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US POLICIES IN AFGHANISTAN IN 20TH CENTURY

GUNJAN PRIYA

Programme Executive, Prasar Bharati, Delhi, India

Abstract: In 1910, An Afghan mission visited the United States to establish diplomatic ties. The United States assured to help Afghanistan to improve its standard of living under its policy to help developing nations. William Harrison Hornibrook was a non-resident US Envoy to Afghanistan from 1935 to 1936. In 1942, Kabul Legation was opened and Major Gordon Enders was appointed in Kabul. From 1942 to 1945 Engert represented United States and Ely Eliot Palmer followed him till 1948. Despite of its close relation with Germany, Afghanistan remained neutral during Second World War.

Analyzing US policies in Afghanistan in 20th century needs a critical evaluation of chronological events that connect America with Afghanistan. The paper discusses different dimensions of American policies in Afghanistan in 20th Century. In the wake of present days' drastically different situation, a glance over history of US perspective on Afghanistan is worthy to look at.

INTRODUCTION

This paper had been written as a term paper for M. Phil. Central Asian Studies (2012-2014), School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. This paper focuses on US-Afghan relations and American strategy in Afghanistan, particularly in 20th century.

Source of Data: Secondary data, books, articles and journals have been used to prepare this paper.

Theoretical Framework: This paper has been prepared as a term paper during the course of M Phil in Central Asian Studies and serves purely academic purpose. It is study of a historical chronology of events that reflect US strategies in Afghanistan

Research Methodology: The study uses different books, journals, published articles referred for the course of M Phil in Central Asian Studies. It analyses United States relationship with Afghanistan and American policies in Afghanistan in detail exclusively in 20th century which serves as the base of US policies onwards.

US POLICIES IN AFGHANISTAN IN 20TH CENTURY

The United States relation with Afghanistan mainly becomes visible since 1921, however, the very first imprints of contact is of 1830, when Josia Harlan visited. Since then, the relation between two countries has gone through tremendous changes through different phases of history. This paper focuses on US-Afghan relations and American strategy in Afghanistan, particularly in 20th century.

In 1910, An Afghan mission visited the United States to establish diplomatic ties. The United States assured to help Afghanistan to improve its standard of living under its policy to help developing nations. William Harrison Hornibrook was a non-resident US Envoy to Afghanistan from 1935 to 1936. In 1942, Kabul Legation was opened and Major Gordon Enders was appointed in Kabul. From 1942 to 1945 Engert represented United States and Ely Eliot Palmer followed him till 1948. Despite of its close relation with Germany, Afghanistan remained neutral during Second World War.

Analyzing US policies in Afghanistan in 20th century needs a critical evaluation of chronological events that connect America with Afghanistan. In 1953, first Afghanistan Ambassador Habibullah Khan Tarzi visited United States. US Kabul Legation was converted into US Embassy, Kabul in 1948. In 1953 Richard Nixon as Vice President of USA visited Afghanistan, meeting local people and toured Kabul.

So far, US aims remained establishing diplomatic ties and it was not yet involved in the power game in Afghanistan. This is why, when in 1958, Daud Khan as prime minister of Afghanistan attended US Congress in Washington and sought for assistance, America almost ignored the importance of US-Afghan relations. President Dwight Eisenhower declined any defense cooperation but extended economic assistance for developing power plants, dams and roads in Afghanistan.

Later on US intentions shifted from infrastructural assistance to technical. During Cuban Revolution [1953-1959] in retaliation to Soviet's help to Fidel Castro, USA focused on Afghanistan to counter communism.

Chris Johnson, in his book, "Afghanistan" writes that the strategic significance of Afghanistan was well understood by the USA and the USSR and both poured aid into the country. Between 1955 and 1978, the USSR gave $2.52 billion whereas the USA gave $533 million. By late 1980, the contributors included the UK, Saudi Arabia, China, and Pakistan and from these contributions mujahideens received weapons worth $5 billion.[1]

The strategy changed later. President Eisenhower made a state visit to Afghanistan in December 1959 to meet with its leaders. He landed at Bagram Airfield and then drove from there to Kabul in a motorcade. He met with King Zahir Shah, Prime Minister Daoud and a number of high-ranking government officials. He also took a tour of Kabul. After **this important visit, the United States began to feel that Afghanistan was safe from ever becoming a Soviet satellite state. From the 1950s to 1979, U.S. foreign assistance provided Afghanistan with more than $500 million in loans, grants, and surplus agricultural commodities to develop transportation facilities, increase agricultural production, expand the educational system, stimulate industry, and improve government administration.**

In 1963, King Zahir Shah of Afghanistan made a special state visit to the United States where he was met by John F. Kennedy and Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Zahir

[1] **Chris Johnson,"Afghanistan"**

Shah also took a special tour of the United States, visiting Disney World in California, New York and other places. Habibullah Karzai, uncle of Hamid Karzai who served as representative of Afghanistan at the United Nations, is also believed to have accompanied Zahir Shah in the course of the King's state visit. **During this period the Soviets were beginning to feel that the United States was turning Afghanistan into a satellite state**. In 1965, Afghanistan and Cuba saw the establishment of communist parties, the Communist Party of Cuba and the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

Vice President Spiro Agnew, accompanied by Apollo 10 astronauts Thomas Stafford and Eugene Cernan, visited Kabul during an eleven-nation tour of Asia. At a formal dinner hosted by the Royal Family, the American delegation presented the King with a piece of lunar rock, a small Afghan flag carried on the Apollo 11 flight to the moon, and photographs of Afghanistan taken from space. **By the 1970s, numerous American teachers, engineers, doctors, scholars, diplomats, and explorers had traversed Afghanistan's rugged landscape where they lived and worked. The Peace Corps was active in Afghanistan between 1962 and 1979. Many other American programs were running in the country such as CARE, American Scouting overseas (Afghanistan Scout Association), USAID, and others.**

Soviet invasion and civil war

After the April 1978 Saur Revolution, relations between the two nations deteriorated. In February 1979, U.S. Ambassador Adolph "Spike" Dubs was murdered in Kabul after Afghan security forces burst in on his kidnappers. **The U.S. then reduced bilateral assistance and terminated a small military training program. All remaining assistance agreements were ended after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.**

Following the Soviet invasion, the United States supported diplomatic efforts to achieve a Soviet withdrawal. In addition, generous U.S. contributions to the refugee program in Pakistan played a major part in efforts to assist Afghan refugees. U.S. efforts also included helping the population living inside Afghanistan. This cross-border humanitarian assistance program aimed at

increasing Afghan self-sufficiency and helping resist Soviet attempts to drive civilians out of the rebel-dominated countryside. During the period of Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, the U.S. provided about 3 billion US dollars in military and economic assistance to the Mujahideen groups stationed on the Pakistani side of the Durand Line. The U.S. Embassy in Kabul was closed in January 1989 for security reasons.

Afghanistan in 20th Century

In the 19th Century, Afghanistan was caught between the expanding British and Russian empires. The British held India and at the same time Russia wanted a port on the Indian Ocean, a route that would go straight through Afghanistan. The political maneuverings and alliances by Western powers and Russians with the local tribes are referred to by historians as the "Great Game."

The Modernization of Afghanistan-A series of cautious and moderate governments brought political stability.

Abdur Rahman died in 1901 and was succeeded without warfare–a first in Afghan history– by his son Habibullah. **Habibullah kept Afghanistan neutral during World War I but was murdered in 1919.** Habibullah's favored son and successor, **Amanullah, declared his nation fully independent from the British, prompting the third of the Anglo-Afghan wars, a half-hearted skirmish that ended in a peace treaty that recognized Afghanistan's independence in August 1919.**

Amanullah Khan initiated a series of ambitious efforts at social and political modernization, including education and work opportunities for women. These reforms infuriated the rural religious conservatives and the resulting revolt ended with Amanullah's abdication.

Over the next 40 years, a series of cautious and moderate governments under the Afghan monarchy brought political stability to the country, and allowed it to make substantial strides toward modernization and national unity.

Mohammad Zahir Shah was the last Shah, or King, of Afghanistan, serving from 1933 - 1973. He is considered the father of the nation. Having realized the drastic need for modernization in Afghanistan, Zahir Shah instituted a new constitution in 1964, creating a democratic state with free elections, a parliament, civil rights, women's liberation, and universal suffrage. He is seen by Afghans as having brought freedom to the people.

Shah Zahir's Prime Minister (and first cousin), Daoud Khan, turned to the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance. The Soviets ultimately became Afghanistan's major aid and trade partner, but shared the stage with the United States. The competition between the superpowers in aid of nonaligned Afghanistan benefited Afghanistan's infrastructure: Its roads and hydroelectric dam systems were in turn funded and directed by the Soviets and Americans.

With the help of the military, Daoud Khan seized power in 1973 in a virtually bloodless coup. Communist military officers and civil servants of the Banner party assisted in the overthrow. The constitution of 1964 was abolished and the Republic of Afghanistan was established with Daoud Khan as President.

Soviet Occupation-The Soviets occupied Afghanistan to prevent the Afghan communists from being overthrown.

Afghanistan was subjected to Cold War politics in the late 20th century. In 1978, Afghan communists, along with sympathetic elements in the army, staged another military coup overthrowing the government of the Republic of Afghanistan and assassinated President Khan.

Once in power, the communist government attempted to replace Muslim ideologies with more liberal, Marxist ones. Men were required to cut their beards; women could not wear Muslim attire and mosques were placed off-limits. While many people in urban areas accepted these policies, most of the population did not.

War followed, which was styled a jihad, or religious war, fought by the mujahedeen(MOO-jah-ha-DEEN), loose knit bands of Afghan freedom fighters comprised mostly of Pashtuns. The mujahedeen kept control of most of the

countryside, and the Soviet troops held the cities and those areas near local garrisons.

1979 – 1989-Dissent over Soviet reforms was widespread among the population, and to prevent the government's collapse the Soviet Union invaded in 1979. The resulting Soviet-Afghan War caused widespread destruction, killed someone and a half million people and drove more than six million refugees into neighboring Pakistan and Iran. The mujahedeen, supported by the U.S., Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, China, Iran and other nations fought the Soviets throughout the country. Often compared to U.S. involvement in Vietnam, Afghanistan proved to be overwhelming for the Soviets and they ultimately withdrew in 1989.

The Soviets were despised by the Afghan peoples during the occupation. They came with few supplies, often resorting to pillaging and looting to sustain themselves. They were ruthless in their treatment of the population, committing many atrocities, including rape. Comparatively, American forces operating in Afghanistan today are viewed by many Afghans as being much more respectful of the Afghan people and as upholding human dignity.[2]

Early 20th Century and Cold War Era [3]

King Amanullah Khan (1919-1929) launched attacks on British forces in Afghanistan (Third Anglo-Afghan War) shortly after taking power and won complete independence from Britain as
recognized in the Treaty of Rawalpindi (August 8, 1919). He was considered a secular modernizer presiding over a government in which all ethnic minorities participated. He was succeeded by King Mohammad Nadir Shah (1929-1933), and then by King Mohammad Zahir Shah. Zahir Shah's reign (1933-1973) is remembered fondly by many older Afghans for promulgating a constitution in 1964 that established a national legislature and promoting

[2] http://uwf.edu/atcdev/afghanistan/History/line.swf

[3]http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL30588.pdf- Kenneth Katzman ,Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs kkatzman@crs.loc.gov, 7-7612

freedoms for women, including dropping a requirement that they cover their face and hair. In part, the countryside was secured during the King's time by local tribal militias called arbokai. However, possibly believing that he could limit Soviet support for Communist factions in Afghanistan, Zahir Shah also built ties to the Soviet government by entering into a significant political and arms purchase relationship with the Soviet Union. The Soviets built large infrastructure projects in Afghanistan during Zahir Shah's time, such as the north-south Salang Pass/Tunnel and Bagram airfield.

This period was the height of the Cold War, and the United States sought to prevent Afghanistan from falling into the Soviet orbit. As Vice President, Richard Nixon visited Afghanistan in 1953,
and President Eisenhower visited in 1959. President Kennedy hosted King Zahir Shah in 1963.
The United States tried to use aid to counter Soviet influence, providing agricultural and other development assistance. Among the **major U.S.-funded projects was large USAID-led irrigation**
and hydroelectric dam efforts in Helmand Province, including Kajaki Dam.

Afghanistan's slide into instability began in the 1970s, during the Nixon Administration, when the diametrically opposed Communist Party and Islamic movements grew in strength. While
receiving medical treatment in Italy, Zahir Shah was overthrown by his cousin, Mohammad Daoud, a military leader who established a dictatorship with strong state involvement in the
economy. Daoud was overthrown and killed in April 1978, during the Carter Administration, by People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA, Communist party) military officers under the
direction of two PDPA (Khalq, or "Masses" faction) leaders, Hafizullah Amin and Nur Mohammad Taraki, in what is called the **Saur (April) Revolution**. Taraki became president, but he was displaced in September 1979 by Amin.

Both leaders drew their strength from rural ethnic Pashtuns and tried to impose radical socialist change on a traditional society, in part by redistributing land and bringing more women into government. The attempt at rapid modernization sparked rebellion by Islamic parties opposed to such moves.

Soviet Invasion and Occupation Period

The Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan on December 27, 1979, to prevent further gains by the Islamic militias, known as the mujahedin (Islamic fighters). Upon their invasion, the Soviets replaced Amin with another PDPA leader perceived as pliable, Babrak Karmal (Parcham, or "Banner" faction of the PDPA), who was part of the 1978 PDPA takeover but was exiled by Taraki and Amin.

Soviet occupation forces numbered about 120,000. They were assisted by Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) military forces of about 25,000-40,000, supplemented by about 20,000 paramilitary and tribal militia forces, including the PDPA-dominated organization called the Sarandoy. The combined Soviet and Afghan forces were never able to pacify the outlying areas of the country. DRA forces were consistently plagued by desertions and its effectiveness on behalf of the Soviets was limited.

The mujahedin benefited from U.S. weapons and assistance, provided through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in cooperation with Pakistan's Inter-Service Intelligence directorate (ISI).

The Seven Major "Mujahedin" Parties and Their Activities

The mujahedin were also relatively well organized and coordinated by seven major parties that in early 1989 formed a Peshawar-based "Afghan Interim Government" (AIG). The seven party leaders and their parties—sometimes

referred to as the **"Peshawar 7"—were Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi (Islamic Revolutionary Movement of Afghanistan); Sibghatullah Mojaddedi (Afghan National Liberation Front); Gulbuddin Hikmatyar (Hezb-i-Islam—Gulbuddin, Islamic Party of Gulbuddin); Burhanuddin Rabbani (Islamic Society); Yunus Khalis (Hezb-i-Islam); Abdi-Rab Rasul Sayyaf (Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan); and Pir Gaylani (National Islamic Front).** Mohammadi and Khalis died of natural causes in 2002 and 2006, respectively, and

Rabbani was killed in a September 20, 2011, assassination. The others are still active in Afghan politics and governance or, in the case of Hikmatyar, fighting the Afghan government.

The mujahedin weaponry included U.S.-supplied portable shoulder-fired anti-aircraft systems called "Stingers," which proved highly effective against Soviet aircraft. **The United States**

decided in 1985 to provide these weapons to the mujahedin after substantial debate within the Reagan Administration and some in Congress over whether they could be used effectively and whether doing so would harm broader U.S.-Soviet relations. The mujahedin also hid and stored weaponry in a large network of natural and manmade tunnels and caves throughout Afghanistan.

However, some warned that a post-Soviet power structure in Afghanistan could be adverse to U.S. interests because much of the covert aid was being channeled to the Islamist groups including those of Hikmatyar and Sayyaf.

Partly because of the effectiveness of the Stinger in shooting down Soviet helicopters and fixed wing aircraft, the Soviet Union's losses mounted—about 13,400 Soviet soldiers were killed in the

war, according to Soviet figures—turning Soviet domestic opinion against the war. In 1986, after the reformist Mikhail Gorbachev became leader, the Soviets replaced Karmal with the director of

Afghan intelligence, Najibullah Ahmedzai (known by his first name). Najibullah was a Ghilzai Pashtun, and was from the Parcham faction of the

PDPA. Some Afghans say that some aspects of his governing style were admirable, particularly his appointment of a prime minister (Sultan Ali Keshtmand and others) to handle administrative duties and distribute power.

Geneva Accords (1988) and Soviet Withdrawal

On April 14, 1988, Gorbachev agreed to a U.N.-brokered accord (the Geneva Accords) requiring it to withdraw. The withdrawal was completed by February 15, 1989, leaving in place the weak
Najibullah government. A warming of relations moved the United States and Soviet Union to try for a political settlement to the Afghan conflict, a trend accelerated by the 1991 collapse of the
Soviet Union, which reduced Moscow's capacity for supporting communist regimes in the Third World. **On September 13, 1991, Moscow and Washington agreed to a joint cutoff of military aid**
to the Afghan combatants as of January 1, 1992, this was implemented by all accounts.

The State Department has said that a total of about $3 billion in economic and covert military assistance was provided by the U.S. to the Afghan mujahedin from 1980 until the end of the
Soviet occupation in 1989. Press reports say the covert aid program grew from about $20 million per year in FY1980 to about $300 million per year during FY1986-FY1990.

The Soviet pullout was viewed as a **decisive U.S. "victory."** The Soviet pullout caused a reduction in subsequent covert funding and, as indicated in Table 10, U.S. assistance to Afghanistan remained at relatively low levels after the Soviet withdrawal. There was little support for a major U.S.-led effort to rebuild the economy and society of Afghanistan. **The United States closed its embassy in Kabul in January 1989**, as the Soviet Union was completing its pullout, and it remained so until the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

Despite the Soviet troop withdrawal in 1989, Najibullah still enjoyed Soviet financial and advisory support and Afghan forces beat back the first post-Soviet withdrawal mujahedin offensives—defying expectations that his government would immediately collapse after a Soviet withdrawal. However, military defections continued and his position weakened subsequently, particularly after the Soviets cut off financial and advisory support as of January 1, 2992 under the agreement with the United States discussed above. On March 18, 1992, Najibullah publicly agreed to step down once an interim government was formed. That announcement set off rebellions by Uzbek and Tajik militia commanders in northern Afghanistan—particularly Abdul

Rashid Dostam, who joined prominent mujahedin commander **Ahmad Shah Masoud of the Islamic Society, a largely Tajik party headed by Burhannudin Rabbani. Masoud had earned a reputation as a brilliant strategist by preventing the Soviets from conquering his power base in the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul. Najibullah fell, and the mujahedin regime began April 18, 1992**.

The Mujahedin Government and Rise of the Taliban: The fall of Najibullah exposed the differences among the mujahedin parties. The leader of one of the smaller parties (Afghan National Liberation Front), Islamic scholar Sibghatullah Mojadeddi,

was president during April-May 1992. Under an agreement among the major parties, **Rabbani became president in June 1992 with agreement that he would serve until December 1994.** He

refused to step down at that time, saying that political authority would disintegrate without a clear successor. That decision was strongly opposed by other mujahedin leaders, including Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, a Pashtun, and leader of the Islamist conservative Hizb-e-Islam Gulbuddin mujahedin party. **Hikmatyar and several allied factions began fighting to dislodge Rabbani. Rabbani reached an agreement for Hikmatyar to serve as Prime Minister, if Hikmatyar would cease the shelling Kabul that had destroyed much of the**

western part of the city. However, because of Hikmatyar's distrust of Rabbani, he never assumed a working prime ministerial role in Kabul.

In 1993-1994, Afghan Islamic clerics and students, mostly of rural, Pashtun origin, formed the Taliban movement. Many were former mujahedin who had become disillusioned with conflict
among mujahedin parties and had moved into Pakistan to study in Islamic seminaries ("madrassas") mainly of the "Deobandi" school of Islam.
Some say this interpretation of Islam is similar to the "Wahhabism" that is practiced in Saudi Arabia. Taliban practices were also consonant with conservative Pashtun tribal traditions. The Taliban's leader, **Mullah Muhammad Umar, had been a fighter in Khalis's Hezb-i-Islam party during the anti-Soviet war—Khalis' party was generally considered moderate Islamist during the anti-Soviet war, but Khalis and his faction turned against the United States in the mid-1990s.** Many of his fighters, such as Mullah Umar, followed Khalis' lead. Umar, a low-ranking Islamic cleric, lost an eye in the anti-Soviet war.[4]

The Taliban viewed the Rabbani government as corrupt and anti-Pashtun, and the four years of civil war (1992-1996) created popular support for the Taliban as able to deliver stability. With the help of defections, **the Taliban peacefully took control of the southern city of Qandahar in November 1994. Upon that capture, Mullah Umar ordered the opening of the Qandahar shrine containing the purported cloak used by the Prophet Mohammad; he reportedly donned the purported cloak briefly in front of hundreds of followers.**

[4] Afghanistan," in U.S. Department of State Dispatch, vol. 5, no. 23 (June 6, 1994), p. 377.

By February 1995, it was approaching Kabul, after which an 18-month stalemate ensued. In September 1995, the Taliban captured Herat province, bordering Iran, and imprisoned its governor, Ismail Khan, ally of Rabbani and Masoud, who later escaped and took refuge in Iran. In September 1996, new Taliban victories near Kabul led to the withdrawal of Rabbani and Masoud to the Panjshir Valley north of Kabul with most of their heavy weapons; the Taliban took control of Kabul on September 27, 1996. Taliban gunmen subsequently entered a U.N. facility in Kabul to seize Najibullah, his brother, and aides, and then
hanged them. **After failing to flee, Najibullah, his brother, and aides remained at a U.N. facility in Kabul until the Taliban movement seized control in 1996 and hanged them**.

Taliban Rule (September 1996-November 2001)

The Taliban regime was led by Mullah Muhammad Umar, who held the title of Head of State and "Commander of the Faithful." He remained in the Taliban power base in Qandahar and almost
never appeared in public, although he did occasionally receive high-level foreign officials. Al Qaeda leaders Osama bin Laden relocated from Sudan to Afghanistan, where he had been a recruiter of Arab fighters during the anti-Soviet war, in May 1996. He at first was located in territory in Nangarhar province controlled by Hezb-i-Islam of Yunus Khalis (Mullah Umar's party
leader) but then had free reign in Afghanistan as the Taliban captured nearly all the territory in Afghanistan. **Umar reportedly forged a political and personal bond with Bin Laden and refused**
U.S. demands to extradite him. Like Umar, most of the senior figures in the Taliban regime were Ghilzai Pashtuns, which predominate in eastern Afghanistan. They are rivals of the Durrani Pashtuns, who are predominant in the south.

The Taliban lost international and domestic support as it imposed strict adherence to Islamic customs in areas it controlled and employed harsh punishments, including executions. The Taliban authorized its "Ministry for

the Promotion of Virtue and the Suppression of Vice" to use physical punishments to enforce strict Islamic practices, including bans on television, Western
music, and dancing. It prohibited women from attending school or working outside the home, except in health care, and it publicly executed some women for adultery. In what many consider its most extreme action, and which some say was urged by Bin Laden, in March 2001 the Taliban blew up two large Buddha statues carved into hills above Bamiyan city, considering them idols.

U.S. Policy Toward the Taliban During Its Rule/Bin Laden Presence

The Clinton Administration opened talks with the Taliban after it captured Qandahar in 1994, and engaged the movement after it took power. However, the Administration was unable to moderate the Taliban's policies and relations worsened. The United States withheld recognition of Taliban as the legitimate government of Afghanistan, formally recognizing no faction as the government.

The United Nations continued to seat representatives of the Rabbani government, not the Taliban.

The State Department ordered the Afghan embassy in Washington, DC, closed in August 1997. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1193 (August 28, 1998) and 1214 (December 8, 1998) urged the Taliban to end discrimination against women. Women's rights groups urged the Clinton Administration not to recognize the Taliban government. In May 1999, the Senate-passed S.Res.
68 called on the President not to recognize an Afghan government that oppresses women.

The Taliban's hosting of Al Qaeda's leadership gradually became the Clinton Administration's overriding agenda item with Afghanistan. In April 1998, then-U.S. Ambassador to the United
Nations Bill Richardson (along with Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth and NSC senior official Bruce Riedel) visited Afghanistan, but the Taliban refused to hand over Bin Laden. They did not meet Mullah Umar.

After the **August 7, 1998, Al Qaeda bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzani**a, the Clinton Administration began to strongly pressure the Taliban to extradite him**, imposing U.S. sanctions** on Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and achieving adoption of some U.N. sanctions as well. **On August 20, 1998, as a response to the Africa embassy bombings, the United States fired cruise missiles at alleged Al Qaeda training camps in eastern Afghanistan, but Bin Laden was not hit**.

Some observers assert that the Administration missed several other opportunities to strike him, including a purported sighting of him by an unarmed Predator drone at a location called Tarnak Farm in Afghanistan in the fall of 2000. Clinton Administration officials said that domestic and international support for ousting the Taliban militarily was lacking.

Support to Taliban? The United States supported the Taliban through its allies in Pakistan and Saudi Arabia between 1994 and 1996 because Washington viewed the Taliban as anti-Iranian, anti-Shia and pro-Western. Washington furthermore hoped that the Taliban would support development planned by the U.S.-based oil company **Unocal**. For example, it made no comment when the Taliban captured Herat in 1995, and expelled thousands of girls from schools, the Taliban began killing unarmed civilians, targeting ethnic groups (primarily Hazaras), and restricting the rights of women.[176] In late 1997, American Secretary of State Madeleine Albright began to distance the U.S. from the Taliban. The next year, the American-based oil company Unocal withdrew from negotiations on pipeline construction from Central Asia.

One day before the capture of Mazar, bin Laden affiliates bombed two U.S. embassies in Africa, killing 224 and wounding 4,500, mostly Africans. The U.S. responded by launching cruise missiles on suspected terrorist camps in Afghanistan, killing over 20 though failing to kill bin Laden or even many Al-Qaeda. Mullah Omar condemned the missile attack and American President Bill Clinton. Saudi Arabia expelled the Taliban envoy in protest over the

refusal to turn over bin Laden, and after Mullah Omar allegedly insulted the Saudi royal family. In mid-October the U.N. Security Council voted unanimously to ban commercial aircraft flights to and from Afghanistan, and freeze its bank accounts worldwide.

Allegations of connection to CIA There have been many claims that the CIA directly supported the Taliban or al-Qaeda. In the early 1980s, the CIA and the ISI (Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency) provided arms and money, and the ISI helped gather radical Muslims from around the world to fight against the Soviet invaders. Osama Bin Laden was one of the key players in organizing training camps for the foreign Muslim volunteers. **"By 1987, 65,000 tons of U.S.-made weapons and ammunition a year were entering the war."**

The "Northern Alliance" Congeals

The Taliban's policies caused different Afghan factions to ally with the Tajik core of the anti-Taliban opposition—the ousted President Rabbani, Ahmad Shah Masoud, and their ally in the Herat area, Ismail Khan. Joining the Tajik factions in the broader "Northern Alliance" were Uzbek, Hazara Shiite, and even some Pashtun Islamist factions discussed below. Virtually all the figures entioned remain key players in politics in Afghanistan, sometimes allied with and at other times adversaries of President Hamid Karzai. The Soviet occupation-era parties remain relatively intact informally, although they do not remain organized under those prior names. [5]

[6]• **Uzbeks/General Dostam**. One major faction was the Uzbek militia (the Junbush-Melli, or National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan) of General Abdul Rashid Dostam. Frequently referred to by some Afghans as one of the "warlords"

[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_policy_of_the_United_States

[6] (Detail on these figures is in CRS Report RS21922, Afghanistan: Politics, Elections, and Government Performance, by Kenneth Katzman.)

who gained power during the anti-Soviet war, Dostam first joined those seeking to oust Rabbani during his 1992-1996 presidency, but later joined him and the other Northern Alliance factions opposed to the Taliban.

• Hazara Shiites. Members of Hazara tribes, mostly Shiite Muslims, are prominent in Bamiyan, Dai Kundi, and Ghazni provinces (central Afghanistan) and are always fearful of, and subject to some extent to, repression by Pashtuns and other larger ethnic factions. The Hazaras have tended to serve in working class and domestic household jobs, although more recently they have been prominent in technology jobs in Kabul, raising their economic status. During the various Afghan wars, the main Hazara Shiite militia was Hizb-e-Wahdat (Unity Party, composed of eight different groups). Hizb-e-Wahdat suffered a major setback in 1995 when the Taliban captured and killed its leader Abdul Ali Mazari.

One of Karzai's vice president's Karim Khalili, is a Hazara. Another prominent Hazara faction leader, Mohammad Mohaqeq, is a Karzai critic.

• Pashtun Islamists/Sayyaf. Abd-i-Rab Rasul Sayyaf, now a leading Islamic conservative in parliament, headed a Pashtun-dominated hardline Islamist mujahedin faction (Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan, Ittihad Islami) during the anti-Soviet war. Even though he is an Islamist conservative, Sayyaf viewed the Taliban as selling out Afghanistan to Al Qaeda and he joined

the Northern Alliance.

On 12 March the Director of National Intelligence, James R. Clapper, along with the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, released a document titled "Worldwide Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community." The document outlines eight major "global threats" and numerous major "regional threats" to the U.S. Among the regional threats, unsurprisingly, is Afghanistan, a country the U.S. has occupied since 2001, making it the second longest U.S. wartime occupation after Vietnam.

The aforementioned issues are in urgent need of being adequately addressed if the future of Afghanistan is to look at all promising. Furthermore, policymakers in the U.S. State Department and White House need to acknowledge that new policies need to be implemented if Afghanistan has any hope of becoming more stable in the near future. Ultimately, the U.S. needs to start seriously considering the legacy it wants to leave in Afghanistan and what kind of role it's going to play in the future.

Future Prospect Post 2014

2014 will be a pivotal year for Afghanistan. In addition to U.S. and ISAF forces withdrawing, an Afghan presidential election is scheduled for April. For the average citizens of Afghanistan, the election is bound to change very little given the large amount fraud and corruption that has plagued past presidential elections. If anything, the election will be another opportunity for the U.S. to try and implement a pro-western president. The current president, Hamid Karzai, has recently made attempts to distance his country from U.S. influence, a move that upset Washington.

But Washington also appears to be distancing itself from Afghanistan as foreign policy concerns shift elsewhere. Relations with Iran and Israel, the civil war in Syria, U.S. drone strikes in the Middle East and Africa, Mali, and tensions with North Korea and China have all become major concerns or issues in the State Department. Because of these other matters and the fact that U.S. is winding down its presence in Afghanistan, there appears to be a lack of focus by Washington on what to do with Afghanistan.

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