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## **The Current Situation in Afghanistan : Since the Establishment of the Mujahidin's Government**

So YAMANE\*

### **1. Introduction**

After the fall of Najibullah's communist regime in April 1992, Afghanistan's conflict turned into a severe civil war. At this moment (1 March, 1997), two main political parties are fighting each other, both of which are claiming that their respective governments are 'legitimate'. One is the Taliban's interim government established soon after the Taliban's occupation of Kabul on 27 September, 1996. And the other is Burhan- ud-Din Rabbani's government recognized by the United Nations and some countries since June 1992, that has been driven out of the capital and has been trying to recapture Kabul. In addition to these two parties, there are ten more political parties in Afghanistan and some of them are also participating in the civil war and the political negotiations for the cease-fire.

In spite of the continuous efforts for peace made by the United Nations Special Mission, only short-term cease-fires were agreed several times for giving food assistance to the war-affected area by the UN agencies. And still now there is a great fear of a wholesale war. The number of casualties is not accurate, but according to the International Committee of Red Cross, almost thirty thousand people have been killed so far during this civil war.

These political parties of Afghanistan fighting for the supremacy, respectively belong to the major ethnic groups or religious sects within

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Afghanistan, and these ethnic groups do not only exist within the country, but also spread across the border in the surrounding countries. Therefore, the destiny of one party relates deeply not only to that of the ethnic group it belongs to, but also to that of the same ethnic group in the neighbouring countries. This is the reason why some parties are said to have been supported by some foreign countries not only politically, but also militarily. Some countries, especially Iran, Pakistan and Russia have been sending their missions to some particular parties for the political consultations, despite the proposal by the UN not to make any interference. Moreover, these parties of Afghanistan are having negotiations each other confidentially and are changing alignment very often. These external support and internal negotiations are making Afghanistan's conflict more complicated and difficult to resolve.

In this article, firstly we will see the ethnic and religious background of Afghanistan and the features of main political parties. Then we will overview the situation in Afghanistan after the establishment of an interim government Mujahidin (Soldiers for Holy War)' and we will try to give a prospect of the future development.

## 2. The Social Background and The Political Parties of Afghanistan

### (1) Ethnic Groups in Afghanistan

As mentioned above, Afghanistan's political groups have their different ethnic background. There are six major ethnic groups existing in Afghanistan: Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, Turkmens, Farsiwan, Aimaks and Baluchs. The majority is Pashtuns, whose proportion is around fifty percent of the total population. They live in the southern and eastern areas of Afghanistan, and the Pashtun Kings controlled Afghanistan for two hundred years, since the eighteenth century. Tajiks live in the northeastern and western areas of Afghanistan, accounting for about fifteen percent of the total

population. Uzbeks live in the northern area, forming about fifteen percent of the total population. Hazaras live in the central area of Afghanistan, constituting ten percent of the total population. Other smaller ethnic groups live in the western and northern areas, and the proportion of each group to the population is less than five percent.

These ethnic groups occupy their own regions and except the capital city of Kabul, each of the major cities in Afghanistan is also occupied by one ethnic group locally in a majority. For example, Kandahar city is the center of the Pashtuns, and Mazar-e-Sharif is regarded as the one of the Uzbeks. And each ethnic group has its own tradition, language and history. For instance, the Pashtuns speak Pashto language and have kept their own tribal code called *Pashtunwalai*, prescribing in detail their code of conduct, including a traditional council of tribal leaders called *Jirga*, courage, honour, revenge, hospitality, law of war, hostage, the role of women in the houses and so on. According to A. Ghani<sup>(1)</sup>, at the individual level, there is no conflict or contradiction between Islam and the *Pashtunwalai*, for the Pashtun, Islam and *Pashtunwalai* support each other. A. S. Ahmad also says that a Pashtun is by definition a Muslim, as by birth he obtained an inalienable right to Pashtunness; hence, Pashtunness and Muslimness do not have to coalesce; they are within each other and the interiority of the former is assumed in the latter.<sup>(2)</sup>

The Afghanistan Tajiks have the same ethnic origin as the Iranian Tajiks, and both have the same kind of historical, linguistic and cultural background. Both the Tajiks and the Uzbeks also live in the Commonwealth of Independent States, and under the communist regime they were more westernized than the Pashtuns living in the south. The Hazaras constitute a majority in the central region, which is generally known as the Hazarajat. Most of the Hazaras belong to the Shiite sect, and largely owing to the geographical condition of the Hazarajat and the concentration of the Shiite population in the region, the

Hazaras remained localized for a long time on their own turf. According to R. B. Rais, the Shiites have not felt any strategic need to move out of their area or enter into alliances with the Sunni parties, and the Hazarajat was practically abandoned by the Kabul-Soviet forces in 1981. It was a historic opportunity for the Hazaras to establish a sort of self-rule over their own territory.<sup>(3)</sup> This autonomy of the Hazarajat caused the Hazaras to develop their political activities.

This domination of one region by one particular ethnic group naturally has brought about the different ethnic identities among the people of Afghanistan, which have become the background of ethnic confrontation. And at the same time, the geographical distribution of the major ethnic groups has caused the surrounding countries to utilize Afghanistan's ethnic problem to their advantage.

## (2) The Religious Tradition and the Mujahidin's Islamic Movement in Afghanistan

According to the UN's annual statistics of the population, the total population of Afghanistan in 1993 was approximately eighteen million. And more than ninety percent of the population have faith in Islam. And eighty-five percent of them belong to the Sunni sect and others follow the Shiite sect.

The majority of the Sunni Islam in Afghanistan belong to the Hanafi school and are led by *ulama* (men of Islamic learning and trained scholars of Islamic law) and *taliban* (students in religious schools). The majority of *ulama* are linked to the Bareili branch of the Hanafi school and this branch accepts the Sufi (Islamic mysticism) network. The *ulama* regard this Sufism as truly representative of Afghanistan's Islam<sup>(4)</sup>, and people follow the saying of *pirs* (spiritual leaders of the sufism) and *ulama.*, also study Islamic teachings at '*madrasas*' (colleges for higher Islamic studies) in a traditional system of individual tutoring. *Madrasas* are generally supported by the local

community. A. Olesen explains that those students come from poor, landless families with no other prospects in life than becoming mullahs (religious teachers) or religious scholars.<sup>(5)</sup> Most of Afghanistan's people live in such kind of society, i.e. in the life of the mixture of both religion and tradition. R. B. Rais points out that the Durrani aristocracy which controlled the Afghanistan state until 1978 managed its affairs through tribal law and custom with a smattering of Islam.<sup>(6)</sup> The Afghan tribal code, though not strictly the Shariah (Islamic law), evolved within the civilizational context of Islam. Under influence of the Soviet, the Afghanistan's society has become more secularized.

On the other hand, there also exist the Deoband school and the Wahhabi movement in Afghanistan, both of which reject the Sufi orders as being outside the pale of its puritanical Islam. Most of the Mujahidin leaders are influenced by these movements. They think Islam is a '*din*' (code of life), which is not only capable of governing social relations, but is also a legitimate source for guiding state policies on the modern issues of planning, economic development and the maintenance of a just order in society.<sup>(7)</sup> They are also influenced by Abu-ul Ala Maududi, the founder of the Islamist movement in Pakistan, who argued that the objective of Muslims must be the setting up of an Islamic state. The traditional ulama of Afghanistan claim that the Islamic thought that the Mujahidin insist on is strange to the traditional society of Afghanistan. On the contrary, the Mujahidin condemn the private and tradition-oriented *madrasas* for depriving the students of acquiring political consciousness and westernized education.

### (3) The Mujahidin's Political Parties in Afghanistan

The Mujahidin's political movement started in the Faculty of Theology at Kabul University in around 1958, as an activity of Islamic reformation of the society. Some professors inspired by Dr. Ghulam Muhammad Niazi held

meetings there. These meetings in closed circles came to be known as 'Tahrik-e-Islami' (Islamic Movement), and the group was formally called 'Jamiat-e-Islami' (Islamic Association). Islamic intellectuals such as Burhan-ud-Din Rabbani, Maulvi Yunus Khalis, Sibghatullah Mujadidi, Minhaj-ud-Din Gahiz joined this group. Especially, Rabbani and Khalis, who graduated from Al-Azhar University, Cairo, became the core members of the group.

According to R. B. Rais, Afghanistan's contemporary Islamist thought, with the exception of the Shiite sect, has been influenced by two Islamic movements, the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhood) of Egypt and the Jamaat-i-Islami (Islamic Party) of Pakistan.<sup>(8)</sup> And this thought became not only Afghanistan's Islamists' political view of Islam but also made themselves part of a pan-Islamic movement. They advocated a pan-Islamic concept of the 'Ummah' (Muslim commonwealth). Rabbani translated and published some of the major works of Sayyid Qutub, while some Islamists introduced Maududi's works.

Under the influence of the Islamist scholars, the students of Kabul University established an organization called 'Sazman-e-Jawanan-e-Musalman' (Muslim Youth Organization). By 1970, this organization grew up to be a dominant political group in the educational institutions in the capital. Ahmad Shah Masud, Gulb-ud-Din Hekmatyar, Ishaq, Nasrullah Emmat and Habib-ur-Rahman were prominent among these young Islamist activists. And many *taliban* of the traditional *madrassas* as well as the *ulama* and the school teachers in the countryside began to join this group.

A formal split in the Islamist movement occurred in 1975. Two separate groups began to emerge, one around Rabbani and the other around Hekmatyar. R. B. Rais points out that the complex factors of ethnicity, social background, leadership ambitions and strategy divided a once unified group welded together by ideological ties.<sup>(9)</sup> The ideology of political Islamism could not prove to be a strong enough glue to keep the ethnically diverse groups

together. While Rabbani retained the Jamiat-e-Islami, Hekmatyar established a new party, the Hizb-e Islami.

Khalis and Hekmatyar, both Pashtuns, worked together in the Hizb until 1979. Once again the difference of strategy and approach towards the political and military issues resulted in a split in the Hizb. Khalis insisted on more and immediate guerrilla action after the communists captured power. Hekmatyar appeared to be more cautious. Rais conjectures that Hekmatyar wanted to build up an organized and trained force before plunging into the conflict. Rais further explains that Khalis is a highly accomplished religious scholar trained at Al-Azhar, much like Rabbani, but on the other hand, Hekmatyar is more of an Islamist intellectual and politician than an *alim* (religious scholar).<sup>(10)</sup> Therefore, Khalis, instead of forming a new party, has continued to lead a break-way faction of the Hizb-e-Islami.

These Islamist political parties operated separately on both the political and the military front. And after the invasion of the Soviet in December 1979, these Islamists began to be called the *Mujahidin*. As Rabbani's Jamiat and Hekmatyar's Hizb fought each other from 1985 to 1996 inside Afghanistan, the Mujahidin parties battled with one another.

Thus, the differences in political and military strategies among the Mujahidin were one of the main factors leading to the civil war. Hereafter we will see the characteristics of each political party.

R. B. Rais points out that there are three kinds of differences among the Mujahidin political parties. The first is tribal, ethnic and religious, and the second is political, especially the difference in the social class origin and Islamist-traditionalist orientations. The third is in terms of personality clashes and rivalry for personal recognition and leadership, and much of the infighting among the Mujahidin parties is a reflection of personal antagonisms, which are generally extended to the level of ideology.<sup>(11)</sup>

Burhan-ud-Din Rabbani was inspired by the Islamist thought of Ikhwan-



ul-Muslimin when he was studying theology at Al-Azhar University during 1966-1968. After his study in Egypt, he became a professor of Islamic Law at Kabul University. He edited the *Mujalla-e-Shariat* (Journal of Islamic Law) until 1974, when he was ousted from the University for his involvement with the Islamist movement. The Daud government ordered his arrest, but he escaped and remained underground in Afghanistan. Then after the communist coup he migrated to Pakistan. His party, the *Jamiat-e-Islami*, established in 1975, holds such legendary commanders with strategy, tactics and leadership qualities as Ahmad Shah Masud, Ismail Khan (the former Governor of Herat Province) and Zabiullah. Rabbani has pan-Islamic views and has tended to support the Iranian Revolution and the unity of the Islamic Ummah. He was not opposed to the Western economic and military support to the resistance (against communist regime) via Pakistan, but argued that Afghanistan's resistance remain politically independent and capable of making its own decisions.<sup>(12)</sup>

Gulb-ud-Din Hekmatyar, a puritanical Pashtun Islamist is considered to be an unaccommodating extremist. When he was a student at Kabul University, he joined the Islamist movement under Rabbani's initiation. But as mentioned before, he separated from Rabbani and established the *Hizb-e-Islami* party in 1975. He preferred to keep his party's independence from other groups. Most of the members of his party are former students of Kabul University, i.e. the educated youth from the detribalized middle class. His party was supported by Pakistan's several groups, especially political and religious groups.<sup>(13)</sup> Pakistan, with the Pashtun people in its western area, was once annoyed by the Pashtunistan movement through the 1960s. Therefore, Pakistan began to keep close ties with Hekmatyar, a Pashtun leader, as an ethnic card.<sup>(14)</sup> Because of this ethnic problem, Pakistan has always wanted Afghanistan to establish a pro-Pakistan government and to satisfy the Pashtuns.

The conflict between Rabbani and Hekmatyar was escalated by the Takhar incident, in which Rabbani's thirty commanders were allegedly killed by Hekmatyar's guerrillas in the summer of 1989. This incident considerably strained the relations between the two, not only politically, but also personally.

Yunus Khalis did Islamic studies at the traditional *madrasas* in Afghanistan, and then he was influenced by the Ikhwan-ul-Muslimin during his study at Al-Azhar like Rabbani. After coming back to Afghanistan, he began to teach Islamic studies at *madrasas*. He worked with Hekmatyar, but separated from him and established his own party. Most of the members of his party are *taliban* from the traditional *madrasas*, *ulama*, tribal chiefs and intellectuals. He also wishes to cooperate with the traditionalists. Most of the leaders of the present political group of the Taliban also once belonged to Khalis's party and joined the anti-Soviet resistance. He migrated to Pakistan in 1978, and was inspired by the thought of a Pakistani Islamist Maududi, but he wants to keep a political distance from other Mujahidin parties. He insists that for Jihad (Holy War) in Afghanistan, the financial and material support should come from the Islamic countries, which is different from Rabbani's opinion. But in spite of his insistence, his party was supported by the western countries via an Islamic country Pakistan.<sup>(15)</sup>

Abd-ur-Rasul Sayyaf, the leader of the Ittehad-e-Islami (Ittehad-e-Islami barae Azadi-e-Afghanistan) party, is known as a Wahhabi activist in Afghanistan. In other words, Sayyaf's party has got financial support from the Middle East, mainly through private sources. His party has been close to Rabbani's, so in spite of being a small party, he could have a definite influence among Rabbani's alliance because of the financial abundance. Sayyaf is said to be a person who recruited the Islamist fighters from Arab countries.<sup>(16)</sup>

Furthermore, there are other three Mujahidin parties in Afghanistan, Nabi Muhammadi's Harkat-e-Inqilab-e-Islam, Pir Sayyid Ahmad Gilani's

Milli Islami Mahaz and Sibghatullah Mujadidi's Nijat-e-Milli. These leaders have basically the traditional religious background of the Pashtuns, so their political and military tactics is more conservative and moderate than other Islamist parties.

Maulvi Muhammad Nabi Muhammadi is a Pashtun traditional religious scholar and is considered to be a moderate person. Most of the members of his party consist of liberal intellectuals, *ulama* and *taliban*.

'Pir' Sayyid Ahmad Gilani is a descendant of a spiritual family known as Naqib of Baghdad. When he migrated to Pakistan in 1978, he established the Milli Islami Mahaz party. Gilani had strong personal relations with ex-King Zahir Shah, so his party is the only one that support the ex-King's return to Afghanistan. He believes that only a sort of representative government can unify the country and is opposed to the dictatorship of one party. His party's members comprise people who follow the spiritual leaders, such as tribal chiefs, land-owning aristocracy and Sufi families. According to R. B. Rais, Gilani favored the political and military support from the US and the Free World against the former Soviet Union, and he has received financial support mainly from the US and Saudi Arabia.<sup>(17)</sup>

Sibghatullah Mujadidi's father was a religious leader of a famous religious family known as Mujaddid Alf-Sani in Kabul. He was one of the core members of the Islamist group at Kabul University since the 1960s, but he is recognized as an Islamic scholar and a follower of traditional Islam. He is strongly opposed to the Islamists' political ideology. He organized the party of *ulama* in 1970, and then migrated to Pakistan in 1978. Later in April 1992, he became President of the interim government of the Mujahidin.

There are three Shiite political parties in Afghanistan. These Shiite parties were organized in Iran, and they received tremendous support from Iran during the entire period of the war of resistance.<sup>(18)</sup> Iran's interests lie more in promoting the unity of the Shiite parties and seeking regional

autonomy for the Hazaras.

Ayatullah Muhammad Asif Mohseni formed the Harkat-e-Islami party. Mohseni was first based in Qom in Iran, and then moved to Pakistan, because of some differences with the Iranian leaders. His party is based in Kabul now, and has formed an alliance with Rabbani.

The Hizb-e-Wahdat party, established as a coalition of eight Shiite parties, joined the Mujahidin government in April 1992, and continued to attack Rabbani with Hekmatyar. Later, in September 1994, this party was divided into two parties; one led by Mazari, who was killed by the Taliban in March 1995, and the other led by Akbari, who joined Rabbani. The former party is now led by Khalili, successor of Mazari.

Still more, there is a party called Jumbish-e Milli, headed by Abd-ur Rashid Dostom, based in Mazar-e-Sharif. Actually this party was a militia of the communist regime in northern Afghanistan. This party joined the Mujahidin in February 1992, just before the fall of the communist regime.

We can recognize Dostom's party as an exception from the point of view of its different way of the establishment, and then we can see an interesting fact about the Mujahidin parties. The fact is that all the Mujahidin parties were established by the support from foreign countries, such as Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and so on. And most of the leaders have an experience of living in the foreign countries so as to escape from the arrest by the communist regime. But because of the invasion of the Soviet, these support to the Mujahidin were called 'support' or 'aid', not 'interference' in the West. (Of course the communist regime accused the US and Pakistan of interfering)

These Mujahidin parties established several coalitions such as the 'Islamic Alliance for the Liberation of Afghanistan' in 1980, the 'United Islamic Front of Afghanistan' in 1981, the Islamic Alliance of Afghan Mujahidin' in 1981 and the 'Islami Ittehad-e-Mujahidin-e-Afghanistan' in 1985. And at last, the Mujahidin met in February 1989 in Islamabad to elect the interim government,

and Mujadidi secured the highest votes and was elected as President of the interim government.

### 3. The Political Situation in Afghanistan

#### (1) Soon after the Establishment of the Mujahidin's Government

The spring in 1992 was the memorable season Afghanistan's Mujahidin had been waiting for. After the 12 year-long war against the communist regime, the Mujahidin established their own Islamic government. Interestingly, this establishment of the Mujahidin's government happened soon after the agreement between the US and the Soviet Union about halting military assistance to the warring parties of Afghanistan from 1 January, 1992. Pakistan also stopped its assistance to Afghanistan on 25 January. Then as mentioned above, Mujadidi became President. The international community understood that the problem was over, and ceased to pay more attention to this region. However, from this time started the civil war. Antagonism among the Mujahidin political parties came to the surface because of the disappearance of their enemy against whom they had made an alliance to fight. Among all the political parties, the dispute between Rabbani's Jamiat-e-Islami and Hekmatyar's Hizb-e Islami was quite significant.

Rabbani became President in June, 1992, but Hekmatyar did not accept Rabbani's Presidency and started to attack the capital.

After 8 months, Pakistan became a negotiator between the two, and three accords were concluded, viz. the Peshawar Accord (concluded on 14 February, 1993), the Islamabad Accord (9 March, 1993), and the Jalalabad Accord (20 March, 1993). The Peshawar Accord was signed for the cease-fire, but only after one week, another attack on each other started. The Islamabad Accord followed the former one, and it included the extension of Rabbani's term of Presidency for another 18 months, with Hekmatyar's prime ministership. Then Hekmatyar opposed to the assumption of the defence ministership by

Ahmad Shah Masud, called 'The Tiger of the Panjsher Valley' a powerful military commander of Rabbani's party. By the Jalalabad Accord, Masud agreed to resign the defence ministership, and the military power was divided into two committees the Defence Committee (air force and army) led by Rabbani, and the Interior Committee (police and intelligence) led by Hekmatyar. As a result, both the Defence Ministry and the Interior Ministry were abolished.

In spite of these accords, Hekmatyar still refused to enter the capital, claiming that he would be killed if he would enter Kabul.

Once in December 1993, Hekmatyar agreed to send his party's person Fahim as a representative of Hekmatyar to Kabul, but on the first day of 1994, Hekmatyar and General Abd-ur-Rashid Dostom attacked Kabul. Dostom once joined Rabbani and played an important role in ousting the communist regime, but in 1994 Dostom suddenly became an opponent of Rabbani.

Hekmatyar's forces blocked the road on Sarobi, 60 km east of Kabul, to stop the aid of food and fuel to Kabul. Politically, Hekmatyar, Dostom, Mujadidi and Mazari established a political alliance called 'The Supreme Coordination Council for Revolution of Afghanistan (SCCRA)' as an anti-Rabbani alliance and this alliance continued to attack Kabul.

## (2) The Taliban's Emergence

On 22 February, 1994, one Afghan group hijacked a school bus in Peshawar, and forced it to go to the Parliament House in Islamabad. These hijackers, who were known to have belonged to Rabbani's party, demanded a huge ransom and reopening the road to Kabul. Pakistan was at that time able to put pressure on Hekmatyar. Then the bus moved to the Embassy of Afghanistan there, and in the midnight the hijackers were all shot dead by Pakistan's Special Command.

This countermeasure of Pakistan caused Kabuli people to join an

anti-Pakistan demonstration, and they ransacked the Embassy of Pakistan. As mentioned above, Pakistan had close ties with Hekmatyar, so this bus-jack incident caused the relation between Pakistan and Rabbani's government to worsen.

After this incident, there were small clashes between Rabbani and Hekmatyar, but there was no major change for some eight months. Rabbani stayed in Kabul, and in June and September 1994, he declared a further extension of his Presidency. He was always saying that he was ready to transfer the power to a legitimate interim government or commission, but, according to him, he could not see any legitimate body to which he could transfer his power. The SCCRA accused Rabbani of gaining time by the extension. The UN Special Mission, headed by Mahmud Mestiri (the former Foreign Minister of Tunisia) tried to form a commission as an interim government, but every party refused Mestiri's plan, because Mestiri had included ex-King Zahir Shah's people in the commission. These people have been in exile for a long time.

On 1 November, 1994, Nasirullah Khan Babar, Pakistan's Interior Minister declared that the Pakistan government would reopen the road from Quetta, the provincial capital of Balochistan, Pakistan to Turkmenistan, through the southern area of Afghanistan. He sent 31 trucks, full of goods called 'a gift to the peoples in Central Asia', to Turkmenistan. But soon after the departure, these trucks were assaulted at the bordering town of Spin Bordak in the Kandahar Province of Afghanistan.

After the withdrawal of the Soviet forces, there was no public order or security in the most areas of Afghanistan. Kandahar, a historical city that once developed under the reign of King Zahir Shah, was also ruined. Some local commanders became bandits, plundering money and goods as 'transit taxes' from the merchants trading between Pakistan and Central Asian countries. Pakistani trucks were also ransacked by such kind of bandits.

Here the Taliban made their appearance. Some twenty Afghan students lodging at the *madrasas* in Pakistan, mainly based in Balochistan and the North-West Frontier Province, roused themselves to action and rescued all the raided trucks on 4 November. They executed the bandits in conformity with the Shariah.<sup>(49)</sup> Then the Taliban gathered all the weapons from the people there and succeeded in the demilitarization of the area. The Taliban preached the bandits to obey, saying that, if they would surrender, they would just forfeit their arms, but that, if not, the Taliban would give a 'punishment' upon them. The Taliban did not utilize their weapons so often; that is the reason why people welcomed these pure-hearted students. Furthermore, those merchants annoyed by the bandits, supported the Taliban, contributing money to the *madrasas* in the name of Islam, because the Taliban eliminated the bandits and made their trade safe.<sup>(50)</sup>

Since their emergence, the Taliban have played a significant role to recover the public order in the region. At the first stage, the Taliban never called themselves a political group, but a students group. The Taliban gained power very fast without any major fighting. And on 14 February, 1995, the Taliban reached Hekmatyar's mainbase, Charasyab, twenty km south of Kabul and forced Hekmatyar to withdraw from the base. And then the Taliban warned Rabbani to surrender.

When the Taliban were proceeding to the capital, they captured Mazari, the leader of a Shiite party, the Hizb-e-Wahdat, and killed him. This incident caused a confusion between the Taliban and the Hizb-e-Wahdat, and Rabbani's commander Masud utilized this confusion to attack the Taliban intensively. The Taliban were forced to withdraw from the south of Kabul to Maidan-e-Shahar, about twenty km southwest of Kabul.

The Taliban's withdrawal gave an impression to the people that they were not so experienced and organized as Rabbani's forces. But at the same time, they were recognized not as students' 'vigilance committee', but as a strong



militia. And Mestiri, the head of the UN Mission officially recognized the Taliban as one of the political parties in Afghanistan.

Rabbani's Government became confident of its military superiority. Therefore, Rabbani's Government reopened Kabul University in April, and some countries began to resume the diplomatic relations with this government. In May, Iran, India, Turkey and Pakistan reopened their embassies in Kabul. Reopening of the Pakistan Embassy seemed to recover the relations between the two governments, though there was a rumor that Pakistan had been supporting the Taliban since the establishment of the group.

Rabbani's stability seemed to continue, but in August 1995, a great change happened. On 4 August, the Taliban forced a Russian airplane to land at Kandahar airport and captured seven Russian crew and lots of arms that were to be conveyed to Kabul. The Taliban blamed Russia for its military support to Rabbani. In response, both Rabbani and Russia declared that these weapons were bought by Rabbani in a legal way, so the crew and weapons should be released as soon as possible.

Then in the middle of August, Ismail Khan, Rabbani's commander and the Governor of Herat, sent his troops to the Taliban's area, but the Taliban pushed them back; besides, the Taliban proceeded to the west and captured Herat on 5 September. Herat, a bordering city on Iran, was one of the most important cities for Rabbani's tactics. Ismail Khan escaped to Mashhad, a northeastern city in Iran, with his soldiers.

Rabbani issued a statement on the same day that it was Pakistan that arranged the Taliban's capture of Herat. The fall of Herat inflamed Kabuli people's anti-Pakistan feeling, and again, they attacked the Pakistan Embassy there on 6 September. Most of the staffs and diplomats including the Ambassador got injured and were sent back to Pakistan. Pakistan decided to close the embassy, and expelled some Afghanistan nationals including some diplomats staying in Pakistan in October as 'persona non grata'. This was the

worst ever incident between the two governments.

### (3) The Taliban and Pakistan

Even in the editorials of Pakistan's papers, a rumor was mentioned about Pakistan's support to the Taliban. The basic reasons for this rumor came from the following facts; ① The Taliban were based in the *madrasas* in Pakistan, and these religious institutions were under the control of the Interior Ministry of Pakistan. ② These *madrasas* mostly named Dar-ul Ulum (a house of knowledge), belonging to the Deoband school, were patronized by the Jamiat-e Ulama-e Islam (JUI(F)), a religious political party in Pakistan led by Maulana Fazl-ur-Rahman.<sup>(21)</sup> The JUI(F) later played an important role as a negotiator for a cease-fire between the Taliban and Rabbani. ③ After the emergence of the Taliban, the Pakistan government officially sealed the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, but Pakistani newspapers showed many pictures of Afghan students' going back to Afghanistan from Pakistan in order to join the Taliban. The border was controlled by the Interior Ministry, but it seemed that Pakistan let the Afghan students move freely. ④ Interior Minister Babar once said that the Taliban were his people.<sup>(22)</sup> ⑤ The Taliban first appeared to rescue Pakistani trucks, as mentioned above. ⑥ The Taliban basically belonged ethnically to the Pashtuns who were living in the bordering area of Pakistan too.

From these facts, it can be said that Pakistan certainly has a relation with the Taliban and that some groups in Pakistan can have an influence on them, but there is no evidence that can prove Pakistan's support to the Taliban. Afghan students' move from Pakistan to Afghanistan may be claimed that these students were just going back to their own country as repatriates. And about the role of the Interior Ministry, it may be claimed simply as a matter of administration. There are around 1.6 million refugees from Afghanistan within the country, and because of the existence of the

refugees, there have arisen lots of social and economic problems, like smuggling, terrorism and an inflow of narcotics and arms from Afghanistan. This is the reason why the Interior Ministry has been putting Afghanistan's refugees under observation. For these reasons Pakistan has kept on denying the rumor officially. But it is to be noted that after the agreement between the US and the Soviet Union halting military assistance to the warring parties of Afghanistan from 1 January, 1992, followed by Pakistan on 25 January, the assistance can be regarded as 'interference', not 'support'. Of course Afghanistan's Mujahidin accept foreign assistance realistically if it is beneficial to them, but they strongly condemn assistance to their opposition.

Iran, which has been sensitive to the Sunni group's expansion in the region, has been watching the Taliban's emergence closely, because Iran recognized the Taliban as the Sunni extremists supported by Saudi Arabia. That is why some Iranian newspapers often claimed that the US had planned the Taliban movement, Saudi Arabia had paid money to the Taliban and Pakistan had taught logistics.<sup>(23)</sup> And Iran has been seeking for an opportunity of getting out of economic problem brought about by the US's sanction, and eager to open the access to Central Asia for new markets. And in contrast to Pakistan, Iran has been close to Rabbani, a Tajik leader, because the Tajiks have the same ethnic origin as Iranians, as mentioned above.

Russia is afraid of the inflow of Islamic extremists in the CIS region, as it wants to maintain its influence there. Therefore, Russia is concerned about the internal conflict between the Tajikistan government and anti-government Muslim groups. That is why Russia has kept its ties with a Tajik leader, Rabbani in Afghanistan.

India has always supported Afghanistan's groups opposed to Pakistan. It once supported the Pashtunistan movement which created ethnic conflict in Pakistan, but as the movement was weakened and Pakistan became close to a new Pashtun leader, Hekmatyar, India kept its ties with Rabbani who was

opposed to Hekmatyar. It is also said that the reason why India was against Hekmatyar was that he had been sending Mujahidin guerrillas to Kashmir.

Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, during her visit to Iran in January 1996, accepted a difference of view on the Afghanistan issue between Pakistan's and Iran's.<sup>(24)</sup> This seemed to agree that Pakistan was close to the Taliban, not to Rabbani. On the contrary, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Borjerdi claimed that Rabbani's government was a legitimate Islamic government.

Since Pakistan is an independent state, it is of course Pakistan's own option to choose any Afghanistan's party to politically support, but the problem is, as most of Pakistani papers are warning, viz. that except Pakistan, most of the surrounding countries of Afghanistan, Russia, India, Iran, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are close to Rabbani; therefore, Pakistan may become isolated on this issue in this region. A. Rashid points out that like a headless chicken, the (Pakistan) government is trying to run in too many directions at the same time.<sup>(25)</sup> This utterance means that there are different groups in the Pakistan government supporting the different parties of Afghanistan separately, such as one group supports the Taliban, the other does Hekmatyar and another tries to be close to Rabbani. This disunion of the Afghanistan policy also will be a serious problem that Pakistan may confront.

#### (4) The Taliban's Islamization and Their Tribal Code

The Taliban, that literally means 'seekers after the truth' or 'students' in Persian, are consisted of Afghanistan's Islamic students. They started their activity as a 'vigilance committee', and tried to recover law and order of the area. Most of them belong to the Pashtun ethnic group living in the eastern and southern areas of Afghanistan, which are more conservative than others, as mentioned above. Before their emergence, most of the leaders of the Taliban were lodging at the *madrasas* belonging to the Deoband school which is said to

be alien to Afghanistan's tradition according to the traditional *ulama*.

The Pashtun people have kept their tribal code called *Pashtanwalai*, and they do not see any contradiction between *Pashtanwalai* and the Islamic law. The Taliban's activity also seems to be based on these two sorts of laws; one is very local, and the other is Islamic.

The Taliban consist of three kinds of people. The first group is the core of the Taliban, called the 'Shura (an advisory council) members', that consists of some twenty persons. This *Shura* is based in Kandahar, and after the Taliban's capture of Kabul on 27 September, 1996, six of them established the Interim Council as an interim government there. But the most important person among the Taliban is the founder of the Taliban, Mulla Umar, born in 1961 in southern Afghanistan, called the 'Amir-ul-Mominin' (chief of the faithful) among themselves. Umar once joined the Mujahidin movement as a soldier of Yunus Khalis's Hizb-e Islami party during the anti-Soviet war. Umar lost his eye and a leg during the war, and after the war, he stayed with his wife and a son in a town in southern Afghanistan, spending a simple religious life there.<sup>(26)</sup> But as he saw the bandits' atrocities, he decided to raise a group for the recovery of the Islamic way of life. According to the Taliban, the anti-Soviet war was Jihad against an anti-Islamic power, but this civil war that has been continuing since April 1992 is merely a conflict for the domination, which is only ruining their Islamic country. Afghanistan's parties, calling themselves the Mujahidin, are killing innocent Afghanistan's Muslims, which is totally against the teachings of Islam. The Taliban issued such sort of *Fatwa* (a decree issued by an Islamic leader) in the end of 1994 as the Deobandi Muslim leaders usually do.<sup>(27)</sup>

The Taliban's second group consists of the people who joined the Taliban movement later, impressed by the Taliban's activity or the *Fatwa*. These people too once belonged to the *madradas* in both Pakistan and Afghanistan and also follow the Islamic way of life.

The third group comprises the people who have joined the Taliban according to the situation. Most of them were the commanders of Rabbani's or Hekmatyar's party or local bandits, but they changed sides later to join the Taliban. They do not follow so strictly the Islamic way of life but are very moderate, or can be said to be more realistic. In short, they chose the winning side. As they could not beat the Taliban, they joined the movement.

The Taliban have accepted those who obey them, no matter what ethnic group they belong to, but have punished in the name of Islam those who resist them.

All the Taliban's activities follow the decision of the *Shura*. The Taliban have two kinds of *Shura*. One is the so-called 'Kandahar *Shura*' or the 'Central *Shura*' held by the senior Taliban. This *Shura* decides the main plan of all the Taliban's activities. The other is the 'Provincial *Shura*' or the 'Regional *Shura*' based in the provinces under their control. These *Shuras* decide relatively less important affairs or try criminals. The Taliban are inflicting punishments on the criminals of rape, larceny, murder, gambling, not praying on time and so on. They cut off hands and legs of thieves, and execute murderers according to the Shariah.

The Taliban call their council *Shura*, but practically there is no big difference between their *Shura* and a traditional *Jirga*. A *Jirga*, consisting of elders or influential persons in the area, and decides according to the *Pashtunwalai*, while the *Shura* follows the Shariah. And both *Jirga* and *Shura* are basically councils. If there is a difficult problem to be solved in a council, the seniormost person can decide it, and all the other council members should obey the decision in both *Jirga* and *Shura*. In the case of the Taliban, Umar has this right to decide.

When the Taliban started Islamization in the region, they were recognized as 'fanatic Islamic fundamentalists'. Of course the Taliban want the Islamic order in the region, but the important thing is that at first the main purpose

of the Taliban movement was not Islamization, but the recovery of law and order in the lawless area. According to the papers the people in the region under the Taliban's control were reported as saying that they welcomed the Taliban because there came back the social order, and that they did not care who would reign the region, but just wanted peace and stability there.<sup>(28)</sup>

Even after the establishment of the interim government in Kabul, the Taliban's activities have still been limited to the recovery of law and order. According to the Taliban Shura, stopping women from working outside their homes is not only based the teachings of Islam or the *Pashtunwali*, but also is effective for them to avoid rapes. To close down schools is also considered to be for the reason that the westernized education causes confusion in the society. The Taliban insist on the Islamic education. The Taliban have never done any kind of practical administrative activities, like tax collection, de-mining, the reconstruction of roads, water and electricity supply or diplomatic activities.

Before their emergence, the Taliban were living a traditional and religious way of life. They had no experience of administration. Certainly, they themselves had never thought of establishing their own government. They had no technocrats or skillful administrators, so it was quite natural for the Taliban to choose the easiest way of administration which was just traditional and easy to be understood by themselves. For the people in the southern conservative area, the Taliban's Islamization was not so strange, because most of the Mujahidin were also asserting the establishment of the same kind of Islamic government, but for the people more westernized under the communist regime, like those in Kabul, Herat or Mazar-e-Sharif, where women wore skirts and worked outside their homes freely, the recovery of law and order was welcomed but forcing a strictly religious way of life was too severe to accept. That is the reason why in the urban areas that the Taliban have occupied, there are still conflict between the Taliban and the people. For

example, the Afghan Women's Network based in Islamabad sent an appeal to human rights organizations to focus critical attention on the basic human rights situation of Afghanistan's women living and working in Kabul on 3 October, 1996.<sup>(29)</sup>

This problem arose not only for the people of the urban areas, but also for the 'moderate' people who had joined the Taliban according to the circumstances or the traditionalists in the countryside. Accordingly, in December, 1996, the Taliban allowed Kabuli people to hold a sports festival in the city and the Taliban declared that they would accept the sports as the welfare of the people to show their tolerance, though once they had strictly prohibited the western sports in the region.<sup>(30)</sup> If the Taliban cannot maintain the political stability in Afghanistan, many people may be estranged for the movement.

#### (4) The Current Situation

After the fall of Herat, the Taliban again attacked Kabul. In October 1995, they entered Kabul city from the eastern side, but Rabbani's forces repulsed them. Then there were skirmishes between the Taliban and Rabbani's forces, but no big change came out.

In December, Iran invited representatives from Rabbani's and Hekmatyar's parties. Iran was said to be a negotiator between the two. From Hekmatyar's side, his son-in-law Qutub-ud-Din Jalil played an active role in this negotiation. He is a Tajik, born in the Panjsher Valley, which is famous for Masud's hometown, though Hekmatyar is a Pashtun. And in May, 1996, Hekmatyar joined Rabbani. Hekmatyar took up prime ministership in August. This caused a split in the anti-Rabbani alliance, the SCCRA. In spite of Hekmatyar's alliance with Rabbani, there was no change in the situation.

In June, Mahmud Mestiri, Head of the UN Special Mission, resigned and Norbert Hall, a German diplomat, succeeded him.

In August, Pakistan suddenly declared that it was going to send a



delegation to Kabul so as to reopen the embassy there. This seemed to mark the restoration of relations between the two governments.

But then the situation changed very dramatically. On 11 September, the Taliban captured Jalalabad, a point of transit between Afghanistan and Pakistan, which was under the control of Haji Abd-ul-Qadir, the Mayor of Jalalabad city and the Governor of Nangarhar province, belonging to Khalis's Hizb-e-Islami. This city had developed as a center of narcotics and smuggling, so the Governor had enough military power and money. But as the leaders of the Taliban including Umar once belonged to Khalis's party, many of Qadir's soldiers betrayed and joined the Taliban when the Taliban accused Qadir of earning money by narcotics and smuggling, which was an un-Islamic way according to the Taliban. At the time when the Taliban entered the city, most of the soldiers surrendered to the Taliban.

Then the Taliban proceeded from Jalalabad to the west, and they began to enter Kabul in the midnight of 26 September. They captured the capital at daybreak of 27 September. When the Taliban entered Kabul, they met little resistance. Most of Rabbani's forces, including Rabbani himself and Masud, escaped to the north.

On 27 September, the Taliban declared the establishment of the 'Interim National Council', an interim government consisting of six Taliban leaders, five of whom belonged to the Pashtun ethnic group and the other was a Tajik. Mulla Rabbani became the leader of the Council.<sup>(31)</sup>

Some of the Taliban executed Najibullah, the last President of the communist regime, who had been under the protection of the UN in Kabul. In April, 1992, Najibullah tried to escape abroad, but failed to do so. He had been sheltered at the Office of Secretary General for Afghanistan (OSGA) for four and a half years.

His body was hanged by the Taliban at a crossroads in Kabul with his brother's body for three days. The Taliban claimed that Najibullah had been

executed because he had led Afghanistan to the destruction. The UN showed a deep regret at this execution on the same day.<sup>(32)</sup>

The Taliban also captured four staffs of the United Nations High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR) in Kabul, for there were some differences between the two. Furthermore, the Taliban ordered all the male public servants to keep beards. Then the Taliban prohibited taking pictures without their permission. The Taliban also closed all the schools. Recently, the Taliban arrested two French men working at a NGO in Kabul for the violation of Islamic law. These two French men had held a farewell lunch for three female staffs.

On 27 September, the US and Pakistan issued statements about the Taliban's government. Both governments welcomed the new government and said that both of them were considering to send missions to Kabul.

On the other hand, Russia and Iran showed great concern about the Taliban's government. Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation held a meeting of the CIS in Almatoi of Kazakhstan, and issued a statement that all the CIS countries unite for the protection of security of the bordering areas. Iran again declared that Rabbani's government was a legitimate Islamic one. Iran sent Ismail Khan, the former Governor of Herat, who had taken refuge in Iran since the fall of Herat, to Mazar-e-Sharif and other cities to meet Dostom and Rabbani, for forming a joint struggle against the Taliban.

Although Rabbani's forces escaped from Kabul, it was the known fact that they were strong enough to fight against the Taliban. Therefore the Taliban immediately sent their forces to the north to fight against Rabbani.

In regard to the military situation, General Dostom was said to be a key person to determine the future. Dostom, who had once attacked Kabul with Hekmatyar, kept silence after the Taliban's emergence. Dostom several times sent delegations to Kandahar for negotiations with the Taliban, but since Dostom was a commander of the communist regime, some of the Taliban

accused him of being a communist who denied the existence of God. Dostom stayed in his own region, the northern area of Afghanistan. While the fighting between Rabbani and the Taliban was going on, Dostom was engaged in training his forces.

This is the reason why not only both Rabbani and the Taliban, but also some surrounding countries sent missions to Dostom to make arrangements for a joint struggle with him. Pakistan's Interior Minister Babar visited Dostom, so did Iranian and Russian delegations. Sardar Faruq Leghari, President of Pakistan, visited Uzbekistan (on 18 October) and Kazakhstan (on 27 October), and other Pakistani ministers visited Iran, China, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Turkey and the CIS on the Afghanistan issue.

While the negotiations with Dostom were going on in October, the Taliban advanced on Salang town on the Salang Highway running from Kabul to the north. The Taliban tried to attack Panjsher, where Masud's forces were based, but Dostom warned that he would fight against the Taliban if they would advance to the north. Some Taliban in the front line fired warning shots at Dostom's soldiers and as a revenge Dostom bombed some parts of Kabul. Then this exchange of fires grew more intense. The Taliban started to attack Badghis Province, a western province half of which was under the control of Dostom, on 25 October.

On 28 October, Dostom's party officially accused Pakistan of supporting the Taliban, and this statement meant that Dostom had not join the Taliban but Rabbani, and that Pakistan had failed in the negotiations. The reason why Dostom decided to join Rabbani is not clear.<sup>(33)</sup>

Rabbani's forces began to try to recapture Kabul in the middle of October, and still now (as of 1 March, 1997), the fighting between Rabbani's forces and the Taliban is going on. The Taliban are proceeding to the north, especially to Bamiyan Province, the central area of Afghanistan where the stronghold of Hizb-e-Wahdat is located. The Hizb-e-Wahdat has sent their

forces against the Taliban. Masud and Dostom have been fighting against the Taliban separately.

The Taliban declared the establishment of an interim government, to which both the US and Pakistan showed a positive reaction, although no country has yet recognized this new government. Rabbani participated in the annual meeting of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN in Rome as a representative of Afghanistan in November. The Taliban are asking the UN to recognize their own government, but it is only Pakistan that has shown its willingness to recognize. Pakistan held the signing ceremony in Islamabad with the Taliban representatives on the agreement of reopening the road from Pakistan to Central Asia through the area under the control of the Taliban on 9 December, 1996. On the other hand, Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan said in January 1997 that there was no reason to recognize the Taliban's government.

Pakistan has been close to the Taliban politically. It was Interior Minister Babar who had carried out the Afghanistan Policy of Pakistan, but in the general elections held on 3 February, 1997, Babar was defeated. As a result of the elections, Nawaz Sharif has come back as Prime Minister, who once took the initiative in bringing about the three Afghanistan peace accords in 1993. It is not clear what kind of Afghanistan policy Pakistan's new government will formulate, but it is possible that as Nawaz Sharif did in the past, Pakistan will try again to take the initiative in the peace process. Ayatullah Mohseni, the leader of a Shiite party loyal to Rabbani celebrated Nawaz Sharif's victory in the elections, and showed the hope that Nawaz Sharif's new government may lead the peace process in Afghanistan as before.<sup>(34)</sup>

The UN has been trying to bring all the parties together, and recently held negotiations between Afghanistan's political parties in Islamabad for three days at the end of February, 1997, but because each party presented difficult conditions, like the exchange of prisoners of war, demilitarization and

cease-fire, the negotiations could not reach any political agreement. There is still a great fear of battles to be fought each other among the conflicting parties in Afghanistan.

#### 4. Conclusion

##### (1) The Problems Caused by the Civil War

The continuation of the civil war has caused several serious problems in Afghanistan, which are influencing the surrounding countries also politically and economically. We can recognize four kinds of the problems that are intertwined each other.

The first of the problems is internal. The continuation of the civil war has caused heavy casualties. Although Afghanistan's political parties have claimed that there can be no military solution in Afghanistan, they are still continuing to fight each other. And reportedly there are around ten million mines placed below the ground in Afghanistan, and almost every day there have been casualties by mine-blasts. While the United Nations Office for the Coordination of the Humanitarian Assistance for Afghanistan (UNOCHA) and NGOs have been working for the de-mining project, some of Afghanistan's parties have been laying mines in order to prevent their enemies from entering their territories.

The civil war has also made Afghanistan itself a lawless country. During the anti-Soviet war, lots of volunteer fighters especially from Arab countries joined Afghanistan's Mujahidin, and after the war, they have stayed there. Even now, some terrorists are said to be entering Afghanistan and getting military training. Some notorious terrorists related to the blasting of the World Trade Center in New York, also got a military training in Afghanistan. And these terrorists are called the 'Afghan Arabs'.

The second is the problem the surrounding countries are facing. Especially the existence of the two governments in Afghanistan is posing a political

problem for the surrounding countries, as mentioned above. The recognition of the Taliban's government and the political support to the Taliban have become an important political issue. And the difference of policy on this issue has caused Pakistan's isolation in the region.

Furthermore, there is an internal problem within Tajikistan. The Tajik opposition group is getting military aid from Afghanistan's Islamic extremists. Both Russian and Tajik governments want the political solution of this problem. Recently, in December 1996, Rabbani invited Imamali Rakhmanov, President of Tajikistan, and Abd-ur-Rahman Nuri, the leader of the Tajik opposition, to Kunduz city, north of Afghanistan for a negotiation. Rabbani controls the Tajik majority area bordering Tajikistan, so he has his influence on the Islamic opposition there.

Another problem of this kind is the volunteer army of Afghanistan's Mujahidin sent to the disputed area of Kashmir to fight against India. Hekmatyar was said to be a person who sent many Afghanistan's Mujahidin to Kashmir when he had a good relation with Pakistan's Islamic groups. Mujahidin sent to Kashmir have still been active there.

The third problem is that of Afghanistan's refugees staying in Pakistan and Iran. At this moment, there are more than 1.6 million refugees in Pakistan (including non-registered refugees) and one million in Iran. Iran decided to repatriate the refugees in 1995, but there seems to have been no positive result. In Pakistan, many refugees have become self-sufficient and independent of the UNHCR's or NGO's support, and some of them have got Pakistani nationality after they got married with Pakistanis. They do not want to go back to their native country, for there is no political and social stability there. This inflow of refugees has also caused an employment problem in Pakistan.

These refugees move between Pakistan and Afghanistan freely, and this causes an influx of narcotics and arms from Afghanistan, disturbing public order in Pakistan.

The fourth problem is an economic one. The total disruption of economic activity in Afghanistan has caused a large scale of smuggling. A huge amount of duty-free goods landed at Karachi port for Afghanistan on the basis of the Afghan Transit Trade Agreement (1965) are gathered at the markets in Peshawar and sold there without being carried into Afghanistan. This smuggling oppresses Pakistan's economy seriously. The Pakistan government once invited Rabbani's representatives to Islamabad and tried to amend the agreement and to restrict the variety of goods in the spring of 1995, but both of the governments could not reach any agreement.<sup>(35)</sup>

Furthermore, Afghani notes were exchanged abundantly at the markets in Pakistan for US dollars or Pakistani rupees by Afghanistan's several parties. This exchange has become one of the ways of collecting funds for them, though actually Afghani notes cannot be used outside Afghanistan at all. And this has become a serious problem for Pakistan's exchange control.

Another economic problem is about reopening the route to Central Asia through Afghanistan. For Pakistan, the road to Central Asia is regarded as a road to prosperity. It would be a foreign policy success as well as a financial coup for the starving economy. The Taliban's interim government declared in December 1996<sup>(36)</sup> that the consortium of Unocal of the US and Delta Oil of Saudi Arabia, Daewoo of Korea and Bidas of Argentina were the companies that were showing interest in the project of the construction of gas-pipeline in this region. On the other hand, Iran held an opening ceremony of the railway from Mashhad to Ashkhabad of Turkmenistan in May 1996. Iran also wishes to strengthen its ties with the CIS for economic recovery. Over this issue Pakistan and Iran have become competing rivals.

## (2) Prospects of the Afghanistan's Problem

Afghanistan has experienced two kinds of war for the last sixteen years; one was the war against an external power, and the other was fought among

the internal parties. In spite of the long-term civil war, Afghanistan has never been divided into pieces, but the political fragmentation of Afghanistan along ethnic lines can present a serious challenge to the territorial unity.<sup>(37)</sup> At this moment, the Taliban have already captured the southern two-thirds of the country, and they may be able to capture militarily the whole country in the future. But it cannot be ignored that military occupation and political control are different things. Even if the Taliban capture the whole region of Afghanistan, they will not be able to control it politically. This can be said to be true of Rabbani or Dostom, too. No single political party, or no single ethnic group can control Afghanistan. R. B. Rais points out that the most important change after the establishment of the Mujahidin's government among Afghanistan's people is the strengthening of ethnic identity<sup>(38)</sup>. And this ethnic identities have been greatly strengthened by the emergence and growth of the different political parties. So as to avoid the disruption of Afghanistan into ethnic divisions, it will be needed to reorganize the present provinces along the ethnic lines, and to establish a federal system of government with provincial autonomy.

Since April 1992, the Mujahidin parties have always been claiming to form a broad-based government with the consensus of Afghanistan's people, to hold the elections to Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) and to demilitarize the country. But an immediate cease-fire is the first necessary step for realizing their claims. The stopping of foreign interference in the name of 'assistance' is the most important measure in order to achieve a cease-fire.

About ex-King Zahir Shah's return to Afghanistan, he can come back only as a neutral symbol of the unity of Afghanistan's people. Once in 1995, Pakistan invited Commander Wali, Zahir Shah's son-in-law to Islamabad as a negotiator. During his stay in Pakistan, most of the Mujahidin accused Pakistan of utilizing the ex-King, and as a result, Wali could never enter his homeland.<sup>(39)</sup> The ex-King's neutrality will be an indispensable term to the



Mujahidin's acceptance.

The destruction of Afghanistan's society by the anti-Soviet war was one of the worst results of the Cold War, but Afghanistan's people themselves are responsible for the consequences of this civil war since 1992. They have rights to determine their own future, but the international community, which once gave a huge quantity of financial and military assistance to Afghanistan should support Afghanistan's people not for their own interest, but for the restoration of peace and stability in the whole country. If not, since the political and military confrontation between Afghanistan's parties has been bringing about the intensification of the ethnic conflict, the problem will be more complicated and the negotiation more difficult, and as a result, the influence of the conflict in Afghanistan will possibly spread over the surrounding regions.

#### Notes

- (1) Quoted in Olesen, Asta, *Islam and Politics in Afghanistan*, Wiltshire, 1995, p.33
- (2) Quoted in Ibid., p.33
- (3) Quoted in Rais, Rasul Bakhsh, *War Without Winners*, Karachi, 1994, pp.192-193
- (4) Ibid., p.176
- (5) Olesen, *op. cit.*, p.42
- (6) Rais, *op. cit.*, p.174
- (7) Ibid., p.178
- (8) Ibid., p.179
- (9) Ibid., p.181
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- (11) Ibid., pp.262-263
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- (33) *News*, Islamabad, 28 October, 1996
- (34) *News*, Islamabad, 19 February, 1997
- (35) *News*, Islamabad, 27 March, 1995
- (36) *News*, Islamabad, 19 December, 1996
- (37) Rais, *op. cit.*, p.259
- (38) Ibid., p.259
- (39) *Nation*, Islamabad, 1 July, 1995

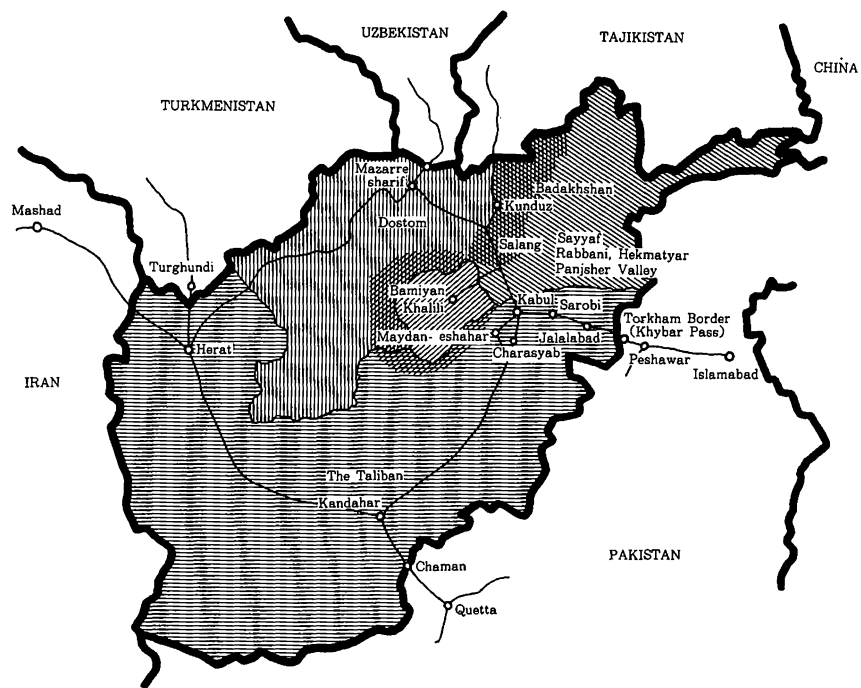


Figure 1: Political Parties in Afghanistan (February 1, 1997)

Name of the Party	Leader	Major Ethnic Group	Influential person(s)	Military Forces (approx)	Bases	Notes
S Jamiat-e Islami	Burhanuddin Rabbani (b. 1940)	Tajiks	Ahmad Shah Massoud	35,000	North-east	Rabbani studied Islamic study at Al-Azhar in Egypt. He became a professor of Kabul University and established Sayyid Rabbani's party. He established the party and moved to Pakistan in 1973. In June 1992, he became the President.
N N			Wahid Khalili		Badkhashan	
N						
E Hizb-e Islami	Yunus Khalili (b. 1925?)	Pashtun	Haqueel, Hali, Abd-ul Qadir	10,000	East	Yunus Khalili is a Pashtun and traditional religious leader. He separate 4 from Hezmatiyar's party.
X					Jalalabad	
T T						
R Ummah-e Islami	Abd-ul Rasni Sayyaf (b. 1946)	Pashtun	Akhtar Muhammad Maulvi, Abd-ullah	5,000	East	Sayyaf studied at Al-Azhar with Rabbani. He is said to be an Islamic extremist and be funded by Wahabi group in Saudi Arabia.
E					Paktika	
M Hizb-e Islami	Gulbud Din Hakim alai (b. 1947)	Pashtun	Qulbud Din Jalili, Mangal Hussain	20,000	East	When Hezmatiyar was a student at Kabul University, he was influenced by Rabbani. In 1973, he moved to Pakistan and became close to Pakistani intelligence. In 1992, he became Prime Minister but attacked Kabul. In 1996, he joined Rabbani.
I					Logar	
S						
T						
S						
The Taliban	Muhammad Umar (b. 1961)	Pashtun	Muhammad Rabbani, Mulla Abbas, Mulla Hasan, Mulla Ghous, Mulla Mullaqaqi	25,000 ~ 50,000	South, West, Kandahar, Kabul	Most of the Taliban leaders once joined the anti-Soviet war as Yunus Khalili's soldiers. After the fall of communists' regime, they moved to the villages in the south in Afghanistan or Pakistan. At first, they raised as a vigilance committee but in a few months, the Taliban gained most of the southern area and in September 1996, they captured Kabul.
SU Harakat-e Milli	Nabi Mohammad (b. 1927)	Pashtun	Abd-ul Hakim	30,000	South, Kandahar, Ghazni	Nabi Mohammad is a moderate person. He once joined Rabbani, but in January 1994, he appealed the support to the Taliban.
MO						
DE						
RA						
TE						
S						
M						
J						
S						
Hizb-e Wahidat-e Islami	Pir Gilaai (b. 1932)	Pashtun	Wardak, Shafiq Gul Agba	3,000	South, East, Kandahar	Pir Gilaai is a religious leader of Qadriya sect of Islam. His party supports King's return.
A						
Hizb-e Wahidat-e Islami	Siqdar-ullah Mujaddidi	Pashtun	Wali Masar	1,000	South, East, Kandahar	Mujaddidi's father was a famous religious leader in Kabul. In April 1992, Mujaddidi became the first President of Mujaddidi's Government.
Hizb-e Wahidat-e Islami	Khalili	Hazara	Ayat-ullah Fazi, Dr. Talib	10,000	Central, Badkshan, Ghazni	Hizb-e Wahidat gained power by the support of Iran. The largest party of Hazara parties in Afghanistan. Former leader Masari was killed by the Taliban in March 1995.
Hizb-e Wahidat-e Islami	Akbari	Hazara		1,000	Kabul, Ghazni	Akbari separated from Masari's Hizb-e Wahidat (now led by Khalili) and joined Rabbani in September 1994.
Hizb-e Wahidat-e Islami	Mohsani	Hazara	Ali Awarai	5,000	Central, Kabul	Small party and joining with Rabbani.
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Figure 2: Mutual Relation of Afghan Parties and the Surrounding Countries

