in the morning of December 28, an announcement was disseminated claiming that the government had requested "political, moral, and economic assistance, including military aid" from the Soviet Union because of the provocation of Afghanistan's "foreign enemies." Specifically, it recalled the December 5, 1978, friendship treaty as the basis for such a request.

Like many of the communist leaders who came to power in Eastern Europe after World War II, Karmal did not march into his capital in triumph but was trucked—or flown—in by the Soviets. Kept "on ice" in Moscow or Czechoslovakia after the purge of the Parcham ambassadors in August 1978, he apparently did not return to Afghanistan until after Amin was killed and Kabul secured by Soviet troops; his first public appearance was on January 1, 1980. This was, for both Karmal and the Soviets, a sensitive issue because the fiction of Karmal's dynamic leadership and a genuinely Afghan request for Soviet

military intervention had to be maintained. According to one story, Karmal had slipped into Kabul in the autumn of 1979 and gained the support of a majority of the members of the PDPA Central Committee; he claimed on several occasions after the invasion that he had arrived in Kabul by way of Pakistan and mountainous Paktia Province, a miniature "Long March" that deemphasized his Soviet connections. The Central Committee allegedly forced the reluctant Amin to agree to a request for Soviet military assistance in December. A Soviet publication claims that he made such a request four times during the month because of the insistence of other PDPA leaders (Karmal claimed with crafted ingenuousness in March 1980 that he had been ignorant of the call for Soviet help). On December 27, with the clatter of Soviet Army boots in the background, the Central Committee majority (according to official accounts) convened the revolutionary tribunal that sentenced Amin to death. It supposedly elected Karmal to the post left vacant by Amin's execution.

According to regime sources, Amin had planned an anticommunist bloodbath to commence on December 29 with the cooperation of Islamic militants. Supposedly, Amin had made contact with Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, leader of the Hezb-i-Islami (Islamic Party) in early October and promised him the post of prime minister in a new government.

On January 9, 1980, the regime announced a general amnesty for political prisoners. About 3,000 to 4,000 prisoners were released from the Pol-i Charki prison. Karmal allegedly invited some of the more prominent imprisoned figures to his office to ask their cooperation in forming a new government. Most politely asked for time to think the proposal over and then took themselves and their families off to Pakistan. On January 10 the membership of a new PDPA Central Committee and Politburo was formally announced. Five of the Politburo's seven members were Parchamis and included Karmal, his fellow exiled ambassadors, Anahita Ratebzad and Nur Ahmad Nur, and Soltan Ali Keshtmand. Keshtmand's Khalqi torturer, Sarwari, was also a member.

The Soviet Occupation

Just as analysts have disagreed on the Soviet role in the 1978 coup d'état, they have drawn different conclusions about the motivations behind the invasion and occupation of Afghan-

istan. Although there is general agreement over the immediate causes of the invasion, the assessment of Moscow's long-term goals and strategies is more controversial. One school of thought explains the invasion primarily (sometimes solely) in terms of a short-term preoccupation with rescuing a friendly and dependent socialist regime from external attack and internal disintegration. Troops were deployed to manage an emergency and then depart, similar perhaps to United States military intervention in Lebanon in 1958 or in the Dominican Republic in 1965. The quick fix did not work. In December 1985 Soviet troops had been in the country six years; Moscow was caught in the Afghan "quagmire."

A "strategic" school of thought, often drawing on the determinism of early twentieth-century geopolitics, depicts the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan as the inevitable march of a "heartland" power to the sea. In 1904 the British geographer Halford Mackinder published a highly influential article, "The Geographical Pivot of History," arguing that Central Asia (the "pivot" later known as the "heartland"), being immune to naval power, was an impregnable base from which a state (Russia) could assert world domination. Other theorists (particularly A. T. Mahan, a proponent of naval power) argued that Russia needed access to warm water ports because its vast land area precluded easy communication between European Russia and Siberia. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 seemed to vindicate this view. The Trans-Siberian Railway could not ferry supplies in sufficient volume to support the tsar's land armies in Manchuria. The Russian Baltic Fleet sailed eight months, after being denied access to the Suez Canal by the British, to reach East Asian waters. Low on supplies and with mutinous crews, it sailed into the Strait of Tsushima in May 1905 and was decimated by a Japanese fleet. A supply and refueling base was needed in the Indian Ocean. Observers predicted that Russia would seek to carve a corridor, through western Afghanistan or Iran, to the Arabian Sea. In an age of strategic bombers and intercontinental ballistic missiles, the dynamic of geopolitics seems obsolete. For many analysts, however, the occupation of Afghanistan was a decisive step in Soviet Russia's march to the Indian Ocean. Moscow's strategy of cultivating friendly relations with Indian Ocean states, such as India, Madagascar, and South Yemen, and the buildup of a Soviet naval presence in the area during the 1960s and 1970s seemed to justify such a conclusion. Once in firm possession of Afghanistan—the reasoning goes—the Soviets could extend their influence and con-

trol southward to Pakistan, an unstable and ethnically divided state on the Indian Ocean's rim. One respected analyst has suggested that by the early twenty-first century the Soviets either will have retreated back across the Amu Darya or will be the dominant military and political force in South Asia and the Middle East.

It is impossible to know for certain whether the occupation was forced by circumstances or was part of a long-range plan. The weight of the evidence suggests the former. The strategic advantages to maintaining a military presence several hundred kilometers closer to the Persian Gulf are dubious. Enhanced Soviet military capabilities (long-range aircraft and a fleet in the Indian Ocean) make installations south of the Amu Darya less essential. Nevertheless, the invasion brings certain dividends. A generation of Soviet officers is gaining experience in guerrilla warfare and "ticket punches" for rapid promotion. New weapon systems are being tested in actual combat. The country is rich in minerals, especially natural gas, and these can be exploited more easily than they could when Afghanistan was an independent country. But these advantages do not outweigh the costs, expecially the enmity of Western and Third World nations.

One perspective draws on both the emergency and the strategic schools of thought. It suggests that although the Soviets, for both ideological and strategic reasons, are determined to expand their sphere of influence and control, they are acutely aware of their limitations. Thus, the decision to intervene was taken reluctantly and only after careful consideration. A useful analogy can be made with the history of the British Empire in the mid- and late nineteenth century. British expansionism on the fringes of the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere was defensive in the sense that policymakers were less concerned with building new empires than with protecting existing interests. Expeditions into Afghanistan in 1837-42 and 1878-79, for example, were undertaken not for conquest but to protect British territory in India. A closer analogy to the Soviet case is possibly the British annexation of Upper Burma in 1885. The weakness of the Burmese state under King Thibaw promoted anarchy that threatened British commercial interests. There was, moreover, a perceived threat of French intervention in Upper Burma, an area the British regarded as exclusively in their sphere of influence. When King Thibaw and his ministers proved unable or unwilling to

Mujahidiin passing through a village

Mujahidiin gather for an operation

Hashish and opium poppy

Soviet antipersonnel mine
Photos courtesy Kurt Lohbeck

restore order, protect privileges given the British by treaty, and expel the French, troops were ordered in.

By such "defensive" moves, the British Empire expanded. A similar dynamic evidently operated in Afghanistan. Taraki and Amin were violent, unpopular, and ultimately ineffectual rulers, like Thibaw. Their misrule created a power vacuum that could be exploited, Moscow feared, by foreign powers. This posed a threat to Soviet territory. Foreign interference in Afghan affairs was the principal justification given by official spokesmen for the invasion. Naturally, the enemy was depicted as acting out of desperation rather than from a position of strength. According to an article published in *Pravda* on December 31, 1979, the shah's fall had caused cracks to appear "in the notorious, 'strategic arc'" that the United States had constructed along the Soviet Union's southern border. A January 3, 1980, *Pravda* article asserted that "having lost their bases in Iran, the Pentagon and the United States Central Intelligence Agency were counting on stealthily approaching our territory more closely through Afghanistan." According to Brezhnev in a speech to the CPSU Central Committee in mid-1980, "we had no choice but to send troops" in order to forestall the creation of an imperialist base in Afghanistan.

Like British imperial possessions in India and Southeast Asia, the Soviet Central Asian republics contain a population that has neither ethnic nor cultural ties—nor a deep sense of loyalty—to the colonizing power. The ethnic factor accentuated Soviet defensiveness. Soviet leaders may have envisioned a "worst case" scenario in which the PDPA regime would be replaced by a militantly Islamic one like the Islamic Republic of Iran. The spread of Islamic militance north across the Amu Darya would challenge Soviet rule over its own Tajik, Uzbek, and other Muslim peoples. Historically, the populations on both sides of the river have close ethnic and even kinship ties. Many *basmachi*, resisters to Soviet rule in Central Asia during the 1920s and 1930s, had settled in Afghanistan.

The Ideological Dimension

Ideology provides the Soviets with both a perspective from which to understand and interpret the world and a rationale for the use of military power. The Kremlin's acknowledgement, apparently by early 1979, of the "socialist oriented" nature of the PDPA regime entailed a significant commitment. Because the party's leadership, with the possible

exception of Amin, remained steadfastly loyal to the Soviet model of revolution both before and after April 1978, their incompetence and heavy-handedness could not be dismissed as deviationist. Resistance (Islamic militance and Afghan nationalism) could only be explained—and dealth with—as a contrivance of foreign imperialism and domestic reaction. Moscow could neither admit that it was an expression of genuine popular sentiment, i.e., the result of PDPA misrule, nor tolerate the sacrifice of fellow socialists on its doorstep.

Observers such as Bradsher interpret the Afghan invasion as the culmination of developments that broadened the scope of the Brezhnev Doctrine beyond its original Warsaw Pact context. The doctrine emerged as an important theme in Soviet foreign policy after the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. It represented both a response to Western criticism and a warning to other Warsaw Pact states not to inititate their own "Prague Spring." Brezhnev in 1968 asserted the right of the Soviet Union and other socialist states to intervene in the internal affairs of a country in Eastern Europe where counterrevolutionary forces endangered socialism. The invasion of Czechoslovakia was carefully orchestrated to appear as if it were an undertaking of the Warsaw Pact as a whole and not Moscow alone.

With the growth of Soviet military power, the Kremlin could extend assistance to "progressive" forces in geographically remote places. In 1975, with Cuban surrogates playing an indispensable role, the Soviets began aiding the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola on a large scale. Two years later, Moscow and Havana began pumping men and material into Ethiopia to prop up the revolutionary regime of Colonel Mengistu Haile-Mariam. Developments in South Yemen in 1978 are suggestive of events in Afghanistan a year later. South Yemeni president Salim Rubay Ali was both critical of the Soviet model of socialist construction (he was often described as a "Maoist") and eager to develop ties with neighboring Saudi Arabia to obtain economic aid. When he attempted to purge his rivals in the leftist National Front, Cuban military personnel, flown in by Soviet aircraft, assisted local militia in overthrowing him in June 1978. Rubay Ali was executed and replaced by a reliable pro-Moscow figure, Abd al Fattah Ismail. Ismail's own career subsequently resembled Karmal's. Forced out of power in 1980, he went into a Soviet-arranged exile in Eastern Europe, returning to South Yemen in March 1985 and in October securing a seat in that country's Politburo.

The Soviet Union was the only socialist state to participte in the invasion of Afghanistan. In late 1982, however, high-ranking defectors from KHAD reported that there were military personnel from Cuba, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Vietnam in training or advisory capacities inside the country. This reflected the Brezhnev Doctrine's emphasis on intervention by the worldwide socialist community.

Long-Term Soviet Aims

Few Western observers in the mid-1980s believed that there would be an early end to the Soviet occupation. It appeared that the Soviets planned to stay in Afghanistan—for at least 10 to 15 years—for the same reason they invaded: to preserve a friendly regime that could not survive without substantial armed assistance. The military costs to Moscow were relatively modest. The number of Soviet troops in the country—estimated by different sources as between 105,000 and 150,000 but most often given as about 118,000—was sufficient to maintain the status quo but not enough to decisively crush the resistance. (It was substantially less, for example, than the 500,000 United States troops stationed in South Vietnam in the late 1960s and early 1970s.) This limited commitment would give the Soviets time to achieve several important goals: creation of strong party and state organizations, education of a new generation of Afghans loyal to the Soviet Union; and the development of close cultural, social, and economic ties between Afghanistan and the Soviet socialist republics north of the Amu Darya. The long-range perspective was most evident in Moscow's policy of sending Afghan children, particularly war orphans, to the Soviet Union for education. In 1984 a new program was initiated that involved the sending of thousands of children between the ages of seven and 10 to Soviet schools for a 10-year period. A contingent of 870 children was sent in November 1984.

Moscow's experience with the *basmachi* uprisings north of the Amu Darya in the early 1920s set a precedent. Bradsher notes that the Soviets combined military force with a policy of co-optation and gradual transformation of the society: "Local people who had fled from any involvement with the Bolsheviks were brought into the government . . . A new generation was trained to appreciate the benefits of adherence to the large new Soviet state and had vested interests in the material prog-

ress offered by it . . ." There occurred "stages of gradual encroachment into traditional ways," such as collectivization and the abolition of Muslim trading rights.

As in Soviet Central Asia, programs to promote literacy, health, and a higher standard of living were an important component of Moscow's strategy. Living standards in independent Afghanistan were among the world's poorest. Prosperity, coupled with military force and a Soviet-style education system, would ensure the allegiance of new generations of Afghans.

There was speculation in the mid-1980s that the Soviets were planning to annex the northern region of Afghanistan, whose residents are ethnically similar to those of Soviet Central Asia. Some observers envisioned the creation of a new "Afghan" Soviet Socialist Republic. But if Moscow's dual policy of coercion and cooptation were successful, such a drastic step would be unnecessary. Afghanistan would become a compliant satellite state similar to Mongolia.

There are problems, however, with applying the *basmachi* and Mongolian precedents to Afghanistan. Although pockets of *basmachi* resistance persisted through the 1920s, the Red Army had broken the movement's back by 1923. The Afghan resistance (sanctified, unlike the *basmachi*, with the status of jihad or holy struggle) was still formidable after six years of Soviet occupation. The drawing of Mongolia into the Soviet sphere of influence was a relatively simple matter because Mongol leaders cooperated in order to avoid domination and absorption by China. The Mongols lacked, moreover, the fighting traditions of the Afghans. Though they were the descendants of Genghis Khan, their conversion to Lamaistic Buddhism in more recent centuries made them a nation of monks rather than warriors.

Although the Soviet leadership changed three times in the period between the invasion and early 1985—from Brezhnev to Yuri Andropov in November 1982, from Andropov to Konstantin Chernenko in February 1984, and from Chernenko to Mikhail Gorbachev in March 1985—Soviet policy toward Afghanistan displayed singular continuity. Rumors that Andropov, while director of the KGB, had opposed the invasion and was prepared to negotiate a political solution to the crisis became academic after his death in February 1984. In December of that year, Marshal Sergey Sokolov succeeded the powerful Dmitry Ustinov as the Soviet Union's minister of defense. Sokolov had been in charge of operations during the 1979 invasion, and his promotion suggested that the leadership had

no second thoughts about their decision to intervene. Although Gorbachev appeared to Western observers to be politically more astute and image-conscious than his grayer predecessors, there was little evidence in late 1985 that he was a "dove" on Afghanistan. Hints of Soviet flexibility during the November 1985 summit meeting between Gorbachev and United States president Reagan were not supported by any alteration of the basic Soviet position: that troop withdrawal could occur only when the survival of the Kabul regime could be guaranteed.

The Regional Crisis

Afghanistan straddles South Asia and the Middle East, two regions that are among the world's most unstable. The 1979 invasion heightened tensions between Afghanistan and its neighbors—Pakistan, Iran, and China—and also between these countries and the Soviet Union. It added a new factor of uncertainty to traditionally hostile relations between Pakistan and India. On the global level, Moscow's policy of championing Third World causes was seriously compromised, and it earned the enmity of practically the entire Islamic world. The invasion precipitated a crisis in United States-Soviet relations. The administration of President Jimmy Carter, already preoccupied with the Iran hostage crisis, was left in the unenviable position of verbally chastising an unheeding Moscow as it tightened its grip south of the Amu Darya. Sanctions were imposed, but they were ineffective in dissuading Moscow from continuing the military occupation (see table 12, Appendix).

Although world interest in the Afghanistan crisis had dwindled appreciably by late 1985, six years after the invasion most nations still voiced their opposition to the occupation. On November 13, 1985, the UN General Assembly overwhelmingly approved a resolution calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops without specifically mentioning the Soviet Union, as it had each year since an emergency session was convened in January 1980. The vote was 112 nations in favor of the resolution, 19 opposed, and 12 abstaining. This was the largest majority supporting a troop pullout since the January 1980 resolution (the 1984 figures were 119 nations in favor, 20 opposed, and 14 abstaining). The Soviet Union, its Warsaw Pact allies (except Romania), Angola, Cuba, Ethiopia, Laos, Libya, Madagascar, Mongolia, South Yemen, Syria, and Viet-

nam voted against the measure. Significant abstentions included Romania and India.

Pakistan and "Proximity Talks"

The Soviet occupation had the most immediate impact on neighboring Pakistan. By late 1985 an estimated 3 million Afghan refugees had crossed over into Pakistan. Most lived in refugee camps in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP). This area, like the Afghan provinces to the west of the Durand Line separating the two countries, was inhabited primarily by Pashtuns.

Between Quetta in Pakistan's Baluchistan Province and its border with China, there were more than 200 passes leading into Afghanistan. Ninety of these were motorable. The *mujahidiin* passed back and forth across the sieve-like border to launch attacks against the regime and then return to their bases in Pakistan.

From the Afghan (and Soviet) perspective, Pakistan was a base for counterrevolution. Kabul routinely accused its eastern neighbor of interfering in Afghanistan's internal affairs by offering sanctuary to the *mujahidiin*. Pakistan viewed the crisis as posing three distinct but interrelated threats. First, *mujahidiin* operations brought Afghan government and Soviet forces to the border. Islamabad discovered, to its dismay, that it now had the Soviet army as a neighbor. Hot pursuit of *mujahidiin* by Afghan and Soviet forces resulted in frequent border violations. Second, KHAD agents slipped across the border to assassinate resistance leaders or stir up trouble between the various *mujahidiin* factions in Peshawar. They allegedly maintained contact with Pakistanis opposed to the regime of President Zia. Until 1983 two sons of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the prime minister of Pakistan whom Zia had executed in April 1979, resided in Kabul. They headed Al Zulfikar, a terrorist organization whose most notorious operation was the hijacking of a Pakistan International Airlines airliner to Kabul. Their group was also linked to the assassination of several prominent politicians in 1981 and 1982.

Finally, the refugees posed a threat to internal stability. Tension between the newcomers, most of whom were armed, and Pakistani citizens increased as the passage of years and competition for scarce jobs frayed the edges of Muslim and Pashtun hospitality. Islamabad feared that unless a way to repatriate the refugees was discovered, they might become, like

the Palestinians in Jordan and Lebanon, a perpetual source of trouble. There were apprehensions that the Afghans could act as a wedge to disturb the already fragile consensus that existed among the nation's different ethnic groups.

Pakistan pursued two options in response to the crisis. One was dependence on its allies—the United States, the Arab states of the Persian Gulf, and China—for military and other forms of assistance. Washington committed US$3.2 billion in economic and military aid for the 1981-86 period, substantially more than its postinvasion offer of US$400 million, which Zia hastily dismissed in January 1980 as "peanuts." Both the Carter and the Reagan administrations regarded Pakistan as a "front-line state," vital to United States interests in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. Arab and Chinese aid was also important as Soviet border incursions became more frequent and the burden of supporting millions of Afghan refugees increased.

Another option was pursuit of a negotiated settlement of the crisis. Islamabad initially had insisted that a withdrawal of Soviet troops must precede talks with Kabul. But a more flexible attitude was apparent in early 1981, when Zia and Pakistani foreign minister Agha Shahi urged UN secretary general Kurt Waldheim to arrange trilateral talks between the governments of Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan. It was not until June 16, 1982, however, that the UN under secretary for special political affairs, Diego Cordovez, convened the first of a series of indirect talks between the Afghan and Pakistani foreign ministers in Geneva. These were later called "proximity talks" because, at Pakistan's insistence, the two parties did not meet face to face but employed Cordovez as an intermediary. Iran declined to participate because representatives of the *mujahidiin* were not included. The winds between Kabul and Islamabad, by way of Geneva, blew warm and cool. Observers sensed Kabul's anxiousness to reach an understanding with Islamabad in its early 1983 decision to expel the Bhutto brothers from Afghanistan.

Between June 1982 and August 1985, five UN-sponsored sessions were held in Geneva, and more were expected in the future. During this time, four principles emerged as preconditions for a mutually satisfactory resolution of the crisis: withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan; mutual pledges of noninterference and nonintervention; international guarantees of a peaceful settlement; and voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees. There were, however, formidable obstacles to imple-

mentation of these points. The Afghans, even if they were free to do so, would not request a withdrawal of Soviet troops as long as a strong *mujahidiin* movement threatened the regime's existence, and voluntary repatriation of refugees was impossible as long as the Soviets continued their occupation.

Iran and Afghanistan

Iran shares an 800-kilometer border with Afghanistan, running north-to-south from its border with the Soviet Union to the northwestern tip of Pakistan. (see fig. 1). The regions that it passes through are desert but not as rugged as those along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Thus, it was more difficult for *mujahidiin* and refugees to cross undetected. In late 1985, however, an estimated 1.9 million Afghans resided on Iranian soil (whether most came after 1979 or were earlier arrivals was unclear). Guerrilla movements operated along the border, though not on the scale of Pakistan. Because of the immense costs of the war with Iraq, Tehran could not devote its full energies to helping its eastern Muslim neighbors. Its influence was most strongly felt in the predominantly Shia Hazarajat region in central Afghanistan; there, groups whose members were followers of Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini formed an important component of the resistance.

The day after the invasion, the foreign minister of Iran, Sadeq Qotbzadeh, delivered a protest to the Soviet embassy in Tehran calling the invasion a "hostile action against Iran and all Muslims of the world." The occupation confirmed Khomeini's perception of the two superpowers as equally perfidious. An important factor was historical fear and distrust of the Soviet Union. In November 1979 Tehran repudiated a 1921 "friendship treaty" that gave Moscow the right to intervene militarily in Iran if its territory was used as a base of military operations against the Soviet Union. During and after World War II, Soviet troops had occupied portions of Iran and had sought to promote separatist movements among ethnic minorities. Iranian leaders feared the growth of Soviet influence in the region even as they denounced the United States as the "Great Satan."

Relations between Tehran and Kabul were acrimonious. In November 1981 Tehran proposed a "peace plan" involving the replacement of Soviet troops with an "Islamic peace unit." This was, needless to say, rejected by the Karmal regime. In late 1985 Iran continued to refuse to participate in the Geneva

"proximity talks," insisting on inclusion of the *mujahidin* as a condition for its participation.

China and Afghanistan

China's view of the invasion, like Pakistan's and Iran's, was strongly critical. On December 29, 1979, the Chinese government labeled it "another grave international incident following the Soviet armed occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968." It also condemned the Soviet action as a "threat to peace and security in Asia and the whole world." Relations between Beijing and Moscow had been laden with suspicion and hostility since the early 1960s. Afghanistan, however, was peripheral to China's major security concerns (Soviet troops stationed along its borders and in Mongolia and a hostile, Soviet-backed Vietnam to the south after 1975), but the two countries shared an 80-kilometer border where the Wakhan Corridor touches China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. The inhabitants of the corridor, mostly Kirghiz, have close ties to the people of Xinjiang. In ancient and medieval times, what is now Afghanistan skirted the fabled Silk Road between China and the West.

Although relations between China and the Soviet Union improved noticeably during the 1980-85 period, Afghanistan remained an issue of serious contention. Afghan and Soviet spokesmen regularly accused the Chinese of aiding the resistance. In June and July 1981, Soviet troops occupied the Wakhan Corridor, expelling the original inhabitants and sealing it off from Chinese infiltration. The Chinese offered Pakistan moral support and aid as a "front-line state." During talks between Chinese and Soviet leaders in the mid-1980s, the Chinese insisted that the Soviets end the occupation. This issue, along with reduction of Soviet border troops and an end to encouragement of Vietnamese expansionism, was defined by Beijing as a precondition for normalized relations with Moscow.

India's Position on the Occupation

India was the one major noncommunist state that maintained amicable relations with Afghanistan in the mid-1980s. Although the Indian government called for a withdrawal of Soviet troops on December 31, 1979, it also expressed its apprehensions about United States military commitments to Pakistan. New Delhi feared that newly acquired United States

arms could be used against India, rather than to secure the Afghan border. Its close ties with the Soviet Union, highlighted by a treaty of friendship in 1971, were another factor in its relative reluctance to issue public condemnations of the occupation. Leaders voiced support for a political resolution of the crisis and deplored the use of "cold war rhetoric" to describe the situation.

An Indian observer notes that on two occasions Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, in meetings with Soviet leaders in 1980 and 1982, privately urged a pullout of Soviet troops. But before her assassination in October 1984, member nations of the Nonaligned Movement repeatedly criticized Gandhi's reluctance to publicly condemn Soviet actions. Her son, Rajiv Gandhi, elected prime minister in December 1984, was equally circumspect. He avoided criticism of the Soviet Union in his address before the UN in October 1985. As on five previous occasions, India's representative to the UN abstained in the November 13, 1985, vote on the General Assembly resolution on withdrawal.

Political Institutions Under Soviet Domination

With the death of Amin, the Afghan state lost its last shred of independence. Soviet advisers wielded great influence while Taraki and Amin were in power. After the invasion, the advisers ran the government's ministries and departments as surely as British colonial officials ran those of nineteenth-century India. Afghan administrators were carefully watched and allowed to make, at best, only routine decisions. Karmal enjoyed considerably less freedom than his counterparts in the Warsaw Pact. A puppet in every sense of the word, he presided over a government that had virtually no power, no popular support, and no room to challenge decisions handed down by the Soviets.

Testimony to the extent of Soviet control was provided by Abdul Majid Mangal, a diplomat whose last post was the Afghan embassy in Moscow and who defected to Pakistan in 1983. He noted that after the invasion, the Soviets sent noncommunist Afghan diplomats to Warsaw Pact countries to keep them under surveillance. They also trained a new generation of Afghan diplomats at universities in the Soviet Union. Safronchuk remained, in the mid-1980s, a very important figure. Though resident in Moscow, Safronchuk, described by

Mangal as "the real foreign minister of the Kabul regime," cabled instructions to the foreign ministry by way of the Soviet embassy in Kabul. Before traveling to international meetings, such as those of the UN or the Nonaligned Movement, the nominal foreign minister, Shah Mohammad Dost, customarily stopped over in Moscow to receive instructions. According to Mangal, "each communique, each statement issued by the Foreign Ministry in Kubul is prepared, drafted, and finalized in Moscow."

Observers in the mid-1980s described the network of Soviet advisers as an efficient, well-oiled machine that got things done but preserved the facade of Afghan independence. Limits to Soviet power, however, were apparent. Eighty percent of the country remained outside effective government control. Soviet advisers were also unable to stop the costly blood-feud that continued to rage between Parcham and Khalq.

The Political Role of KHAD

Because the regime depended so much on coercion to stay in power, the most important political institution, from the standpoint of ordinary Afghans in the mid-1980s, was probably the internal security organ, the State Information Service (Khadamate Ettelaate Dowlati, in Dari—KHAD). Successor to AGSA and KAM, KHAD was nominally part of the Afghan state, but it was firmly under the control of the Soviet KGB (see Internal Security, ch. 5). Little is known of its internal organization, but KHAD's system of informers and operatives extended into virtually every aspect of Afghan life, especially in the government-controlled urban areas. Aside from its secret police work, KHAD supervised ideological education at schools and colleges, ran a special school for war orphans, and recruited young men for the militia. Its importance to Moscow was reflected in the fact that it was chiefly responsible for the training of a new generation of Afghans who could be loyal to the Soviet Union. One observer, John Fullerton, calls it "the primary instrument used in the Sovietisation of the country." KHAD was also responsible for co-opting religious leaders. It funded an official body known as the Religious Affairs Directorate and recruited proregime ulama and mosque attendants to spy on worshipers. Another important area was work with tribes and ethnic minorities. KHAD collaborated with the Ministry of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs to foster support for the regime in the countryside.

KHAD also had a political role that was clearly unintended by the Soviets. Its director, Najibullah, and other high officials were Parchamis. Thus, KHAD was zealous in suppressing Khalqis in the government and in the armed forces. There was a bitter rivalry between Najibullah and Sayed Muhammad Gulabzoi. Gulabzoi, a Khalq sympathizer, was minister of interior and commander of Sarandoy (Defenders of the Revolution), the National Gendarmerie. In late 1985, Najibullah was promoted to be a secretary on the PDPA Central Committee; in this capacity he may be able to exercise party authority over all security organs, including those attached to the Khalq-dominated defense and interior ministries.

The PDPA after the Invasion

In *A Socialist Oriented State*, Chirkin and Yudin classify the PDPA as a "revolutionary vanguard party of the working people." They suggest that it can be considered to be in the process of evolving into a genuine Marxist-Leninist party. They note that "the 1982 Rules of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan define the PDPA as a new type of party, the highest form of political organization, the leading and guiding force of society that unites advanced and most class-conscious workers, peasants, servicemen, intellectuals, nomads, craftsmen and other patriots."

Like other parties with Marxist-Leninist affinities, the PDPA was organized according to the principle of democratic centralism. This was a concept developed by Lenin before the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. It meant, simply, that although party members could discuss issues freely when policies were being formulated, once a decision had been made by the party as a whole, they had to adhere to it strictly. In the PDPA constitution, allegedly adopted at its First Congress in 1965, democratic centralism was defined according to several criteria: election of party leadership on all levels; adherence of a minority to the decisions made by the majority; adherence of lower-ranking party officials to the decisions made by higher-ranking ones; and "enforcement of collective basic leadership and individual responsibility." Lenin's determination to build a tightly organized and highly disciplined party meant that, in practice, the centralist component of the theory was always more apparent than the democratic one. In the PDPA, however, factionalism impeded the smooth operation of democratic centralism, and party discipline was notoriously lax.

A second Marxist-Leninist organizational principle is the parallelism of party and state bodies. Party units in theory supervised and directed the operations of their state counterparts on the national, provincial, district, and subdistrict levels (see fig. 7). This conformed with the concept that the revolutionary party uses the state as an instrument for the transformation of society. Most Western observers agreed, however, that the *mujahidiin* prevented the PDPA from extending its organization down below the provincial level in most parts of the country. Local party figures were easy targets for assassination.

According to the party constitution, the highest authority in the PDPA is vested in the Party Congress, consisting of delegates elected by provincial party conferences. It convenes every four years, although the Central Committee, or two-thirds of the party membership, may call an extraordinary Party Congress at other times. The congress selects the members and alternate members of the Central Committee. This body, responsible to the congress, has an executive function. It administers the party and its constituent organizations and is responsible for its finances. In 1984 Western observers identified 46 full and 27 alternate members. The Central Committee chooses the membership of its Politburo Secretariat, and the party secretary general. The Politburo, in practice the most powerful party organ, consisted of nine full members and four alternate members in 1984.

Factionalism

In the mid-1980s repeated Soviet attempts to foster party discipline and unity had come to naught, and the PDPA remained bitterly divided along the Parcham-Khalq faultline (see table 18, Appendix). Each faction had bitter memories of torture and abuse at the hands of the other. Within the two groups, smaller factions, organized around individual leaders, could be identified. Within Parcham, Karmal, Keshtmand, and Solayman Laeq allegedly had the strongest personal followings. Najibullah, as head of the KHAD apparatus, was also extremely powerful. Important faction leaders among Khalqis included Gulabzoi, the minister of interior, and Muhammad Zahir Ofagh, a founder and member of the PDPA with close Soviet ties. Gulabzoi apparently led the former followers of the notorious Sarwari, an anti-Amin Khalqi who after the 1979 invasion was elected to the Politburo but then was sent off to

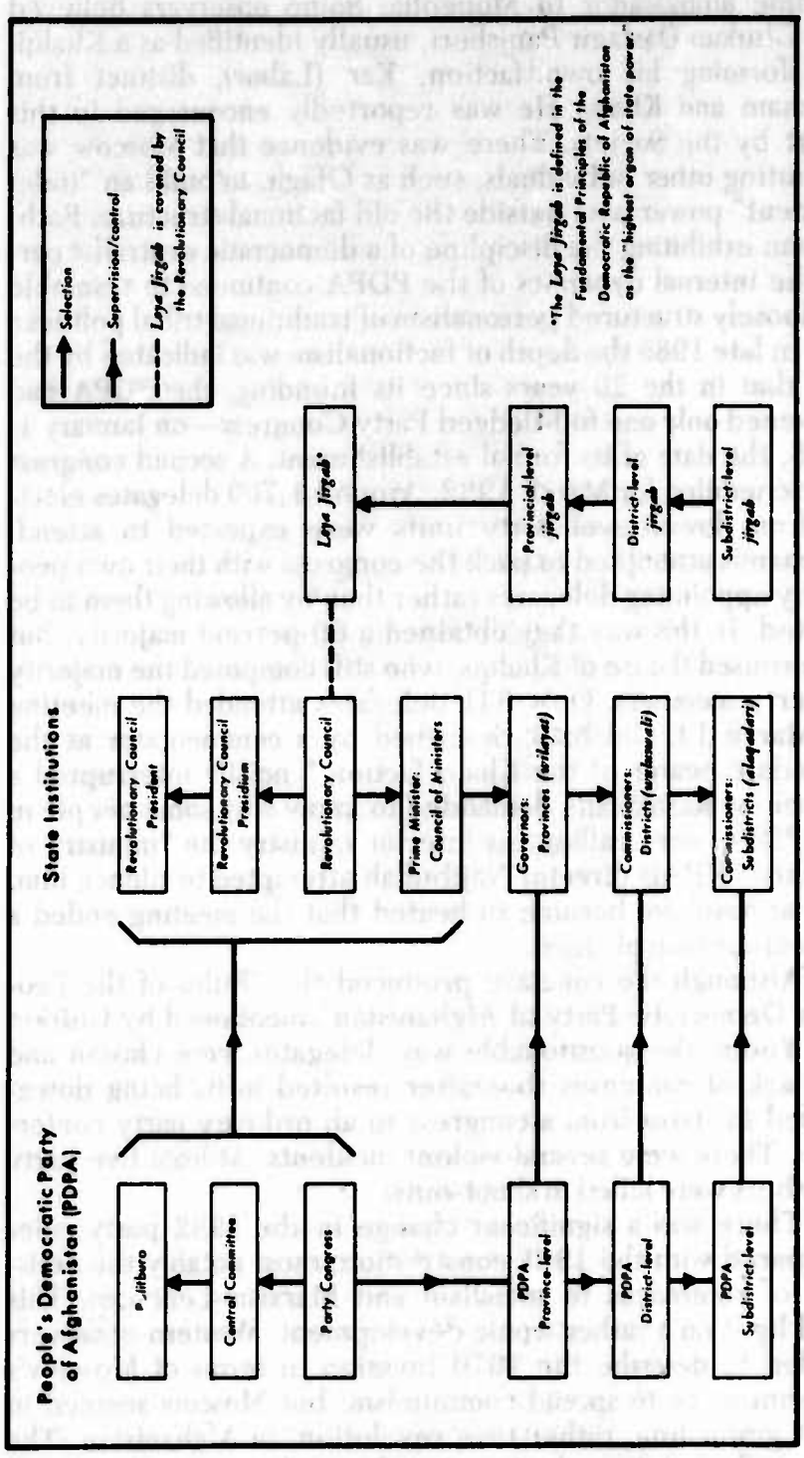

Figure 7. Party and State Structure, 1985

become ambassador to Mongolia. Some observers believed that Ghulam Dastagir Panjsheri, usually identified as a Khalqi, was forming his own faction, Kar (Labor), distinct from Parcham and Khalq. He was reportedly encouraged in this effort by the Soviets. There was evidence that Moscow was recruiting other individuals, such as Ofagh, to build an "independent" power base outside the old factional structure. Rather than exhibiting the discipline of a democratic centralist party, the internal dynamics of the PDPA continued to resemble the loosely structured personalism of traditional tribal politics.

In late 1985 the depth of factionalism was indicated by the fact that in the 20 years since its founding, the PDPA had convened only one full-fledged Party Congress—on January 1, 1965, the date of its formal establishment. A second congress was scheduled for March 1982. Around 1,700 delegates elected from lower-level party units were expected to attend. Parchamis attempted to pack the congress with their own people by appointing delegates rather than by allowing them to be elected. In this way they obtained a 60-percent majority, but they roused the ire of Khalqis, who still composed the majority of party members. Only 841 delegates attended the meeting on March 14. Gulabzoi, described by a commentator as the "standard-bearer of the Khalq faction," noisily interrupted a speech by Karmal and demanded to know why some people in the PDPA were calling his interior ministry the "ministry of bandits." KHAD director Najibullah attempted to silence him. The atmosphere became so heated that the meeting ended a day earlier than planned.

Although the conclave produced the "Rules of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan" mentioned by Chirkin and Yudin, the questionable way delegates were chosen and the lack of consensus thereafter resulted in its being downgraded in status from a congress to an ordinary party conference. There were several violent incidents. At least five party members were killed in shoot-outs.

There was a significant change in the 1982 party rules compared with the 1965 constitution, most notably the omission of references to socialism and Marxism-Leninism. This shed light on a rather ironic development. Western observers tended to describe the 1979 invasion in terms of Moscow's determination to spread communism; but Moscow seemed to want gradualism, rather than revolution, in Afghanistan. The rules reflected the orthodox view that such an underdeveloped country—a socialist-oriented rather than socialist state—was

in the national democratic stage of development. This viewpoint was bitterly opposed by Khalqis.

The party was severely crippled organizationally because the majority of rank-and-file members, Khalqis, were continually at odds with the Parcham-dominated upper ranks. Eight of the 13 members and alternate members of the Politburo in 1984 were Parchamis: Karmal, Keshtmand, Najibullah, Nur Ahmad Nur, Muhammad Rafi, Ratebzad, Qader (though he was not in the Politburo in 1985), and Mahmud Baryalai. Muhammad Aslam Watanjar, Salih Muhammad Zeary, Muhammad Ismail Danesh and, possibly, Ghulam Dastagir Panjsheri, were Khalqis (the affiliation of an alternate member, Abdul Zahoor Razmjo, was not clear). Watanjar, commander of rebel tanks during the April 1978 coup, had been involved in the plot to remove Amin, while Zeary, nicknamed "Quicksilver," was known for his skill in evading ideological commitments. Danesh was another hardy survivor, having served as minister of mines and industries under Taraki, Amin, and Karmal. Panjsheri's ambition to form his own faction and his close ties to the Soviets made him a doubtful exponent of Khalq interests. None of the men in the Politburo shared the perspective of the Khalqi rank-and-file.

Frequent shootings gave party life a Dodge City atmosphere. In late September 1985, for example, it was reported that 14 people had been killed in Parcham-Khalq confrontations. Disaffected Khalqis often assisted the *mujahidiin*. Khalqis in the armed forces often accused their Parchami officers of using them as cannon fodder and complained that young Parchami men were exempted from compulsory military service. Even Afghan students at Soviet universities kept alive the old animosity. One source reported that two Khalqi students fell out of a window of the Afghan embassy in Moscow under highly suspicious circumstances. When PDPA meetings were held by Afghan students at Moscow State University, the two factions reportedly met in different rooms.

By the mid-1980s the party's problems were too severe to hide. Karmal, in an address before the Central Committee plenum in March 1984, warned against excessive leftism (presumably a reference to Khalq), castigated the party's lack of zeal, factional selfishness, obstructionism, and "narcissism," and asserted that "a solid unity can only be ensured through an iron discipline." There was little prospect, however, that the PDPA had the will or the resources to cure its factional ills.

Membership

Figures on PDPA membership were highly unreliable. In late 1984 the party claimed a figure of 120,000 persons. This was considered by many Western observers to be as many as 10 times the actual figure. The 1984 edition of the *Yearbook on International Communist Affairs*, published by the Hoover Institution, suggests a figure as low as 11,000, composed of 3,000 Parchamis and 8,000 Khalqis. In a 1985 article Arnold offers a much more generous estimate of between 50,000 and 90,000. Even the higher figure is significantly less than 1 percent of the total Afghan population (around 14.7 million; for purposes of comparison, the CPSU composed in the mid-1980s about 7 percent of the Soviet population, and the Chinese Communist Party, 4 percent of China's). The statistics suggest that the party has had only limited success in recruitment, despite the rewards of membership. According to the Peshawar-based *Afghanistan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin*, the salaries of civil servants who joined the party were quadrupled, and those of armed forces personnel were doubled or tripled. Balanced against this, of course, was the risk of being assassinated by the *mujahidiin*.

During Amin's months in power—September-December 1979—party membership plunged because of his brutal purges of both Parchamis and pro-Taraki Khalqis. After the invasion the party grew slowly but steadily. It was prepared to accept practically anyone who applied. One noticeable trend in the 1980s was the decline in members' educational qualifications. The party had been founded by intellectuals, but Arnold notes that only 40 of the 841 delegates attending the March 1982 conference were intellectuals or professionals. About half the party members were from worker, craftsman, or peasant backgrounds. Other sources give 60 percent of the party membership as belonging to the armed forces, Sarandoy, or KHAD.

The Succession

Although the Soviets could not curb factional violence or transform the PDPA into a disciplined party, their involvement in its internal affairs meant that they had a decisive role in choosing who would succeed Karmal. In 1985 Karmal was a relatively young 56 years of age, but the life expectancy of Afghan leaders has tended to be short. Soviet support of Karmal, moreover, was far from unequivocal. He was an inef-

fectual leader. Rumors circulated in Kabul and emigré circles that he was deeply disillusioned about the revolution and drowned his sorrows in alcohol. Politburo member Ratebzad, his mistress, was reportedly the power behind a very powerless throne, but given the sexual prejudices of a still strongly Muslim country, it was unlikely that the Soviets would back her as a new leader.

The Soviets apparently cultivated Ofagh and Panjsheri in an attempt to find an alternative to Karmal. Other possible candidates included the prime minister, Keshtmand, and the chairman of the National Fatherland Front (NFF), Abdul Rahim Atef. But Keshtmand, a Hazara, would not be acceptable to Pashtuns and other nationalities, and Atef, an old parliamentarian, was not well-known. In April 1985, however, he came into the spotlight as chairman of the Loya Jirgah, and he assumed his position as head of the front a month later. Another candidate at that time was the old Parcham stalwart, Nur Ahmad Nur. Though he was a member of the Politburo, he reportedly resided in Moscow, kept "on ice" by the Soviets like Karmal himself. After his appointment as PDPA party secretary, Najibullah emerged as another candidate. Coverage in the local press indicated in late 1985 that he was ranked third in the party hierarchy.

Government Structure

In late 1985 the basic document of the Afghan state, serving as a provisional constitution, was the Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. Replacing the Thirty-two Basic Lines of Revolutionary Duties promulgated by Taraki, it was adopted by Karmal's Revolutionary Council (RC) on April 14, 1980, and put into effect a week later. It is divided into 10 chapters containing 68 articles that explain the regime's basic principles and define government structure. There is little mention of socialist or Marxist-Leninist themes. Afghanistan is described as an "independent, democratic State belonging to all Moslem working people of Afghanistan ranging from workers, peasants, nomads and the intelligentsia to other toilers and the entire democratic and patriotic forces from all nationalities, tribes and clans of this country" (Article One). Article Five guarantees "respect, observance and preservation of Islam as a sacred religion" and religious freedom for members of other religions. Article Eleven, however, declares the government's determination to "expand and strengthen its

friendship and traditional all-out co-operation with the Soviet Union" and other members of the "socialist alliance."

The Loya Jirgah, or national assembly, is defined as the "highest organ of state power." When it is convened, as the Fundamental Principles declare it will be, a permanent constitution will be ratified. Until that time, the RC stands at the apex of the government system. This body holds plenary sessions twice a year. At other times, its responsibilities are performed by the RC's Presidium. These include the ratification of laws and decrees, approval of economic plans, appointment of members of the Council of Ministers, convening (when appropriate) of the Loya Jirgah, and ratification of treaties and other agreements with foreign states. Laws are passed by a majority of the members of the RC. They choose the Presidium and its chairman, who is president of the RC.

The RC president, Karmal in late 1985, fills the role of head of state. He is commander of the armed forces, accepts the credentials of foreign diplomatic representatives, and signs laws and decrees into force. Karmal, like Taraki and Amin, simultaneously held the post of PDPA secretary general.

The Council of Ministers, with 28 members in the summer of 1985, is the highest executive body. It implements policy and submits draft laws to the RC. The president of the Council of Ministers, the prime minister, is head of the council and is assisted by several deputy prime ministers. In late 1985 the prime minister was Keshtmand.

Provincial and District-Level Government

Afghanistan was divided in the mid-1980s into 29 provinces *(wilayat)*. These, in turn, were divided into districts *(wuluswali)*, and subdistricts *(alaqadari)*. Provincial governors were appointed by the RC, and district and subdistrict commissioners were also central government officials. Because of the widespread nature of the resistance, however, the local government administration was inoperative in most of the country. After the 1979 invasion, Soviet advisers established a new system of administration. Afghanistan was divided into seven military districts, each jointly administered by a Soviet military commander and a PDPA political officer.

The Loya Jirgah on the national level and the provincial, district, and subdistrict *jirgahs* (assemblies) are elective bodies. In July 1985 the RC passed the Law on Elections and Local Organs of the State Power and Administration. The following

month, local elections were held with great fanfare in Kabul. How widely they were held in other parts of the country at this time was unclear. A Soviet observer, commenting that the elections were being held in several places, noted that "it must be said that the elections in Afghanistan are of a rather peculiar character . . . because of the military-political situation which remains difficult and because of the many national traditions and practices."

The Judicial System and Human Rights

The Fundamental Principles declare that all citizens are equal before the law. The highest court is the Supreme Court. It administers the lower courts (on the provincial, municipal, and district levels) and "ensures a uniform application of laws by all courts." Court judges on all levels are appointed by the RC Presidium. Article Fifty-four provides for "special courts" to judge "specific cases according to law." According to the United States Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984*, "revolutionary" courts, controlled by the PDPA and similar to those established during the Taraki era, still functioned.

Although Islamic law is not designated as the foundation of the legal system by the Fundamental Principles, courts may settle cases according to sharia when there are ambiguities in the law (Article Fifty-six). Cases can be tried in Pashtu, Dari, or the languages of minority nationalities. In areas controlled by the *mujahidiin*, qazis (religious judges) continued to dispense justice.

Although the Fundamental Principles pledge "due respect" to the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both the United States Department of State and Amnesty International identified significant human rights abuses in the mid-1980s. These included the use of torture, particularly by KHAD; the use of predetermined "show trials" to dispose of political prisoners; and widespread arbitrary arrest and detention. Secret trials and the execution of prisoners without trial were also common.

The Search for Popular Support

In the mid-1980s only a tiny minority of the total population—perhaps 3 to 5 percent—actively supported the regime. The largest group were PDPA and state cadres and their fami-

lies in the urban areas, who depended on Soviet armed protection and subsidies for physical survival. The PDPA's postinvasion united-front strategy—aimed at groups as diverse as women, youth, national minorities, tribal leaders, Islamic clergy, peasants, workers, and intellectuals—was regarded by observers as largely ineffectual. In people's eyes, the regime combined the worst features of the reigns of Shah Shuja, the nineteenth-century king installed as a puppet by the British in 1839, and the radically unorthodox King Amanullah (see The First Anglo-Afghan War; Reign of King Amanullah, 1919-29, ch. 1).

Certain rural communities were proregime because they had relatives in important government positions or received special treatment because of their strategic location near the country's borders. One, Lakan in Paktia Province, was nicknamed "little Moscow." The authorities were typically reduced to buying people's loyalty. A Swedish journalist, writing in 1984, notes that the regime discovered it was cheaper to bribe guerrillas to lay down their arms than to repair sabotaged facilities. A guerrilla source claimed that the authorities paid the equivalent of US$500,000, a princely sum in Afghanistan, to keep the peace in one district. Government sinecures, in Kabul or provincial centers, were another inducement.

On January 2, 1980, Karmal announced that he intended to establish a united-front organization, but it was not until June 15, 1981, that the NFF held its founding congress. Zeary, the "quicksilver" Khalqi, was named its first chairman.

Designed to serve as a bridge between the PDPA and the people, the NFF contained around 15 mass, elite, and professional organizations. The most important were similar to those found in the Soviet Union: the Central Council of Trade Unions (200,000 members), the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan (25,000 members), and the Pioneers (like the Soviet Pioneers, similar to boy and girl scouts; 85,000 members). Other constituent groups in mid-1985 included the Council of Religious Scholars and Clergy, the Council of Tribal Elders, local *jirgah* (assemblies—see Glossary), peasants' cooperatives, paramilitary units, the Afghan Red Crescent Society, and the Kabul University Center for Social Activities (apparently the equivalent of a student union). Recruitment for some of these groups was reportedly coerced. The NFF published its own newspaper, *Anis*, in Kabul. PDPA leaders in late 1984 heaped criticism on the NFF for its lack of discipline and

initiative. This may explain the replacement of Zeary as chairman by Atef in May 1985.

The Loya Jirgah

The convening of a Loya Jirgah, or grand assembly of tribal chiefs, local notables, and religious leaders, has traditionally been an event of tremendous significance in Afghan politics. Since 1747, when a grand assembly in Qandahar elected Ahmad Shah Durrani king of Afghanistan, the institution has functioned as an elite referendum on major national issues. It draws on the tradition of the tribal *jirgah*, a vital feature of Pashtun political life. Given the weakness of the central government, rulers have needed the consensus of members of the powerful local elite to initiate new policies. In 1924 King Amanullah convened a Loya Jirgah to approve the country's first constitution. Four years later, he called together around 1,000 of the country's most prominent men to approve his radical political and social reforms. When they rejected his proposals, which included enforcement of monogamy and the unveiling of women, he convened a "rump" *jirgah* of 100 reformist notables to gain their approval. Outraged conservatives then sought to overthrow him. Loya Jirgahs were convened to approve Afghanistan's neutrality in World War II, lend moral support to the Pashtunistan movement in 1955, and ratify new constitutions in 1964 and 1977.

It is not surprising that the Fundamental Principles designate this vital symbol of legitimacy—in many ways the foundation of the modern Afghan state's identity—as the "highest organ of state power." The first postinvasion Loya Jirgah was assembled in Kabul on April 23, 1985. With much fanfare, elections of representatives from the different provinces were hastily conducted in early spring of that year. According to the April 17 *Kabul New Times*, "the election of representatives of the people for the Loya Jirgah is taking place through traditional tribal and popular jirgahs in each province in a democratic and free atmosphere." Many local notables, however, had to be bribed to attend. In late 1985, moreover, it was unclear what exactly the meeting had accomplished. The Fundamental Principles state that one of the first tasks a Loya Jirgah would undertake is ratification of a permanent constitution, but this did not occur. One observer of Afghan affairs has suggested that Karmal's sponsorship of the assembly was an act

of desperation meant to show that the regime was a genuinely Afghan government and not a Soviet implantation.

Resistance groups have also attempted to use the Loya Jirgah as a vehicle of legitimacy. A grand assembly was convened in Peshawar, Pakistan, in May 1980. Although representatives from all the major *mujahidiin* groups attended, the meeting failed to produce a consensus or establish the basis for a truly unified movement.

The Promotion of "Official" Islam

After the invasion, Karmal attempted to put the Soviet wolf in Islamic sheep's clothing, claiming that "the date of 27 December represents the intervention of God Almighty. That the USSR is helping us is also an act of God." The more credulous Afghans must have reflected that God was indeed acting in mysterious ways, since the Soviets were universally known as *kafirs*, or unbelievers. The regime sought to assuage, if not win over, the country's deeply religious population. The old Afghan tricolor, with the Islamic color of green, was restored. Beginning in April 1980, the traditional invocation, "In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate", was again used to preface official documents.

The regime attempted to co-opt Islamic clergy and scholars, the mullahs and ulama. Numerous clergy conferences, with top leaders in attendance, were sponsored. The Council of Religious Scholars and Clergy was given a prominent place in the NFF, and the state's ministry of religious affairs and endowments was responsible for subsidies to the Islamic establishment. The theology faculty at Kabul University trained a new generation of ulama in the mid-1980s. Karmal claimed, in an August 1985 address commemorating the Islamic holiday at the end of Ramadan, that there were 20 *madrasa* and schools for memorizing the Quran in the country and that religious subjects were taught in all the schools. He also claimed that the regime had distributed thousands of copies of the Quran.

In the mid-1980s mullahs were given ration coupons and special allowances. According to the *Kabul New Times* in February 1985, the equivalent of US$3.4 million had been donated by the state for the construction or repair of mosques in the 1982-85 period. The paper also noted that US$9.4 million had been donated to subsidize the haj (pilgrimage) to Mecca. Special supplies of firewood were made available to mosques to keep them warm during the winter months.

The regime's goal of creating an "official," and subservient, Islam was frustrated by the nature of the religious community in Afghanistan (see Meaning and Practice, ch. 2). Like temporal authority, spiritual authority tended to be diffuse. Clerical hierarchies were poorly developed, and individual mullahs had very limited prestige outside their local communities. According to Alexandre Bennigsen, an expert on Soviet and Central Asian Islam, the most powerful religious figures were members of spiritual families that claimed descent from the Prophet. Many of these had been persecuted while Taraki and Amin were in power and, after the Soviet invasion, played a prominent role in the resistance. The few mullahs or ulama foolish enough to express support for the regime risked a grisly death at the hands of the *mujahidiin*.

The PDPA's Soviet advisers discovered that Moscow's experience with Muslims in the Central Asian republics bordering Afghanistan was of limited relevance. There, clerical hierarchies were well-established and had tremendous prestige. Thus, it was relatively easy for the Soviets to foster the growth of a co-opted elite of "red mullahs" commanding the allegiance of local Muslims.

The PDPA regime, with Soviet guidance, apparently planned over the long terms to combine support of official Islam with an educational and cultural program designed to loosen its hold on the population. As a Soviet scholar living in the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic north of the Amu Darya has commented, "there can be no harmless religious beliefs." Observers have noticed preliminary moves in this direction, such as the gradual abandonment of the study of Arabic, the language of the Islamic scriptures, in schools; the introduction of materialist philosophy into curricula; and the promotion of secular festivals, such as the "orange blossom festival" held in Jalalabad in April 1983, to compete with traditional religious observances. Although the PDPA was in no position in the mid-1980s to initiate a campaign of antireligious propaganda, the promotion of "scientific atheism"—a prominent theme in the cultural life of the Central Asian republics—was likely to be one of the later fruits of the Soviet occupation.

National Minorities

Given centuries-old animosity between minorities and the Pashtun majority, exploitation of the nationality issue seemed to Western observers in the mid-1980s to be an excellent way

for the regime to gain popular support. The Soviets were able to use a tribal and ethnic divide-and-conquer policy to undermine resistance in the ethnically heterogeneous areas of the Caucasus and Central Asia. Available evidence suggests that although the PDPA, urged by the Soviets, had initiated such a policy, by the mid-1980s it had limited effectiveness. One reason was that the party was still a predominantly Pashtun organization, and its policies reflected a Pashtun point of view. Parcham was more ethnically diverse in its following than Khalq, but only a handful of its top adherents, such as Prime Minister Keshtmand, were non-Pashtuns. The radical policies of Taraki and Amin, moreover, had alienated most national minorities. Minority areas remained centers of rebellion that were as much anti-Pashtun as they were anticommunist. The largest *mujahidiin*-controlled region was the Hazarajat, inhabited by the Shia Hazaras and covering parts of the three central provinces of Bamian, Ghowr, and Oruzgan.

Two features of nationality policy were apparently heavily influenced by the Soviets. One was the deep involvement of the KGB-directed KHAD in work in minority areas. KHAD collaborated closely with the state ministry of nationalities and tribal affairs, headed by Solayman Laeq. The second feature was an emphasis on cultivating cultural and other ties between Afghan minorities and their ethnic counterparts in Soviet Central Asia. There are large populations of Turkic-speaking Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Turkmen on both sides of the Amu Darya. Official histories written since 1979 stressed Afghanistan's traditional ties with Central Asia, not with India or Iran. Cultural exchanges between the Afghan minority areas (or at least those areas under government control) and the Soviet Central Asian republics were frequent. The regime also encouraged the development of minority, particularly Turkic, languages and literature. Thus, it established a number of Uzbek and Turkmen journals, schools, and cultural centers. Non-Turkic minority languages, such as Nuristani and Baluchi, were also encouraged. In this manner, the regime and its Soviet advisers sought to fragment the country linguistically and culturally in a manner very similar to Soviet policy in Central Asia.

One social division the regime apparently did not exploit was between the majority Sunni Muslims and the Shia Muslims. Bennigsen suggests that the PDPA was too fearful of "Khomeiniism" to encourage a sense of Shia identity, particularly among the rebellious Hazaras.

Political Bases of The Resistance

Like the elephant in the Indian fable of the blind men, the Afghan resistance has been characterized in different ways by different observers. If the analogy of the blind men holds, each grasps a part of the truth but lacks a comprehensive perspective.

For example, Gérard Chaliand, an expert on guerrilla movements worldwide, describes the resistance as a traditionalist uprising, a violent repudiation of the PDPA's ambitious modernization schemes. He notes that "unlike virtually all guerrilla movements of Asia, Africa. or Latin America, the Afghan resistance has nothing new to show the visiting observer: no new elected village committee, for example; no program for the integration of women into the struggle; no new clinics or schools; no newly created stores that sell or exchange essential goods; no small workshops contributing to economic self-sufficiency of the sort one finds in guerrilla camps elsewhere throughout the world. The Afghan rebels have undertaken no political experiments or social improvements."

Leftist writers such as Fred Halliday also see the resistance in essentially negative terms. In his 1980 essay, "War and Revolution in Afghanistan," Halliday explains the revolt in terms of the underdeveloped state of the Afghan countryside. Because of the strength of tribal loyalties, the lack of class-consciousness, Afghanistan's violent political ethos, and the reactionary nature of militant Islam, the PDPA's reforms in 1978-79 roused widespread popular opposition. Afghan peasants were not ready for revolution because they still had strong economic and emotional ties to members of the local elite.

On the other end of the political spectrum, sympathetic commentators describe the resistance in terms of either Afghan nationalism or a struggle between the forces of "freedom" and "totalitarianism." Like the leftists, their perspectives and judgments are often compromised by adherence to Western concepts. Those close to the scene realize that Western ideas such as nationalism or freedom are meaningless to all but a rather small minority of resistance fighters.

Finally, there is the Islamic perspective. In a 1984 article, "Islam in the Afghan Resistance," French scholar Olivier Roy argues that "the Afghan resistance sees its struggle more in terms of a 'holy war' (*jihad*) than as a war of national liberation. In a country in which reference to the 'nation' is a very recent phenomenon, where the State is perceived as exterior to socie-

ty, and where allegiance belongs to the local community, Islam remains the sole point of reference for all Afghans." Edward Girardet, a journalist who spent time with the resistance in Afghanistan, notes that "Russia's most formidable foe is not a military one, but Islam . . . Difficult for the Western (and Russian) mind to understand, faith is the greatest strength of the Afghan, whose whole approach to life is closely bound to his constant struggle for survival."

Although the Islamic concept of jihad is a theme common to all the major resistance groups, it would be simplistic to assume that they share a single Islamic ideology. Rather, there are several Islamic constituencies with widely diverse perspectives on religion, society, and the state. In a country where 99 percent of the population is Muslim, Islam ostensibly provides a basis for unity and legitimacy. Yet the variations within the Muslim community are so pronounced that different groups, professing Islamic goals, have little in common except the vocabulary of the Quran, hostility to the foreign invader and, sometimes, appreciation of the material benefits of united action (see Religion, ch. 2).

Perhaps more basic to the resistance than even Islam is Afghanistan's cultural, ethnic, and social diversity (see Ethnicity and Tribe, ch. 2). The Afghan state has existed since the rise of Ahmad Shah Durrani in the mid-eighteenth century. It has had, however, minimal impact on the daily life or self-conceptions of most Afghans. As Roy indicates, the state has been largely unsuccessful in fostering a coherent sense of Afghan nationhood (although some sense of this was found among Pashtun close to the royal family). Old social divisions, then, remain extremely important: those between the various ethnic groups, between Durrani and Ghilzai, between speakers of Pashtu and speakers of Dari, between Sunni and Shia, between Sufi communities and other Muslims, and between farmers, nomads, and urbanites, to mention some of the most important. The local elites that emerged from this social complexity enjoyed, with a few exceptions, unchallenged authority. The downfall of Amanullah in 1929 shows that they could sabotage the state's efforts to exercise power on the local level or promote radical social change. The *mujahidiin* resistance beginning in 1978 was probably as much an expression of local political interests as it was a religious struggle. Revolt, moreover, was nothing new. In Afghan politics, violence is not extremism but part of a centuries-old status quo.

Thus, the resistance in the mid-1980s reflected the diver-

sity and complexity of Afghan society. Western analysts counted as many as 90 localities where armed groups operated. With the exception of a few famous commanders, such as the intrepid Ahmad Shah Mahsud in the Panjsher Valley, these groups and their leaders were less well-known to outsiders than the seven emigré parties based in Peshawar, Pakistan, which are identified in the Western press as leading the *mujahidiin*. The Peshawar groups played a vital role in publicizing the Afghan struggle worldwide and in funneling arms and funds from outside donors (such as the Arab states of the Gulf) to the fighting groups inside the country. They also represented the broad currents of Islamic ideology and politics. But they did not directly control or command the unquestioning loyalty of the *mujahidiin*. Observers such as Louis Dupree have commented that the guerrillas were growing increasingly dissatisfied with the emigré parties' inefficiency, corruption, and quarrelsomeness.

The complexity of the resistance was accentuated by Afghanistan's rugged topography and the economic effects of the war. Soviet attacks and *mujahidiin* sabotage of highways and bridges isolated communities, making them economically more self-reliant than they had been before 1979. At the same time, the smuggling of foodstuffs and other goods from Pakistan and Iran flourished. Because the majority of the population, including the guerrillas, consisted of subsistence farmers and nomads, their survival did not depend on an integrated economic system of the kind found in developed countries. Thus, the Soviets found it relatively difficult to impose an economic stranglehold on the country and starve the scores of self-sufficient liberated areas into submission.

Both the *mujahidiin* and Western observers generally classified the different resistance groups—the guerrilla units within the country and the emigré parties based in Pakistan—into "Islamic fundamentalist" and "traditionalist" categories. These are sometimes misleading labels, but they reflect significant social and political cleavages. A third category consisted of Shia groups. Some, but not all, had close ties with revolutionary Iran in the mid-1980s. There were also small groups of Maoist leftists involved in the resistance, although their role in the mid-1980s appeared to have been minimal.

Islamic Fundamentalists

Islamic fundamentalists were ideologically and organiza-

tionally the most coherent groups in the resistance, and they most resembled modern revolutionary parties in other parts of the world. Influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood (Al Ikhwan al Muslimun) in Egypt and to a lesser extent by modern Muslim thinkers on the Indian subcontinent, the movement originated on the campus of Kabul University in the late 1950s. Principal figures were professors of the Faculty of Theology, such as Burhannudin Rabbani (in late 1985 the leader of a major emigré fundamentalist party, the Jamiat-i-Islami). Many of these scholars had studied at the venerable Al Azhar University in Cairo, a center of Islamic political thought. In the early years, the Jamiat-i-Islami, the predecessor of the resistance group established by these professors, was concerned primarily with encouraging cultural activities among students. Because of their critical views of the monarchy, however, many Jamiat-i-Islami members were arrested, and their activities were conducted in a semiclandestine manner.

During the 1965-72 period, when Kabul University was wracked with political turmoil, students formed the Sazman-e Jawanan-e Musalman (Organization of Muslim Youth). More militant than their teachers, they held demonstrations against Zionism, United States involvement in Vietnam, and—most controversially—against the creation of Pashtunistan. Given the importance of this issue to the government, they suffered severe repression. Muslim students also had violent confrontations with leftist students. The organization gained recruits not only at the university but also at teachers' training colleges and the polytechnic and engineering schools in Kabul. Among the most important were engineering student Gulbuddin Hikmatyar (leader in late 1985 of the Hezb-e Islami, or Islamic Party, the largest fundamentalist emigré party) and polytechnic student Mahsud, the Panjsher Valley commander. Islamic fundamentalist students came from diverse regions of Afghanistan; but significantly, the movement gained only a few adherents from Pashtun tribal areas.

In his 1984 article Roy argues that the fundamentalists were distinct both from Afghanistan's traditional religious authorities (the ulama, or scholars, and the *pirs*, or Sufi holy men) and from conservative Muslims (sometimes also known as "fundamentalists"), who advocated restoration of sharia (Islamic law) as the basis of the state but opposed the creation of a modern state. Unlike these groups, they were not inimical to Western ideas. Roy notes that "Islamism [his term for fundamentalism" attempts to think of Islam in terms of a political

ideology which is fit to compete with the great ideologies of the West (liberalism, Marxism, nationalism). It borrows the conceptual framework of western political philosophy (the sense of history, the State, the search for a definition of politics) and endeavours to fill it with the traditional concepts of Muslim thought." Their political activism and self-awareness as modern intellectuals rather than traditional scholars gave them a perspective that was deeply at odds with Afghan tradition. In many ways, they were as remote from the society in which they lived as the more radical members of the PDPA. This was particularly true of Hikmatyar, who sought to build a highly disciplined, Leninist-style "vanguard" party.

As revolutionaries, the fundamentalists were committed to establishing a just society based on Islamic principles. On this issue they were at odds with the often corrupt religious authorities who were concerned with tradition and hairsplitting interpretations of sharia. These divergent viewpoints engendered much suspicion and hostility.

Fundamentalists were opposed to Daoud's regime after he came to power in July 1973 because of his collaboration with Parcham, his initially friendly relations with the Soviet Union, and his Pashtun nationalism. Their opposition to the Pashtunistan issue gained them the active support of Pakistan. The Pakistani armed forces trained Afghan units in the early 1970s, and around 5,000 guerrillas were based at camps near the border at Peshawar. In July 1975 they launched an insurrection. Although the Jamiat-i-Islami, like the PDPA, had established cells in the armed forces, army sympathizers did nothing to aid the revolt. Insurgents attacked government installations in the Panjsher Valley, Badakhshan, and other parts of the country. The uprising was brutally crushed, and the survivors fled back across the border to Peshawar. There, the foundations were laid for the later *mujahidiin* movement.

The history of the Jamiat-i-Islami parallels, in a striking fashion, that of the PDPA. As in the leftist party, there were radical and moderate wings. Hikmatyar, the youthful "Leninist," bitterly opposed the more moderate and accomodating united-front strategy of Rabbani. In 1976 or 1977 the two leaders went separate ways. Hikmatyar formed the Hezb-e Islami, while Rabbani retained control over the original Jamiat-i-Islami. In 1979 a second split occurred. Yunis Khales, one of the few traditional ulama to become involved in the fundamentalist movement, broke with Hikmatyar and formed his own Hezb-e Islami. This group was more moderate than Hikmat-

yar's and in the mid-1980s enjoyed good relations with Rabbani's party.

Four major Islamic fundamentalist emigré parties were prominent in the mid-1980s: Hikmatyar's Hezb-e Islami; Rabbani's Jamiat-i-Islami; Khales' Hezb-e Islami; and Abdul Rasool Sayyaf's Ittehad-e-Islami (Islamic Alliance) (see Resistance Forces, ch. 5). Hikmatyar's party had widespread support in the Pashtun areas of the north and east, especially Konduz, Baghlan, Konarha, and Nangarhar provinces. Though Hikmatyar led the best organized, best led, and numerically strongest party (it had between 20,000 and 30,000 adherents in the mid-1980s), he was often accused of greater zealousness in attacking resistance rivals than the Soviet or Afghan armed forces. The 1979 rumors of a plot between him and Hafizullah Amin also tainted him with the stigma of a collaborator. Chaliand calls him "the most intelligent, ambitious and ruthless resistance leader in Peshawar."

Rabbani's Jamiat-i-Islami derived most of its popular support from the Dari- and Turkic-speaking national minorities in the northern part of the country. One of his most supportive guerrilla commanders was Mahsud, who, like Rabbani himself, was a Tajik. Khales' Hezb-e Islami maintained its power base in the southeastern part of the country, particularly Paktia Province. Sayyaf's group was well-armed and well-equipped, but it was regarded as having little support outside his native area, Paghman, near Kabul.

The Traditionalists

Traditionalist resistance groups differed from the Islamic fundamentalists chiefly in their reliance on personal networks, defined in terms of religion or tribe, rather than Western-style ideology or political organization, as a basis for allegiance. Thus, they reflected more faithfully Afghan values and social institutions, particularly in the Pashtun tribal areas. Politically and militarily, their factional jealousy and loose structure hampered their effectiveness. Yet local networks of *mujahidiin*, affiliated with tribal notables or local religious figures, were an indispensable component of the resistance. Groups that before the PDPA coup d'état had served religious and social functions were readily adapted afterward to become fighting units.

The fundamentalist-traditionalist distinction was not clear-cut. Rather, there was a continuity between the traditionalists and the more moderate fundamentalists, represented in Pe-

shawar by Rabbani and Khales. Three major traditionalist emigré parties were recognized in the mid-1980s: the Harakat-e Inqelab Islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement) of Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi; the Jebh-e Nejat-e Milli (National Liberation Front) of Sibaghatullah Mojadeddi; and the Mahaz-e Milli Islami (National Islamic Front) of Pir Sayyid Gilani. In *"Afghanistan: Islam and Political Modernity"*, Roy defines three traditional networks that play a formative role in the resistance: ulama, or Islamic scholars (known as *mawlawi* in Afghanistan), and their followers; Sufi communities, organized around a *pir* or holy man; and tribal networks whose leaders often had blood or other ties to the old royal family. Such networks were not feudal or authoritarian. Leadership was generally defined in terms of consensus. "The khan must always show, by his generosity and availability, that he alone is worthy to fulfill the post."

Ulama or Mawlawi Networks

Ulama were scholars and teachers resident at *madrasa* (theological schools) located throughout the country. During their careers, individual scholars moved from less to more prestigious *madrasa* as they acquired greater knowledge of the Quran and Islamic law. Networks were built up as scholars, in their passage from one school to another, acquired teachers, colleagues, and students. These associations tended to be lifelong. Ulama were generally affiliated with the more conservative, private *madrasa* rather than the state-supported institutions established in the 1950s. These schools emphasized the legalistic interpretation of texts rather than the kinds of political issues—the redefinition of Islam in society—that were important to fundamentalists. Politically, they supported the restoration of sharia as the legal basis of the state. This was natural, since interpretation of sharia was the scholars' principal role in society.

Roy notes that the ulama networks "massively" joined Muhammadi's Harakat-e Inqelab Islami, making this group the largest in the resistance after the Soviet invasion. Yet its fortunes had declined drastically by the mid-1980s. A loosely organized "clerical association" rather than a genuine political party (Roy calls it "an 'invertebrate' party, a mere juxtaposition of local fronts revolving around *mawlawi* without any political experience"), the Harakat-e Inqelab Islami lost members to Rabbani's Jamiat-i-Islami. The change in affiliation reflected

ethnic and linguistic cleavages. Dari-speaking and non-Pashtun networks switched over to the Jamiat-i-Islami, while Pashtuns remained generally more faithful to Muhammadi's group. It remained influential in the southern and eastern provinces of Qandahar, Ghazni, Kabul, Lowgar, and Baghlan. Its membership was estimated in late-1985 at between 10,000 and 25,000.

Sufi Networks

Sufi networks consisted of a holy man and his followers, organized into a brotherhood (see Sufis, ch. 2). Central to these groups' identity was the lifelong association of brotherhood members and their master, who often assumed the venerable Arabic title of shaykh. Roy describes the brotherhoods as "closed but not secret societies." Members are expected to show the utmost loyalty and devotion to the master, who ideally occupies himself almost incessantly with prayer and meditation. The history of Sufi brotherhoods throughout the Muslim world is a complex and multifaceted one. One central concept was that charisma could be passed from generation to generation within a single family. Thus, holy families emerged as the core of Sufi orders that persisted for centuries. Generally described as "mystics," Sufis were also in the forefront of struggles against foreign invasion in many countries, including Afghanistan. They, rather than the established Islamic clergy, backed the *basmachi* insurrection against the Soviets in Central Asia during the 1920s. Two leaders of traditionalist emigré parties—Mojadeddi and Gilani—were members of holy families with high status in Sufi communities.

The membership of Mojadeddi's Jebh-e Nejat-e Milli and Gilani's Mahaz-e Milli Islami was drawn largely from communities that over the generations maintained close ties with their holy families. This was particularly true in Pashtun tribal areas. The brutal treatment of the brotherhoods by the Khalqis in 1978-79 ensured that leaders of the holy families would be firmly on the side of the resistance. On the local level, highly disciplined brotherhoods were ideal fighting units. Unlike the ulama networks, they were almost impossible for informers to penetrate. Roy notes that the region around the town of Chesht-e Sharif in Herat Province became a "veritable little Sufi republic" after the brotherhoods seized the town from the government in 1983-84.

Tribal Networks

Because Sufi holy families were often intimately associated with tribal groups, these two kinds of networks were often difficult to distinguish. The most important tribal network consisted of lineages belonging to or related to the old Mohammadzai royal family. These were elitist, highly conservative groups with strong monarchist sympathies. They provided both Mojadeddi's and Gilani's groups with the majority of their adherents. Because of their nonclerical and monarchical associations, the Jebh-e Nejat-e Milli and the Mahaz-e Milli Islami were the most secular of the emigré parties. They drew as much on Pashtunwali (the Pashtun code) as on Islam to provide the basis of their legitimacy. Both suffered in competition with Islamic fundamentalist groups and in the mid-1980s had limited influence.

Both emigré parties were loosely organized. Roy describes Gilani's group as a coalition of tribal notables (khans) and noble families. More like a royal court than a genuine political party, it distributed arms solely on the basis of the recipients' personal relationship with Gilani. Mojadeddi's group was less blue-blooded, including some non-Durrani tribes and even Nuristanis.

Shia Groups

Little was known of Shia groups in the mid-1980s. This was because they were based either in Iran, a country still largely closed to Westerners, or in the remote central part of Afghanistan known as the Hazarajat. Home of the minority Hazaras, Shia Muslims who have suffered the worst discrimination at the hands of other groups, this region covers parts of Bamian, Ghowr, and Oruzgan provinces. It remained independent of Soviet and Afghan control in the mid-1980s. Roy describes the Hazarajat as a poor area with a social system that was more hierarchical and oppressive than that of the Pashtuns. Sayyids, members of families claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad, formed what was virtually an elite and inbred caste. Beginning in the 1960s, educated Hazara youth, resentful of sayyid privileges, joined Maoist, nativist, or Islamic fundamentalist organizations. The latter had close affinities with movements in Iran. One of the earliest youth groups, the Hezb-e Moghol (Mongol Party), reflected their self-conception as an oppressed "Mongol" people, unlike other inhabitants of

Afghanistan. This viewpoint may have encouraged ties with fellow "Mongols" in China in the 1960s and 1970s.

In late 1979 Hazara religious, temporal, and intellectual leaders established the Shura-i Inqelabi-e ettefaqqe Islami-e Afghanistan (Revolutionary Council of the Islamic Union of Afghanistan) and elected Sayyid Ali Beheshti as their president. By 1981 the insurgents were successful in expelling Soviet and Afghan forces from most of the Hazarajat. The Shura took over the local government, dividing the territory into nine provinces (*wilayat*). Governors and mayors were appointed, and the majority of the population was disarmed. This was, for Afghanistan, a relatively strong—but also corrupt and oppressive—state.

The Shura was soon divided by factional infighting. Roy identifies three major factions: a sayyid-dominated traditionalist group, a leftist (Maoist) group, and a pro-Khomeini, Islamic fundamentalist group. Outside the Shura, there was a pro-Iranian party, the Sazman-e Nasr, which had been founded in Iran in 1978. In 1983 another pro-Iranian group, the Pasdaran (guardians of the revolution) emerged. In 1984 the Sazman-e Nasr and the Pasdaran were successful in driving Beheshti out of his capital at Varas in Ghowr Province and gaining at least temporary control over most of the Hazarajat.

Another Shia group was the Harakat-e Islami (Islamic Movement), led by Shaykh Mohsini. This originally had been pro-Iranian. Although it retained its identity as an Islamic fundamentalist group, it had become disillusioned with Iran's revolution by the mid-1980s. Based on the borders of the Hazarajat, its membership included not only Hazaras but other Shia minorities and even Pashtuns.

Leftist Groups

Leftist movements were minimally important in the resistance in the mid-1980s. Settem-i-Melli, the group that allegedly held United States ambassador Dubs hostage in February 1979, had been exterminated, largely by Islamic groups. Remnants of the Shula-i-Jawid formed the Sazman-i Azadibakhshi-i Mardum-i Afghanistan (SAMA—Organization for the Liberation of the Peoples of Afghanistan) in 1978. Its leader, Abdul Majid Kalakani, was arrested and executed by the regime in 1980. A third party, the Itihad-i Inqelab-i-Islamwa Afghan Milli (the National Islamic Revolution of the Afghan People, often referred to as Afghan Milli or Afghan Millat) was a socialist

group with a largely urban following. Afghan Milli cadres attempted to establish a base in Nangarhar Province on the Pakistan border, but they were wiped out by guerrillas belonging to Khales' Hezb-i Islami.

Building Resistance Unity

Resistance unity remained an elusive goal as the Soviet occupation entered its seventh year in December 1985. The history of guerrilla movements in other parts of the world suggests that if ideological and organizational unity cannot be achieved, a strong leader, like Josip Broz Tito in wartime Yugoslavia, is needed to coordinate disparate fighting groups. Such a leader can also foster an emerging sense of national identity. Given the disparity in worldviews between Islamic fundamentalists, traditionalists, Shia *mujahidiin*, and leftists, it appeared unlikely that Afghanistan would have its own Tito. Observers believed that the best that could be hoped for was an effective united-front strategy that would improve *mujahidiin* fighting abilities and prevent the different groups from attacking each other.

In May 1980 the different *mujahidiin* groups convened a Loya Jirgah in Peshawar, but this failed to create consensus or promote genuine unity. One reason may have been that the Loya Jirgah remained primarily a Pashtun tribal institution with limited relevance for minorities or detribalized Pashtuns. With the withdrawal of traditionalists from a single, Peshawar-based alliance, coalitions formed around the fundamentalist and traditionalist polarities, while Shia groups remained isolated or closely associated with Iran. Two coalitions with the same name, the Ittehad-i-Islami Mujahidiin-i-Afghanistan (Islamic Alliance of Afghan Mujahidiin) emerged: one contained the four major and three smaller fundamentalist parties and was commonly known as the Group of Seven; the other included the three traditionalist parties, known as the Group of Three.

The Group of Seven was deeply divided between moderates and radicals. Abdul Rasool Sayyaf, one of the original founders of the Islamic fundamentalist movement at Kabul University in the 1950s, had been designated its head in 1981. Moderates resented him, however, for his closeness to Hikmatyar and his determination to use funds donated by foreign countries to build his own power base.

Traditionalists in the Group of Three flirted with the idea

of employing exiled King Zahir Shah as a focus for resistance unity. The king issued statements that although he did not wish a restoration of the monarchy, he still had an important role to play in promoting unity. Fundamentalists regarded him as corrupt and reactionary and blamed him for allowing Afghanistan to drift into the Soviet sphere of influence during his years on the throne.

Attempts at building unity continued, however, through the mid-1980s. An alliance was forged between the seven major fundamentalist and traditionalist parties in Peshawar in May 1985. Although concrete accomplishments were not evident by the end of the year, the alliance was viewed by Western observers as a significant development. Also, observers such as Louis Dupree noted that a new generation of resistance leaders inside the country was growing impatient with émigré factionalism and was developing an increasingly effective working arrangement among themselves.

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Probably the most comprehensive account of the Soviet invasion and its background in English is Henry S. Bradsher's *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*, published in 1983. Anthony Arnold's book, *Afghanistan's Two-Party Communism: Parcham and Khalq*, also published in 1983, is a thoroughgoing, though hardly sympathetic, description of the career of the PDPA. A more creditable leftist perspective is given in Fred Halliday's articles on Afghanistan, which appeared in the *New Left Review* in 1979 and 1980.

Louis Dupree's partly eyewitness account of the April 1978 coup d'état and its aftermath appears as a six-part series, *Red Flag over the Hindu Kush*, in American University Field Staff Reports. The anthology edited by M. Nazif Shahrani and Robert L. Canfield, *Revolutions and Rebellions in Afghanistan*, provides excellent insights into the cultural bases of the resistance. Probably the most comprehensive account of the *mujahidiin*, expecially the Islamic fundamentalists, is Olivier Roy's *L'Afghanistan: Islam modernité politique*, published in 1985; a passable, though not elegant, English translation of Roy's book appears in the Joint Publications Research Service *Near East/South Asia Report* series. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 5. National Security

Mujahid at prayer; at left, an antiaircraft gun

THE SOVIET ARMED FORCES that invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 consisted of about 40,000 officers and men and their equipment. The fierce resistance by Afghan guerrilla forces—*mujahidiin*, literally meaning warriors engaged in a holy war—forced the Soviets to increase the size and sophistication of their military units, and in late 1985 a United States government official estimated that Soviet units in Afghanistan comprised about 118,000 men, of which about 10,000 were reported to be in the Soviet secret police and other special units.

One reason for the Soviet buildup was the ineffectiveness of Afghan military and paramilitary units. When the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) seized power in a coup d'état in April 1978, the army consisted of about 80,000 officers and men and the air force of about 10,000. Both services were almost completely dependent on the Soviet Union for equipment and spare parts. A very large number of commissioned and noncommissioned officers had been trained in the Soviet Union, and Soviet military advisers were posted throughout the services. Nevertheless, by the time of the Soviet invasion the services had been seriously weakened by widespread desertions and by infighting among adherents of the two major factions of the PDPA—Parcham and Khalq. Although data on the armed forces were necessarily incomplete and speculative, informed observers in late 1985 estimated the strength of the army at no more than 40,000. Most army personnel were conscripts, and many of them had been forced into service by roving press-gangs. The air force reportedly had about 7,000 men in uniform, who were watched over by an estimated 5,000 Cuban and Czechoslovak advisers. Soviet military officers were responsible for important and routine military decisions, not only in the Ministry of National Defense but also in all units and detachments.

The pampered, feared, and well-paid Afghan secret police, KHAD, was active and aggressive in the urban centers, especially in Kabul. In 1985 organizations such as Amnesty International continued to publish detailed reports of KHAD's use of torture and of inhumane conditions in the country's prisons and jails. KHAD reportedly has had some success in penetrating the leadership councils of the several resistance groups, most of which are headquartered in Pakistan. Con-

versely, the *mujahidiin* presumably had numerous informants in KHAD, other police and intelligence units within the Ministry of Interior, and the armed forces.

In six years of fighting, the resistance forces had inflicted considerable damage on Soviet and government forces. Reliable observers estimated that the Soviets had experienced 10,000 fatalities and many times that number in other casualties. Huge sections of the countryside remained beyond the reach of the government, and such major urban centers as Herat and Qandahar were war zones in which neither side could claim supremacy. The cost to the Afghan people, however, had been immense. Millions had fled their homes and resided as refugees in foreign lands, most of them in Pakistan. An unknown number, but certainly scores of thousands, of warriors and noncombatants had been killed or had died as a result of injuries or disease brought on by the war. If, as many observers speculated, the Soviet policy was to depopulate the country as a prelude to imposing control, in the mid-1980s the policy seemed to be succeeding.

Background

Military operations, particularly those of tribal forces, have been vital factors in shaping the country's history. The celebration of military prowess is firmly embedded in folklore and songs. Indeed, the martial valor of the Afghan warrior is proverbial in his own country and among his neighbors. Conquerors such as Cyrus the Great (550 B.C.), Alexander the Great (331 B.C.), and Genghis Khan (A.D. 1220) overpowered the peoples in this area by armed force, but they ruled only as long as constant armed force was applied, and their successor dynasties were driven out. The acme of Afghan military prowess, however, at least until the current struggle against the Soviet Union, was reached in three wars waged against the British between 1838 and 1919. From these victories the Afghans felt they had gained the right to boast that they alone, of all Islamic nations, had never been subjected to occupation or subservience to European colonialists.

Afghan groups, such as the Pashtuns, cultivated the image of warrior-poet. Folk heroes, such as Khushal Khan Khattak, excelled both in warfare and in verse. Yet even Pashtuns have rarely cooperated with each other for very long in common military operations. One observer remarked that tribal wars

"have been characterized by their blitzkrieg nature, by their swift irresistible penetration and by the rapid, inevitable disintegration of the *lashkar* (tribal war party). Often the Pashtun warrior will simply pack up and leave after a hard day's fighting without coordination with, or command from, the *lashkar*."

This martial tradition rendered the position of Ahmad Shah, a tribal chief who in 1747 established himself as the first independent ruler of Afghanistan, most difficult (see Ahmad Shah and the Durrani Empire, ch. 1). From the rule of Ahmad Shah to that of Babrak Karmal, the Afghan government's task has been to rule over an extremely well-armed, pugnacious population. At the same time, the government army has been beset by numerous problems resulting from the divisiveness of its component ethnic, linguistic, and religious pluralities. Tribes were responsible for providing troops to the king. The only national army that existed during Ahmad Shah's time consisted of small groups that functioned as royal bodyguards.

From the mid-eighteenth century onward, two fundamental strategies were attempted. The first effort to create a more or less professional armed force that was not under tribal control occurred in 1834, when Shah Shuja ul Mulk, one of the contestants for the throne, secured the services of a British officer, Captain John Campbell, to train the forces that were to oppose those of Amir Dost Mohammad (1826–38; 1842–63), a rival contestant. Although Shuja's forces fought well on the battlefield, Shuja fled the area, leaving Dost Mohammad the victor and the wounded Campbell a prisoner. After recovering from his wounds, Campbell resumed his military services under Dost Mohammad, serving directly under the amir's son, Sardar Afzal Khan, father of Abdur Rahman Khan (1880–1901), who later became one of the country's most colorful and forceful rulers. The innovations introduced by Campbell during this period gave the army the rudiments of its ultimate British character.

Campbell was very influential, but Dost Mohammad employed many other foreign soldiers, including Europeans (especially British and French) and other Muslims (Iranians and Indians), as well as some North Americans. The incorporation of foreigners into the military was unprecedented among Afghan rulers before Dost Mohammad.

Sher Ali, Dost Mohammad's son, continued his father's reliance on outside military advice. An 1869 visit to colonial India inspired him to undertake the reform of the Afghan army. He attempted to undermine the army's tribal structure

and to create a national armed force. Whereas Ahmad Shah's troops had been compensated in booty, Sher Ali sought to provide his soldiers with regular cash payments. He further tried to incorporate European military tactics and technology by publishing Pashtu translations of European manuals and producing copies of European weapons. The year 1869 also marked Britain's provision of Afghanistan's first major foreign military assistance: artillery pieces and rifles. The British, in addition, provided 1.5 million Indian rupees. Sher Ali's army, consisting of 37,000 cavalry troops, had quadrupled since Dost Mohammad's reign and was a far cry from Ahmad Shah's royal bodyguard.

Although these changes might appear impressive, the reality was much less so. Economic, social, and cultural factors defeated Sher Ali's dreams of a national armed force. The treasury simply could not support the demands of such an army. In addition, the cultural factors that had prevented the previous formation of a national nontribal military also sabotaged Sher Ali's efforts. For example, soldiers were accustomed to nonhierarchical tribal organization rather than blind submission to officers. Officers, who achieved their position through tribal and interpersonal ties, never received adequate training. Furthermore, military equipment was less than adequate.

Tribesmen, however, were extremely knowledgeable about the topography in their own areas, and on their own turf they could outmaneuver and outfight any invading force. A prominent historian remarks that "the real problems of a European army fighting the Afghans began only after the 'war' against the Afghan regulars was over, as was clearly demonstrated in both the First (1838–42) and Second (1878–80) Afghan wars." In both wars the British vanquished the Afghan army and deposed the rulers but were ultimately defeated by massive tribal uprisings. Opposition by the Afghan tribes would have forced the British to wage a long-term guerrilla campaign against them. The British opted to settle hostilities by political means. Thus in 1842 the price for British extrication from Afghanistan included reinstatement of the ruler (amir) they had deposed. The amir's nephew, Abdur Rahman, had been living outside the country under Russian protection for 10 years when, in 1880, the British had to recognize him as amir as part of the political rapprochement ending the Second Afghan War.

Abdur Rahman was the creator of the modern Afghan

state. When he came to the throne, the army was virtually nonexistent. With the assistance of a liberal financial loan from the British, plus their aid in the form of weapons, ammunition, and other military supplies, he began a 20-year task of creating a respectable regular force by instituting measures that formed the long-term basis of the military system. These included increasing the equalization of military obligation by setting up a system known as the *hasht nafari* (whereby one man in every eight between the ages of 20 and 40 took his turn at military service); constructing an arsenal in Kabul to reduce dependence on foreign sources for small arms and other ordnance; introducing supervised training courses; organizing troops into divisions, brigades, and regiments, including battalions of artillery; developing pay schedules; and introducing an elementary (and harsh) disciplinary system.

Abdur Rahman's army was beset by many of the same problems that had plagued the earlier Afghan forces, such as lack of formal military education and preferred treatment for Durrani officers. In addition, Abdur Rahman reverted to the earlier practice of eschewing foreign military aid, which may have damaged the attempt to modernize the armed forces. The army was probably effective at preserving national security, however.

In 1904 Amir Habibullah, Abdur Rahman's son, created the Royal Military College. He accepted foreign military advice, and in 1907 the school's commandant was a Turkish colonel. In fact, Afghanistan received Turkish military aid until the 1960s.

The Afghan army responded to the Third Anglo-Afghan War (1919) in ways similar to the two earlier wars. The ruler during this conflict was King Amanullah (1919–29). Amanullah had been educated in the new military college, and he continued his grandfather's military program. His lack of method and rash policies in financial matters, however, virtually bankrupted the country and led to reductions in the army and a serious loss of effectiveness. Two noteworthy military events did emerge from his desire to modernize the country. One was the creation of an air force in 1924 through the purchase of two British aircraft (and the acceptance of aircraft as a gift from the Soviets) and the hiring of German pilots, who helped put down a rebellion that his attempted social programs had inspired. The other was the acceptance of a second Turkish mission in 1927—an earlier mission had left Kabul in 1921

after an unsuccessful effort to reorganize the army—to assist in training and improving the efficiency of the army.

Amanullah's persistence in forcing reforms on the people led to greater popular dissatisfaction, and eventually serious revolts broke out in 1928 and 1929. The army shared the widespread feeling against the king, and this together with its long-term neglect was a major factor in its defeat by the rebel leader Bacha-i Saqqao, a "mountain Tajik" who took Kabul in January 1929 and declared himself king. Amanullah's government and army disintegrated. Soldiers deserted in large numbers, leaving matériel and fortifications to Bacha-i Saqqao's forces. Muhammad Nadir Khan, an exiled prince, managed to defeat Bacha-i Saqqao by mobilizing the remnants of the army, as well as tribes loyal to him. A tribal *jirgah* (see Glossary) acclaimed Nadir Khan king (King Nadir Shah) on October 16, 1929.

Both the Afghan army and state were in lamentable condition following the events of 1928–29. Nadir Shah and his brothers labored hard to recreate the armed forces and government. Nadir Shah accepted foreign loans and equipment offered by the British, the Germans, and the French. These loans enabled him to introduce several measures. These measures included an increase in military pay; acquisition of 10,000 rifles and a substantial loan from the British; appointment of his brother, Shah Mahmud Khan, as minister of war and commander in chief; the reopening of the Royal Military College for officers; reinforcement of the Turkish military mission with some German instructors; and the hiring of Soviet air technicians to improve instruction in the deteriorated air force. By 1933, when Nadir Shah was assassinated, military morale and capabilities had improved appreciably, and the army was a factor in achieving the peaceful accession of his young son, Muhammad Zahir Shah.

The new king and his uncle, Sardar Hashim Khan, who as prime minister exercised great influence over governmental affairs for many years, continued the policy of military development initiated by Nadir Shah. Progress, however, was retarded by the matériel shortages and other restrictions imposed by World War II. During the war the country proclaimed its neutrality and concerned itself primarily with efforts to stabilize conditions within the country and to increase internal security. Some improvements were made in the organization of the embryonic air force through acquisition of a limited number of relatively modern aircraft.

In 1933 the army boasted 45,000 members. By 1945 the membership was counted at 90,000. An additional 20,000 Afghan men belonged to the Gendarmerie, a quasi-military force created by the government during the years of World War II. The officers of the Gendarmerie were Afghan army officers, and their duties included maintaining internal security in rural areas, i.e., virtually the whole country.

The immediate post-World War II period was one of further adjustment between internal security forces and the army. The autocratic Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan, proclaimed prime minister after a palace coup in 1953, required a strong army. Although Daoud relinquished his prime ministerial duties in 1963, he resumed power in 1973 and ruled until 1978 as the first president of the republic.

Daoud sought United States aid for Afghanistan's armed forces. The United States was unable to help, however, because Daoud's strong stance on the Pashtunistan issue would have embarrassed the American government. (The Pashtunistan issue basically was the insistence by the Afghan government and others that the Pashtu- and Pakhtu-speaking residents of Pakistan be granted autonomy, independence, or the right to join Afghanistan.) When Daoud's requests to the United States proved fruitless, he decided to turn to Afghanistan's northern neighbor and successfully obtained arms from the Soviet Union.

In August 1956 Afghanistan and the Soviet Union concluded their first military agreement. Afghanistan received US$25 million in jet airplanes, tanks, and heavy and light weaponry at a greatly discounted price. By October 1956 an IL-14, 12 MiG-15s, and a few helicopters appeared at Mazar-e Sharif's new airstrip. Nine years later foreign observers reported Afghanistan's possession of about 100 Soviet T-34 and postwar T-54 tanks. The new air force employed about 100 aircraft, including a few helicopters, as well as IL-28 bombers and MiG-17 fighters.

With the Soviet weapons came Soviet technicians. Afghan commissioned and noncommissioned officers (NCOs) were also sent to military schools in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union to learn to handle the new weapons. The air force was 1,500 strong in 1967. By 1970 the decision to rely on the Soviet Union for military equipment had produced a dependence on the Soviet Union for new weapons as well as parts for older equipment. In the course of the relationship between the two countries, Soviet culture (as well as matériel) was transmit-

ted, including political beliefs and language. Russian became the Afghan military language.

During this period Pashtuns continued to dominate the officer corps at the highest levels; low-level officers were usually Tajiks. Males were conscripted for two years, and most were Tajiks or Hazaras.

Although officers were now well-trained, old problems still haunted the conscripts, e.g., their poor or nonexistent military training and the disproportionately small number of Pashtuns. Many Pashtuns, as well as the educated urban elite, managed to avoid conscription. Pashtuns did volunteer, however, for certain elite services, such as the air force, Guard Brigade, and armored units. These came to be Pashtun domains. From 1963 to 1973 the king successfully drafted Kabuli elite males into the military. This had the effect of introducing the complaints of disgruntled Kabulis to men who might not otherwise have had been quite so dissatisfied at this time.

The Coup of 1973

British journalist Henry S. Bradsher provides the following detailed account of the military events that toppled the Mohammadzai monarchy. The king was in Italy receiving medical treatment when "before dawn on 17 July, a small group of officers leading several hundred troops seized the palace in downtown Kabul, the radio station, airport, and other key positions. There was little resistance; only four soldiers and four policemen died . . . At 7:20 A.M. Kabul radio announced that Afghanistan had become a republic." Opposition to the monarchy came from those closest to it. Daoud led the coup, but General Abdul Mustaghni, who had been chief of staff of the army, was also reported to have been active in the coup. The general, however, was overshadowed by younger officers, who Bradsher observes "included a Tajiki major, Abdul Qadir Dagarwal, and engineer Pacha Gul Wafadar, both of the air force, and Mohammed Aslam Watanjar and Faiz Mohammed from the army."

Despite his initiation of Soviet military aid as prime minister, as president Daoud attempted to lessen his country's dependence on Soviet assistance. He established military assistance programs for Afghan personnel in other countries with significant Muslim populations, i.e., India, Egypt, and (shortly before his ouster) Pakistan. Bradsher notes that this policy

must certainly have angered Soviet leaders. "A purge of leftist military officers in 1975 indicated that he [Daoud] feared political influences in the armed forces in a way that he had not in the late 1950's and early 1960's, presumably as a result of having seen the political connections of some officers who helped him seize power. . . .[In] India. . . Afghan soldiers could use Soviet-made equipment without being subjected to Marxist indoctrination." Egypt, although at the time on a far less friendly basis with the Soviet Union than India, could also provide the opportunity to train with Soviet equipment.

Daoud's foreign policy notwithstanding, he was able to arrange additional Soviet aid, including 300 T-54/55 medium tanks and more than 50 T-34 tanks, as well as 90 37mm antiaircraft guns, 30 120mm mortars, and SA-2 Guideline surface-to-air missiles (SAMs). The air force also received its share of Soviet hardware: 36 MiG-17 Fresco-C fighters and spare parts for the 27 IL-28 bombers—Beagles—stationed near Shindand (see fig. 6). In addition, Czechoslovakia sold 12 L-39 airplanes to Afghanistan to be used for training purposes.

Politicization of the Officer Corps

The elite officer corps indulged in political conflict. Daoud and other members of the royal family had their loyal factions, and members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) were divided into the Khalq (Masses) and Parcham (Banner) factions (see Evolution of the PDPA as a Political Force, ch. 4). The PDPA may have become secretly active in the armed forces during the early 1960s.

According to Anthony Arnold, a former United States intelligence officer, in 1973 the Khalq faction energetically began to encourage military personnel to join them. Nur Muhammad Taraki had been in charge of Khalq activity in the military. In 1973 he passed his recruitment duties to Hafizullah Amin, whom Arnold describes as Taraki's "most active and efficient lieutenant." Amin was highly successful; Arnold reports that "by the time of the communist coup, in April 1978, Khalq outnumbered Parcham by a factor of two or three to one."

By 1977, Arnold observes, the Soviet Union had provided Afghanistan with the equivalent of US$600 million in military equipment. It had been necessary to send 3,700 officers and NCOs to the Soviet Union to teach them to use the sophisticated hardware. These Afghans not only were exposed to the

Soviet belief system, but some were, according to observers, also recruited to serve as Soviet intelligence agents. Others left for home sympathetic to, but not employed by, the Soviet Union. It was to such officers and NCOs that Khalq appealed. In addition, Arnold asserts that "at least one former Afghan official believes that the Soviets passed along such promising leads to Khalq through their embassy in Kabul."

Daoud inadvertently furthered Khalq aims through his own political wariness. He sought out men who were politically weak (often non-Pashtuns and those whose landholdings were small) for preferment in the military. He hoped by so doing to meld the weak components into an officer corps united primarily by personal loyalty to him. To this end he also frowned on the traditional practice of promotion based on kinship ties, and he refused to allow provincial military governors to occupy a post for too long. Instead of creating an officer corps personally loyal to him alone, his actions had the effect of producing a disaffected, disunited, easily recruitable pool for the PDPA.

1978 Revolution

Daoud's fears about his possible overthrow led to his increasingly repressive internal policies. He used the police to try to forcibly squelch any opposition. In November 1977 anger over Daoud's excesses caused a temporary rupture between Daoud on one hand and his younger brother Naim and six cabinet ministers on the other. From late summer of 1977 to early spring of 1978, a series of prominent Afghans were murdered, including the chief pilot of Ariana Afghan Airlines (who was the leader of a recent strike) and the minister of planning. On April 17, 1978, Mir Akbar Khyber, a Parchami theorist, was murdered. His was the most important death for Afghan politics. The identities of the perpetrators were never fully ascertained, but at the time, many believed Daoud's police to be the executioners.

Louis Dupree, who was present at the time of the PDPA takeover, vividly describes the events of April 27–28, 1978. Upon Khyber's death, Khalqi army cells prepared for a massive uprising. On April 27 the Khalqi military leaders began the revolution by proclaiming to the cells in the armed forces that the time for revolution had arrived. Khalqi Major Watanjar (of the Fourth Armored Unit at Pol-e Charkhi) readied his troops.

This included his leading a convoy of nine light tanks and 40 or 50 heavy T-62 tanks to Kabul. Daoud's defense minister, General Rasooli, remained loyal to the government and "ordered a special unit to protect the Presidential Palace." The unit was unable to comply with the defense minister's order because Khalqi officers killed the commander of the unit and prevented the unit from assuming its position.

Rasooli next contacted the air force. He could not rely on nearby Bagrami Air Base because he and Daoud suspected that the pilots' political sympathies lay with the PDPA. He therefore called upon Shindand Air Base, which sent two "fully armed" MiG-21s to Kabul. At this point the 1,800 men of the Presidential Guard came to support the palace. The uprising proceeded rapidly, and by midday Khalqi tanks approached the Ministry of National Defense compound just opposite the palace. The revolutionaries' occupation of the ministry compound prevented loyal officers from contacting provincial units that might have come to their aid. The airport was still in government hands; the 15th Armored Division, under the command of Colonel Muhammad Yousuf, was firmly entrenched. Watanjar sent tanks to wrest the airport from Yousuf's forces.

Shortly after the defense ministry fell, the Presidential Guard, with well-aimed bazookas and an active defense, succeeded in driving PDPA tanks out of firing range of the palace. Daoud waited in vain for the antitank units and Eighth Mechanized Division; Khalqi officers were in the majority and prevented the units from reaching Daoud. The two MiG-21s dispatched from Shindand flew over Kabul, but ground-to-air contact was nonexistent, so the pilots had no idea who controlled what and where they should strike.

Daoud and Rasooli were correct in their assessment of the Bagrami base's loyalty. At approximately 3:00 P.M. on April 27, MiG-21s and Su-7s at Bagrami Air Base were armed, pursuant to the command of Colonel Abdul Qader (deputy commander of the air force and instrumental in the 1973 coup). It was Watanjar and Qader who were responsible for the coordinated ground and air attack on the palace. While Watanjar and Qader met to plan the attack, loyalist General Rasooli, Abdul Ali, and Abdul Aziz arranged for deployment of the 8th Infantry Division to Kabul. At about 3:30 P.M., Dupree reports, "the first two Su-7s attacked, launching rockets and firing 120mm cannon into the Presidential Palace. . . . Air strikes from Bagram began in earnest, MiG-21s or Su-7s remained

constantly in the air, but no more than six were over Kabul at one time." Daoud's Presidential Guard was sorely pressed and unable to mount an effective antiaircraft defense. By 7:00 that evening the only pockets of loyalist resistance were the 7th Infantry Division stationed south of Kabul at Rishkor and the Presidential Guard at the palace. Dupree recalls that the Presidential Guard "continued to fight gallantly, holding out against constant pressure from the tanks while being hammered from the air." After dark, the unfortunate Presidential Guard took rocket fire from helicopters and was attacked by jets. Dupree noted that "a bright half-moon made further sorties by jets possible."

Although Rasooli led the 7th Division out under cover of darkness, he unhappily chose to march in full battle gear and in tight military formation, providing a perfect target for Khalqi aircraft. By midnight the Seventh Division was no more. The force had been stopped before achieving its objective of reaching the palace and never even made it into downtown Kabul; many of the surviving soldiers chose to defect to the PDPA forces. The beleaguered Presidential Guard bore the unremitting air and ground assaults unrelieved by reinforcements, and by 4:30 A.M. on April 28 they surrendered. As for Rasooli, when the PDPA found him and some associates hiding in a chicken coop, the ensuing skirmish put an end to both him and his colleagues. By 5:00 A.M., Mohammadzai rule had ended.

Mortality figures for the revolution differ; Taraki claimed that 72 people died, whereas others cite numbers ranging into the thousands. Most observers agree that Taraki's figure is too low. PDPA forces murdered senior members of Daoud's government during and immediately after the revolution, and these deaths were almost certainly omitted from Taraki's accounting. It is not known for certain who commanded the PDPA during the takeover. Bradsher believes that the commander was neither Taraki nor Amin.

The Armed Forces After the PDPA Takeover

Military analyst George Jacobs writes that before the revolution the armed forces included "some three armored divisions (570 medium tanks plus T-55s on order), eight infantry divisions (averaging 4,500 to 8,000 men each), two mountain infantry brigades, one artillery brigade, a guards regiment (for palace protection), three artillery regiments, two comman-

do regiments, and a parachute battalion (largely grounded). All the formations were under the control of three corps-level headquarters. All but three infantry divisions were facing Pakistan along a line from Bagram south to Qandahar." Although there had been heated verbal exchanges with Pakistan over the Pashtunistan issue, Pakistan had never threatened attack. It was unclear to some observers why the prerevolution Afghans needed so many Soviet weapons. Certainly fewer and lighter weapons could have provided sufficient firepower to quell internal rebellions. Anthropologists suspected that the hardware was obtained for cultural reasons—as an expression of Afghan notions of manhood.

The effect of so many sophisticated weapons in Afghanistan was to bring down Daoud more easily. The PDPA regime sought to develop the armed forces even further. High on the list of PDPA military priorities was the preservation of the armed forces' unity. The fledgling government purchased more hardware from the Soviet Union and invited what Jacobs terms "Soviet company-level units" to visit.

According to Bradsher, 350 Soviet military advisers participated in the PDPA military coup. Soviet personnel appear to have accompanied the PDPA-controlled armored units that were responsible for the successful takeover of the military section of Kabul International Airport. Soviet advisers came, in a managerial and supportive capacity, to the aid of the air force at Bagrami Air Base.

The Soviet Union sent the person in charge of its army's Main Political Administration, General Aleksey Alekseyevich Yepishev, to Afghanistan in April 1979 to evaluate how his country could best support the increasingly weak Afghan government. Although it was clear to Yepishev that the Afghans could not effectively counter a large-scale popular uprising, the PDPA government had not been idle in its attempts to strengthen the military. According to the account published by Jacobs, "efforts were being made to raise two added infantry divisions (to ten); to raise the strength of the tank units (200-plus T-55s and 40 to 45 T-62s were being delivered during this period); and to begin modernising the air force (adding later model MiG-21s, delivery of 12 Mi-24 Hind-As and a few Hind-Ds and possibly augmenting the 12 Czech L-39s delivered in late-1977)." Yepishev's visit produced an increased presence of Soviet advisers in Afghanistan (about 1,000 in preinvasion Afghanistan) and an increase in the number of Afghan military personnel sent for training to the Soviet Union.

Khalqi-Parchami differences began to rend the military as Khalqi leaders, fearful that the Parchamis retained their cellular organization within the military, mounted massive purges of Parchamis. In June 1978 an estimated 800 Parchami military personnel were forced to quit the armed forces. Indeed, Taraki refused to tolerate any Parchamis in the military and insisted that all officers affiliate with Khalq. The secret police, AGSA (Da Afghanistan da Gato da Satalo Adara, in Pashtu, and translated as Afghan Interests Protection Service), headed by the well-educated Hafizullah Amin, acted to rid many sectors, including the military, of Parchamis. Most were simply dismissed, but Bradsher reports that some were incarcerated as well.

Taraki arrested some of the men most instrumental to his success in the 1978 takeover, alleging a Parchami plot. These included Qader, defense minister and army chief of staff. In Bradsher's opinion, and other scholars would agree, these men "were not Parchamis but essentially Moslem nationalists who might disapprove of the regime's radical new course . . . [or] had already done so." Taraki, assisted by Amin, took control of the defense ministry at the insistence of the PDPA Political Bureau (Politburo). Bradsher writes that the Parchami ministers of planning and public works were arrested and "widespread arrests followed. Virtually everyone known to be, or suspected of being, a Parchami was imprisoned. Some were tortured to death."

Armed resistance grew slowly. At first, Dupree reports, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar and his Hezb-e Islami (Islamic Party) attacked occasionally from their base in Pakistan, and bombings occurred in Kabul (see Resistance Forces, this ch.). Opposition spread, but during the remainder of the spring and summer of 1978 Hikmatyar's group was virtually the only organized resistance. Many potential opponents were waiting to see what happened, while others were busy farming. Dupree points out that feuds and antigovernment campaigns traditionally occur during the slack agricultural season, from fall to spring. So it was in late summer that grievances against the government were expressed in a Nuristani valley by a raid, in the traditional style, on the local military post. The government had also displeased other areas of Nuristan and other parts of Afghanistan. Rebellions soon followed, according to Dupree, in "the rest of the Kunar Valley and the provinces of Paktya, Badakhshan, Kapisa/Parwan, Oruzgan, Badghis, Balkh, Ghazni, Farah, and Herat" (see fig. 1). Instead of responding to

the traditional opposition in a traditional way, by a slap on the wrist followed by a Loya Jirgah of concerned parties, the government retaliated with its Soviet-equipped armed forces, bombing and napalming villages. Such acts caused villagers to change their modus operandi as well; they fought throughout the 1979 agricultural season to topple the government, not merely to express displeasure. The resistance began to organize, and Bradsher describes "the development of a network of guerilla training camps and supply routes" in Pakistan.

The army was also not immune to antigovernment sentiment. Soldiers began to desert and mutiny. Herat, one of the country's major cities and located in close proximity to anti-Marxist Iran, was the site of an uprising in March 1979 in which a portion of the town's military garrison joined. Bradsher reports that the rebels butchered Soviet citizens as well as Khalqis. "At least twenty Soviet men, women, and children are definitely known to have died, but the toll of Soviet citizens probably was much higher, 100 or more." Bradsher opines that this brutal act of frustration led to the 1979 Soviet invasion. The government responded by quashing the rebellion with loyal forces from Qandahar. It was then the turn of Qandahar. Some of the troops in that city were not as loyal as the troops sent to Herat, and they mutinied, followed by troops in Kabul, Jalalabad, and Khowst. The militias, whose members were handsomely paid, also proved disloyal to the government.

By late spring of 1979 the government was plagued by a multiplicity of problems, including armed revolt in all but three provinces and defection and rebellion in its military. The Soviet Union acted to shore up the government. An unknown number of Soviet military personnel (estimates range from the hundreds to thousands) were deployed to Afghanistan. From Fergana Air Base in the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, the Soviets shipped hardware to their southern neighbor: armored personnel carriers (APCs), light tanks, Mi-24 and other helicopter gunships, and other aircraft, some armed with napalm.

The redoubtable Nuristanis, last to be forcibly converted to Islam and first to rebel against the PDPA, presented the government with its largest problem in late 1978 and early 1979. In late 1978 local Nuristani tribes controlled Konarha Province. According to some reports, the resistance fighters were Hezb-e Islami members. The government deployed the 11th Infantry Division (of Jalalabad). Nuristani rebels claimed that 1,500 of these troops defected, but the government denied the allegation. The guerrillas' tactics were traditional and

their weapons outmoded. They had some captured Kalashnikov assault rifles, but they relied primarily on locally produced rifles and rifles dating from World War I. With these armaments they ambushed and sniped at government forces.

With unrest growing steadily, the Soviets advised Taraki to temper his more radical programs. Most sources believe that he refused. In an effort to strengthen internal security, Watanjar, hero of the revolution, left his post in the defense ministry to assume duties in the Ministry of Interior. The creation of a nine-member Homeland High Defense Council led by Taraki with Amin as his deputy (and including Asadullah Sarwari of AGSA, Watanjar, Colonel Sher Jan Mazdoorya, and Major Dayed Daoud Tarsoon, the chief of Sarandoy) was supposed to aid in the administration of internal security. The government created Sarandoy (Defenders of the Revolution) under the Ministry of Interior to replace the old Gendarmerie (see The Sarandoy, this ch.). Although the council was established on the basis of decisionmaking by consensus, in practice Taraki and Amin held the power. Furthermore, Amin parlayed his position on the council to increase his own power base by forcing the dismissal of officers disloyal to him. Amin succeeded in becoming prime minister on March 27, 1979, although Taraki retained the presidency. Eventually, however, Taraki's assassination gave Amin full control.

In August the Soviet deputy minister of defense, commander of all ground forces, and the 1968 commander of the forces that invaded Czechoslovakia, General Ivan G. Pavlovskiy, led a visiting group of 50 Soviet officers to Kabul. Suspicions of a future Soviet invasion mounted with Pavlovskiy's arrival. One observer commented that in August the Afghan army was in deep trouble. Taraki's assassination in September and the Soviet delegation's visit demonstrated that the PDPA's tenuous hold on authority was rapidly weakening.

As Afghan soldiers' discontent became increasingly obvious, Soviet advisers took on an ever increasing role in the military. Soon all orders of any consequence required approval by Soviet advisers. The Afghans were not allowed use of the Soviet-provided advanced weapons. Reports from the Afghan press indicate that Amin was less than happy about this increasing dependence on the Soviet Union. Originally Soviets had stepped in only to replace those Afghans who fell victim to the purges, but in light of the disintegration of the military, dependence on the advisers could only increase.

Even with massive Soviet aid, the government's war

against the rebels did not prosper. For example, at the end of October a significant operation directed against resistance fighters in Paktia Province was only successful in the very short term. Soviet advisers planned the attack, commanded the Afghan forces, and provided air support. About 40,000 refugees fled to Pakistan during the 10-day offensive. The Afghan military employed recently obtained T-62 tanks, APCs, Mi-4 Hind helicopter gunships, and MiG-21s. Afghan tribal warfare had always included the principle of retreat in the face of a superior force; accordingly, the guerrillas withdrew. No sooner was the operation over and the tanks back in Kabul than the resistance returned to take up their old positions.

Still the guerrilla war continued, and still Afghan troops defected. Cases of large-scale defections abounded. For example, Indian political scientist Vijay Kumar Bhasin describes a massive defection that occurred in mid-November 1979 in Gardez (in Paktia) involving 30 tanks and 300 government soldiers. Guerrillas may also have captured the Zabol military cantonment and seized large numbers of weapons, including antiaircraft guns. Reportedly 1,000 government soldiers surrendered in this action.

The defections hit closer to home. A severe battle occurred at Rishkor, just a few kilometers southwest of the capital. The garrison revolted. Bhasin describes the battle from accounts by eyewitnesses: "There were several hundred casualties in hours of heavy fighting in the Rishkor Division. During the battle which lasted from 14 October to the afternoon of 15 October, the government brought in its tanks, mortars, modern Soviet Mi-24 assault helicopters and bombers."

Amin was now in power. His rule was notable for its brutality. Even the Soviets admitted that perhaps 500 PDPA members had forfeited their lives. The official Afghan figures are much higher—1,500 to 4,500. Amin was not a popular person. His policies angered rural Afghans, his rigidity and independence upset the Soviets, he was rapidly accumulating as enemies a large group of very angry relatives of victims, and PDPA members must have lived in fear of their lives. Because of or in spite of this, Amin attempted to solidify his hold on the country militarily.

In mid-November 1979 Amin launched a large military operation against the resistance at Sayd Karam in Paktia Province. Two army formations were used, one column moving out of Gardez, the other an armored attack from Khowst. The offensive was successful, eliminating as many as 1,000 or more

resistance fighters, relatives, and supporters, driving most of the remainder into Pakistan, and obliterating sympathetic villages.

Even with the significant military victory, Amin's position was unenviable. He had to cope with widespread military resistance among the citizenry and widespread antipathy to himself in the government armed forces. *New York Times* reporter David Binder notes that in early December 1979 the government's control extended only to Kabul and a few other cities. The government sought to ascertain the loyalties of army members through loyalty checks and to indoctrinate military personnel politically. Binder accounts for the certain loyalty to Amin of most of the senior ranks by the lack of any other option within the PDPA. Although assessment of Afghan military strength is notoriously difficult and the figures unreliable, a respected source reports that army strength fell from 80,000 to 50,000 from the April Revolution in 1978 to the Soviet invasion in 1979.

The Soviet Invasion

Early in the winter of 1979-80 the Soviet Union began military deployment along its border with Afghanistan. Soviets usually refer to their presence in Afghanistan as "The Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan." The official epithet translates into the English acronym LCSFA. The forces are "limited" in that they represent only a very small proportion of the total Soviet military machine.

Security was tight before the invasion. The newly formed planning staff and theater-level headquarters had rapidly built up the units and deployed these at the border with Afghanistan, particularly in the Kushka and Termez areas. These Soviet towns possessed both railroads and easy access to major Afghan roads. Already by December 7 one regiment had been deployed to Afghanistan. Another reached Afghanistan sometime between December 21 and 23. Three others from this theater moved with the main force in the December 26–28 invasion.

On Christmas eve of 1979 at 11:00 P.M., the Soviet airlift began. Troops and matériel arrived primarily at Kabul International Airport, but also at the air bases at Bagrami, Shindand, and Qandahar. One Kabuli witness remembered: "The planes started landing at night. You couldn't see anything [it was so

dark]. You could only hear the constant roar of planes overhead. For two days and three nights the planes kept landing without a break." Bradsher reports that by the morning of December 27 about 5,000 Soviet troops occupied Kabul alone.

Some Western witnesses took note of the large number of Soviet Central Asian troops among the invaders, but no accurate account of their representation in the invading force exists outside of the Soviet Union. It is known, however, that the arriving divisions held only two-thirds of their full complement.

Evidence that the Soviets anticipated a massive Afghan army rebellion is provided by their choice of weapons, for example, SA-4 antiaircraft missiles and FROG rocket battalions. These are certainly not the hardware of choice for counterinsurgency operations on poorly equipped tribesmen. Lieutenant General V. Mikhailov was stationed at the 40th Army Headquarters in Termez, from which he commanded the ground forces. His superior was the commander of the Turkestan Military District, Army General Y. Maximov, whose superior was Marshal Sergey Sokolov, chief of operations.

Bradsher likens Soviet tactics in the invasion of Afghanistan to the strategy used in invading another neighbor, Czechoslovakia. In both cases the indigenous armies were told that the sudden influx of battle-ready Soviet troops was part of a military exercise. Both indigenous armies were ordered to turn in live ammunition for blanks, in keeping with the training exercise ruse. Not all Afghan units complied, however, including some tank units loyal to Amin. Amin appears to have realized what was happening but chose to put up a front of normality.

The day when the air lift was completed was Friday. In most Muslim countries government offices close on Friday (see Tenets of Islam, ch. 2). Nikolai V. Talyzin, the Soviet minister of communications, paid a visit to Amin, perhaps to preserve the business-as-usual appearance or to divert Amin. The Soviets blew up Kabul's telephone system at 7:00 P.M. and by 7:15 occupied the Ministry of Interior. The Soviet military command at Termez did not wait until Amin's capture to announce on Radio Kabul (in a broadcast prerecorded by Babrak Karmal) that Afghanistan had been liberated from Amin's rule.

Whatever the politics of the invasion, militarily the Soviet Union had found in Afghanistan, as the United States did in Vietnam, a testing ground for its early 1986 weapons and newest military tactics. Furthermore, the Soviets had played, as of

December 1985, a major role in fighting and launching offensives, as well as deploying troops to hold key cities and strategic roads.

Reorganization and Consolidation of the Soviet Forces

One month after the invasion there were as many as 40,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan, and during the first year the occupation forces were reorganized. Some 10,000 of the troops—such as the support forces of the 40th Army, its artillery and SA-4 brigades, several FROG battalions, and a tank regiment—were useless in a guerrilla war and were sent back to the Soviet Union in mid-1980. These heavy units were replaced by infantry units, more helicopter gunships, and other light forces more appropriate for guerrilla warfare. United States estimates were that there were about 85,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan by late 1980 and about 100,000 by the end of 1981. The Soviets could not reduce troop strength any more than this without risking control of key points in Afghanistan because they could not rely on the Afghan army.

In the early days of the occupation the Soviets limited combat to the minimum needed to maintain their hold on the major cities and towns of Afghanistan. During this period the Afghan army itself, approximately 25,000 in number, was a major obstacle to Soviet aims, and the Soviets felt compelled to use heavy weapons against the army whose government they were presumably supporting. It was only at significant cost in casualties that the Soviet occupation forces subdued major mutinies by the Afghan 8th Infantry Division in January 1980 and by the 14th Armored Division in July 1980.

Major guerrilla activities also harassed the Soviets only a few months after the occupation began, and the Soviets sent task forces as large as a division against the guerrillas in the Panjsher Valley in February 1980, Jalalabad in March 1980, and Herat in September 1980. There were also heavy bombardment and artillery attacks in 1981 against the latter two cities and Qandahar. Guerrilla strength in the Panjsher area was especially threatening, for it menaced the major Soviet supply line from Kabul to Mazar-e Sharif through the Salang Tunnel, and this area was the scene of several Soviet assaults. Early Soviet battle tactics in Panjsher and elsewhere were notably unsuccessful. A Soviet reinforced motorized rifle battalion in Paktia, for example, left the main road and appears to

have been virtually destroyed when its inexperienced troops panicked and hid behind their vehicles until they ran out of ammunition and were killed. This and other incidents convinced the Soviets that small unit tactics, as well as individual marksmanship standards, had to be improved immediately.

After the first few months the Soviets began to move toward decentralized support, such as ensuring that reinforced units had their own artillery, engineer, and helicopter support. New tactical units were also created, such as an air assault brigade, and new rifle battalions possessing integrated helicopter-mechanized capability.

A major Soviet problem in the early days of the occupation resulted from the use of motorized rifle divisions from the Turkestan Military District. These units were low-readiness formations and had only been brought up to combat strength by the addition of recalled reservists. These Central Asian soldiers not only fraternized with soldiers of the Afghan army but also with guerrilla forces, especially Tajiks with whom they had ethnolinguistic ties. Concerned about this problem, Soviet leaders eventually replaced most Central Asian soldiers with troops from other areas of the Soviet Union.

According to Soviet prisoners of war (POWs), most conscripts served six-month tours in Afghanistan. Many of the other ranks were given no special training before their tour of duty, and some servicemen were sent to Afghanistan only a few weeks after being called up. NCOs were sent to a training division for six months before being posted to Afghanistan. A large number of the NCOs in the occupation forces, plus some enlisted men, were trained in Ashkhabad in Turkestan Military District, where there were large battle training areas.

The most significant units of the Soviet force in 1980-81 were the elite Guards Airborne regiments, elements of the 103d, 104th, and 105th divisions. These units established initial control around Bagrami Air Base at the time of the invasion, and in the next two years they were also stationed at the air bases at Kabul, Herat, and Shindand. These elite units, each with its own armor, were entrusted with the principal tasks of protecting the leaders of the new Afghan regime and controlling key urban centers and adjacent areas.

To improve coordination between the army and the Air Assault Brigades, the Soviets began to construct permanent communication facilities to replace mobile field communications used in the early months of the occupation. This emphasis on centralization was inappropriate to the guerrilla war Soviet

forces were fighting in Afghanistan, in which decentralized command would have been more effective. According to military analysts, decisions that would be made by a senior officer in conventional operations had to be made by junior officers, or even NCOs, in a guerrilla conflict. According to David C. Isby, the NCO/junior officer group was the weakest command level in the Soviet occupation forces. There were few NCOs with extensive service experience, and junior officers were frequently not competent to undertake the tasks they faced. Commanders began to comment in Soviet military journals on the need to improve the capacity of junior officers, warrant officers, and NCOs to make independent decisions.

Attempts were made during the first year of the Soviet occupation to rebuild the depleted Afghan army, first by such inducements as pay raises and reenlistment bonuses and then by such measures as more stringent conscription laws and impressment. None of these efforts was successful, not only because the regime itself was unpopular but also because the warfare in which potential recruits would be engaged was repugnant to most Afghans, i.e., a brutal guerrilla war against other Afghans. Intensified efforts in 1980-81, such as lowering the draft age and recalling discharged soldiers, were generally fruitless. According to the United States Department of State, press-gangs were sent into Kabul to capture youths as young as 15 years of age, although that was under the legal draft age. At the end of 1980 Afghan military strength was estimated at 20,000 to 30,000.

Offensives, 1980–81

By 1981 the conflict that had been centered earlier on the eastern part of the country had begun to spread to almost every area. *Mujahidiin* attacked government and Soviet vehicles, which even in convoys were not safe on Afghan roads. The route from Kabul to Jalalabad and on to the Pakistani border was often under guerrilla control, forcing government and Soviet officials to use air transport to these areas. Even the key road from Kabul to Mazar-e Sharif and on to the Soviet border, although heavily guarded by Soviet troops, was not immune to attack from guerrillas, despite repeated offensives against them.

The principal Soviet objective of the first six months of the occupation was control over the Pakistani border region, but

the resistance in this region was quite strong, despite Soviet bombardment and the use of antipersonnel mines to hamper guerrilla movements. A significant number of the inhabitants of the region, however, fled their homes in the eastern part of the country in response to Soviet bombardment of civilian areas. The number of Afghan refugees in neighboring Pakistan grew in 1980 from 400,000 to about 1.4 million. Some peasants fled to the cities; following major Soviet offensives in Panjsher, Ghowr, Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Paktia, and Paktika in 1980, the population of some Afghan cities increased considerably.

Despite their lack of coordination, the *mujahidiin* maintained only a few fighters in northwestern Afghanistan or in the semidesert regions. The guerrillas focused their assaults along two strategic lines, one running east-west from the Pakistani border to Hazarajat and the other running north-south delineating the eastern half of the country. Other than these two lines, the guerrillas established bases outside the cities of Qandahar and Herat.

Although the Soviets lost some equipment and between 2,000 to 4,000 men during 1980, the Soviet offensives did not succeed in securing major roads or in halting guerrilla supply routes from Pakistan. An assault only a few kilometers northwest of Kabul in the Paghman mountains did not succeed. Hundreds of casualties were sustained on both sides, including local villagers, and the retreat of the Soviet-Afghan troops could not be easily concealed because it occurred so close to the capital.

In early 1981 Soviet emphasis seemed to shift to a more political approach to subduing Afghanistan, but by the middle of the summer the deteriorating security situation again became the major focus of Soviet attention. At the end of the summer the Afghan government began to establish new "defense councils" at the national, provincial, and district levels to place all military matters under the clear control of the PDPA in response to what President Karmal called "increasing armed actions by counter-revolutionary elements."

Further changes were also made in the Afghan army at this stage. The age of conscription was officially reduced from 22 to 20, and two senior Afghan officers were replaced: the minister of defense was sent to the Soviet Union with some other senior officers "for training" and did not return, and the general who headed political affairs in the Afghan army was also replaced in August.

By the beginning of 1981 the *mujahidiin* had begun a war of terror, sending units even into Kabul to attack PDPA and Soviet personnel. In January 1981 a guerrilla group raided the large Soviet residential complex in Kabul, and on January 29, 1981 they attacked and destroyed the headquarters of the Afghan secret police, the State Information Service (Khadamate Ettelaate Dowlati, in Dari-KHAD). In April 1981 three senior Afghan security officials were assassinated, including the commander of the defense militia and the second-ranking commander of Afghan military intelligence.

The response to this campaign of terror took the form of attacks in Lowgar Province by Afghan and Soviet troops that were intended, according to Radio Kabul, "to annihilate mercenaries, criminals, terrorists and anti-revolutionary elements to preserve the gains of the revolution." As John Fullerton notes, the order of battle for this offensive was characteristic of such operations. Afghan militia units were sent in first, followed by Afghan army units, with Soviet forces bringing up the rear. If the Afghans, sent in first to draw guerrilla fire, deserted (as was frequently the case), their Soviet allies were in a good position to fire on them. Soviet forces were only sent in on the ground when the area had been thoroughly prepared by artillery bombardment and with close air support.

Soviet losses in the second year of the occupation were higher than in the first: by the end of December 1981 Western intelligence sources believed that Soviet troops had lost hundreds of aircraft and lightly armored vehicles. It was also noticed that in 1982 the Soviets tried more consistently to recover military matériel that had been damaged in combat, especially APCs and tanks.

By the end of 1981 there began to be reports from guerrillas of Warsaw Pact and Cuban military personnel in Afghanistan. One guerrilla, describing the Cubans in combat, said they were "big and black and shout very loudly when they fight. Unlike the Russians they were not afraid to attack us in the open." There were also reports from guerrilla sources and a defecting Afghan officer of Bulgarian troops and of a Bulgarian military base in southern Mazar-e Sharif to protect the fuel pipeline to Sheberghan (see Mining, ch. 3). In addition, there were reports from intelligence sources of personnel from the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) training Afghan security and police forces.

Soviet Occupation Phase II, 1982–85

A major principle of Soviet military doctrine is the use of heavy air offensives to stun and disorganize resistance operations. In Afghanistan this has mainly taken the form of helicopter assault, although there, as elsewhere, the Soviet Army depends on the helicopters of the Soviet Air Force. Normally these Frontal Aviation units have been attached either to a front-level army command or, as independent mixed-helicopter squadrons, to selected motorized and tank divisions. The extent to which Soviet Frontal Aviation forces in Afghanistan were operationally integrated with the Afghan air force was unknown. The overall force disposition appeared to be under Soviet command.

Helicopters

Estimates of the number of Soviet helicopters in Afghanistan has ranged from 500 to 650, and, of these, it is estimated that up to 250 have been the Mi-24 Hind gunship. The Hind, with up to 192 unguided rockets under its stub wings and machine guns or cannon in the nose turret, has room for eight to 12 soldiers and their equipment. The Hind has been used not only for search-and-destroy missions but also for close air support, assaults (sometimes along with fixed-wing aircraft) on villages, and armed reconnaissance missions against guerrillas.

Hind helicopters have been deployed in Afghanistan since before the 1979 invasion, but Soviet tactics in using them have changed since then. Up to as late as 1985 several Hind helicopters would be used in a circular pattern to engage guerrillas directly, attacking in a dive from 1,000 meters with 57mm rockets and with cluster and high-explosive 250-kilogram bombs. In 1985 Soviet use of Hinds began to change somewhat, and a wider variety of tactics began to be employed: using helicopters (either Hinds or Mi-8 Hips) as scouts; running in from 7,000 to 8,000 meters away, rising to 100 meters and drawing fire, and having other aircraft waiting behind a ridge to attack whomever opened fire; and using helicopters in mass formations.

The Hip is armed with 57mm rocket pods or (in the Hip-E version) with a single-barrel 12.7mm gun. The drawbacks of the Hip, however, are the exposed fuel system, the relatively short rotor life (1,500 hours), and the time required for an engine change.

Two other Soviet helicopters used in combat in Afghanistan have been the Mi-4 Hound and the Mi-6 Hook. The Hound has been used in what appears to be a forward air-control role for ground-based artillery attacks. It has also been deployed in conjunction with the Hind, usually to commence an operation and then to circle while the Hinds attack, dropping heat decoys to ward off hits by hand-held SA-7 heat-seeking missiles. The big Mi-6 Hook, which can hold up to 70 soldiers and their combat equipment and which has a range of 370 kilometers, has been attached principally to the 181st Independent Helicopter Regiment in Jalalabad and to the 280th Independent Helicopter Regiment in Qandahar and Shindand.

Fighter-Bombers

Soviet fighter-bombers have been deployed primarily for air-to-ground assault in Afghanistan. They have been used in terror bombing, scorched-earth bombing, and carpet bombing. Fighter-bombers have been deployed against guerrillas and against settlements and cities; for example, half of the city of Herat was reportedly destroyed in a 1983 assault.

Early in the war the Soviets relied primarily on the MiG-21 Fishbed, with generally poor results. The MiG-21 is armed with one twin-barrel 23mm gun (with 200 rounds of ammunition in a belly pack), four 57mm rocket packs, two 500-kilogram bombs, and two 250-kilogram bombs or four 240mm air-to-surface rockets. The MiG-21 proved ineffective in combat in Afghanistan for several reasons: rockets were often fired from as far as 2,000 meters, which rendered them inaccurate; many bombs failed to explode on impact; the aircraft was best suited for air-to-ground combat situations; in a guerrilla war the early warning provided by fighter-bomber attack tended to negate the effects of the strike; and the mountainous terrain where guerrilla resistance has been concentrated has made air-to-ground fire from fixed-wing aircraft less effective, and the high altitudes, mountain peaks, and narrow valleys have made movement difficult for most fixed-wing aircraft.

Because of the poor performance of the MiG-21 Fishbed, the Soviets introduced the other fixed-wing aircraft, the Su-25 Frogfoot and the Tu-16 Badger. The Frogfoot is a close-support aircraft designed for the same uses as the American-made A-10. Carrying up to 4,500 kilograms of ordnance and used primarily to hit point targets in difficult terrain, the Frogfoot

operated in loose pairs in combat in Afghanistan. At least one squadron of Frogfoot aircraft operated from Bagrami Air Base. The other fixed-wing aircraft introduced by the Soviets was the Tu-16 Badger, a medium-range bomber that can carry up to 8,950 kilograms of ordnance and fly more than 12,000 meters above sea level. Before April 1984 Badger units were deployed on the Soviet border. The Badgers were first used in the bombing campaign against the city of Herat, and in April 1984 they were used for high-altitude carpet-bombing of guerrilla bases in the Panjsher Valley, during which a reported 36 Badgers were used and 30 to 40 strikes made per day.

Although there appeared to be little threat to Soviet bombers because their guerrilla adversaries had no weapons that could reach fighter-bomber altitude, the Soviets appeared to remain worried about antiaircraft fire, as manifested in their bombing tactics. Nelson, observing five Soviet air attacks, noticed that bombs were dropped from too high an altitude and rockets fired from too far away, with visibly inaccurate results. Thus the Soviets appear to be increasingly dependent upon helicopter forces as a vital part of their overall strategy in Afghanistan.

Air Bases

As of mid-1985 seven air bases had been built or significantly improved by the Soviets: Herat, Shindand, Farah, Qandahar, Kabul International Airport, Bagrami, and Jalalabad. Airfields at Mazar-e Sharif, Konduz, Ghazni, and Pol-e Charkhi also were improved somewhat. All were turned into all-weather, jet air bases (although Jalalabad continued to be principally for helicopters). The two most important air bases, where the sensitive technical support and maintenance capabilities were located, were at Bagrami and Shindand—the former serving as the supreme local headquarters for the entire Soviet military operation in Afghanistan. Most military aircraft were not permanently based at any one field, for maintenance and support were concentrated at these two fields. No Afghans were permitted on the Shindand Air Base.

Chemical Warfare

The Soviet Union is believed to have an 80,000-man chemical and biological warfare establishment with specialist chemical defense units attached to divisions, battalions, and

companies. Although the Soviets have described the main role of these forces as defensive, there have been many and varied reports of chemical weapon attacks by Soviet troops against guerrilla forces in Afghanistan. The United States Department of State reported that chemical bombs supplied by the Soviet Union were used against guerrillas in November 1978, even before the Soviet invasion. The State Department received reports of 47 different chemical attacks between mid-1979 and mid-1981, resulting in a death toll of more than 3,000. Thirty-six of these reports were from Afghan army deserters, guerrillas, journalists, and physicians. Another serious report came from an Afghan army defector who gave the *Far Eastern Economic Review* details of Soviet-supplied chemical and biological agents being used by Afghan army units. Although the veracity of the report was supported by its extensive detail, a number of questions remained.

Other reports by foreign journalists abound, and they suggest that the Soviets have used chemical weapons from helicopter units to drive guerrillas from caves or other dwellings in order to attack them with conventional weapons. In general, the numerous reports of chemical and biological agents being used against Afghan guerrillas, from a wide variety of sources, suggest that Soviet use of such materials may be extensive but remains highly selective. There have been reports by Afghan resistance leaders of decreased use of such agents, and, although a State Department report of February 21, 1984, charged the Soviets with more uses of chemical weapons, it did state that, contrary to previous years, the Soviet use of chemical weapons in 1983 "could not be confirmed as valid."

New Soviet Weapons

Several new weapons, which had not been seen outside the Soviet Union, have been introduced in combat in Afghanistan since the 1979 invasion. Most of these new weapons have been for ground forces.

One weapon that appeared to have been specifically designed for use in Afghanistan is the "butterfly" mine with a "wing" that makes it look like a butterfly or a sycamore seed and allows it to spin slowly to the ground when dropped from the air. Made of green or brown plastic and powerful enough to blow off a foot or a hand, these mines seem to have been designed to blend in with the terrain and to maim rather than

kill, although the inaccessibility of medical facilities means that many victims of these mines die of infection or loss of blood.

"Butterfly" mines have been used effectively against the guerrillas. Spread by Mi-8 Hip helicopters or large-caliber artillery, they enable the Soviets to sow a minefield very quickly. According to *Jane's Defence Weekly*, a Hip usually carries two mine dispersal units and can lay 144 mines. When released, the mines are scattered by airflow or on impact. The use of these "butterfly" mines is banned by the Geneva Convention, which specifically forbids combatants to use mines that cannot be detected by normal means and that have an unlimited lifespan. In 1981 John Fullerton witnessed an incident in which a guerrilla lost a hand and much of his face when washing his hands in a ditch in an area that had not been the object of mine-laying operations for nine months. Fullerton says that there was "little doubt that mines could last a decade and were a threat to children and livestock especially."

Four other weapons noted for the first time outside the Soviet Union included a new automatic, 81mm mortar, the AGS-17 automatic grenade launcher, the AK-74 high-velocity rifle, and the new RPG-16 antitank weapon. The new mortar is capable not only of rapid and continuous fire but also has a high trajectory, which, although not normally advantageous, has proved useful in mountainous Afghanistan in support of infantry operations. The AGS-17 automatic grenade launcher can either be mounted on a vehicle or used from a helicopter. Fired by two persons, it launches 30mm grenades from a drum that contains 30 rounds. In conjunction with the grenade launcher the Soviets have also used "flechette" rounds, which are small, razor sharp, steel slivers contained in 152mm artillery shells. The AK-74 high-velocity rifle, a 5.45mm caliber weapon equipped with an image-intensifying sight, resembles the standard AK-47 rifle. This new rifle fires a hollow core bullet that is very damaging to the human target. The RPG-16 antitank weapon replaces the RPG-7 and represents an improvement both in range and in accuracy.

The Soviets have also used an improved APC in Afghanistan. The BMP-2, a variant of the BMP-1, is essentially an improved version of the standard BRT-60 APC, with which most Soviet and Afghan motorized units have been equipped. Armed with an automatic 30mm cannon, the new APCs have an improved hatch for safer evacuation and are considered to have better mobility.

Despite the use of improved weaponry in Afghanistan, the

Soviets continued to have logistical problems in 1985. Very long supply lines and the impossibility of depending solely on aircraft for resupply of the outlying areas have necessitated continuous repairs on the roads, bridges, and bypasses that are the targets of guerrilla attack.

Combat Activity, 1984–85

Despite the intensive combat activity in all areas of the country and the costly offensives of previous years, by late 1985 neither the Soviets nor the *mujahidiin* had achieved significant territorial gains. During 1984–85 most Soviet-Afghan assaults were concentrated around major cities (especially Kabul), the Panjsher Valley, and the areas near the Pakistani border.

Kabul

The guerrillas succeeded in threatening the general security of the capital, especially in the late summer and fall of 1984. Their attacks included, but went beyond, assassinations and kidnappings of Soviet and Afghan regime officials and interruptions of supply convoys. The guerrillas also carried out bombings, ground assaults, and rocket attacks (for example, on electrical facilities). Kabul remained to some extent a city under seige.

One of the largest guerrilla attacks since the 1979 invasion occurred in Kabul in September 1984, culminating in a violent two-hour battle near the military base at the ancient Bala Hissar fortress. According to a State Department report, 15 Soviet armored vehicles were destroyed and 40 to 50 Afghan soldiers killed in the battle. In accordance with their practice in the Afghan conflict, the Soviets retaliated for the attack with a ground and air assault on villages nearby, resulting in considerable civilian casualties.

With the stability of the capital deteriorating as a result of such attacks, the Soviets tightened security throughout Kabul and around the airport and increased the number of retaliatory attacks on areas from which they believed the guerrillas had launched their attacks. These measures did not appear to deter the *mujahidiin*, who launched another rocket attack on Kabul in late September 1984, resulting in extensive damage. Again the Soviets retaliated by attacking villages south of Kabul.

Also in the fall of 1984 the guerrillas caused severe electrical shortages in Kabul by destroying pylons at the hydroelectric plant east of Kabul. Most homes were without electricity, and industrial output was also affected by the cutoffs to factories.

Rocket attacks on Kabul by the *mujahidiin* continued in November 1984, and Western diplomatic sources also reported that they had killed a Soviet general by shooting down his helicopter. In response to the continued guerrilla rocket attacks on Kabul, the Soviets continued to bomb villages south of the capital. The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that in one attack on a village east of Kabul, a dozen or more Soviet aircraft dropped bombs from over 6,000 meters. Western diplomatic sources reported in early 1985 that guerrilla rocket attacks into Soviet military camps in and near Kabul reportedly had killed 60 and wounded 34. The Soviet response to these attacks included setting up a security network of eight concentric circles around Kabul: at each post an estimated 100 soldiers, plus eight to 10 tanks or APCs, were posted.

The guerrillas did not restrict their attacks to the city or the military camps; airports were attacked repeatedly as well. SAMs were apparently used to destroy several aircraft in flight, and in September 1984 the only DC-10 of Ariana Afghan Airlines was damaged. The Soviets responded at first by curtailing air activity, but they later improved military facilities around the airport and deployed more armor and artillery in the vicinity. By the end of 1984 Kabul was often lit by flares fired from aircraft during takeoff or landing, apparently to defend against heat-seeking SAMs being used by the guerrillas. Nearby Bagrami Air Base was also attacked in early 1985, and Western diplomatic sources reported the destruction of at least 10 helicopters.

In June 1985 the Soviet Union announced 37 construction projects at Kabul International Airport, including new hangars and security posts, runway expansion, extended power supply, and an air communications network. This work, however, suffered repeated interruptions from sporadic guerrilla rocket attacks.

In the summer of 1985 the guerrillas continued to be able to attack both Kabul and its airport, and the inability of the Soviet-Afghan forces to prevent this was considered to have shaken their confidence and resulted in even tighter security precautions by the Soviets. More patrols and armed positions were established in areas where there was a high concentration

Mujahid repairing machine gun; local commander Abdul Haq looks on

Father, son, grandson—mujahiddin

Mujahidiin outside caves used as shelters

Positioning BM-12 rocket launcher near Kabul
Photos courtesy Kurt Lohbeck

of government and military personnel, and helicopters on night patrol over Kabul were equipped with special night vision equipment.

Panjsher Valley

The Panjsher Valley has been one of the major centers of resistance to Soviet forces since the 1979 invasion, and guerrilla fighters under the command of Ahmad Shah Mahsud (frequently spelled Massoud in the press) of the Jamiat-i-Islami (Islamic Society) group have repeatedly attacked convoys passing through the valley on the highway south to Kabul. In late April 1983 the Soviets broke a truce with Mahsud with a major offensive that sought to destroy resistance in the valley and eliminate Mahsud as a leader. To these ends this offensive, the seventh launched against the Panjsher area between 1979 and 1983, included the first use in Afghanistan of heavy, Soviet-based bombers, which carried out carpet bombing missions over the valley. The largest number of troops ever committed to a Panjsher operation, some 20,000 men, was supported by several thousand Afghan soldiers and also local militias. Adjacent valleys were also occupied in an attempt to seal off the Panjsher.

The assault failed to achieve its objectives. The guerrillas followed their usual tactic of withdrawing from the valley floor to the surrounding areas, counterattacking whenever possible. Although the *mujahidiin* lost a significant number of fighters, their units remained intact. Mahsud was quoted as estimating Soviet-Afghan army losses at 2,500 killed or wounded. Although these figures were not verified, observers believed that the Soviet-Afghan troops had suffered heavy casualties.

In 1984 the Soviets continued to maintain bases in the Panjsher Valley around Peshghor and conducted limited sweep operations in November of that year, bombing suspected guerrilla positions from Tu-16s. In 1985 the Soviets carried out a major offensive in the area, beginning in April. According to intelligence sources, they brought in at least one motorized rifle division (about 12,000 men) and mounted bombing raids with Tu-16s and Mi-24 helicopter gunships. In June the offensive entered its second phase, with bomb and rocket attacks against guerrilla positions. The *mujahidiin* followed their usual pattern, withdrawing into the mountains and adjacent areas.

As of late 1985 the Soviets did not appear to have succeeded either in driving Mahsud from the Panjsher Valley or in

improving the security of their supply line from Mazar-e Sharif. The fierce combat and bombing raids had, however, severely depopulated the valley. Guerrilla sources estimated that as many as 150,000 people had been forced to flee their homes, although some observers suggested the number might be as low as 25,000. Most Panjsheris seemed to have taken refuge in neighboring valleys, hoping to return later, while some fled to Kabul and others to Pakistan. For those who remained, food had become very scarce and prices extremely high.

Pakistan Border Area

Another area of violent confrontation included the regions adjacent to Pakistan: Paktia, Paktika, Nangarhar, and Konarha provinces. Attempting to seal the border-crossing routes between the two countries, the Soviets fortified garrisons with both Soviet and Afghan troops and conducted sweep operations and bombing missions in these provinces. Soviet efforts were relatively unsuccessful as *mujahidiin* groups cooperated in besieging and attacking Soviet and Afghan army posts in Khowst and made it almost impossible for the Soviets to resupply garrisons except through risky air routes. Virtually all resistance groups, both fundamentalist and traditionalist, were represented in these operations. Guerrilla attacks in Paktia and Konarha provinces resulted in Soviet airstrikes in efforts to relieve the pressure on their garrisons. When these airstrikes occasionally spilled over the border into Pakistan, Kabul accused Pakistani forces of attacking the garrisons in Afghanistan. Observers reported more than 43 violations of Pakistani airspace by Soviet-Afghan forces in 1984, and about 14 ground incursions resulted in an estimated 300 casualties.

In the spring of 1985—after three weeks of heavy fighting that saw use of as many as 100 tanks, 80 helicopters, and 60 jet fighters for daily bombing—Soviet-Afghan forces broke the 11-month siege of the garrison of Barikot in Konarha Province, although *mujahidiin* continued to fire on the Soviet positions in this area from the mountains across the border. Western diplomatic sources reported that the Soviets hoped to make progress in sealing off the border in this area by replacing the small Afghan brigade and its Soviet advisers at Barikot with a brigade-strength base of 3,000 men, by establishing military posts elsewhere in the province with 100 men at each post, and by paving the tortuous 40-kilometer road from Asmar to Barikot

to connect the border garrisons with each other. Observers and military experts were dubious, however, that the Soviets could keep these positions under their permanent control.

Resistance forces in Paktia Province continued their attacks on Soviet-Afghan forces in the city of Khowst. The Soviets began an offensive in this area in the summer of 1985, reportedly using napalm bombs to drive the *mujahidiin* out of their positions around the city and increasing air and artillery attacks across the border in Pakistan to cut off the guerrillas' supply lines. Although Soviet-Afghan forces remained garrisoned in Khowst and Gardez in late 1985, there were high casualties on both sides. Resistance forces retained a formidable presence in the province and continued to attack the positions held by Soviet and Afghan army troops.

A fall 1985 offensive by Soviet-Afghan troops in Paktia Province failed to cut off supplies entering Afghanistan from Pakistan, although by use of aerial bombardment and ground ambushes Soviet forces were able to drive the *mujahidiin* away from the more accessible trails. Use of routes through more difficult terrain and losses sustained from attacks on convoys of supplies from Pakistan made all goods needed by the guerrillas in Afghanistan more expensive, according to December 1985 reports in the *Washington Post*. There were also reports from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in late 1985 that the Soviets used commando units to launch attacks on convoys from Pakistan, using silencers on their rifles as well as mortars.

Southern Afghanistan: Qandahar

Qandahar was the scene of the fiercest fighting in any Afghan city. Virtually every night of 1984–85 saw fighting in and around the city, and the inhabitants were subjected to almost daily bombing and strafing by Soviet helicopters from the nearby base, as well as arbitrary arrests and frequent ground combat between Afghan forces and the guerrillas. Terrence White of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* spent almost a month in Qandahar and reported that the guerrillas enjoyed remarkable freedom of movement in the city. Although an estimated 30,000 Soviet troops were positioned at the airport about 12 kilometers southeast of the city, there were no Soviet foot patrols, and in early 1985 Afghan army forces usually did not leave their 30 or so posts in the city. Afghan resistance leaders interviewed in Pakistan reported that the 1984–85 fighting in Qandahar was the fiercest since the Soviet invasion

in 1979. The Soviets relied increasingly on air attacks in an effort to drive the guerrillas out of the city. White reported that there was bombing every one of the 28 days he was in Qandahar.

Even APCs were at risk on the road between the airport and the city, and it was reported that the governor of the province, who had been in the habit of commuting to work in an APC, by mid-1985 was compelled to work out of the Soviet air base and to make his rare visits to Qandahar in a helicopter. Government officials were assassinated frequently and, according to a report in *Le Monde*, at least 40 civilians were killed by Soviet soldiers in January 1985 in a bazaar in Qandahar in reprisal for the assassination of an official of the PDPA. Guerrilla retaliation took the form of an ambush in February that reportedly killed 30 Soviet and Afghan soldiers.

Western Afghanistan: Herat

According to a State Department report, as much as half of the city of Herat had been destroyed in bombardment by mid-1985, and large sections of the city were deserted. Soviet forces carried out three major offensives against guerrilla forces in Herat in 1984–85. In a June 1984 operation 10,000 Soviet troops and 5,000 Afghan troops were deployed against the *mujahidiin*, who fought a delaying action until they could flee to the mountains in the north or to neighboring Iran.

Another offensive began in late 1984 in Herat, which, like Qandahar, is temperate enough in climate to permit winter combat. Ismail Khan, guerrilla commander of Jamiat-i-Islami in Herat, told observers that the Soviets were following a scorched-earth policy and that the city was suffering from shortages of essential supplies. This offensive also included air attacks; one such attack against civilians resulted in an estimated 150 deaths.

The Soviets planned a new offensive in Herat in the spring of 1985, and in the early months of the year they brought in Soviet and Afghan troops to supplement an already large number of soldiers stationed at three bases in the area. Despite this, the guerrillas staged a spectacular attack on Shindand Air Base in June 1985, destroying an estimated 20 Soviet-made MiG-21s. Reports from intelligence sources indicated that the way the airplanes were blown up suggested sabotage rather than battle, and a month later some 20 Afghan air force officers were executed. The Soviets continued to be concerned about

security at Herat, and there were reports that a large number of Soviet and Afghan aircraft had been relocated (from Qandahar as well as Herat) to Shindand Air Base.

The Afghan Armed Forces, 1985

A high desertion rate and poor morale among soldiers who remained in the ranks drastically reduced the combat effectiveness of the Afghan armed forces in the mid-1980s. Despite infusions of aid and the presence of a large number of military advisers, the Soviets were unsuccessful in their effort to transform the army into a viable fighting force. Animosity between members of the Parcham and Khalq factions of the PDPA also hampered the army's ability to carry out its mission. Khalq officers and men expressed bitterness over the preferential treatment given their Parcham rivals by the Parcham-dominated regime. Many actively gave assistance to the *mujahidiin.*

Command and Control

The Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan designate the president of the Revolutionary Council (RC) as the commander of the armed forces (see Government Structure, ch. 4). Below the president in the chain of command are the minister of national defense and the chief of the general staff. In 1985 these two posts were held by Major General Nazar Muhammad and Lieutenant General Shah Nawaz Tannay, respectively. There were three geographically based corps commands, headquartered at Kabul, Qandahar, and Herat.

Behind the formally established chain of command, Soviet advisers directed operations, their authority extending from the highest to the lowest levels. Like their civilian counterparts in government ministries, Afghan commanders enjoyed little or no autonomy.

Army Manpower, Organization, and Equipment

On paper, the Afghan army had a strength of 110,000 men in 1978. The actual number at that time was closer to 80,000. By late 1980, a year after the Soviet invasion, desertion and casualties had thinned its ranks down to about 20,000 men. According to *The Military Balance, 1985–1986,* published by

the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in London, the number had increased to around 40,000 men by mid-1985. The IISS questioned the reliability of this figure, however. Rates of desertion and demobilization continued to be high. According to one analyst, David C. Isby, there was a turnover of about 10,000 men annually.

Although officers and men were generously compensated by Afghan standards, the quality of personnel was notoriously poor. The ranks were filled with the dregs of Afghan society or with youths unfortunate enough to have been caught by regime press-gangs. The army consisted principally of conscripts. Coercion was generally used. Fullerton tells of a woman who was shot in the back by the authorities as she tried to prevent the dragging away of her 21-year-old son. The conscription season was usually late spring or summer, when weather permitted fighting around the country. There were cases of men being drafted, then deserting, only to be drafted again. Because of the shortage of able and willing young men, the draft age was lowered in 1984 from 17 to 16 years of age, and the term of service lengthened from three to four years; it had been lengthened from two to three years in 1982. This touched off mutinies and further desertions to the *mujahidiin*.

Soldiers were given minimal training. Fullerton reports that conscripts were fortunate if they had the opportunity to fire an automatic weapon once before going into combat. Because potential deserters regarded stolen weapons as a ticket to good treatment and enrollment in the ranks of the *mujahidiin*, officers routinely ordered their men to turn in their guns and ammunition after an engagement.

Thanks to Amin's efforts in the 1970s, the officer corps consisted largely of Khalqis. Given the shortage of trained and able personnel, Parcham leaders were obliged to retain their services rather than carry out a purge. Relations were strained because of years of interfactional violence. Khalqis complained that they were being used as "cannon-fodder" while Parcham adherents were awarded noncombatant posts. Khalqis made eager recruits for the resistance. Even when they did not desert, they often impeded Afghan army operations in such a way as to allow the *mujahidiin* to evade encirclement and defeat. There were also instances of skirmishes between Khalqi army units and Soviet forces.

One remedy that the regime used to attempt to cut down on the desertion rate was to increase the ratio of officers to enlisted men. In certain cases, there could be as many as six

officers to every 10 conscripts. The former had the role of watching their men as well as commanding them, although officers with strong Khalqi sympathies could not be relied on to do this. Shortage of loyal officers resulted in rapid promotion of inexperienced—and sometimes illiterate—men. Although captured enlisted men were usually welcomed by the *mujahidiin*, captured officers were viewed with suspicion. Their backgrounds and political sympathies were typically investigated before their fate was decided. Less fortunate captive officers were killed immediately by the *mujahidiin*.

The Afghan army played a supplementary role in the Soviets' overall strategic planning. Units were often detailed to defend a fort or town of secondary importance in territory controlled by the *mujahidiin*. Unlike Soviet units, they received scanty air and artillery support. They were also used to spearhead major offensives. Afghan soldiers who attempted to desert were shot by Soviet troops posted immediately behind them. According to Fullerton, Afghan army casualties were estimated to be twice those of Soviet troops. But these were generally not very high. Afghan soldiers, facing the *mujahidiin*, often preferred to surrender or "play dead" rather than fight.

Formally, the army was divided into 11 infantry divisions and three armored divisions in late 1985. There were also two mountain infantry regiments, a mechanized infantry brigade, an artillery brigade, three artillery regiments, a commando brigade, and three commando regiments. The IISS estimated in 1985 that divisions were at about quarter strength, i.e., about 2,500 men.

Soviet advisers were generally reluctant to allow Afghan units access to the latest military equipment. Armored units in 1985 had a variety of Soviet-supplied armored vehicles. These included 100 T-62 main battle tanks, 300 T54/55 main battle tanks, 50 T-34 medium tanks, and 60 PT-76 light amphibious tanks. Its complement of fighting vehicles also included 40 BMP-1 mechanized infantry combat vehicles and over 400 APCs of the BTR-40, 50, 60, and 152 series. These weapons were, of course, of limited use in a guerrilla war, but they played a role in securing highways and open areas and in maintaining order in the towns and cities.

There were several elite Afghan army units: the 24th Airborne Battalion, and the 37th, 38th, and 444th Commando Brigades. According to Isby, the status of the airborne brigade was unclear in late 1985; it had revolted in 1980. The commando units were considered politically loyal but had endured

heavy casualties. As a result, they were reorganized as independent battalions.

The Air Force

The Military Balance, 1985–1986 estimates the number of air force personnel at 7,000 in 1985. This included members of the Air Defense Command. There were about 150 combat aircraft. All of these were obsolete or obsolescent, Soviet-made varieties: four squadrons, totaling 50 MiG-17 jet fighters (Fresco-C); three squadrons composed of 40 MiG-21 jet interceptors (Fishbed); two squadrons comprised of about 25 Su-7B ground attack fighters (Fitter-A); and a squadron composed of 12 Su-17 single-seat attack aircraft (Fitter-C). There were also three squadrons totaling about 20 Il-28 light bombers (Beagle). Transport aircraft included about 15 An-26 short-haul transports (Curl). The air force had about 30 attack helicopters: Mi-24s, Mi-4s, and Mi-8s. There were also reconnaisance and training aircraft. The Air Defense Command was equipped with antiaircraft guns and surface-to-air missiles.

Reportedly, there were as many as 5,000 Czechoslovak and Cuban military advisers attached to the Afghan air force, as well as Soviet personnel. The quality of pilots and other staff, in terms of training and reliability, was low. This was one reason why they were denied access to advanced aircraft. In July 1985, however, Afghan pilots succeeded in flying two late-model Mi-24D gunships to Pakistan. These had electronic equipment designed to adapt them for use in Afghanistan's mountainous terrain.

Internal Security

Like the Bolsheviks in the years following the October Revolution, the Kabul regime faced a largely hostile, or at least nonsupportive, population. Both revolutionary regimes were involved in bloody civil wars. The constant use of coercion, rather than the fostering of an abiding sense of legitimacy, ensured their survival. In an atmosphere of internal and external violence, secrecy, and incessant plotting between factional rivals, the PDPA leadership depended on an internal security apparatus—similar in many ways to the Bolsheviks' dreaded Cheka secret police—to intimidate and punish opponents and undermine the armed resistance. By the mid-1980s KHAD had

gained a fearsome reputation as the eyes, ears, and scourge of the regime. Its influence was pervasive, and its methods lawless.

Less than a month after the PDPA came to power, President Taraki established a secret police. A decree issued on May 14, 1978, nullified Daoud's 1977 constitution, set up special "revolutionary military courts" to deal swiftly with enemies of the revolution, and established KHAD's predecessor, AGSA (Da Afghanistan da Gato da Satalo Adara, in Pashtu, and translated as Afghan Interests Protection Service). AGSA had wide-ranging powers. According to Taraki, "the criterion of our judgment regarding the removal of unhealthy elements from the administration is sabotage, anti-revolutionary action, corruption, bad reputation, bribery, cruelty, oppression and administrative inefficiency of the officials." Given the PDPA's unpopularity and its internal purges, the secret police soon had its hands full. Taraki appointed Amin as its director. During the bloody year and five months between the coup d'état and Taraki's fall from power, Amin used his enhanced power to build his own political base, eliminate rivals, and eventually seize power. Prisons in Kabul and other parts of Afghanistan overflowed with political prisoners. They were subjected to inhuman conditions and brutal torture.

In September 1979, after Amin became president, he changed the name of AGSA to the Workers' Intelligence Institute (Kargari Astekhbarati Muassessa, in Pashtu,—KAM) and promised that it would act within the bounds of legality. He named his nephew, Asadullah Amin, as KAM's director. The Soviets donated the equivalent of US$6.7 million to KAM, despite their disenchantment with Amin. This apparently included the latest in Soviet interrogation and torture technology. After the December 1979 Soviet invasion, KAM was renamed KHAD.

KHAD's Activities in the Mid-1980s

In the mid-1980s KHAD enjoyed a formidable measure of autonomy in relation to other Afghan state institutions. It was, however, under the de facto control of the Soviet secret police, the KGB. The organization was generously funded. Its cadres—estimated by Western observers as numbering anywhere between 25,000 and 60,000 persons—formed an intelligence network throughout Afghanistan and even beyond the country's borders. This included a uniformed KHAD brigade of

2,000 men. Many received training from the KGB and East German intelligence specialists. Its mission was multifaceted, including the detection and suppression of antiregime elements, the gathering of intelligence, and the sponsorship of organizations designed to win the population's adherence to the PDPA's ideology and programs. KHAD was responsible for the ideological education of new PDPA members and armed forces personnel. It set up a special school for the education of the children of party members and war orphans who were routinely shipped off to the Soviet Union for further education. It supervised the teaching of compulsory courses in ideology at Kabul University, the technical colleges, and secondary schools. KHAD personnel on the campuses ostensibly worked as "information officers."

KHAD was the bulwark of "official" Islam. It provided subsidies to the Religious Affairs Directorate, an organization designed to use Islamic symbols to gain popular support for the regime. It was intimately associated with the Supreme Council of Ulama (see Glossary) in Kabul and allegedly founded the Society of Islamic Scholars and the Promotion of Islamic Traditions as a means of co-opting religious figures. According to Fullerton, KHAD encouraged proregime imams (see Glossary) to enlist mosque attendants as informers. Informers were apparently also included among the several thousand official pilgrims on the haj to Mecca in 1982. KHAD also directed its attention to Afghanistan's tiny Hindu and Sikh religious minorities.

KHAD influence and power were naturally most pervasive in the capital. Kabul was reportedly divided into 182 residential blocks, designed to improve control of its inhabitants. Fullerton reports that each block had more than 100 informers paid by KHAD. The secret police had its own headquarters building with electronic equipment on the roof that was used to monitor the communications of foreign embassies. According to a late 1984 report by Amnesty International, KHAD also operated eight detention centers in the capital, which were located at KHAD headquarters; at the Ministry of Interior headquarters; at a location known as the "Central Interrogation Office"; at the headquarters of the department of KHAD responsible for monitoring the military; and at four other locations, including several formerly private houses. Qandahar, Jalalabad, Feyzabad, and other provincial cities also had detention centers.

KHAD worked hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Nation-

alities and Tribal Affairs, headed in 1985 by Solayman Laeq, to extend regime control over the rural and tribal areas. According to Fullerton, the country was divided by KHAD and the ministry into three administrative sectors. The first encompassed non-Pashtun ethnic groups, largely in the northern part of the country, and was Laeq's responsibility. The other two regions—the Pashtun tribal areas reaching from the Pakistan border to Qandahar in the south and the Pashtun and Baluch tribal areas in Pakistan—were the responsibility of KHAD. KHAD operatives arranged meetings between government officials and their relatives in the minority or tribal areas to foster support for PDPA policies. They sponsored local *jirgahs* and distributed subsidies to cooperative individuals. A major goal of such activities was to establish a network of informers. The secret police also sowed dissension at various localities between traditional tribal and ethnic rivals in order to weaken local support for the *mujahidiin*.

Thus, KHAD agents stirred up hostilities between Pashtun and Nuristanis in eastern Afghanistan and between Pashtuns and Hazaras in the central part of the country. This divide-and-rule policy, similar to that of colonial authorities in many parts of the world, was often successful because of the age-old animosities that existed among different Afghan ethnic and tribal groups. Non-Pashtun ethnic groups in the north were offered cultural, linguistic, and administrative "autonomy" similar to that granted to Central Asia during the 1920s and 1930s.

Infiltration of *mujahidiin* organizations in the countryside and the conversion of guerrilla leaders were high priorities. KHAD apparently experienced uneven success in carrying out these activities. Fullerton reports that in some areas, such as the northeast and the area around Qandahar, KHAD had planted large numbers of informers and agents among the *mujahidiin*. These were responsible for stirring up fighting between different guerrilla groups and the assassination of *mujahidiin* leaders. When discovered, however, KHAD informers were swiftly executed. In some cases, individual *mujahidiin* agreed to work for KHAD, received subsidies, but then became agents for the resistance, successfully infiltrating the secret police.

KHAD's activities reached beyond the borders of Afghanistan to neighboring Pakistan and Iran. Agents operated within émigré resistance organizations, refugee camps, and indigenous opposition groups in these two countries. KHAD's objectives in Pakistan were to promote *mujahidiin* disunity and defections by any means possible and to pose a threat to the

Pakistani government sufficiently large as to give that country's president, Mohammad Zia ul Haq, second thoughts about offering sanctuary and aid to the resistance. Agents stirred up Pashtun separatist feeling among the tribes living along the Durand Line, giving rebellious tribal leaders funds and arms. They entered refugee camps east of the frontier, stirred up trouble between the volatile, well-armed refugees and the local population, and carried out assassinations of guerrilla leaders. The hand of KHAD was evident in much of the violent infighting that occurred between émigré groups. The secret police also offered support to opposition movements, such as the outlawed Mazdoor Kisan (Workers' and Peasants') Party. It also aided Al Zulfikar, an extremist party formed by two sons of executed Pakistani prime minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Based in Kabul until 1983, when the PDPA regime in a conciliatory move to Islamabad decided to expel it, Al Zulfikar was allegedly responsible for terrorist acts, including assassinations inside Pakistan and the hijacking of a Pakistani airliner to Kabul in March 1981. KHAD also reportedly subsidized several hundred Baluch separatists who engaged in subversive activities in Pakistan's Baluchistan Province. Little was known in the mid-1980s of KHAD operations in Iran.

KHAD's director in the mid-1980s was Najibullah. Trained as a physician, he was one of the few well-educated persons in the PDPA leadership and apparently carried out his covert tasks with dedication. He was a close associate of Karmal and a loyal Parchami. Consequently, KHAD evolved into a Parchami stronghold, equally zealous in the suppression of enemies of the revolution and Khalqis. There was an intense and bitter rivalry between KHAD and the police and paramilitary forces under the authority of Sayed Muhammad Gulabzoi, minister of interior. Gulabzoi was one of the few prominent Khalqis remaining in office in a Parcham-dominated regime.

In a November 1985 Central Committee plenary session, Najibullah was appointed to one of the PDPA's eight party secretaryships. This is a prestigious and influential position, though subordinate to the party secretary general. The promotion reflected his abilities, his close ties to the Soviets, and the importance of KHAD's activities from a political as well as a security point of view. Some Western observers speculated that the Soviets considered Najib a likely successor to Karmal. It was, at least, a reward for the efficiency and ruthlessness of the secret police that was in sharp contrast to the performance of the poorly trained and demoralized armed forces.

KHAD and Torture

Amnesty International reported in December 1984 that although the use of torture was widespread under the Taraki and Amin regimes, KHAD was the first to employ it in a systematic manner at its network of detention centers in Kabul and in other parts of the country. Torture was both physical and psychological. It included deprivation of food and sleep, beatings, burning victims' bodies with cigarettes, immersion in water, confinement in shackles for long periods, and electric shock treatment. Detainees were sometimes threatened with execution or forced to watch the torture of their relatives. Victims included people of both sexes ranging from adolescents to adults in their early sixties. Quite often, detainees were confined incommunicado for months and even years.

Amnesty International published testimonies of former prisoners, who after fleeing Afghanistan gave information about their treatment. A senior civil servant, arrested in August 1982, was detained by KHAD at one of its Kabul detention centers for six weeks. He wrote to his family that during this time he was constantly subjected to torture. This included beatings and the application of electric shock to his fingers and toes.

According to the United States Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984*, Afghan troops and KHAD agents conducted a house-to-house search, primarily in Kabul, in October 1984. They took children from their parents and held them under water to force the parents to divulge information about the resistance.

The Sarandoy

The general ineffectiveness and unreliability of the Afghan army led the Kabul regime to organize a number of paramilitary internal security forces. Probably the most important of these in the mid-1980s was the Sarandoy (Defenders of the Revolution), an armed body under the control of the Khalqi-dominated Ministry of Interior. It was an outgrowth of the Daoud-era Gendarmerie that before 1978 had comprised about 20,000 men. The November 1985 issue of *Jane's Defence Weekly* gave approximately the same figure for the size of the Sarandoy in 1985. It was organized into six brigades or regiments, numbering around 6,000 men and based in Qandahar, Badakhshan, Baghlan, and Parvan provinces and in Kabul, which had two Sarandoy units; there were also 20 oper-

ational and mountain battalions, with an additional 6,000 men; personnel attached to the national and 28 provincial headquarters of the Sarandoy, numbering around 3,000 men; and other personnel attached to the Sarandoy Academy and to administrative, construction, and maintenance units. These totaled a further 4,000 men. Established in early 1981, the force played an active role in offensives against the *mujahidiin*, though its effectiveness was hampered by the rivalry between Parchamis and Khalqis. Sarandoy relations with Parcham-dominated KHAD were tense.

Other Security Forces

Tribal militias operated under the aegis of the Ministry of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs. Many were former *mujahidiin* whose loyalty had been purchased, temporarily at least, by the regime. In 1985 they seemed to have totaled around 1,600 men, based in the provinces bordering Pakistan and organized into four regiments. The ministry was also responsible for contingents of frontier troops. These were organized into five border brigades having an estimated 2,000 men. Another 2,000 men were apparently attached to other frontier units or administrative units. Frontier troops had originally been under the authority of the Ministry of National Defense but were transferred to the Ministry of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs in 1983. Other forces, generally characterized as militias, included armed contingents of PDPA cadres—Revolution Defense Groups—and youth groups such as those attached to the Parcham and Khalq factions of the PDPA and the Pioneers. In cities and towns, militias had been organized by the Ministry of Interior. Although the total number of militia personnel was not known, it was estimated in 1985 to equal that of the army, around 40,000. Many of these, however, served only part-time. Because of their knowledge of local terrain and conditions, militias, when reliable, were useful in offensives against the *mujahidiin*; they were also used to forcibly round up recruits for the army.

Hand in hand with militia units, the regular police carried out guard and patrol duties at government buildings and sensitive installations and, reportedly, sometimes participated in counterinsurgency operations. Like the urban militias, they were under the authority of the Ministry of Interior. The Daoud-era police, trained by specialists from the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), remained loyal to the

president during the April 1978 coup d'état. Subsequently, police personnel were purged and the force was thoroughly reorganized and placed under the tutelage of East German and Soviet advisers. Like the Sarandoy and other forces controlled by the Ministry of Interior, the police were regarded as politically unreliable by the Parcham-dominated regime.

Resistance Forces

According to Isby "the Afghan resistance is not an army but rather a people in arms." Thus, it is impossible to characterize the resistance in conventional military terms. Reflecting the fragmentation of Afghan society, it was deeply divided along tribal, ethnic, regional, religious, and ideological lines (see Political Bases of the Resistance, ch. 4). It remained, however, a formidable movement, capable of denying the regime control of as much as 80 percent of the countryside, assassinating state and party officials, and attacking regime and Soviet targets even in the heart of the capital.

Fighting men ranged from preadolescent boys to grizzled veterans of the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919. The total number of *mujahidiin* was difficult to estimate. *The Military Balance, 1985–1986* published a figure of 90,000, backed by about 110,000 "reserves." Other Western estimates are in the 200,000 to 250,000 range, and figures given by Afghan sources go as high as 744,000. Isby suggests that the actual number might be equal to about 10 percent of the rural population, the latter totaling about 7 to 9 million in the mid-1980s.

Dupree suggests that in the mid-1980s there were around 90 areas located throughout the country commanded by *mujahidiin* leaders. In the years since the first uprisings against the PDPA regime in late 1978, two trends had become apparent. One was the emergence of a new generation of resistance leaders who had gained prominence because of their fighting prowess rather than because of their status in the traditional social structure. These men won followers and local popular support, often overshadowing traditional secular and temporal elites in the regions where they operated. Probably the most striking representative of this new generation was Ahmad Shah Mahsud, a Tajik who commanded forces in the Panjsher Valley and had successfully thwarted repeated Soviet and Afghan army offensives.

A second trend was a steady improvement in the fighting

abilities of the *mujahidiin* and the coordination of different resistance groups. Afghan culture—particularly that of the Pashtuns—affirmed the value of a life under arms. But traditional fighting styles were highly individualistic and undisciplined. Afghan men were not "born guerrillas" but had to learn, often at great cost, the lessons of fighting a modern, well-equipped opponent. Greater coordination between groups was largely the achievement of the new generation of *mujahidiin* commanders. These men apparently were less firmly wedded to the old social and ethnic distinctions than their elders and thus were able to overlook old animosities and weld new alliances. Growth in intergroup cooperation was essential if the resistance was to counteract Soviet and PDPA attempts to apply a classic divide-and-conquer strategy.

Military Role of the Émigré Parties

Most Western observers were inclined to think of the resistance in terms of the seven major émigré parties based in and around the city of Peshawar in Pakistan. This was not entirely accurate, because émigré leaders, with perhaps one or two exceptions, did not command *mujahidiin* forces within Afghanistan. Local commanders were generally affiliated with one or another of the groups because they needed the funds, arms, and other supplies that the groups could provide. They were not, however, subordinate to them in a military chain of command.

The groups did, however, reflect social, religious, and political differences between major sectors of the population and divisions within the *mujahidiin*. The seven major émigré parties formed two loose coalitions that both the guerrilla leaders and Western observers characterized as "traditionalist" and "fundamentalist."

Traditionalists

The Mahaz-e Milli Islami (National Islamic Front) of Pir Sayyid Gilani had its strongest support in the areas around the cities of Qandahar and Kabul and among tribal Pashtuns living in the border regions and in Ghazni and Vardak provinces. Politically, it was conservative, and the leadership had close ties to the former royal family. Gilani's authority derived from his status as a *pir* or Sufi religious leader (see Sufis, ch.2). Westernized in taste and habits, he was an undynamic individ-

ual with little knowledge or understanding of military tactics. His attempts to introduce a military command structure and ranks among Pashtun tribesmen in the early 1980s ended in disaster. Within Afghanistan, the party claimed armed adherents ranging from an estimated 8,000 to 15,000 men.

Sibaghatullah Mojadeddi's Jebh-e Nejat-e Milli (National Liberation Front) also had an organized strength of between 8,000 and 15,000 men, concentrated mostly in the Jalalabad, Lowgar, and Qandahar areas. Most of the party's followers were tribal Pashtuns. Its political views were similar to those of the Mahaz-e Milli Islami. The Harakat-e Inqelab Islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement) of Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi was the largest traditionalist group, with a membership ranging from 10,000 to 25,000 armed men. Like the other groups, its following was primarily Pashtun, and it was active militarily in Ghazni, Vardak, Badakhshan, Konarha, Lowgar, and Baghlan provinces. Militarily and politically, it was weakened by the defection of two groups, led by Nasrollah Mansoor and Rafiullah Moezzan, to the fundamentalist camp. It was considered, however, militarily the most effective of the traditionalist parties.

Islamic Fundamentalists

Whereas the armed strength of the traditionalist parties tended to be organized in loose networks of adherents, the four Islamic fundamentalist parties had relatively coherent command structures that made them more effective militarily. The largest and most powerful party was the Hezb-i Islami of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar. In the mid-1980s the number of its armed adherents was estimated at between 20,000 and 30,000. Hikmatyar, a Pashtun, was an able but ruthless leader. Rumors circulated that he had ties with Shia pro-Iranian groups and even the PDPA regime. His group received arms and other forms of aid from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and China. The Hezb-i Islami was strongest in Paktia, Konarha, Badakhshan, Nangarhar, and Baghlan provinces.

Because of a long-standing rivalry, relations between Hikmatyar's group and the Jamiat-i-Islami (Islamic Society) of Burhannudin Rabbani were tense in the mid-1980s. On several occasions, Hikmatyar's forces blocked supply routes to the Panjsher Valley, where *mujahidiin* commanded by Ahmad Shah Mahsud and loyal to the Jamiat-i-Islami were based. The latter party had between 15,000 and 25,000 armed adherents.

Rabbani was a Tajik, and his following included such non-Pashtun groups as Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkmen. In the mid-1980s the party had its strongest contingents in the Dari-speaking regions of Afghanistan, including Herat, Balkh, Badakhshan, Takhar, Parvan, and Farah provinces.

A third party was the Hezb-i Islami (Islamic Party) of Yunis Khales. Khales was perhaps the only émigré leader to involve himself in actual fighting within Afghanistan. His group, however, was small, estimated to comprise between 5,000 and 7,000 armed adherents. Despite its size, it had a reputation for good organization and fighting effectiveness. The Ittehad-e Islami of Abdul Rasool Sayyaf had an undetermined number of adherents. Although Sayyaf had access to arms and funds from Arab countries and by virtue of this was named head of the coalition of four major and three minor fundamentalist parties known as the Ittehad-i-Islami Mujahidiin-i-Afghanistan (Islamic Alliance of Afghan Mujahidiin), his following was small and confined for the most part to his native Paghman, near Kabul.

The Hazarajat, the region covering portions of the central provinces of Bamian, Oruzgan, and Ghowr that was the home of the minority Hazaras, contained three important Shia parties: the Shura-i Inqelabi (Revolutionary Council) of Sayyid Ali Beheshti; the Sazman-e Nasr (Organization for Victory), a group that supported Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran; and the Haraket-e Islami (Islamic Movement) of Shaykh Mohsini, which had originally been linked to Iran but in the mid-1980s had become disillusioned with Khomeini's Islamic Revolution. The size of their forces was not known. Other groups, including leftist and ethnic resistance groups, also operated although they played a relatively minor role in the resistance.

Strategies and Tactics

According to Imtiaz H. Bokhari, a military analyst, "the *mujahidiin* tactics indicate a three pronged strategy: firstly, to prove by large scale sabotage that the government at Kabul is not in control of the country; secondly, to alienate support of the government by assassinations, arson, and looting; and thirdly, to weaken the army by inciting defections and discouraging fresh recruitments." Few *mujahidiin* believed that by such tactics alone the Soviets could be driven out of their country or the PDPA regime overthrown. Rather, what was

involved was a war of attrition that would end, guerrillas swore, only when the last of them was killed.

Traditional fighting tactics—large groups of *mujahidiin* launching attacks against fortified points—were ineffective and costly in lives. In time, the *mujahidiin* refined and diversified their tactics. They staged ambushes of convoys or enemy troop contingents, destroyed bridges and electric and telephone lines, and laid mines on highways and other open areas where enemy troops and vehicles were expected to pass. First armed with antique rifles, the guerrillas gradually obtained more sophisticated weapons. These included British-, Chinese-, and Soviet-manufactured mortars, Soviet antitank rocket launchers, Chinese-made plastic-covered mines, and a few SAM-7 missiles. According to sources close to the scene, the most urgent need of the *mujahidiin* was for portable, heat-seeking surface-to-air missiles that could be used against the Soviets' Mi-24 helicopters.

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Most of the information on national security in Afghanistan can be found in three major works on the country: Henry S. Bradsher's *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*; Anthony Arnold's *Afghanistan's Two-Party Communism: Parcham and Khalq* and John Fullerton's *The Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan*. Also, many articles in the *Jane's Defence Weekly* (London) have focused on the Soviet tactics in Afghanistan. David Isby's "Soviet Tactics in the War in Afghanistan" and Mark L. Urban's "The Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan" are invaluable readings on Soviet military tactics. Also, various yearly reports by the Department of State give a general chronology of important events. Also particularly useful in this regard are the articles in the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *New York Times*, and the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

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1 Metric Conversion Coefficients
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Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m^2)	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
	1.1	short tons
	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	9 divide by 5 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

Table 2. Average Temperatures in Selected Regions, 1981 (in centigrade)

Meterological Station	Average Temperature		
	Summer	Winter	Annual
Gardez	24.5	-7.2	10.3
Konduz	31.4	5.7	18.3
Qandahar	32.9	6.5	19.3
Ghazni	24.5	-6.4	10.5
Bamian	18.0	-4.7	n.a.
Herat	29.9	5.4	n.a.
Jalalabad	32.1	9.0	n.a.
Lashkar Gah	33.2	8.1	20.6
Kabul	25.1	-3.3	12.5
Jebal os Saraj	27.0	1.1	15.7

n.a.--not available

Table 3. Average Precipitation in Selected Regions, 1981

Meteorological Station	Number of Days of Precipitation			Annual Precipitation*
	Snow	Rain	Total	
Gardez	16	22	38	215.2
Konduz	10	52	62	276.9
Qandahar	0	21	21	255.1
Ghazni	24	32	56	215.1
Bamian	28	n.a.	n.a.	87.9
Herat	3	37	40	299.6
Jalalabad	0	43	43	244.1
Lashkar Gah	0	20	20	177.3
Kabul	21	43	64	370.7
Jabal os Saraj	16	50	66	475.9

n.a.—not available.
*In millimeters.

Table 4. Estimated Population, Selected Years, 1981–85

Estimated (in millions)	Year	Comment	Source
16.0	1981–82	From 1979 census figures: 13 million and 2.5 million nomads	*DRA Statistical Yearbook* published 1983
16.3	1982	16,347,786 estimate for 1982 External refugees—3 million	*Europa Yearbook* published 1984
14.6	1985	14,636,000 Crude death rate—27.3	UN population figures
14.7	1985	Excludes external refugees Over 2.8 million in Pakistan and others elsewhere Infant mortality (1978–79)—182 Total fertility rate—7.1 Life expectancy at birth (1978–79)—41	United States Bureau of the Census
14.7	1985	Includes refugees Crude birth rate—48 Crude death rate—23 Infant mortality rate—205 (highest in the world) Total fertility rate—6.9 Life expectancy at birth—37	Population Reference Bureau

Table 5. Islamic Religious Figures in Afghan Society

Term	Definition
akhund	Preacher who possesses saintly qualities
fakir (or faqir)	Wandering ascetic
malang	-do-
miyan (or *mian*)	Families of *pirs* or Sufi shaykhs (sheikhs)
mullah	Religious teacher; arbiter at local level on matters of sharia
pir	Spiritual master
qazi (variant of Arabic qadi)	Religious judge; normally presides on sharia courts
sayyid	Descendant of the Prophet Muhammad's family

Source: Based on information from Jon Anderson, assistant professor of anthropology, the Catholic University of America.

Table 6. Domestic Revenue and Expenditures, Selected Years, 1968-82
(in millions of afghanis)[1]

	1968	1978	1979	1981	1982
Revenue					
Tax revenue					
Income and profit taxes	282	1,419	1,446	1,085	1,282
Trade taxes	1,749	4,819	3,257	4,348	5,513
Other	424	2,614	2,443	3,451	3,992
Total tax revenue	2,455	8,852	7,146	8,884	10,787
Nontax revenue					
Income from public enterprises	1,008	1,192	1,406	2,426	1,214
Natural gas sales	429	2,697	3,873	13,556	14,792
Other	573	3,097	3,312	4,985	5,762
Total nontax revenue	2,010	6,986	8,591	20,967	21,768
Total revenue	4,465	15,838	15,737	29,851	32,555
Expenditures					
Ordinary expenditures					
Administration and public order	445	1,410	1,796	4,320	4,890
Defense	1,501	3,000	3,575	5,250	6,370
Education and health	824	2,807	3,644	4,083	5,050
Other social and economic services	516	1,240	3,225	3,979	5,026

Table 6. Continued

	1968	1978	1979	1981	1982
Subsidies and pensions	368	1,434	1,482	4,020	4,450
Interest payments	601	684	1,022	1,017	1,835
Development expenditures	4,254[2]	10,575[2]	14,744[2]	22,669[2]	27,621[2]
Total expenditures	4,094	8,510	7,150	10,849	11,863
Adjustments and other transactions	8,348	19,085	21,894	33,518	39,484
Final Total Expenditures	—	—	3,097	1,075	9,557
Overall deficit	8,348	19,085	24,991	34,593	49,041
Deficit finance	-3,884	-3,247	-9,254	-4,782	-16,486
Foreign aid	3,884	3,247	9,254	4,782	16,486
Foreign debt amortization	3,292	2,362	2,779	7,208	10,441
Domestic finance	n.a.	-1,809	-2,038	-4,162	-4,196
	592	2,447	8,513	1,736	10,241

—means not known.
n.a.—not available.
[1]For value of the afghani—see Glossary.
[2]Figures do not add to total because of rounding.

Table 7. Estimates of Labor Force Composition, 1966, 1975, and 1981 (in millions of workers)

Sector	1966	1975	1981
Agriculture	2.94	2.49	2.89
Industry[1]	0.23	0.88[2]	0.47[2]
Construction	0.09[2]	0.04	0.13
Transport and communications	0.02	0.06	0.13
Trade	0.10	0.26	0.35
Services	0.18	0.69	0.38
Other	0.44	0.16	0.78
Unemployed	0.20	0.13	n.a.
TOTAL	4.20	4.71	5.13

n.a.—not available.
[1]Includes handicrafts.
[2]Includes mining.

Table 8. Estimates of Industrial Production, Selected Years, 1967–82
(in thousands of tons unless otherwise indicated)

	1967	1972	1977	1980	1982
Food industry					
Wheat flour	67.0	63.0	59.9	113.1	123.9
Bakery products	16.0	16.2	20.7	20.0	25.4
Sugar	7.6	7.1	11.2	2.7	1.1
Vegetable oil	3.2	3.9	13.0	6.5	2.8
Light industry					
Shoes (thousands of pairs)	123.3	215.9	298.6	264.5	228.5
Ginned cotton (millions of meters)	18.1	15.2	42.1	23.0	12.0
Cotton textiles (millions of meters)	62.4	60.2	77.0	43.3	38.6
Woolen textiles (millions of meters)	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2
Rayon textiles (millions of meters)	1.3	14.8	29.7	14.8	6.7
Mining					
Coal (thousands of tons)	152.0	70.9	171.9	118.7	145.4
Natural gas (millions of cubic meters)	595.0	2,871.0	2,583.6	2,790.3	2,583.0
Marble (thousands of cubic meters)	4.4	8.2	6.4	9.2	n.a.
Barite (thousands of cubic meters)	n.a.	n.a.	12,100.0	3,000.0	2,000.0
Lapis lazuli (thousands of kilograms)	5.2	2.9	6.3	n.a.	n.a.
Cement (thousands of kilograms)	124.7	90.6	150.1	87.2	107.8
Electricity (millions of kilowatt-hours)	298.3	503.9	763.8	1,018.3	976.0

n.a.—not available.

Table 9. Value of Exports by Commodity, Selected Years, 1966–82
(in millions of United States dollars)

Commodity	1966	1972	1977	1979	1981	1982
Dried fruits and nuts	14.9	30.5	84.2	175.4	171.4	154.0
Fresh fruits	6.6	10.7	21.4	31.2	50.9	55.2
Karakul skins	11.9	16.1	18.7	24.9	19.8	21.5
Wool	5.0	5.9	5.2	11.8	25.6	20.5
Cotton	11.9	11.1	53.2	36.8	22.6	9.0
Carpets and rugs	8.0	10.8	37.8	62.9	69.3	80.8
Natural gas	n.a.	17.1	39.3	102.9	272.6	283.6
Other	6.4	22.5	54.6	47.8	58.7	83.2
TOTAL	64.7	124.7	314.4	493.7	690.9	707.8

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from Afghanistan, Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, *Statistical Year Book, 1350, March 1981–March 1982*, Kabul, May 1983.

Table 10. Value and Composition of Imports by Commodity, Selected Years, 1966–82
(in millions of United States dollars)

	1966	1972	1977	1979	1981	1982
Commercial imports						
Food						
Wheat and flour	13.1	20.7	—	14.5	18.1	17.8
Sugar	8.8	4.2	16.6	17.8	54.8	52.9
Tea	6.1	9.9	28.1	25.8	23.0	16.2
Other	2.1	2.6	n.a.	n.a.	2.1	3.4
Total food	30.1	37.4	44.7	58.1	98.0	90.3
Beverages and tobacco	0.4	0.7	3.6	5.1	6.6	11.1
Crude materials, inedible, except fuel	n.a.	0.2	4.6	2.3	4.3	4.0
Mineral fuels and lubricants	5.6	9.5	39.8	65.2	67.0	99.1
Animal and vegetable oils and fats	0.8	5.5	10.0	24.9	16.6	20.9
Chemicals	4.3	14.2	30.2	35.7	29.5	29.2
Manufactured goods	18.4	32.3	92.6	61.5	148.0	164.0
Machinery and transport equipment	8.4	13.1	36.4	90.8	172.3	223.2
Miscellaneous manufactures	6.7	7.9	4.2	4.9	44.0	27.1
Other	76.1	31.2	61.6	77.0	65.0	26.2
Total commercial imports	150.8	157.0	327.7	425.5	651.3	695.1
Project-aid imports	63.8	30.3	141.6	187.4	155.4	152.9
Commodity-aid imports	20.3	28.9	20.3	52.6	88.9	83.6
TOTAL*	234.9	216.2	489.6	665.5	895.6	931.6

n.a.—not available.

*Cost, insurance, and freight. Reflects final customs data.

Source: Based on information from Da Afghanistan Bank, *Bulletin*, Kabula, 1983; and Afghanistan, Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, *Statistical Yearbook*, 1350, *March 1981–March 1982*, Kabul, May 1983.

Table 11. Balance of Payments Summary, Selected Years, 1966–82
(in millions of United States dollars)

	1966	1972	1977	1979	1981	1982
Exports, f.o.b.[1]	695.0	121.8	326.7	493.7	690.8	707.7
Imports, c.i.f.[2]	150.8	157.2	523.0	723.3	1,040.5	958.7
Merchandise balance	81.3	35.4	196.3	229.6	349.7	251.0
Net services	3.3	1.4	47.1	47.7	55.6	94.2
Unrequited transfers	n.a.	n.a.	20.4	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current account balance	84.6	36.8	128.8	181.9	294.1	156.8
Capital inflow						
Loans and grants	84.1	61.1	218.4	317.1	262.2	260.6
Repayment of loans	-4.8	-15.5	-37.3	-57.5	-97.8	-113.7
Net capital inflow	79.3	45.6	181.1	259.6	164.4	146.9
Adjustments, errors, and omissions	0.4	6.6	103.1	17.7	96.8	60.4
Overall surplus	5.7	2.2	155.4	60.0	32.9	70.3

n.a.—not available.

[1]f.o.b.—free on board.

[2]c.i.f.—cost, insurance, and freight.

Source: Based on information from Da Afghanistan Bank, *Bulletin*, Kabul, 1983.

Table 12. Chronology of Critical World Reaction to the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan

Date	Event
December 28, 1979	President Jimmy Carter, using the "hot line," urges Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev to withdraw troops.
	Iran issues protest that invasion is a "hostile action against Iran and all Muslims of the world."
December 29, 1979	Pakistan issues statement condemning invasion.
December 30, 1979	Carter's assistant for national security affairs, Zbigniew Brzezinski, affirms United States willingness to use armed force to protect Pakistan's territorial integrity.
December 31, 1979	China delivers a formal protest to Soviet Union.
January 3, 1980	Carter requests United States Senate delay of ratification of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT II).
January 4, 1980	Carter announces sanctions against Soviet Union: embargo on sales of United States grain; sharp restriction of Soviet fishing privileges in United States waters; opening of new United States and Soviet consulates postponed; and suspension of certain United States-Soviet cultural and economic exchanges. Possibility of United States boycott of Summer Olympics in Moscow mentioned.
January 7,1980	United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution deploring invasion vetoed by Soviet Union.
January 10–14, 1980	UN General Assembly holds emergency session; after several days' debate, Resolution ES-6/2 approved by vote of 104 to 18, with 18 abstentions, and 11 countries absent. Resolution calls for "immediate, unconditional and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from Afghanistan in order to enable its people to determine their own form of government" and appealed for international assistance for Afghan refugees.
January 17, 1980	Pakistani President Mohammad Zia ul Haq spurns United States offer of US$400 million in economic and military aid, calling it "peanuts."

Table 12. Continued

Date	Event
January 27–29, 1980	An extraordinary meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference held in Islamabad. Thirty-six nations participating condemn invasion, suspend Afghanistan from their organization, and urge an Olympic boycott.
February 22, 1980	Brezhnev declares that he will withdraw troops when "all forms of outside interference against the Government and people of Afghanistan are fully terminated."
April 17, 1980	Afghan government proposes talks to normalize relations with Pakistan and Iran.
May 17–22, 1980	Eight Afghan *mujahidiin* leaders present at the eleventh foreign ministers' Conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, at Islamabad. Announcement that Saudi Arabia will donate US$25 million to aid rebels.
May 24, 1980	Deadline for acceptance of invitations extended by the International Olympic Committee to attend summer games in Moscow. Eighty-five national committees voted to send teams by that date; 29 boycotted games, and 27 were still undecided. Boycotting nations included the United States, China, and West Germany.
October 16, 1980	Brezhnev and Babrak Karmal sign statement supporting a political settlement of the crisis.
November 20, 1980	UN General Assembly Resolution 35/37 deploring presence of foreign troops passed by vote of 111 to 22, with 12 abstentions.
January 27, 1981	"Mecca Declaration" of the third summit conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, attended by 28 heads of state, affirms support for political solution, immediate withdrawal of foreign troops, and Afghan self-determination.
April 24, 1981	President Ronald Reagan lifts embargo of United States grain to Soviet Union.
September 22, 1981	Egyptian president Anwar Sadat announces that Egypt has supplied arms to the *mujahidiin*.
November 18, 1981	UN General Assembly Resolution 36/34 calls for immediate withdrawal of foreign troops. Passed by 116 votes to 23, with 12 abstentions.

Table 12. Continued

Date	Event
June 16–25, 1982	First round of "proximity talks" between Afghan and Pakistani foreign ministers in Geneva, presided over by Diego Cordovez, UN Under-secretary general for Special Political Affairs.
November 29, 1982	UN General Assembly Resolution 37/37, similar in wording to previous ones on invasion, passed by 114 votes to 21, with 15 abstentions.
November 23, 1983	UN General Assembly Resolution 38/29, expressing "grave concern" at intervention, passed by 116 votes to 20, with 17 abstentions.
November 15, 1984	UN General Assembly Resolution 39/13, similar to earlier resolutions, passed by 119 votes to 20, with 14 abstentions.
November 13, 1985	UN General Assembly resolution again passed, 122 votes in favor, 19 opposed, with 12 abstentions.
November 19–21, 1985 . . .	Reagan-Gorbachev summit in Geneva.

Table 13. Major Party and State Figures in Afghanistan, November 1985

Incumbent	PDPA Position[1]	State or Other Position	Factional Affiliation[2]
Babrak Karmal	PDPA secretary general; member of Politburo	President of Revolutionary Council (RC); head of state	P
Soltan Ali Keshtmand	Member of Politburo	Prime minister (chairman of Council of Ministers)	P
Najibullah	Central Committee Secretary	Vice president of RC; former director of KHAD, the State Information Service	P
Muhammad Rafi	Member of Politburo	Deputy prime minister	P
Anahita Ratebzad	-do-	Member of RC Presidium: head of Democratic Women's Organization of Afghanistan	P
Muhammad Aslam Watanjar	-do-	Minister of communications	K
Salih Muhammad Zeary	-do-	Member of RC Presidium	K
Sayed Muhammad Gulabzoi	-do-	Minister of Interior	K
Abdul Qader	Former member of Politburo	Vice president of RC Presidium	P
Solayman Laeq	Member of Politburo	Minister of nationalities and tribal affairs	P
Ghulam Faruq Yarubi	Full member of Central Committee	Director of KHAD, the state Information Service	---
Abdul Rahim Atef	---	Chairman of National Fatherland Front	---

---means not known.
[1]PDPA—People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan.
[2]Factional affiliation: P - Parcham; K - Khalq.

Table 13. Continued

Source: Based on information from *Yearbook on International Communist Affairs, 1984*, ed., Richard F. Staar, Stanford, 1984, 186–89; Anthony Arnold, *Afghanistan's Two-Party Communism: Parcham and Kalq*, Stanford, 1983, Appendixes D, E, and F; and United States, Central Intelligence Agency, *Chiefs of State and Cabinet Members of Foreign Governments*, Washington, July-August 1985, 1.

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Glossary

afghani—Afghanistan's monetary unit. In 1985 the official rate was Af50.6 to US$1; the bazaar rate exceeded Af100 to US$1.

amir—Former title of ruler (king).

buzkashi—Popular game in which horsemen seek to obtain the carcass of an animal and drop it in a designated area.

fiscal year (FY)—March 21 to March 20.

GDP (gross domestic product)—A value measure of the flow of domestic goods and services produced by an economy over a period of time, such as a year. Only output values of goods for final consumption and intermediate production are assumed to be included in final prices. GDP is sometimes aggregated and shown at market prices, meaning that indirect taxes and subsidies are included; when these have been eliminated, the result is GDP at factor cost. The word *gross* indicates that deductions for depreciation of physical assets have not been made. *See also* GNP.

GNP (gross national product)—GDP *(q.v)* plus the net income or loss stemming from transactions with foreign countries. For Afghanistan the GNP in the 1970s was larger than the GDP. GNP is the broadest measurement of the output of goods and services by an economy. It can be calculated at market prices, which include indirect taxes and subsidies. Because indirect taxes and subsidies are only transfer payments, GNP is often calculated at factor cost by removing indirect taxes and subsidies.

imam—A word used in several senses. In general it means the leader of congregational prayers; as such it implies no ordination or special spiritual powers beyond sufficient education to carry out this function. It is also used figuratively by many Sunni (*q.v.*) Muslims to mean the leader of the Islamic community. Among Shia (*q.v.*) Muslims the word takes on many complex and controversial meanings; in general, however, and particularly when capitalized, it indicates that particular descendant of the House of Ali who is believed to have been God's designated repository of the spiritual authority inherent in that line. The identity of this individual and the means of ascertaining his identity have been the major issues causing divisions among Shia.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)—Established along with the World Bank (*q.v.*) in 1945, the IMF is a specialized

agency affiliated with the United Nations and is responsible for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. The main business of the IMF is the provision of loans to its members (including industrialized and developing countries) when they experience balance of payments difficulties. These loans frequently carry conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by the recipients, most of which are developing countries.

jihad—The struggle to establish the law of God on earth, not only in relation to others but also within oneself. It is often interpreted to mean holy war, and it is often cited as the sixth pillar of Islam.

jirgah—A council. It usually refers to a council of the elders, tribal leaders, lineage leaders, or the heads of families. The Loya (or Loye) Jirgah refers to a great assembly formerly called by the king and since called by the president.

mujahidiin (sing., *mujahid*)—Derived from the word jihad (*q.v.*), the term means holy warriors and is used by and applied to the Afghan resistance or freedom fighters.

Pashtuns—Speakers of Pashtu and members of the largest ethnolinguistic group in Afghanistan. Pashtuns and Pakhtuns (speakers of Pakhtu, a related dialect) form the dominant majority in the neighboring North-West Frontier Province in Pakistan. Popular anglicized term for the group is Pathans.

Shia (from Shiat Ali, the Party of Ali)—A member of the smaller of the two great divisions of Islam. The Shia supported the claims of Ali and his line to presumptive right to the caliphate and leadership of the Muslim community, and on this issue they divided from the Sunni (*q.v.*) in the major schism within Islam. Later schisms have produced further divisions among the Shia over the identity and number of Imams (*q.v.*). Sometimes given as Shiite.

Sufi—Term derived from Arabic *tasawwuf*, denoting the "practice of wearing the woolen robe" and adherence to a mystical and emotional search for union with God.

Sufism— *See* Sufi.

Sunni (from sunna, orthodox)—A member of the larger of the two great divisions of Islam. The Sunni supported the traditional method of election to the caliphate and accepted the Umayyad line. On this issue they divided from the Shia (*q.v.*) in the first great schism within Islam.

ulama (English pl., ulama; Arabic sing., *alim*)—Man trained in Islamic theology.

umma—The community of believers in Islam.

World Bank—Informal name used to designate a group of

three affiliated international institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The IBRD, established in 1945, has the primary purpose of providing loans to developing countries for productive projects. The IDA, a legally separate loan fund but administered by the staff of the IBRD, was set up in 1960 to furnish credits to the poorest developing countries on much easier terms than those of conventional IBRD loans. The IFC, founded in 1956, supplements the activities of the IBRD through loans and assistance specifically designed to encourage the growth of productive private enterprises in the less developed countries. The president and certain senior officers of the IBRD hold the same positions in the IFC. The three institutions are owned by the governments of the countries that subscribe their capital. To participate in the World Bank group, member states must first belong to the International Monetary Fund (IMF— *q.v.*).

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