THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN REGIME AND ITS RECOVERY AS AN INSURGENT MOVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

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Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
2004

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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Thesis Title: The Fall of the Taliban Regime and Its Recovery as an Insurgent Movement in Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN REGIME AND ITS RECOVERY AS AN INSURGENT MOVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN, by Bakhtiyorjon U. Hammidov, (total--3/68) pages.

This thesis investigates the rapid defeat of the Taliban Regime by a US-led coalition and the ability of the Taliban to survive, reorganize, and form an insurgency movement. This thesis contends that there is an important set of interrelated social, cultural, religious, ethnic, tribal, historical, and geographic factors that must be considered to understand the current resurgence of the Taliban as an insurgency. The rationale for looking at these factors is to provide insight into the Taliban resurgence that can expose possible vulnerabilities that might be used to defeat the current insurgency. The main premise is that the insurgency cannot be divorced from its larger cultural context and that an understanding of the Taliban's support base will yield solutions towards eroding that base of support.

The thesis does not provide the definitive solution; rather, it sheds light on the human factors of the problem that are often overlooked in the quest for decisive military action. The underlying assumption is that improving understanding of the human environment in which forces operate provides new points of departure or shifts in focus that are more effective in countering the reemergence of the Taliban or similar groups.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ACRONYMS

AIG	Afghan Interim Government
APA	Afghan Provisional Authority
DRA	Democratic Republic of Afghanistan
GWOT	Global War on Terror
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
ISI	Inter-service Intelligence
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
LCSFA	Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan
NA	Northern Alliance
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIF	National Islamic Front
NSS	National Security Strategy
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
SOF	Special Operation Forces
UNGOMAP	United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan
USCENTCOM	United States Central Command

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates the rapid defeat of the Taliban Regime by a US-led coalition and the ability of the Taliban to survive, reorganize, and form an insurgency movement. Why did the US succeed in defeating the Taliban in the initial stages of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) but was unable to prevent their resurgence? There are no simple explanations for the Taliban's reappearance as a threat to US efforts in Afghanistan. Rather, a complex and interrelated set of social, cultural, religious, ethnic, tribal, historical and geographic factors all come together amidst the backdrop of a country torn by decades of strife and foreign intervention.

Research Objectives and Background

This thesis provides insight into the Taliban resurgence in order to expose possible vulnerabilities that might be used to defeat the current insurgency. The main premise is that the insurgency cannot be divorced from its larger cultural context and that an understanding of the Taliban's support base will yield solutions towards eroding that base of support. The thesis does not provide the definitive solution for dealing with insurgencies in general or the Taliban insurgency in particular. Rather, it sheds light on the human factors of the problem that are often overlooked in the quest for decisive military action. The underlying assumption is that improving understanding of the human environment in which forces operate provides new points of departure or shifts in focus that are more effective in countering the reemergence of the Taliban or similar groups. This thesis is an attempt to assist in that process.

The Taliban suffered nearly catastrophic defeat and were ousted from power in less than two months, largely because they fought the US-led coalition on the coalition's terms. As long as the Taliban fought a linear conventional war to retain terrain and power in the cities, the US could leverage its technological advantages. Additionally, the Taliban only loosely controlled most Afghan territories and lacked the command and control to coordinate a conventional war. The US was able to capitalize on this lack of control by building a coalition with the Northern Alliance (NA) that quickly captured one support base after another.

Faced with collapse, the Taliban became an insurgency and went underground. The situation began to favor the Taliban as they made use of safe-havens, exploited their unique cultural ties and their knowledge of the terrain, and fell back upon their experience in fighting the Soviets. The Taliban also did not lack for funding.

US technology, tactics and troops were no longer appropriate to deal with the change in the Taliban's tactics. In particular, the US began to lose its technological advantage as the war became an insurgency, where human factors were more important.

Other factors favored the Taliban. The beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) diverted important intelligence and Special Operations Forces (SOF) assets away from Afghanistan. The US political emphasis shifted to Iraq, thus relieving the pressure on the Taliban. On the information front, the Taliban discredited the weak Afghan Provisional Authority (APA) with its leader Hamid Karzai as US and Panjshir valley Tajik puppets. Karzai's political weakness resulted from ethnic regional power arrangements that also eroded the fledgling central authority that the interim government attempted to exert. Central government power is mainly limited to Kabul and is supported

by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF); its control continues to be challenged by the existence of warlords and their personal armies. Finally, the defeat of the Taliban coincided with increased levels of drug production and trade with profits often going to the Taliban or Taliban supporters.

This paper takes the reader from a general understanding of insurgencies to the history of insurgencies in Afghanistan, including the specifics of the Taliban's reemergence. In the first chapter, the focus is on the general concept and stages of insurgencies, to include certain considerations of human factors, and then leads into the specific context of Afghanistan. The second chapter takes a cursory look at the period from the Soviet invasion and withdrawal to the consolidation of Taliban power in the aftermath of the civil war. This sets the stage and provides the context for the rest of the discussion. Chapter 3 primarily deals with the various phases of OEF, highlighting both US and Taliban strategies and tactics from the initial stages of SOF and NA cooperation to the introduction of US conventional forces in Operation Anaconda. Chapter 4 deals with the resurgence of the Taliban, including the sanctuary movement that assisted them in surviving and reorganizing. A section of this chapter explores social, cultural, religious, ethnic and tribal aspects, with an emphasis on establishing connections to the sanctuary movement and its role in the Taliban's reemergence. The fifth and final chapter provides conclusions and recommendations. The scope of this study encompasses the existing area of operations and tactics used against Coalition partners and the interim government of Afghanistan from the fall of 2001 to December 2003. The thesis examines on the sanctuaries of the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Taliban's donors and their motives, and the relationship between the population and the insurgency.

The primary question addressed by this paper is: Why did the US-led coalition succeed in defeating the Taliban in the initial stages of Operation Enduring Freedom but was unable to prevent their resurgence?

Secondary questions include:

1. How did the Afghan Islamic resistance recover from catastrophic defeat in the Fall of 2001?

2. How did social, cultural, religious, ethnic, tribal, historical and geographic factors impact on the Taliban's ability to escape coalition forces and then reorganize?

3. How did the existing sanctuaries impact on the reemergence of the Taliban and Coalition operations against them?

4. What were the prevailing Taliban and US-led Coalition Forces strategies and tactics?

5. What indirect factors played a significant role in facilitating the survival and reorganization of the Taliban?

Underlying Assumptions

The key underlying assumptions for this thesis are:

1. There are increased combat activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan since the Spring of 2003, that signal the recovery of the resistance in the region.

2. The Afghan Islamic resistance includes the Taliban and al Qaida (AQ) organizations plus other forces working in loose concert.

Limitations

Limitations in researching this topic include:

1. Lack of access to classified U.S. military records.

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2. Lack of access to Taliban and AQ members.

3. Inability to conduct field research and interview first hand sources.

Delimitations

Delimitations in researching this subject include:

1. The assessment of activities of the Taliban from fall of 2001 to December 2003.

2. The area of operation includes Afghanistan and Pakistan.

3. The paper focuses on the relationship between insurgencies and population.

Literature Review

During the thesis, research examined three main information sources:

1. Publications covering the principles, roots, and factors of insurgency and the issues of counterinsurgency.

2. Publications addressing the historical and cultural background that provide the contextual framework for understanding the basis for insurgencies, with an emphasis on Afghanistan.

3. Relevant journal articles that cover developments and approaches to insurgency and counterinsurgency in the region.

Bob Woodward's *Bush at War* takes a behind-the-scenes look at how the key decision-makers in the Bush White House led the nation to war following the 11 September attacks. Woodward provides an in-depth view of the personalities and difficult issues that faced an untested administration in the face of a grave crisis. The book shows the internal friction between the sweeping idealistic vision of the President to remake the world and the realities of coalition building and attempting to gain international support

for military action in Afghanistan. Woodward's research takes the reader through a journey of how the Bush administration used the instruments of national power to influence and coerce governments in the region to support the over-throw of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and strike a blow at those responsible for the 11 September attack[1].

In the *Hunt for Bin Laden*, Robin Moore explores the covert operations conducted by SOF that led to the liberation of Kabul. The book shows how Task Force Dagger secretly planned and conducted an unprecedented unconventional warfare operation by establishing contact with the Northern Alliance's key leaders and then garnering overwhelming force to defeat the Taliban through communications technology and airpower. Moore gives a vivid chronological account of events that describe how a relatively small military force was able to achieve victory in the first phase of the conflict in less than six months. He shows why the training and techniques of the special operating forces was key to the initial successes in destroying Taliban forces. He also explains why, in his view, the employment of conventional forces in Operation Anaconda and the pursuit of Bin Laden and his key leaders was a failure[2].

In *Modern Guerilla Insurgency,* Anthony James Joes argues that guerrilla insurgencies will be a major feature of the post-Cold War international scene and that the intervention in these will become a major issue in American politics. Joes analyzes the characteristics of guerilla warfare by using historical examples to make his points. He gives accounts of several insurgencies to include the Greek Civil War, the Philippine Insurrection, the French-Indochina war, South Vietnam and the Soviet experience in Afghanistan, all of which involved the US to one degree or another. While approaching

each insurgency as a primary political phenomenon within a definite historical and cultural context, Joes also provides the military context of such conflicts.

Joes' book also discusses third-world nationalism and emphasizes the decisive but often neglected effects of geography. He examines the strategies of the French and US failures in Viet Nam and connects the Soviets' reverses in Afghanistan with the loss of their empire in Europe.

A number of books have been published about insurgency and the combat experience of the Soviet military and Mujahideen in Afghanistan. Two key books are *The Bear Went Over the Mountain* and *The Other Side of the Mountain* by Ali Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, which focus on the tactics and conditions of the Soviet forces and Mujahideen.

The Bear Went Over the Mountain is a collection of tactical experiences of Soviet officers who served in the Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan (LCSFA) during various years. The publication is a thematic collection of tactical examples and specific combat episodes of various periods of the war, which describe and analyze individual combat episodes. Combat experience disclosed that the principal types of combat included: company, battalion and regimental raids; blocking off areas where the enemy was located prior to searching out and destroying guerilla forces; and the simultaneous attack on several groups of the enemy located at various depths and locations. The specific combat conditions influenced the way in which the advance through mountains and inhabited areas was conducted, led to a change in air assault tactics, changed the methods of conducting marches and providing convoy security, and caused a change in the tactics of conducting and organizing ambushes. These episodes

include specific mission decisions involving blocking and destroying guerrilla forces, the offense in mountains and through populated areas, the use of air assault tactics to conduct the defense in a security detachment, the conduct of march and convoy security, and the conduct of ambushes.[3] Frunze Academy and editor's commentaries after each episode provide objective analyses of tactics and methods used in each case.

The Other Side of the Mountain presents the war in Afghanistan from the Mujahideen's point of view[4]. The book covers the combat experience of Mujahideen and their tactics: ambushes, counterambushes, raids and attacks of strong points by taking advantage of terrain; defending against raids, cordon and search and their base camps; warfighting in urban areas. The vignettes describe tactical innovation during the war in response to the technological superiority of the Soviet contingent; the role of the population who provided logistical support and intelligence to the insurgency; the relationship among Mujahideen factions which caused disunity of command because of old disputes and disagreements; and the significance of terrain, which dictated the course of tactics and gave the Mujahideen a great advantage over the enemy.

<u>Methodology</u>

The methodology employed in this paper has four parts. The first sets the stage by providing an examination of insurgencies, looking mainly at their nature, root causes and discernable patterns.

The second part shows the relevant historical background. This includes a multiple source review of contemporary history and the current situation in Afghanistan. The focus is a comparison of the similarities between classic historic insurgencies and

that of the Taliban and AQ during various phases of their existence, to include the rise of the Taliban in the region, their governing and tactics, and finally their defeat.

Then, the first two parts of insurgencies and history form the backdrop for exploring the third part, OEF. The fourth part of the methodology deals with gaining an appreciation for the complex human factors (culture, religion etc.) to include the sanctuary movement, as they relate to the Taliban insurgency against the US-led Coalition. These human factors form an important part of the study because they are often overlooked in the context of military operations. In order to analyze an insurgency appropriately and develop a successful counter-insurgency, the wants, needs, aspirations, outside influences and motivating factors of the individual must be considered. The insights gained through the previous analysis of history combined with the patterns of insurgency and the complex human factors involved explain the reasons for the Taliban's ability to reemerge and point out possible Taliban vulnerabilities.

[1]Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), xxv.

[2]Moore, Robin. "The Hunt for bin Laden: Task Force Dagger,*" On the Ground with the Special Forces in Afghanistan* (New York: Randome House, 2003), xvii.

[3]Lester W. Grau, *The Bear Went over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan* (National Defense University Press Washington D.C. 1995), xxvii.

[4]Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactic in the Soviet-Afghan War* (Quantico, Virginia 1998), xxv.

CHAPTER 2

GENERAL NATURE AND PATTERNS OF INSURGENCY

In the twentieth century, many of the world's great powers were involved in insurgency conflicts: the British in Northern Ireland, the Japanese in China, the Germans in Yugoslavia, the French in Indochina and Algeria, the Americans in South Vietnam, and the Russians in Afghanistan. In each of these wars, the great power settled for something far removed from the classical concept of victory and was widely perceived as having suffered defeat.[1]

Recently another insurgency has begun in Afghanistan, the land of insurgencies. A military coalition, led by the US, has been involved in a war against terror before September 11, 2001. The war commenced in Afghanistan against the Taliban and AQ movements. The coalition faced a conventional enemy deployed in a linear defense, which dispersed after the coalition attacks of fall 2001. The enemy, that controlled 80 percent of the land, was able to survive, withdraw and recover. The remnants of the Taliban no longer fight as a conventional force, but as a guerrilla force. In order to understand the specifics of the situation in Afghanistan it is first necessary to understand the general nature of undergrounds and insurgencies.

For the last six decades, many have associated the term 'insurgency' with Communist or Maoist movements. In fact, guerrilla warfare is only the name for a set of tactics. The decision to engage in an insurgency answers the question: how to fight against overwhelming odds? Insurgency is the option of those who confront an enemy that is greatly superior in numbers, equipment, and training; it is the weapon of the weak, whatever their political philosophy. In itself, insurgency is devoid of ideological content.[2]

By definition insurgency is an organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.[3] Since the insurgency is the weaker side, its first goal is to survive. All insurgencies have important similarities, but each one of them has unique and important features.

Organization

The structure of an insurgent or revolutionary movement is "much like an iceberg" because it has a relatively small visible element (the guerilla force) and a much larger clandestine, covert force (the underground). The underground carries out the key functions of infiltration and political subversion and acts as a support organization for the guerillas. In the initial stages of an insurgency the entire organization functions in a covert manner. Long and careful preparations are necessary to exploit discontent and create a structure strong enough to support overt armed activities. When fully developed, the insurgent organization may consist of a mobile main force (along conventional lines) and two paramilitary forces-a regional force and a local militia-that conduct limited operations in support of the main force.[4]

In the classic Maoist or communist insurgency, underground arm of the insurgent force is structured like a pyramid from a broad base of cells at the bottom, through branches, districts, states, or provinces to a headquarters cell at the top. There are usually three types of underground cells, which are the operational, intelligence, and auxiliary cells. The operational cell is a small team with a leader that conducts unit actions. The intelligence cell is highly compartmentalized and engages in espionage, infiltration, and intelligence gathering with the leader guiding the actions through an intermediary. The auxiliary cell is comprised of those people sympathetic to the cause who can provide a

wide variety of assistance. The personnel within the auxiliary function on a part-time basis and often provide safe houses, assist in escape and evasion, and provide weapons and supplies.[5]

One of the key differences between the classic communist/Maoist insurgency and the current insurgency in Afghanistan is that in a classic insurgency the entire movement was controlled through a central headquarters. What is currently occurring in Afghanistan is that there are number of independent and decentralized insurgency organizations that may have ideological links and common interests. However, they are not controlled by any central authority and may or may not provide assistance to each other depending on a variety of factors. In terms of scale, the Afghani insurgencies are smaller and are more regionally focused along ethnic and tribal lines. Even though these differences exist, the basic patterns and phases of insurgent evolution are very useful in determining strengths and weaknesses that can be exploited in counter-insurgent actions.

There are a number of phases in the evolution of a classic communist insurgency. The tactics, security methods, command, and control, recruiting strategies, and financing of operations employed by the insurgents depend on the particular phase of this evolution. The four phases are the clandestine organization phase, the subversive and psychological offensive phase, the militarization phase and the consolidation phase. During these phases the insurgency develops structurally while increasing the size and scope of its activities. As the insurgency matures, its organization changes from small cells that conduct clandestine activities to large formations openly in conflict with the existing authorities. Finally, those of the insurgents replace the legitimate government's institutions. These phases are fluid and often overlapping and they may expand and

contract over time depending on a variety of internal and external factors, such as funding

and support as well as, the effect of government counter-measures. This chart depicts the

phases along with the organizational structure and major activities.

Table 1. Evolutionary Phases of an Insurgency		
	Structure	**Activities**
Clandestine Organization	• Small cells • Highly compartmentalized • Background and loyalty of new members closely scruticizined	• Setting up cells • Recruiting • Training and testing cadres • Infiltration of key organizations • Establishing external support and safe areas
Subversive and Psychological Offensive	• Covert Underground agents • Number of Cells increased • New cells are added for agitation, newspaper production etc. • Operational terror cells are formed	• Capitalize on dissatisfaction among populous • Agitate for change • Organize strikes, demonstrations, mass protests • Exploit tensions created by social, economic and political differences • Selective use of threats, intimidation and assassinations • Expand activities to discredit police, military and government
Militarization	• Guerilla forces established • Paramilitary forces established • Intelligence organization established • Foreign government liaisons established	• General attention is drawn to the insurgent movement • Guerilla forces conduct raids, ambushes, assassinations • Supply lines are extended • Focus is on control of people not territory • Arms and supplies are acquired • Training and recruitment is increased • Villages are recruited into front groups and local militia • Infiltration efforts increased • External sources are tapped for funds
Consolidation	• Creation of a shadow government • Creation of small front organizations	• Schools, courts and other institutions are brought under the control of the shadow government • People within the villages are inducted into mass organizations for indoctrination and control over their actions • Elimination of all opposition ion the controlled areas • Establishment of covert and surveillance systems within the new mass organizations and civil government • Governmental support eroded
Source: DA PAM 550-104 *Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies,* 28-32.		

The visible activities of a communist insurgency at its initial stages resemble the tip of an iceberg, since the majority of the activities are being conducted underground. The chart shows how important this underground activity is to the building of an insurgency into a successful revolutionary movement.

When viewing the above pyramid it should be noted that certain elements do not apply to the insurgencies in Afghanistan. Specifically, the establishment of national front organizations, liberation movements, penetration into labor unions, student and national organizations are not relevant to the situation in Afghanistan. The reason for this has to do with the political, social, and organizational differences of the insurgencies and the fact that Afghanistan is not a modern industrial society. However, there are similar patterns that correspond to the classic pyramid, such as the penetration of existing and establishment of new extremist religious and educational institutions that then support the insurgent movement. Also, the classic pyramid shows the infiltration of foreign communist agents and agitators; in the Afghanistan model the same occurs but with like-minded foreign religious extremists.

<div align="center">Motivation and Behavior</div>

Many of the usual factors attributed to the "cause" of an insurgency have been shown not to play a significant role. In a study of 24 insurgencies the environmental factors, along with the stage of a nation's development, rural composition, rate of illiteracy and educational level had little effect on the occurrence or outcome of the insurgency.[6]
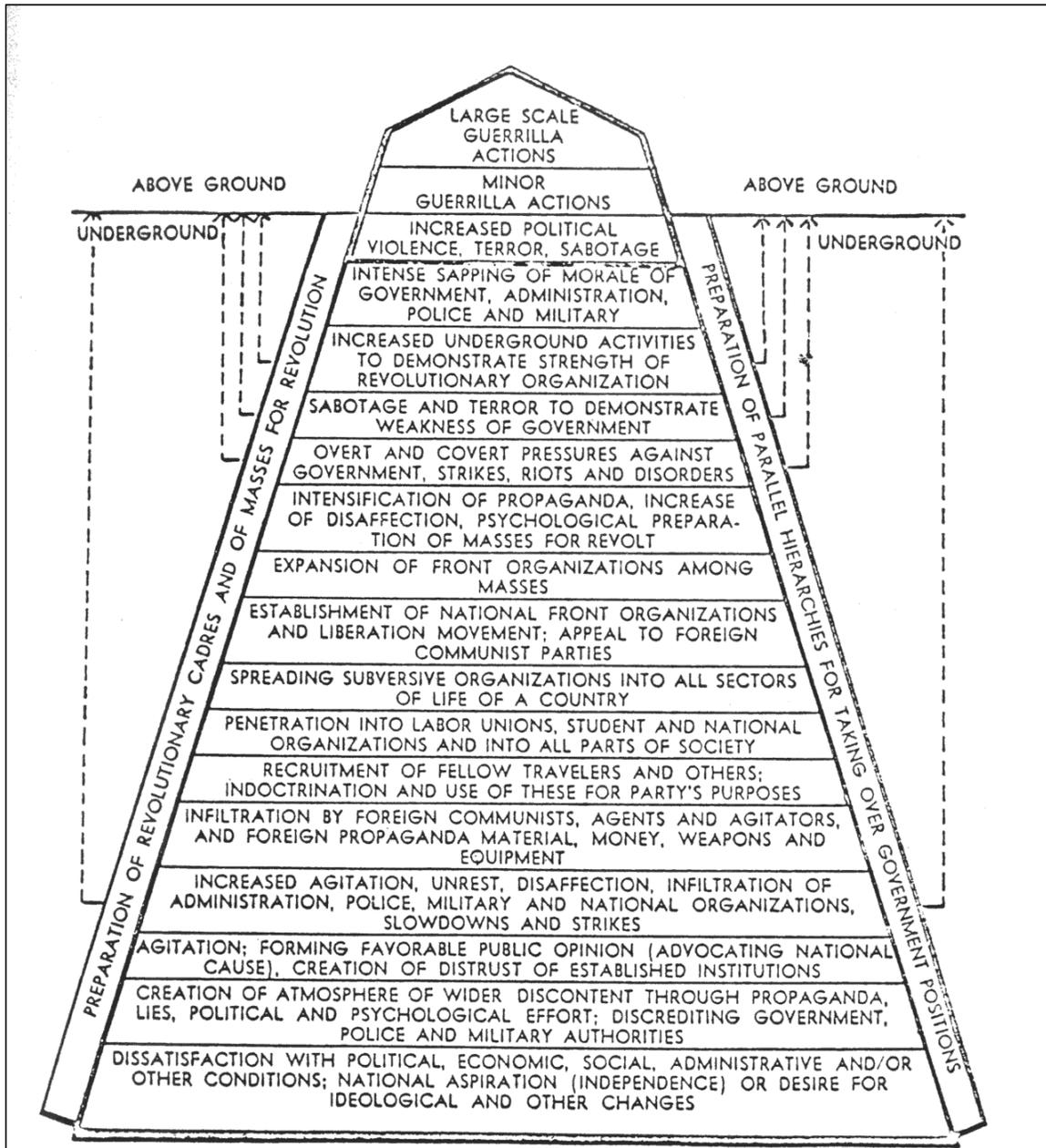
Figure 1.   The Building of a Revolutionary Movement

Source: DA PAM 550-104, *Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies.*

The decision of an individual to join an insurgency movement is complex and often personal and situational. Generally, ideology and political motivations inspire only a minority. Coercion is not a prime motivator, although when combined with positive incentives it can then become a significant factor. The decision to remain in the underground is quite different from the original reason for joining. Feelings of loyalty, the influence of propaganda, indoctrination, close surveillance and the fear of retaliation and sometimes simple inertia all play a role.[7] Where ideology plays an important role is in the unification of the divergent interests and goals of the movement's membership. Ideology also provides a way to reduce ambiguity and provide meaning and organization to unexplained events.

Strong organizational ties protect the individual from external threats and offer the opportunity to achieve economic or political goals not otherwise attainable. The organization has a great deal of influence on the individual by providing a set of standards, conditioning attitudes and perceptions, so the individual knows what is right and wrong, what "can" or "cannot" be done. Small groups and cells exercise more effective control than large ones, because the frequency of meetings and the length of relationship affect the development of an intimate relationship.[8] In case of Afghanistan, strong organizational ties based on extended family, tribal and village relationship.

Clandestine and covert behavior is another important feature within of an insurgency. An insurgency member establishes a behavior pattern that draws attention away from the group or cell, so it makes it difficult for the security services to detect the members. Clandestine and covert behavior covers and conceals activities from observation by using various techniques to achieve secrecy.

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<u>Administrative Operations</u>

Administrative operations are intended for survival and expansion of an insurgent movement. They include recruitment, training, and financial needs. Operating in a hostile and risky environment, leaders must adapt administrative techniques to the changing, but always hostile, situation of insurgency.[9]

During insurgency recruiting, the means, as well as the kind of individual recruited depend upon the movement's stage of development and political-military situation. In early phases, recruitment is highly selective and recruits are thoroughly screened. In later phases, as the movement and organizational structure expands in size and internal as well as external support increases, recruiting techniques become less selective, enlisting larger numbers, often through persuasion and coercion. There are many reasons people join insurgency movements, among these are: the love of power, pressure from friends, anticipation of future rewards, hatred, ideology and patriotism.[10]

Training of cadres is an essential organizational feature of an insurgency movement and a significant aspect of recruitment. The movement greatly increases its effectiveness by preparing recruits in techniques of clandestine behavior, agitation, subversive activities, terror, sabotage, intelligence methods, underground support training, and guerrilla warfare. It establishes special schools where recruits can get both practical and ideological training. Political and ideological indoctrination takes place all the time.[11]

Financing of the movement is another essential element of insurgent administrative operations. The movement uses various collection methods outside and within the country. It may persuade people to give voluntary contributions and it may

profit from both legitimate and illegitimate business transactions. If voluntary sources are not adequate, the underground frequently turns to coercive methods, such as robberies, extortion, or by the imposition of taxes in areas they control.

Individuals and groups donate to insurgency movements for a variety of reasons: ideological allegiance to the cause, social pressure, future protection, chance of personal gain, or a desire to be on the winning side. Funds from sources outside of the country, such as from foreign governments, expatriates, foreign sympathizers and business speculators are usually solicited by small teams of collectors. To acquire funds from sources within the country the insurgency movement usually establishes a central finance collection agency.[12]

Psychological Operations

In an insurgency, success is dependent upon a combination of military, political, and social activities. Much of the political leverage involved in favorable settlements is derived from effective underground psychological operations. Insurgency employs several techniques of psychological operations to create social disorganization and conditions of uncertainty in order to manipulate the social-political climate in its favor.

Underground psychological operations are conducted in a number and variety of forms, from mass media to face-to-face communications. Some common methods that are used to disseminate pro-insurgent messages or propaganda include handbills, theatrical performances, and programs for local civic improvement. Threats, coercion and terror may also be employed if the "soft" approach is not yielding results.

In attempting to influence mass action and to develop mass support, psychological operations are aimed primarily at specific audiences or target groups often divided along

occupational, religious, ethnic or other social groupings. Additionally, acts of terror are often employed to create a psychological impact to coerce neutral or opposing groups from opposing the movement or prevent them from assisting the government. Religious or pacifist groups, women and children, or old men that are reluctant to take up arms against the government can be rallied around emotional issues and directed into passive measures.[13]

<center>Paramilitary Operations</center>

Many of the functions performed by the underground can be properly called military activities. Since the insurgency is inferior in numbers and resources to the established government's armed forces, they must use every opportunity and capitalize upon advantages when undertaking paramilitary operations. The most common paramilitary activities that insurgents conduct are ambushes, raids and sabotage. Intelligence and methods of escape and evasion are essential to paramilitary operations.

The ambush is a favorite and extensively used tactic of insurgency movement since it allows the covert massing of forces in order to attack the enemy, seize needed supplies and retreat before the enemy can effectively react.[14] Ambushes are defined as surprise attacks upon a moving or temporarily halted enemy with the mission of destroying or capturing his forces.[15] The ambushing force has an advantage of terrain, shortened fields of fire and covered routes of withdrawal. When conducting ambushes, insurgencies use the smallest possible number of men and avoid open combat with numerically superior forces.

The raid is another favorite surprise attack tactic of insurgencies designed to seize a point, exploit success, and then withdraw. It is a temporary measure to capture

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equipment, supplies or key personnel, destroy or damage supplies, equipment, or installations, bait traps to draw enemy reactions and attack morale. Insurgency units also conduct raids to demonstrate their ability to attack government forces with relative impunity. Raids generally require fewer supplies than an attack on a strong point since there is no intention of holding the objective for any length of time following a raid.[16]

Sabotage is an act or acts with the intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of a country by willfully injuring or destroying, or attempting to injure or destroy, any national defense war material, premises, or utilities, to include human and natural resources.[17] Organized sabotage attacks are indications to the government forces that the insurgency movement has the will and the strength to perform these acts in spite of the government and its security forces. General sabotage and attacks can create the temporary disruption of transportation or communication, lower morale and induce fear among the population and government forces.

Training in escape and evasion procedures allows insurgent forces to elude capture while operating in government held or hostile territory to flee to areas of sanctuary. Underground forces develop a net of escape and evasion routes for clandestine operations in which couriers with the messages and funds, organizers, or training instructors must move through government-controlled areas. In the planning of raids, ambushes, sabotage and intelligence missions, methods of escape and evasion or withdrawal are of primary concern.[18]

<div align="center">Government Countermeasures</div>

The most effective countermeasure against an insurgency is to use immediate and overpowering force to repress the first signs of resistance. Usually, the government has a

preponderance of troops and a superiority of weapons (if an insurgent force was numerous and well armed it would not be insurgency but a conventional force). Nations with a representative or constitutional form of government are often restrained from such actions by moral, legal, and social considerations and therefore, often attempt to combat the first recognized signs of an underground movement through social, economic, or political reforms. However, most of the time these programs fail, either because of the advanced stage of the insurgency movement or because of inadequate resources or time.[19] The failure of these programs then unwittingly serves to reinforce the insurgency by showing government weakness or ineptitude. There are several approaches used in counterinsurgency: intelligence collection, defection programs, population control and civic actions.

Counterinsurgency intelligence collection must provide long-range intelligence on the stable factors of the insurgency situation. Stable factors are those that can be analyzed and provide key information relating to demographic factors, nature and roots of the underground organization, characteristics of key leaders, supporters and recruits and the kinds of appeals being made by the insurgent group. In counterinsurgency much intelligence, particularly contact intelligence in the rural areas where undergrounds often succeed, is based either upon informants (paid or voluntary) or infiltrated agents. Surveillance and interrogations also provide another source of intelligence.

Defection programs have a significant psychological affect on the other members of the insurgency movement and may provide considerable intelligence data. Since many members may have joined the insurgency because of coercion or for highly specific grievances they may be able to be persuaded to defect if they are convinced that they will

not be severely punished. The most effective way to get this message to insurgents is through well-organized, fairly operated defection programs. It is as important to advertise these programs to the populace, as it is to attempt to reach the insurgents directly.[20]

The competition between the government and the insurgents for the support and allegiance of the local population is a fundamental feature of insurgencies. Population control seeks to accomplish two different but integrally related countermeasures: restrict the movement of insurgents and separate them physically and psychologically from the population. There are several population control methods that have been used effectively in the past. One method is to assign collective responsibility for insurgent activities to the families of members and then resettle and relocate them to seal off the insurgents from the populace. This technique has the effect of denying the insurgents needed material and intelligence support. Other methods include heightened legal controls by instituting emergency regulations over the populace; these restrict the dissemination of false information, the ownership and use of weapons and the possession of illegal underground documents. Various forms of population registrations also enhance government surveillance and control.[21]

Government civic actions are used to gain support by targeting the majority of the population that does not participate in the insurgency and the nonpolitical portion of the insurgent movement. Civic action programs can be implemented through governmental administrative apparatuses and social services. These include public health programs that provide medical aid, programs that improve agriculture and the infrastructure of a specific area and price controls or rationing to protect the population from inflation.[22]

[1]Anthony James Joes, *Modern Guerrilla Insurgency* (London: Westport), 2.

[2]Ahmed Rashid, "Taliban," *Military Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (London: New Haven), 5.

[3]Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1-02, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 12 April 2001).

[4]Department of the Army, Pamphlet 550-104, *Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies* (Washington DC: The American University, September 1966), 1.

[5]Ibid., 17-20.

[6]Ibid., 71-73.

[7]Ibid., 77-80.

[8]Ibid., 88.

[9]Ibid., 109.

[10]Ibid., 112-114.

[11]Ibid., 121.

[12]Ibid., 131.

[13]Ibid., 135-137.

[14]Ahmad Jalali and Lester W. Grau, *The Other Side of the Mountain: Mujahideen Tactics in the Soviet-Afghan War* (Quantico, Virginia: 1995), 3.

[15]Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1-02, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 12 April 2001),463; available from http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf; Internet; accessed on 19 December 2003.

[16]Jalali and Grau, 69.

[17]Joint Publication 1-02.

[18]Department of the Army, Pamphlet 550-104, 222-223.

[19]Ibid., 11.

[20]Ibid., 253-257.

[21]Ibid., 259-262.

[22]Ibid., 269-276.

CHAPTER 3

GENERAL HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Afghanistan has an extensive and rich history of insurgency. Because of its geostrategic location between the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, Afghanistan has been significant in world politics. During the last three decades, Afghanistan has had a significant impact on insurgency in the region. The April 1978 coup d'etat by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) became a spring board for massive political, social, economic, and cultural change in Afghanistan. The PDPA coup was followed by the Soviet invasion in December 1979, which led to an occupation that lasted for almost ten years. After the invasion of Afghanistan, the PDPA leadership and the Soviet advisors attempted to turn Afghanistan toward socialism, which provoked resistance.

In March 1979, the National Islamic Front (NIF) called for an Afghan jihad against the communist regime. Jihad can be an effort or struggle to become a good Muslim, but also a holy war to defend or spread Islam. [1] Afghan resistance fighters became known as Mujahideen (Holy War warriors).

The Soviet invasion changed the nature of the Mujahideen resistance. The Soviets achieved their initial goals of installing an acceptable government in Kabul and controlling the capital, choke points, and airfields. However, 80 to 90 percent of the terrain remained outside their control.

Local and external support, sanctuaries, religion, tribal and ethnic divisions were significant factors that helped the Mujahideen to survive and to grow.

In the early years, nothing seemed to be going well for the Mujahideen resistance.

Lacking unity, the resistance also lacked weapons. Most guerrilla units were self supporting and captured their guns and ammunition from Soviet and government forces. Later, Mujahideen resistance received training and material support from neighboring countries Pakistan and Iran. The United States, the Peoples Republic of China, Britain, France, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates funneled military, humanitarian and financial aid to the mujahideen through Pakistan. This aid became crucial and turned the course of the war.

Traditionally, local Afghan leadership was independent from Kabul's and even provincial control, therefore the primary loyalty among the Mujahideen was to commanders who were tribal or local figures of importance. Localism and individualism were unique traits in this war.

As one keen and sympathetic observer put it, "the Afghan Resistance is not an army but rather a people in arms; its strengths and weaknesses are those of Afghan society."[2] The guerrillas were part of the population, receiving food, shelter and life-saving intelligence from them.

Above all, Islam was the significant motivator and the strength of the insurgency. From the first days of the war, the resistance was fighting not only for national or tribal freedom, but also for their religion. Religion maintained their morale and countered communist fundamentals to which the Kabul regime and their Soviet allies adhered.

In the Soviet-Afghan War, the Soviets suffered approximately 470,000 casualties (hepatitis, abdominal typhoid, other infectious illnesses), including 14751 deaths. This amounts to approximately 35 deaths a week between December 1979 and December 1987. Annual strength of Soviet troops in Afghanistan consisted of 80,000-104,000

servicemen.[3] In view of the fact that the Soviets were combating a resistance force of between 100,000 and 200,000, this was hardly an oppressive number. But it was far more than anybody in the Kremlin anticipated in January 1980. The insurgents destroyed 118 airplanes, 333 helicopters, 147 tanks, 1314 armored personal carriers[4], and several thousands of other military vehicles; Western correspondents sometimes reported seeing dozens of Soviet and Kabul army vehicles destroyed in just a single engagement.[5] "On May 15 1988, in compliance with the Geneva agreement, the Soviets began to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan," monitored by UNGOMAP (United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan).[6]

The insurgents fought among themselves in a civil war at the same time they fought against the Soviets. The civil war continued after the withdrawal of the Soviets in February of 1989. The civil populace was subjected to brutality, atrocities, revenge killings, rape and enslavement. By the end of the Soviet-Afghan war, the Mujahideen controlled over 70 percent of Afghanistan, including the capitals of several provinces in the strategically important northern and eastern part of the country. The West believed with the 1989 Soviet withdrawal, the Mujahideen would soon control the country, but the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) was able to survive until 1992 for the following reasons.

Guerrilla organization and tactics were unsuccessful when besieging cities. The level of cooperation among the various Mujahideen groups had improved since the early days, nevertheless, internecine rivalries and jealousies within the resistance- including assassination and even occasional open combat between various groups- continued to impede Mujahideen success.[7]

At the start of the civil war, the Kabul regime maintained armed forces approximately equal in number to the Mujahideen. These included about 40,000 regular army troops, generally poor in quality and unreliable; 35,000 better-quality KhAD (intelligence and secret police) and Sarandoy (paramilitary police); and about 25,000 tribal militia, often composed of men from ethnic groups different from that of the local Mujahideen. Well paid, of questionable loyalty, only nominally under the control of Kabul, the militia usually kept the insurgents out and the roads open in their own areas.[8]

By the end of 1994, Afghanistan was in virtual disintegration. The country was divided into warlords' fiefdoms and the warlords fought, switched sides and fought again in a bewildering array of alliances, betrayals and bloodshed. The predominantly Tajik government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani controlled Kabul, its environs and the north-east of the country, while three provinces in the west centering on Herat were controlled by Ismail Khan. In the east along the Pakistan border, three Pashtun provinces were under the independent control of the Shura (Council) of Mujahideen commanders based in Jalalabad. A small region to the south and east of Kabul was under the control of Gulbuddin Hikmetyar. In the north, the Uzbek warlord, General Abdul Rashid Dostum, held sway over six provinces. In January 1994, he abandoned his alliance with the Rabbani government and joined Hikmetyar to attack Kabul. In central Afghanistan, the Hazaras (ethnic Shia minority) controlled the province of Bamiyan. Southern Afghanistan and Kandahar were divided up among dozens of petty ex-Mujahideen warlords and bandits who plundered the population at will. The warlords and leaders sold off everything to Pakistani traders. They took down telephone wires and poles, cut down trees, and sold off entire factories, and machinery to scrap merchants. They seized homes

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and farms, and gave them to their supporters. The commanders abused the population at will, kidnapping young girls and boys for their sexual pleasure, robbing merchants in bazaars and fighting and brawling in the streets.[9]

This lawless and degenerate environment paved the way for the emergence of the Taliban. The word Taliban originated in Arabic. Its singular form is Talib, which means knowledge seeker. In the course of time, the singular form, combined with the Dari ending *alef* (a) and *noon* (n), shaped the plural form Taliban, the knowledge seekers.[10] The Taliban represented a third option for the war-ravaged population who were now willing to listen to anybody who would bring them peace and stability. The Taliban promoted stability by defeating local warlords, gaining local support from village elders and business community leaders, particularly in the border city of Quetta in Pakistan. During this initial period, the Taliban did not claim any power or land for themselves and even gained the support of the weak central government in Kabul. The Kabul government, under President Rabbani, hoped to rid itself of its major opponent, Gulbuddin Hikmetyar, by enlisting the aid of the Taliban.

The first major event to gain the attention of warlords occurred on October 12, 1994 when 200 Taliban crossed the border from Pakistan and occupied the town of Spin Boldak, an important logistics hub for Hikmetyar's forces. During this attack, the Taliban seized some 18,000 Kalashnikov rifles, dozens of artillery pieces, large quantities of ammunition and many vehicles.[11]

The Pakistani government noticed this early success and began to support Taliban operations covertly through its Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) agency in exchange for securing the route between Quetta and Kandahar. The Taliban liberated Pakistani

commercial caravans that had been held hostage by the local warlords and opened the

trade route to Kandahar. By these actions, the Taliban garnered further Pakistani

government support, especially in the area of logistics that was necessary to seize control

of Kandahar. On November 5, 1994, the Taliban took over Kandahar, with the help of the

ISI, who had successfully bribed the most powerful warlord, Mullah Najibullah, to

surrender along with his 2500 man force. The capture of Kandahar netted a stockpile of

weapons, armored vehicles, artillery pieces and most importantly, six MIG 21 fighter

aircraft and several helicopters.

After Kandahar, the Taliban moved to expand their power. They faced several

challenges, to include the recruitment of cadre. The Taliban recruited their followers

while developing their core ideology. The madrassas (Islamic Schools), particularly those

attended by young male Afghan refugees in Pakistan, proved to be fertile ground for

recruits. During the 1970's and 1980's, as the state educational system in Pakistan

collapsed, the influence of madrassas rose along with their increase in student population

from 900 to over 25,000.[12] The madrassas attracted young poor Afghani and Pakistani

boys who received food, shelter, education, and military training at the school. Since this

education was solely based on Koranic studies, it lent itself perfectly to the ideology that

the Taliban wished to spread throughout Afghanistan. In fact, the madrassas not only

provided ideological teachings for Afghani and Pakistani youths, but also played an

important role in exporting Muslim fundamentalism throughout the world. Tens of

thousands of foreign Muslim radicals came to study in the new madrassas flourishing

throughout Pakistan because of the direct financial support of the Pakistani military

government and other Islamic nations.

The ideological bases of the Taliban were their interpretation of *Jihad* and their version of Sharia (Islamic Law). According to the Taliban, the world is divided into believers and non-believers and all those who opposed the Taliban were nonbelievers and enemies in a holy war. In the Taliban's view, the warlords' criminal behavior, including rape and pillage, put them in violation of Sharia law and gave the Taliban moral authority and popular support. The Jihad had its roots in the Mujahideen insurgency against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Between 1982 and 1992 over 35,000 Muslim radicals from 43 countries, in the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia and the Far East fought with the Mujahideen.[13] This solidified Afghanistan's role as a training ground for radical elements. When the Taliban came to power, they resurrected Afghanistan's role as a training base for a Jihad against all unbelievers. In this way, the Taliban forged relations between themselves and other like-minded radical organizations, the most important of which was AQ.

Al Qaida (AQ), which in Arabic means "the Base," was founded during the late 1980s by Osama bin Laden. It is based on radical Wahabism. Their radical views alienated many Afghans to include non-Pashtuns and Shia Muslims. Nevertheless, AQ enjoyed a broad base of financial support throughout the Muslim world due to the concept of Zakat--an Islamic donation/tax of 2.5 percent of personal wealth given to the poor. Huge sums of cash flowed into al Qaida's coffers allowing them to recruit, train and equip terrorists throughout the world. Bin Laden and his organization were linked to a string of terrorist attacks directed against the United States during the 1990s. Those include the 18 soldiers killed in Mogadishu, Somalia in 1993, the five servicemen killed in a bomb attack in Riyadh in 1995 and the 19 US soldiers killed in Dhahran in 1996. Al

Qaida was also suspected of bombings in Aden in 1992, the World Trade Center in 1993, a 1994 plot to kill President Clinton in the Philippines, a plan to blow up a dozen US civilian aircraft in 1995 and the August 1998 of the bombings US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania that killed 220 people. These attacks made bin Laden a household name in the Muslim world and the West.[14] Al Qaida's extreme anti-Western views and large budget, made them an ideal partner with the emerging Taliban movement. The Taliban regime provided sanctuary to AQ in Afghanistan.

Taliban financing came from various sources. The Taliban received covert support from the Pakistani ISI. The link between the ISI and the Taliban strengthened as time went on and continued to play a key role in the expansion of the Taliban movement. Through its intelligence service, Saudi Arabia became another ally of the Taliban movement by providing funding and other assets such as vehicles. Saudi financial and material support was crucial for the Taliban as it advanced and consolidated power in major cities such as Jalalabad and Kabul. In addition to the outside support received from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and other organizations, there was an internal and very lucrative source of income. Wherever the Taliban captured territory, they encouraged the existing drug trade by not placing prohibitions on the growth and sale of the opium poppy. Instead of shutting down the poppy cultivation, the Taliban collected *zakat* and in this way gained the support of the rural communities, and opened a new source of income. The Taliban collected up to 20 percent of the value of a truckload of opium. Local commanders also imposed their own taxes to build their own wealth and support their troops. Along with the cultivation of the poppy and the production of drugs, the Taliban used their connections to increase drug smuggling through Pakistan, Iran and Central

Asian countries. By 1998, Afghan heroin exports doubled to an estimated 3 billion dollars annually. This money funded weapons, ammunition, and fuel; provided food and clothes for the combatants; and paid the salaries, transport and bonuses that the Taliban leadership allowed its fighters.[15]

The rise of the Mujahideen resistance in the wake of the Soviet Invasion provides a wealth of lessons for examining the build-up of local and external support mechanisms, as well as, sanctuaries. Especially, interesting is how the external support (which was ultimately critical to Mujahideen success because of the training and material assistance they provided) expanded to include a host of foreign nations who were either sympathetic to their cause, anti-Soviet, or both.

Important tribal loyalties can be directly transferred from history to the present day. These loyalties often led to internecine rivalries and jealousies within the resistance-a consistent pattern of regional behavior. The array of alliances and partnerships, and the rationale behind forming them, is also instructive. Tribal loyalties and alliances usually played a more important role than religion. Religion and ideology did play key roles but more in the way of the ability to gain funding through the *zakat* and in obtaining support from those sympathetic to a religious-based cause.

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[1]Ahmed Rashid, "Taliban, *Military Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 243.

[2]Barnett R. Rubin, "The Fragmentation of Afghanistan," *State Formation & Collapse in the Internal System, Foreign Affairs*, vol. 68 (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 158.

[3]G.F. Krivosheev, "The Secret Seal is Lifted," in *Statistic Research* (Moscow; Military Publishing House, 1993), 404-407.

[4]Ibid., 404.

[5]Girardet, *Afghanistan*: *Soviet War*, 234.

[6]US Department of State, *Afghanistan: Soviet Occupation and Withdrawal*, 1.

[7]Rubin, 163.

[8]Rubin, 161.

[9]Rashid, 21.

[10]Neamatollah Nojumi, The rise of the Taliban, *Mass Mobilization, Civil War, and the Future of the Region* (Palgrave: New York, 2002), 118.

[11]Anthony Davis, "How the Taliban became a Military Force," in William Maley, ed., *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban* (London: C. Hurst), 23.

[12]Rashid, 89.

[13]Ibid., 130.

[14]Ibid., 135.

[15]Ibid., 124.

CHAPTER 4

US-LED COALITION OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

America's policy towards terrorism from a largely defensive posture to an active offensive changed 11 September 2001. Throughout the 1990s, Bin Laden and his AQ terrorist network targeted US personnel and facilities, in the US and abroad. The first World Trade Center bombing in 1993 was a precursor of things to come. However, the result of these attacks on US interests was not sufficient to prompt US policy-makers into decisive action. In one stroke, the terrible and shocking events of 9-11 forever changed Americans sense of security felt. Any hesitation that may have existed prior to the attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon quickly dissipated and turned into a call for military action against those who had dared to strike the homeland of America.

Just three weeks after the events of 9-11, on 7 October 2001, President Bush informed the American public that he had ordered the military to attack AQ terrorist camps and Taliban military installations.[1] Long known to offer support and sanctuary to Bin Laden and his AQ network, the Taliban regime in war-torn Afghanistan became a primary target of the Bush administration's effort to find and destroy those responsible for the attacks. In the fall of 2001, Afghanistan had a limited military capability; but harbored non-state organizations with intentions to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction. Bush authorized OEF after a definitive link was established between the 9-11 terror attack, AQ and Afghanistan.[2]

The new strategy for the Global War on Terror (GWOT) is articulated in the National Security Strategy (NSS). According to the NSS, the first priority of the war on terrorism is "to disrupt and destroy terrorist organizations of global reach and attack their

leadership: command, control, and communications; material support; and finances."[3]
The president's NSS methodology has three parts based upon the military, informational, and diplomatic sources of power. First, identify and destroy threats, preemptively if possible, before they reach US national boundaries. Second, use information operations to attack the underlying conditions that promote terrorism. Third, convince or compel foreign nations to deny further sponsorship, support, or sanctuary to terrorists.[4]

Bush had stated that the intent of OEF was "to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations" and to bring terrorists to justice.[5] As the commander of United States Central Command (USCENTCOM), it was General Tommy Frank's responsibility to translate the president's strategic vision, as stated in the NSS, into operational objectives. In doing so, Franks established nine logical lines of operation for OEF.[6] Each line of operation was focused upon a decisive point within Afghanistan, and linked to an endstate. Some of the key decisive points were the Taliban and AQ leadership, the Taliban military, the AQ training bases, and the road network.

Although the Taliban were in control of a majority of Afghanistan, they had not been able to consolidate their power over the entire country. The Northern Alliance was holding out in the northern ethnic Tajik-dominated area of Afghanistan. Due to shortfalls in equipment and personnel, they had not been able to conduct decisive offensive operations against the Taliban. After examining the structure and nature of the Taliban-led Afghan government, as well as the inter-woven relationship between AQ's leadership with the ruling Taliban, the OEF planners decided to enlist the help of the Northern Alliance as the primary fighting force in classic conventional warfare. The focus of the operation became the destruction of the Taliban military, the employment of operational

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fires, direct attack against the AQ and Taliban leadership and the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Prior to OEF, the Taliban was a confederation with its leader Mullah Omar exerting only loose control over its territories. Weak ministers and the absence of competent governmental institutions played a major role in Taliban's inability to consolidate power. Even so, there were between 8,000-12,000 foreign fighters forming a fifth to a fourth of the Taliban's military force of 40,000-45,000. With the initiation of combat on 7 October 2001, the Taliban announced the call up of even more troops.[7] These well equipped foreign fighters played a significant role in the Taliban's combat strength. Groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Pakistan's militant jihadi groups, such as Harakat-ul-Mujahideen, fighters from Arab states across the Middle East, as well as Chechen fighters and others affiliated with, and financed by Usama bin Laden came to Afghanistan to train and fight their arch enemy, the US.

By comparison, the Northern Alliance was heavily outnumbered by Taliban forces. They had significant logistical shortfalls, specifically shortages of heavy weapons, equipment and supplies. The Northern Alliance was also hampered by limited manpower, comprising about 12,000 to 15,000 troops in the north-east of the country, with another 10,000 fighters operating in six pockets in the northern, central and western regions of Afghanistan.[8] The Northern Alliance was primarily made up of ethnic Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, and other non-Pashtuns, in contrast to the Taliban who were almost exclusively from the Pashtun ethnic majority.

As OEF began, Central Intelligence Agency operatives (CIA) and SOF contacted the leaders of the Northern Alliance and supported them with training and air power. The

Northern Alliance was accustomed to the terrain and the spartan supply system of Afghanistan. They were able to mount offensives without time consuming and resource intensive buildups. However, they lacked the ability to mount decisive offensives. US airpower provided the Northern Alliance with the firepower and flexibility that they lacked. Agreements with neighboring Coalition countries allowed US Air Force and Navy aircrafts to operate from airfields adjacent to Afghanistan.

The combination of Northern Alliance and Coalition Forces rapidly destroyed the Taliban's conventional forces. The Northern Alliance, advised by SOF, provided the bulk of the ground forces against the Taliban military. SOF ground forces targeted the enemy and guided air-delivered terminal guided munitions to support Northern Alliance. Air Force and the Navy pilots were able to exploit real time intelligence from observers on the ground prior to using precision-guided munitions.[9]

Operations against the Taliban were successful as long as the threat was a largely conventional Taliban force that massed to fight the Northern Alliance and their SOF advisors on their terms. The Taliban, in the initial phases of the war, played to the strengths of the combination of Northern Alliance conventional force supported by unconventional SOF personnel and US air power. Major Taliban strongholds quickly fell and cities like Masar e Sharif, Kunduz, Kabul, Kandahar and Jalalabad were soon in coalition hands. Although the spectacular speed with which the Taliban and AQ forces were driven out seemed to be a clear sign of coalition victory, it produced a chaotic situation that inadvertently favored the Taliban and AQ forces. As long as the Taliban massed in their strongholds, the intelligence gathering mechanisms and weaponry of the coalition were able to score victories easily. However, as Robin Moore points out, "the

rapid roll-up and retreat of the Taliban had created such chaotic conditions that no clear intelligence picture was developing."[10] As they retreated, the Taliban emptied the national treasury of millions of dollars. As they fled into their mountain sanctuaries, the Taliban and AQ moved across their own territories and their established networks in the southeast where they had always been strong. The now-dispersed enemy became increasingly difficult to find and the very US led-coalition strengths that had proven so successful in the initial phases began to erode.

US intelligence showed thousands of Taliban moving into the Tora Bora cave complexes located in the mountainous region between Afghanistan and Pakistan, approximately 50 kilometers southeast of Jalalabad. Coalition efforts to pursue the fleeing enemy concentrated on dislodging the Taliban from their mountain hideouts and destroying them. Several key factors prevented the coalition from defeating the enemy at Tora Bora. The first was the incredibly tough terrain and hidden passes. Within this already challenging landscape, lay an expansive complex of caves that were used to hide equipment and people and contained enough food, ammunitions, fuel and supplies to make it through several winters. Another hindrance at Tora Bora was the decision to use technology rather than adequate ground forces. Although the coalition had unlimited air power at their disposal, they were unable to force the desired decisive battle that would bring about the annihilation of the enemy. A wide array of weapons was used in an attempt to destroy the Taliban. Precision guided bombs, cave-penetrators, smart bombs, and at that time, the largest conventional bomb, the BLU 82[11] was used to kill the Taliban in their caves or cause the caves to collapse. However, because of the dispersion of the Taliban forces over such complex terrain, these impressive displays of firepower had

little effect. Finally, for their part, the government in Karachi had pledged to seal the border to prevent the Taliban from gaining access to the largely lawless tribal areas in the western border region of Pakistan. Unfortunately, sealing the border proved an impossible task for the government of General Pervez Musharraf. Similar to some other developing countries in the world, the central government's span of control did not include the entirety of the country's political boundaries. The Taliban were able to find sanctuary across the border in the Pashtun-dominated Wazeristan region of Pakistan where, for political reasons, the coalition forces could not follow.

Although those factors reduced the overall success of the coalition effort, the operations in Tora Bora were not a complete failure since they removed the Taliban as a credible threat, but only for the short term. As springtime approached and the snow began to melt in the mountain passes between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the Taliban and AQ fighters began to reorganize in the border province of Paktia. About 2000 Taliban and AQ were on the move with their families. They had ample money, weapons and ammunition. Al Qaida was reforming in Shah i Kot, a small valley surrounded by mountains in a former Mujahideen base.

The coalition's response to the reorganization of the Taliban and AQ forces was to develop a plan to attack the area with a tighter circle of security than had been achieved at Tora Bora. "The encirclement and squeezing technique was appropriately entitled Operation Anaconda."[12] The area of operations covered 60 square miles. Approximately 2000 coalition forces participated, including 1000 Afghani fighters, 900 US Army conventional soldiers, 250 US SOF, and 250 soldiers from a variety of NATO Allies.[13] General Franks and the ground-force commander LTG Mikolashek decided to

put US Army conventional forces in the lead with support from SOF. This marked the

first use of US Army conventional forces in the conflict.

Operation Anaconda was the last conventional battle that the Taliban fought

before realizing the futility of opposing the superior coalition forces. The result of

Anaconda was the dispersal of the Taliban forcing them to seek sanctuary in the tribal

areas to which the coalition forces did not have access. After Anaconda the Coalition was

unable to reach the Taliban because of their location in the tribal areas of Pakistan. The

Taliban reconstituted and reorganized to begin guerrilla operations.

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[1]President Bush, "Presidential Address to the Nation," White House, available from http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011007-8.html, internet, accessed 4 December 2003.

[2]Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2002), 40.

[3]George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington DC: The White House, September 2002), 5.

[4]Ibid, 6.

[5]"Presidential Address to the Nation."

[6]"Interview: U.S. Army General Tommy Franks," Public Broadcasting System, available from http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/campaign/ interviews/franks.html, Internet, accessed 10 March 2003.

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[9]"FY03 NDAA_Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command; Asst. Secy of Defense for International Security Affairs," US House of Representatives, available from http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has058000.000/has058000_0.htm, Internet, accessed on 10 March 2003.

[10]Robin Moore, "The Hunt for bin Laden: Task Force Dagger", *On the Ground with the Special Forces in Afghanistan,* (Randome House, New York, 2003), 234

[11]Ibid., 23.

[12]Ibid., 273.

[13]Sergei Kudasov, Russian Information Agency "Novosti," Moscow, 5 march 2004, available from http://www.rian.ru/rian/intro.cfm?nws_id=83719, Internet, accessed on 24 December 2003.

CHAPTER 5

SANCTUARIES AND THE CULTURAL ASPECTS OF INSURGENCY

"Sanctuary"--that is to say, a secure base area within which an insurgent group is able to organize the politico-military infrastructure needed to support its activities-is central to an insurgency. The structures and institutions of the insurgent state-in-waiting may first take form within the shelter of a sanctuary area. And it is here that (in the classic model of guerrilla warfare) guerrilla resources are built up to the point where the insurgents can challenge their opponent in semi-regular warfare.[1] Many guerilla leaders have devoted considerable attention to the importance of base areas in their written works. One of them, Mao Tse Tung, identified the establishment of secure base areas as one of the seven fundamental steps necessary to a successful insurgency campaign.

Mao wrote that secure base area may be defined as an area, strategically located, in which the guerrillas can carry out their duties of training, self-preservation and development. The ability to fight a war without a rear area is a fundamental characteristic of guerrilla warfare, but this does not mean that guerrillas can exist and function over a long period of time without the development of base areas.[2]

What factors contribute to insurgent use of and reliance on sanctuary? A key factor is the availability of sanctuary, such as lawless tribal zones with their own culture and tradition that are outside of central government control. Most importantly, in terms of sanctuary, the area provides freedom of movement. The existence of terrain unsuitable for conventional maneuver also provides freedom of movement for guerilla operations, especially if its geographical location provides entry from one state to another.

The sanctuary provides an extension of shelter for the insurgency because the local population is motivated by ideological sympathy. The existence of popular support to the insurgents in these areas, of a population willing to provide the insurgents with recruits and other forms of assistance, increases the usefulness of that sanctuary. This factor is more important even than the shared ethnic and religious components those insurgents and local tribes have in common. In the case of Taliban and AQ, these areas were also comprised of sympathetic refugees displaced from Afghanistan.

Additionally, insurgents often found that coinciding interests, or cash payments can provide local allies within the sanctuary state. Such allies included influential political parties, associations, interest groups, ethnic and religious groups, or even factions within the government. These groups might provide direct or indirect material support, and exert political pressure to obtain greater regime tolerance and support for the insurgent activities.

Such sanctuaries exist in the lawless tribal areas on the Pakistani-Afghani border. There, insurgents plan and launch actions, forces and leaders train, supply and refit and regroup all relatively free from enemy interference.

Waziristan, the autonomous tribal zone of Pakistan that adjoins the Afghan border, is the primary sanctuary for the Taliban and AQ forces. This rugged border region is home to the Pashtun tribes that live within a closed society, following their customs and traditions, almost like an independent country. The area stretches 1,500 miles from the deserts of Baluchistan in the south to the peaks of the Hindu Kush Mountains in the north.[3] The region is populated with fiercely independent tribes who are devoutly religious, ready to fight, hostile to foreigners and believe that the US goal is to conquer

the Muslim world. They welcome only those who share their beliefs and oppose all others. Waziristan was and remains a major recruiting ground for the Taliban, since the population considers the Taliban and AQ fighters as their own. Pashtun tribesmen shelter Taliban and AQ fighters wanted by the US. They consider them as honorable men who are fighting for the global Muslim community. In addition to tribal honor and Islamic solidarity, the tribal leaders also receive payment for their services. In this highly conservative society, tribal traditions are honored above all else, for example when a Pashtun offers a person shelter, that person becomes a family member and will never be turned away.

The Taliban enjoy huge support among the local Pashtun population. According to a Pakistani provincial government official, "ninety percent of the local population supports the Taliban." In the early fall of 2003, frustrated by the lack of progress in flushing the "guests" from the tribal areas and feeling increased heat from US and Afghan governments, Pakistani President Musharraf sharply stepped up military operations. These inflamed passions among the tribesmen who let the army maintain only a semblance of control along the rugged border. Military operations in the area, (which locals claim often involve American troops) against suspected Taliban and AQ members, have sometimes met with ferocious resistance from tribesmen.

How have the Taliban managed to maintain popular support in the face of increasing military pressure? Most of the population in the area contributes to the Taliban for a variety of reasons, stemming from ideological to financial gain. Additionally, social pressures and fears regarding the perceived need of future protection from infidels bind the local population to the insurgents. A small number of agitators, gathered crowds of

tribal area inhabitants to create civil disturbances in Pakistan. These largely uneducated masses are particularly vulnerable to emotional manipulation. Madrassas and well-placed agents influence these men's minds and control their actions, while covert surveillance ensures positive control over the populace.

With the support of the population secure, recruiting from this same population base is easy. The motivation to join the Taliban movement is complex. Usually people join because of a combination of interrelated factors, although individual reasons for joining and remaining may vary. The individual recruit may develop loyalties toward friends, families and comrades, or may be influenced by indoctrination and other propaganda. Even so, ideological reasons seem to have inspired only a small percentage and propaganda promises appear to have had little affect on the recruit's decision to join. Personal ties and the traditional societal structure may play a more prominent role in these decisions than those of religious ideology alone. These important traditional structures are a reflection of the larger culture, which impact on the population's way of life.

Understanding the specific aspects of culture is indispensable in fighting an insurgency in Afghanistan, because culture determines the values and behavior of the population. In order to understand the culturally based motivations of both the insurgents and those that support them requires knowledge of the specifics of that culture. One of the main reasons that US-led Coalition Force initiatives have not caught the imagination of, or secured the participation of the Afghan people within the tribal areas is primarily due to ignorance of cultural factors.

The cultural environment of Afghanistan represents a challenge not easily mastered by Western ideology, crisis management techniques or relience on technology. The many ethnic groups, tribes and clans, each with their own structures and alliances, does not lend itself to simple solutions. The tribal ethos remains the basis for most of the security, economic, and political discussions in Afghanistan and must be considered in long term security and stability solutions. The insurgency that the coalition is facing today in Afghanistan is the product of its cultural environment. Culture shapes motivations and modes of operation for both the insurgents and those conducting counter-insurgency operations. Culture matters and cannot be considered a minor aspect of counter-insurgency planning and execution as it is the crucial factor in understanding the motivations of the opponent. Undue emphasis on military actions alone, and a disregard for the cultural context fueling the insurgency, will result a failed counter-insurgency.[4] The history of Afghanistan is replete with examples in which government forces won battles but lost the war.

How did cultural factors (religion, family structure, traditions, tribal codes and ethos) help the Taliban and AQ movements survive? These factors diminished the coalition's capability to gather human intelligence against the insurgents, and hampered their campaign.

Afghanistan is ethnically, linguistically, and physically diverse. The dominant ethnic groups include the Pashtuns, Takjiks, Uzbeks, Hazara, and a number of other smaller groups including, Turkmens, Aimaks and Baloch. Over the centuries there has been considerable racial mixing, creating 'ethnic grey areas' particularly among Pashtuns, Tajiks, and Uzbeks, but less so between Hazaras and other ethnic groups. As is often the

case, ethnic groups do not conform to national boundaries, and national culture varies from region to region with the greatest differences existing between rural and urban communities. The Pashtuns are the largest tribal group and also made up the majority of the Taliban. The Pashtuns of Afghanistan and Pakistan share a common heritage, speak the same language, and both recognize the moral and legal code of social order and responsibility known as Pashtunwali. The concept of ethnic identity has played a major role in the emergence and survival of the Taliban.

Pashtuns have historically dominated government, other ethnic groups have had to learn to deal with them on the Pashtuns' own terms. Being a Pashtun, at least a male Pashtun, centers around Pashtunwali, or "doing Pashto." "Doing Pashto" connotes adherence to a code of behavior stressing honor and its defense, autonomy, bravery, self respect, and respect for others. It is probable that all male Pashtuns share Pashtunwali. A man's honor 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. Hospitality is a major tenet of the Pashtunwali but perhaps its most relevant dimension is the requirement of providing refuge to anyone within the confines of one's home or country. The tenet of hospitality is closely related to the main tenet of honor. The Pashtunwali's code of behavior is often in opposition to a strict interpretation of Sharia. When a conflict occurs, Pashtuns tend to "do Pashto" instead of following Sunna, believing that Muslim and Pashtun are equivalent. In matters other than Pashtunwali, there may be regional differences.[5]

Tribal ethos and codes continue to shape how Afghani people think about themselves and foreigners. Tribal culture plays a tremendous role in daily rituals, inter-personal and group relationships and the worldview of population, especially among Pashtun tribes. These tribes are not confined to current political boundaries. Many tribes are interspersed throughout the region and especially in the inter-border areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan. This situation facilitates cross-border cooperation within tribal boundaries such as in the Pashtun Valley.

Tribal culture is extremely resilient and adaptive to changes in the social, economic, and political environment of Afghanistan. Neither modern socio-political ideologies, nor the state itself has succeeded in totally replacing or eliminating the tribal codes and ethos as an organizing principle and its influence in determining behavior. The tribal ethos adapted itself to a sedentary agricultural society linked to a market economy and/or migrated to the urban centers. Although settled in urban areas, individuals retain their tribal names, kinship networks and value systems, common residency patterns in city or provincial towns, and most importantly kinship loyalties, and they often placed their interests as individuals within families and communal groups above the interest of the state.[6]

The fundamental aspect of tribal societies, such as those found in Afghanistan and neighboring Pakistan, is extended kinship. Tribes are more than just kin-based groupings. An individual's attachment to a particular genealogical heritage is, at the tribal level, partly a political act, since tribal genealogies are usually based on fictive kinship ties, if they exist at all. Family ties and a strict honor code bind them more than ethnic background, religion, or professional association. Honor is the most important value

among Pashtuns, more important than life itself. A man without honor is considered to be a dead man. Hence the saying, "it is better to die with honor than live with humiliation."[7] This code has hardened for centuries in Afghanistan.

Most of the tribes have a hierarchical structure, with a noble lineage, a number of commoner clans/lineages, as well as client lineages. Some of these tribes recognize the diversity of their parts and are confederacies. Inter-tribal conflicts and coalitions profoundly affect tribal structure. The degree of complexity and internal stratification of a given tribe depends primarily on two external factors: the availability of resources and the extent of state interference in internal affairs. Private "justice" is meted out through a network in which traditional and/or religious leaders determine the outcome of feuds between clans and individuals.

Another important feature of not only Afghan tribes, but clan-based societies in general, is their segmentary nature and kinship loyalty. Segmentation refers to the hierarchical nature of tribal kinship structures, and describes the way in which various sub-components of a tribe coalesce to form higher-level entities. The segmentation principle applies throughout the tribe, from the extended family, to the confederation.[8] Segmentation determines how an individual sees himself, while loyalty is the social glue that binds these together. Figure 2 depicts this concept:
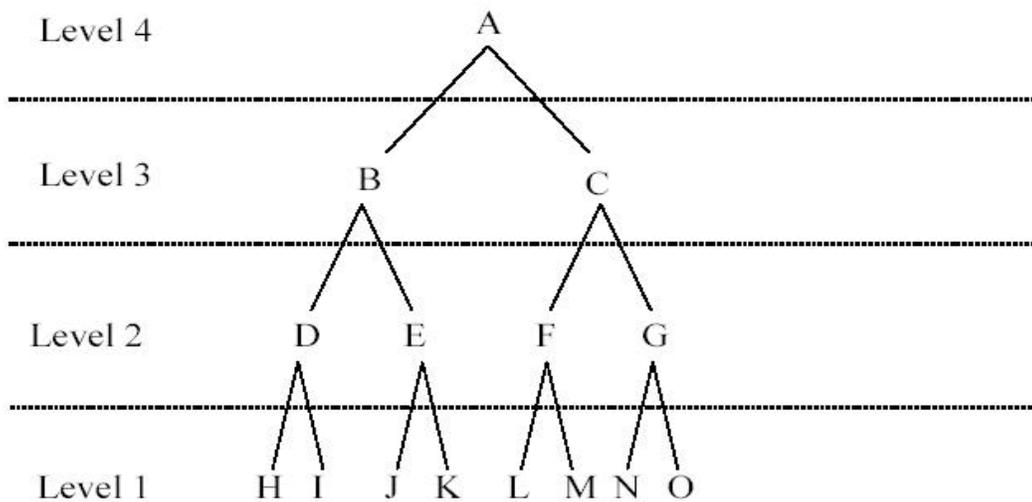
Tribal Segmentary Nature

Figure 2. Tribal Segmentary Structure

Source: Christopher Alexander, Charles Kyle, and William S. McCallister, *The Iraqi Insurgency Movement* (unpublished manuscript, November 2003), 10..

In the Tribal Segmentary Nature chart, groups H and I would act together as group D, if confronted by group E. Similarly, in the case of dispute with C, both D and E would merge into B. Segmentation means that groups which may be potentially hostile toward one another, or even involved in open conflict, come together when confronted by an external threat which endangers them both. On the other hand, tribal rivalries and conflicts exist and present opportunities for a third party to exploit.[9] When growing up, Pashtun tribal children learn the axiom: "me against my brothers; my brothers and I against our cousins; me, my brothers and our cousins against everybody else." This *leitmotif* forms a moral-bedrock for life decisions and seeks to perpetuate the honor of

family, tribe and nation.[10] "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 bear this out.

Dominant religious organizations do not represent the population as effectively as tribal bonds, even outweighing Sunni and Shia associations. Culturally, the strongest loyalty bonds are to the immediate and extended family. Loyalty to clan and tribe come after family and extended family. The tribal leader provides direction to the tribe. Associations of tribes form regional alliances, such as the Afghan-Pakistan border region, called the Pashtun Valley or Wazeristan. Religious loyalties only exist when other commonalities do not. Other loyalties take precedence over religious loyalties thereby offering an opportunity for non-Muslims to establish ties and associations. When such cultural factors are ignored as during the British invasions and the Soviet occupation, opportunities are missed and the loyalty system binds the region together against a common enemy. Once the common enemy has been defeated or pushed out, old rivalries and conflicts reappear, as groups and individuals tend to move back closer to the center of their loyalty-based system.
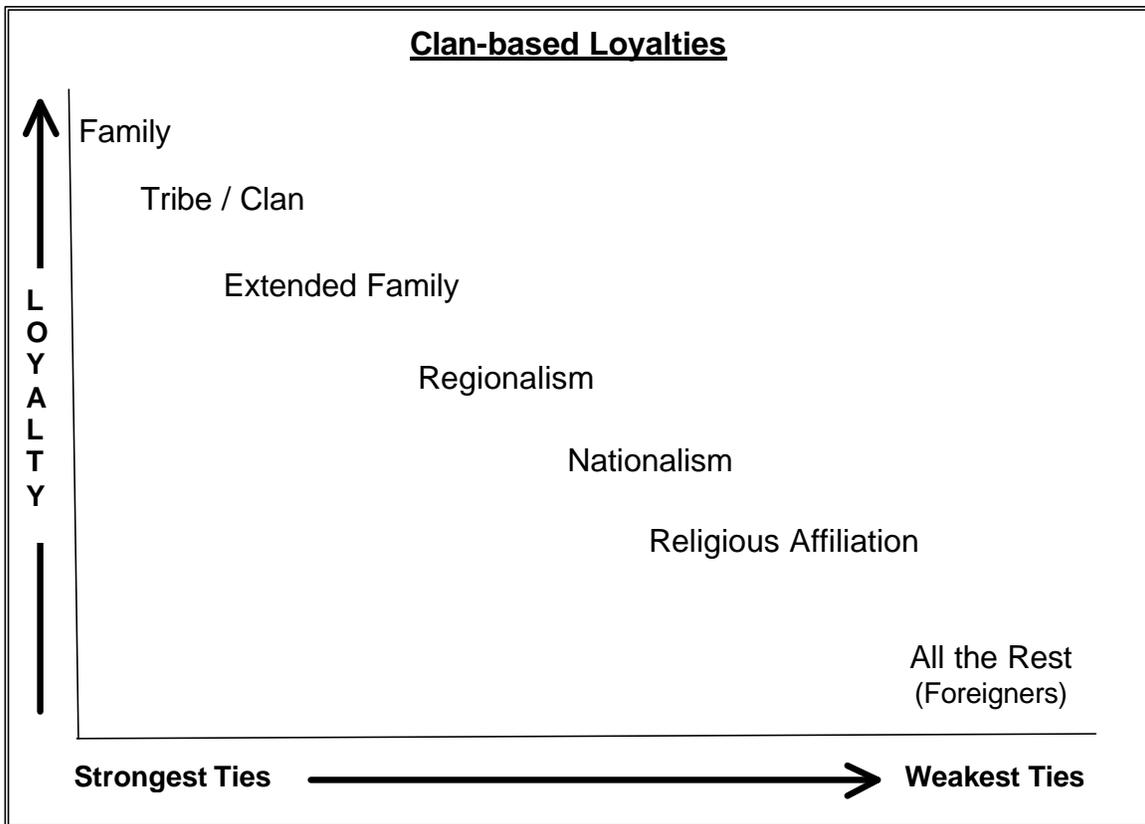
Clan-based Loyalties

```
  ↑  | Family
  |  |
  |  |     Tribe / Clan
  |  |
L |  |        Extended Family
O |  |
Y |  |             Regionalism
A |  |
L |  |                  Nationalism
T |  |
Y |  |                       Religious Affiliation
  |  |
  |  |                              All the Rest
  |  |                              (Foreigners)
  ↓  |_____
```

Strongest Ties ————————————————▶ **Weakest Ties**

Figure 3.   Clan-based Loyalties,

Source: Christopher Alexander, Charles Kyle, and William S. McCallister, *The Iraqi Insurgency Movement,* 11.

Without an understanding of the culture that motivates behavior it is impossible to formulate a strategy that separates the belligerent groups from the rest of the population. The age-old tenets of honor, revenge and hospitality in Pashtunwali provide inroads into culturally appropriate relationships and expectations. Successful dealings with those who support the Taliban and AQ for non-ideological reasons must begin within the context of their traditional and cultural worldview.

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[1] Rex Brynen, "Sanctuary and Survival," *The PLO in Lebanon* (London, Pinter Publishers, 1990), 3.

[2] Mao Tse-Tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, intro. and trans. Samuel B. Griffith (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1961), 107.

[3] Liz Sly, "Osama bin Laden Remains Out of Grasp, Afghan officials say," *Chicago Tribune*; available from http://www.sltrib.com/2003/Dec/12162003/nation_w/120378.asp; Internet; accessed on 16 December 2003.

[4] Christopher Alexander., Charles Kyle., and William S. McCallister. The Iraqi Insurgency Movement. (November 2003), 6. Some aspects of the Iraqi insurgency movement are similar to the Afghan case due to certain cultural characteristics. Unpublished manuscript.

[5] *Encyclopedia,* [document on-line]; available from http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Pashtun, Internet, accessed on 14 December 2004.

[6] Alexander, Kyle, and McCallister, 8.

[7] Ibid., 9.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., 10-11.

[10] News and Articles on Pashtun Culture; available from http://cultures.surfwax.com; Internet; accessed on 14 December 2003.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Insurgencies are the tool of the weaker side and sometimes employ a cellular structure and security measures that are difficult to defeat. Insurgencies are dependent on a large underground support structure whose members are difficult to determine. The guerilla activity is the tip of the iceberg. Being a part of the Pashtun clan-based majority provided the Taliban with a ready-made support base in the tribal areas and allowed the Taliban to take sanctuary there. The populace in the sanctuaries is a center of gravity and must be addressed in any strategy designed to defeat the Taliban.

The Afghan insurgency differs in its nature and structure from the classic model. Although combat dominates in the classic insurgency model, the Taliban and al Qaeda place more emphasis on terror. Normally, the highest level of insurgency results when the guerilla organization becomes a conventional force and conducts a war of movement. In the British and Soviet-Afghan case, the Afghan resistance never achieved this unified level because after they defeated the common enemy they turned on each other.

The historic withdrawal of great powers from their soil provided the Mujahideen and Taliban the will to fight, strengthened their independent nature and reinforced their belief in their traditional way of life. Jihad has been used as a unifying factor because as long as there is a common enemy, Jihad can gain support. The Taliban preaches the US and its coalition partners are no different than other foreign invaders and therefore a "holy war" against them must be waged to oust them from their ancestral territory.

Another key factor was the emergence of the madrassas in the tribal regions between Pakistan and Afghanistan where the reach of the central authorities' power in

Kabul or Islamabad is non-existent. Contributing to the flourishing of the *madrassas* was the influence of external, anti-Western, Islamic ideologists who financially and morally supported their growth following the collapse of the state educational system in Pakistan. Similar to the sanctuaries, the madrassas are a type of "ideological sanctuary" for continued extremist thought and must be considered in any comprehensive successful strategy.

This anti-Western ideology supported the Taliban's original emergence to power and allowed disparate groups to unify behind a common cause. The Taliban's ideology gained the attention of other fundamental Islamic groups outside of the region and included, AQ, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Chechen fighters.

While ideology plays an important role in this conflict, cultural factors such as religion, family, traditions, tribal codes and ethos have been a mainstay of allowing the Taliban and AQ movements to survive. These factors have diminished the U.S Coalition's capability to gather human intelligence against the insurgents, and have hampered their campaign. Pashtunwali is major influence on the local population whose support is the most critical link in providing a power-base for the Taliban and other would-be insurgent groups. The Koran is only "half of a Pashtun's belief" the other and maybe more important half is the adherence to the code of honor, revenge and hospitality.[1] Knowing and using the code has given not only the Taliban but also AQ a distinct advantage over the Coalition's forces.

What approaches has the Coalition used that were successful or unsuccessful and why? What are the centers of gravity and decisive points from a historic, cultural, ethnic viewpoint? What are the natural existing vulnerabilities of any insurgency? What are the

specific vulnerabilities of the Taliban and AQ in regards to their cultural operating

environment? Within the context of Afghanistan's history, culture, religion and ideology

provide an example of a possible multi-pronged strategy that can reasonably executed.

There is a key difference between the classic insurgency sanctuary and those

adjacent to Afghanistan because the sanctuaries there represent the Taliban's ancestral

tribal areas and extended clan structure and cross political boundaries. This means that

these sanctuaries are not external but internal and an integral part of the Taliban. Mao

once said, "Separate the shark from the fish" but this will not work here because the

population and the Taliban are one. If the sanctuaries are a center of gravity then there is

really only one realistic approach. Change the perception of the West, as a mortal enemy

through a strategy that centers on destruction will not provide a long-term solution. As

long as hatred of the West is a cornerstone of the local ideology, another movement will

take its place.

Military action is not enough to succeed in winning against the insurgency. Any

weakening of resolve on the part of the US and its Allies to improve the infrastructure

and economic base will play into hands of the Taliban and other like-minded groups. An

appropriate counterinsurgency strategy takes a multi-pronged approach with a greater

focus on the diplomatic, information and economic elements of power. Cultural

knowledge and sensitivity must be the cornerstone of developing and implementing any

counter-insurgency strategy.

The US primary concerns are the conditions that provide the Taliban and AQ with

their strength, legitimacy, and manpower. These conditions include overwhelming

poverty, economic stagnation, poor educational opportunities, weak political leadership,

and drugs.[2] The "mix" should be changed to take out the most volatile ingredients while being mindful to leave the "cultural" ingredients necessary to form the foundation of a new Afghan society. If the wrong ingredients are taken out or added, the result will be a recipe for continued violence and uncertainty.

To prevail in the strategic arena, there must be a wholesale reconstruction of the entire country.

> Reconstructing Afghanistan will be a monumental task--on that will require broad international support, significant human and material resources, and an unwavering political commitment over time. Indeed the size of the country, the scope of the human needs, the absolute devastation of any infrastructure and the loss of most people with education and professional backgrounds, combine to make Afghanistan the "mother of all reconstructions."[3]

To create a secure environment will erode the support base for the insurgency. This requires getting the support of the tribal leadership who are the basis for local governance in Afghanistan. In Afghanistan there are a number of independent and decentralized insurgency groups that may have ideological links and common interests. However, they are not controlled by any central authority and may or may not provide assistance to each. In terms of scale, the Afghan insurgencies are smaller and focused along ethnic and tribal lines. Their center of gravity is their support base; they live and survive only because of supporting tribal groups. Therefore, the biggest danger for the Taliban and AQ is if their popular base of loyal tribes can be won away and realigned with Coalition forces.

Tribal groups, which may be potentially hostile toward one another or even involved in open conflict, are able to come together when confronted by an external threat that endangers them both. Tribal rivalries and conflicts exist all the time and are more political than military in nature. Tribes supporting the Taliban for local political

power may assist coalition forces to achieve their objectives. By engaging these tribes and incorporating them into a comprehensive security system and encouraging them to participate in the social, political, and economic improvement of their areas will give them a stake in the process.

Tribal rebellions are provoked by disagreement within a leading family of the tribe or a conflict with a neighboring tribe. Splitting tribes that are hostile to each other into pro-and antigovernment factions may not be useful because it misunderstands the context of these inter-tribal conflicts. To use one tribe against another can have unintended consequences like creating long-term family feuds.

Engaging tribes in counterinsurgency is not just a business arrangement or political strategy but relationship building. These relationships should understand tribal loyalty and trust to develop a mutually beneficial relationship. Leading families and tribal elders are the true power brokers in the remote tribal areas of the Pakistani-Afghani border region capable of keeping peace.

Tribal dissatisfaction with the central government is largely due to their perception of being left out of the political process and losing their share of potential profits in the region. The AIG should revise and recognize the local and regional power leaders, and get them involved by actively participating in the social, economic, political, security and cultural improvement activities in the region.

It is difficult to conduct military actions in tribal areas with limited language skills and or cultural understanding. One solution might be village liaison teams to develop rapport understanding the rituals, clan politics, myths and legends, friends and enemies of the tribe they live with. The team would become subject matter experts in all things

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related to the tribe. The organization of the village teams would be centered on the basic

Special Forces team reinforced with a medical capability and civil affairs and PSYOP

personnel.

Any successful counter-insurgency must address the basis for the support of the

insurgency. These bases of support can then be "attacked" through a variety of means.

Combat is important but not the main ingredient at the solution. The Coalition should

seek comprehensive approach that is acceptable to the Afghan people within the context

of their history, culture and society.

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[1]*Encyclopedia;* available from http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Pashtun, Internet; accessed on 14 December 2004.

[2]James B. Brown, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Strategy Essay Competition, Essay 2003, *New Century, Old Problems: The Global Insurgency within Islam and the Nature of the War on Terror* (National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., 2003), 29

[3]Kurt M. Campbell and Michele A. Flournoy, *To Prevail: An American Strategy for the Campaign Against Terrorism* (The CSIS Press, Washington, D.C. 2001), 168.

GLOSSARY

Counterinsurgency. Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civil actions taken by a government to defeat insurgency.

Culture. a: the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations b: the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group

Customs. a: a usage or practice common to many or to a particular place or class or habitual with an individual b: long-established practice considered as unwritten law c: repeated practice d : the whole body of usages, practices, or conventions that regulate social life.

Guerrilla warfare. Military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held or hostile territory by irregular, predominantly indigenous forces.

Ideology. a: a systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture b: a manner or the content of thinking characteristic of an individual, group, or culture c: the integrated assertions, theories and aims that constitute a sociopolitical program

Insurgency. An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict.

Jihad. Arabic word for "Holy war," referring not only to armed resistance against people and practices considered unholy, but also to maintaining personal vigilance against unholy influences in one's own life.

Loya Jirga. Great Council. The traditional meeting of tribal chiefs, ulema and other representatives to chose a new Afghan King, also primary low-making body in the country.

Madrassa. Islamic schools which teach religious subjects.

Mujahideen. Holy warriors fighting jihad or holy war, from the Arabic for "those who struggle" or "those who strive".

Mullah. Traditional leader of prayer at local mosque.

Pashtunwali. The traditional code of the Pashtuns.

Psychological operations. Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations,

groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator's objectives. Also called PSYOP.

Sharia. The canon of Islamic law.

Shura. Islamic Council.

Taliban. The word Taliban originated in Arabic. Its singular form is Talib, which means knowledge seeker. The Taliban were the ruling power in Afghanistan from 1994-2001.

Tradition. An inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (as a religious practice or a social custom)

Tribe. A social group comprising numerous families, clans, or generations together with slaves, dependents, or adopted strangers

Ulema. Islamic scholars. Singular is Alim.

Zakat. An Islamic donation/tax of 2.5 percent of personal wealth given to the poor

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