

Strategic Implications of a Coalition Failure in Operation Enduring Freedom: A Predictive Study on Possible Russian, Iranian and Pakistani Reactions

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INTRODUCTION:

Scholars and leaders, of the military, political and academic varieties cannot fear using the term “loss.” There seems to be an overwhelming view that the United States cannot ever be seen to fail at an overseas endeavor. Take the Vietnam “Conflict” for example. Not truly deemed a “war”, many argue that the United States still has an unmarred and perfect record in the wars it has fought. But for those who fought in it, for those that lost homes and family members in it, whether it was a “war” or a “conflict” does not erase the fact that a very great loss took place. If the United States truly desires international credibility, this will be gained by calling the proverbial spade a spade and not making the same rhetorical mistakes with Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) as were made during the 1970s.

Americans think highly of their nation’s short but successful history and pride themselves on their ingenuity, resilience and generosity. But even the greatest scholars, athletes and leaders can make mistakes. True humility, someone once said, is having an accurate understanding of both ones strengths as well as weaknesses. It is through acknowledgement and understanding of all traits that success can truly be found. No person or group can be successful if they deny themselves the facts about what their history holds or what their future appears to be if they continue on one path. Refusing to use certain terms or words does not change reality. Burying ones head in

the sand simply means that the nastiness of real life will still be waiting upon withdrawal, though it may have worsened while the path of inaction or denial was chosen. Russia, Iran and Pakistan are major players in the future of the nation of Afghanistan, regardless of the outcome of Operation Enduring Freedom. Afghan warlords have carved the country into sectors again and most are financed and supplied by nations bordering Afghanistan (Donini, 2004).

Historically, when one group of people attacked another group of people, those that were attacked typically retained the right to defend themselves against the onslaught. Few people would argue an individual's or group's right to self-defense if their well-being is threatened by someone or something. But what happens when a single group of people residing in one nation attacks a world superpower on the other side of the planet? In the past, when a nation was defeated by a rival, that rival took control of the opponent's territory. Wars were spurred on by the need for new land or resources. But in civilized society, with the access to trade, there is no longer need to conquer in order to gain these things, bargaining or trading is the approved method for gaining what is needed. The primary concern of this paper is to examine the consequences should the United States not achieve its goals in Operation Enduring Freedom. Specifically, this paper is concerned with the future of the nation of Afghanistan involving three parties: Russia, Iran and Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

When Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda organization launched a record-setting attack against the United States on 11 September 2001, the world was unprepared for

the ramifications that would follow. Afghanistan, a nation still shuddering under the after-effects of the Soviet-backed coup which ended in an all-out invasion in the 1970s, found itself out of the frying pan and into the fire when the pro-al Qaeda Taliban government was removed by Coalition forces. Far prior to this military endeavor, Afghanistan has had its share of invaders. While the plains of Afghanistan have been conquered repeatedly, the people residing in the mountains have never been truly conquered (Fiscus, 2004, p. 7). Rough terrain and fierce independence have allowed them to stave off even the most advanced of armies.

But now, Afghanistan's greatest enemy lies within. Rival factions of former mujahideen have fallen back into the civil war that preceded the take-over by the Taliban. But the Taliban is by no means defeated. Initially, the Taliban had been a welcomed change to the brutality of the Soviets and then the civil war, but the harshness with which they governed quickly turned the people of Afghanistan against it. This coupled with the ban on poppy growing which was the only cash crop many poor Afghan farmers could raise was enough to force the nation into destitution, both morally and economically. The key to Afghanistan's future is its own government: its own warlords who are both ministers and power brokers. Also key is going after those who pose the greatest threats to the United States and the international community, which are not necessarily the Taliban or even Mullah Omar but al Qaeda and al Qaeda affiliates.

In some ways the comparison can be made between Iraq and Afghanistan but in reality, they are greatly different. In Afghanistan, a very poor country, there is a rural insurgency and no centralized government (Gordon, 2009). It is important that analysts

understand the interrelatedness of the Taliban and al Qaeda, says Richard Holbrook, Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, U.S. Department of State. "The leaders of the Taliban and the al Qaeda network are deeply intermeshed. If the Taliban succeed in Afghanistan, they will bring back with them to Afghanistan al Qaeda. Al Qaeda will then have a larger terrain from which to operate, and they will have the most enormous international psychological, political victory imaginable to inspire more kinds of people who threaten our homeland" (Gordon, 2009).

A good bit of research has been done on the subject of Afghanistan, but mostly of its past and present. Very little discussion has taken place about what the future holds, should the United States and its partners not achieve what they have sent out to do. A great point of criticism has been the apparent lack of clearly defined objectives for Afghanistan. During an interview with General Stanly McChrystal, Christaine Amanpour directly asked him what he thought the goals of OEF were. His reply broke the process down into two distinct segments. Firstly, that the main concern facing the Coalition was to deny extremist groups, such as al Qaeda, a safe haven to train and recruit terrorist operatives, which was evidenced in that many of the 11 September bombers were trained in camps inside the nation of Afghanistan (Amanpour, 2009). He noted that in order to deny al Qaeda a base to operate from (i.e. Afghanistan) it is important for the Afghan people to understand that Coalition forces differ greatly from the invaders of the past and are operating on their behalf. Secondly, General McChrystal also noted that in denying al Qaeda a base to operate from, the Coalition is also supporting the Afghan National Security agency, giving them time so that they can secure themselves and over time, build their own nation. McChrystal's new plan will focus on the heartland of

the Taliban, southern Afghanistan. If he can cut them off from the population, they can no longer influence, coerce or recruit from the population.

In order to succeed in this, a multitude of international actors will need to coalesce and offer support. But Afghans, ever skeptical of outsiders, are less than willing to accept. If the United States cannot follow through, for reasons of financial strain or inability to attain the trust and support of the Afghan people, it will be the regional powers that must step in to fill the power void and help Afghanistan rebuild and stabilize. Afghanistan has a rocky history with Russia, Pakistan and Iran. Iran and Pakistan have both historically allowed, either through direct understanding or willful blindness, Shi'ia extremists to funnel funds and weapons into Afghanistan. Even now, Iran is investing large amounts of money in setting up infrastructure links between Western Herat and Eastern Iran. Bad blood still exists between Afghanistan and Russia because of the Soviet invasion of the 1970s. Islamic extremism that led to the creation of the Taliban in Afghanistan was birthed in refugee camps in Pakistan when thousands fled the violence of Soviet war.

The Coalition needs to take a look at the way the Afghan's beat the Soviets during the 1970s: the combination of "soft power" from NGOs, plus Western financial aid, private donations and voluntary effort coordinated by the UN was demonstrated first in refugee camps in Pakistan. This combined with the "hard power" of the mujahideen freedom fighters, international society showed that it had the flexibility to partner with local insurgents, inflicting the most grievous defeat experienced by the Soviet Union through the Cold War (Donini, 2004, p. 12).

ACTORS & PERCEPTIONS:

So what is/are the issue(s) for which this paper is/are trying to predict the most likely future? If the US cannot set up a successful government that secures the trust of the people of Afghanistan, what will become of the country? Will Afghanistan become a Russian State? Will the Taliban return? Will another extremist government pick back up where the Taliban left off? There are many nations involved in Operation Enduring Freedom, but not all of these nations will be able to influence Afghanistan should the Coalition fail. Other regional actors will likely step in and play a leading role in fashioning a new future.

Russia:

NATO is currently asking Russia to provide military support (helicopters and training) to Afghanistan (Chance, 2009). Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said in the past that Russia would continue to allow cargo shipments through its territory to help supply NATO forces and maintain its training of Afghan law enforcement and counter-narcotics officials. But he said that Russia would not take on a military role in Afghanistan (Chance, 2009). Russia has its own political and economic challenges, not the least of which is a leader, Vladimir Putin, who is not necessarily considered legitimate leadership. Russia's ongoing struggle with Islamic extremism in Chechnya is another concern which draws its attention away from Afghanistan due to the threat on the home front. However, Russia has a positive take on the direction the war is taking. Russia sees the new U.S. strategy of adding 30,000 troops as "positive" and country should be successful at standing on its own (Novosti, 2009). Chechnya first and foremost (Tsyarkin, 2002, p. 1).

One of its primary concerns with its neighbor, Afghanistan, has to do with the booming drug trade that is centralized around the Central Asian nation. Russia is one of the numerous world-wide victims of the heroin epidemic which claims between 1.5 and 6 million Russian addicts in total (Armstrong, 2009). Overdoses kill 80 people every day and the spread of HIV is an epidemic. Russian policy does not separate a successful Afghanistan from the heroin problem. In Russian minds, the two are completely tied. In the past few years, Russia has accused the United States of doing nothing to curb it while engaging in OEF (Armstrong, 2009).

Iran:

Reaching a consensus on Afghanistan, writes Barnett R. Rubin, an Afghan expert and director of studies at New York University's Center for International Cooperation, is colored by the historic animus between Washington and Tehran, which began with the 1953 CIA-led coup in Iran and was cemented by the Iranian revolution of 1979. Zalmay Khalilzad, the former US ambassador to the United Nations and former envoy to Kabul says that Iran still sees Afghanistan as a bargaining chip against American aggression. Considered heretical by the Taliban due to their stance as Shi'ia Muslims instead of Sunni, feelings still run cold between the two nations. Accusations of funneling arms into Western Afghanistan have colored its involvement with OEF in a negative fashion thus far. In the big picture, Iran does not want the Taliban back. Iran has close linguistic and cultural ties with the Tajiks (Persian speaking Afghans in Herat) and the minority Shiite Hazara group in Central and Northern Afghanistan. Herat was the capital of the Persian Empire in the early 15th century and remained a seat of Iranian influence until taken by Dost Mohammed Khan in 1863.

A stable Afghanistan would benefit Iran in several ways. Firstly, four percent of Iran's total exports in 2006 went to Afghanistan, accounting for more than \$503 million in revenue (Bruno, 2009). Iran is building roads and expanding its industrial base inside Afghanistan's western border. And, like Russia, another benefit would be in gaining the upper hand in Afghanistan's booming drug trade. Iran serves as the major transport hub for opiates produced by its neighbor and the UN Office of Drugs and Crime estimates that Iran has as many as 1.7 million opiate addicts (Bruno, 2009). Iran was showing willingness to facilitate US efforts in Afghanistan including drug interdiction programs after the attacks of 11 September 2001. Tehran also worked at the Bonn Conference to cobble together a post-Taliban system of government. Tehran also normalized relations with the Afghan government of President Hamid Karzai and deported hundreds of al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders who had sought refuge in Iran, according to Hillary Mann Leverett, who served as director for Iran and Persian Gulf affairs at the National Security Council in the George W. Bush administration. Iran had hoped that their cooperation with the US would lead to a genuine strategic opening between the two countries.

However, a strengthened Taliban could also benefit Iran in several ways. A weakened Afghanistan lessened the possibility that it would become a U.S. ally, according to Peter Tomsen, former US ambassador to Afghanistan. He described it as "managed chaos," using a bad situation to ones benefit. Abetting the Taliban helps to boost Iran's leverage at a time when it is under pressure to end its uranium-enrichment program. Even though Iran is the center of Shi'ia Islam, Tehran has given support to primarily Sunni groups in Iraq and elsewhere. This demonstrates that the primary issue

is not ideological but stability. While Afghans resist Iranian encroachment, cultural and economic expansion continues, Iranian radio broadcasts fill the air, Iranian funded road and building projects are underway, a new teacher training facility is being constructed in Kabul and a railway linking Herat and Khaf is being constructed to link the two countries together (Bruno, 2009). Iran also offers humanitarian aid in the form of fuel and transport, almost \$500 million since 2001 (Bruno, 2009). Most of this goes to Shiite Afghans, though. Iran wants stability on its eastern border for commercial and trade reasons. United States, NATO and United Nations officials have all noted the support Tehran has given to the government in Kabul. A stronger Taliban means keeping Western forces off-balance (Bruno, 2009). However, it opened its borders to Afghan refugees during the Soviet war of the 1980s, worked with the Northern Alliance to undermine Soviet influence and then later Taliban rule. Iran's supreme leader denounced the Taliban as an affront to Islam during their take-over in 1996. At one point, the two nations almost went to war over the killing of eleven Iranian diplomats and truck drivers.

Iran has faced numerous accusations about funneling weapons to extremist groups in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Many believe that this is being accomplished with the full knowledge of the government while others believe that the powers at play reside in the hard-line Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, which answers to a different chain of command than the regular forces (Bruno, 2009). The Mashad-based Fourth Corps is responsible for projecting Iranian power into Afghanistan. Colonel Christopher Langdon, a senior fellow at the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies said that it could "maybe even cross-border organization criminal groups. Rogue elements,"

those are responsible. He asserted that arms factories in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province make copies of the weapons made in Iran. Those copies could be finding their way back to Afghan hands.

Pakistan:

As the world's second largest Muslim country, Pakistan's interaction with the countries of Southwest Asia is quite complex. And the history between Afghanistan and Pakistan since 1947 has been very complicated (Gordon, 2009). Pakistan's number one enemy is India. But they have shown a willingness to use extremist groups that it thinks it can use as proxies against India (Bajoria, 2009). Kim Barker, a journalist who has extensively covered the region, says that many in Pakistan's government, intelligence agencies, and military still view India as the real threat and not the militants. "They are still focused on India, and they are still focused on Kashmir, and unless that is dealt with, you are really going to have a hard time getting them to completely focus on the militancy."

In 1997-1998, Pakistan provided the Taliban with an estimated \$30 million in aid. This included 600,000 tons of wheat, diesel, petroleum, and kerosene fuel, which was partly paid for by Saudi Arabia. Also included were shipments of arms, ammunition, aerial bombs, maintenance and spare parts for its Soviet-era military equipment such as tanks and heavy artillery, repairs and maintenance of the Taliban's air force and airport operations, road building, electricity supply in Kandahar and salaries. This was a continuation of aid that had flowed into the country in the 1980s when the US had sought to indirectly support the Mujahedeen as they fought the Soviets. This money was also used to carry out renovations and expansions of the Interservices intelligence

Directorate, or ISI, which tried its best to maintain a tight grip on Afghan policy and Pakistan as a whole. Concerned with the control the ISI was demonstrating over Afghan policy, retired Interior Minister Naseerullah Babar promoted the Taliban. He created an Afghan Trade Development Cell which had the overt intention of facilitating Central Asian trade but a less obvious goal of logistically backing the Taliban. Telephone networks were set up so that anyone in Pakistan could dial Kandahar with the same prefix used to Quetta, Pakistan (081). Despite all of this, the Taliban resisted any efforts designed to control them.

The Taliban's social, economic and political links to Pakistan's Pashtun borderlands were immense, forged through decades of war and life as refugees in Pakistan. The Taliban were born in Pakistani refugee camps, educated in Pakistani madrassas and learned fighting skills from Mujahedeen parties based in Pakistan. The Taliban had numerous connections outside of the ISI, which enabled them to pit one lobbyist against another, even defying the ISI by going to other government ministries for aid and assistance (Rashid, 2000). They would even defy the federal government by going to provincial governments in Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Provinces (NWFP). Pakistan, rather than being the master puppeteer was becoming the puppet. If India remains Pakistan's number one concern and these Kashmiri militants cross the border and conduct attacks in India, Afghanistan will never gain the focus it needs from Pakistan. A friendly Afghanistan would give these militants a base from where they could be trained, funded and armed

RESEARCH DESIGN:

LAMP recognizes that alternate futures are constantly in flux and dependent on the interaction between multiple players. The future changes based on decisions made by more than one person or party. In order to accurately predict what may occur, the analyst must take into consideration what decisions each actor may make. In doing so, those conducting the study must take care to try to see things from that actor's perspective. It does no good to analyze Pakistan's position from an American perspective. The "mirror image" fallacy got the Russians in trouble when they attempted to predict what U.S. strategy would be. They were not looking at it from an American perspective.

This type of study does come with some limitations, though. First of all, the possible outcomes are an ever changing array of outcomes based on day-to-day occurrences. Secondly, information that is up-to-date one day may be grossly out of date two weeks later. Some of the data used here is from four or five years ago. Finally, it is hard to get a good grip on what the "heartbeat" of the Afghan people is because of technological restrictions. The author of this paper is not Pakistani nor is she Russian or Iranian and therefore cannot truly interpret what their perceptions are.

The LAMP method consists of twelve steps listed below:

- 1 . Determine the issue for which you are trying to predict the most likely future.
- 2 . Specify the national "actors" involved.
- 3 . Perform an in-depth study of how each national actor perceives the issue in question.
- 4 . Specify all possible courses of action for each actor.
- 5 . Determine the major scenarios within which you will compare the alternate futures.

6. Calculate the total number of permutations of possible “alternate futures” for each scenario.
7. Perform a “pair wise comparison” of all alternate futures to determine their relative probability.
8. Rank the alternate futures for each scenario from highest relative probability to the lowest based on the number of “votes” received.
9. Assuming that each future occurs, analyze each alternate future in terms of its consequences for the issue in question.
10. State the potential of a given alternate future to “transpose” into another alternate future.
11. Determine the “focal events” that must occur in our present in order to bring about a given alternate future.
12. Develop indicators for the focal events Define the issue for which you are trying to determine the most likely future.

POTENTIAL COURSES OF ACTION:

If the United States cannot reach its goals of stabilizing Afghanistan and completely defeating the Taliban and removes military support from the country, it is highly likely that the Taliban will re-acquire power in some form and re-assert itself. There are five general courses of action that the actors in this paper [Russia, Pakistan, Iran] could take. They could directly aide the Afghan government that follows in the wake of the Coalition, they could indirectly aide the government, they could indirectly resist the government or they could directly resist the government. Direct aide will

include military support and overt funding and approval in the international arena. Indirect aid will be more discreet and take the guise of humanitarian aid. Indirect resistance may come in the form of the freezing of assets and cancellation of any contracts or aid. Direct resistance will include a committal of military forces and as well as the actions taken for indirect resistance. The last course of action could be to do nothing at all and choose the path of inaction or isolation. Because this final course of action, if chosen, would result in none of the actors exhibiting any influence over the nation of Afghanistan it is not a factor and will not be calculated into the analysis. Of note, the acting out of each of these courses of action will appear different depending on the nation that is taking it.

MAJOR SCENARIOS:

There are three major scenarios that should be considered, the first, and most worrisome of which is that the Taliban regains power as a governmental institution following a Coalition withdrawal from Afghanistan. The second is that a pseudo-government driven by a Taliban-like group takes control following a Coalition withdrawal from Afghanistan. And finally, the third scenario, and least internationally devastating, is that the Taliban never regains complete control but maintains a political presence in the country that influences policy making and economics. Each of these scenarios is a possible future should the United States and its Coalition partners fail to achieve their goals of securing Afghanistan and assisting them in setting up a new form of government.

PERMUTATIONS OF BEHAVIOR:

The sixth step in LAMP is to calculate the total number of permutations of possible “alternate futures” for each scenario. ($X^Y=Z$). In this equation “X” equals the number of actions available to each actor and “Y” equals the number of national actors involved. “Z” equals the total number of alternate futures to be compared (Lockwood, 1993). Here we have four possible courses of action for each of the three actors involved (this does not include Afghanistan) and three major scenarios that they might find themselves in. Therefore, the equation becomes $4^3=64$ which means there are 64 possible alternate futures to compare for Russia, Pakistan and Iran which will be determined by the actions of Afghanistan. In order to simplify this process, certain abbreviations will be used:

DA- Directly Aiding the Taliban

IA- Indirectly Aiding the Taliban

DR- Directly Resisting the Taliban

IR- Indirectly Resisting the Taliban

Table 1: Alternate Futures Permutations

Possible Future #	Russia	Pakistan	Iran
1	DR	DR	DR
2	DR	DR	IR
3	DR	DR	DA
4	DR	DR	IA
5	DR	IR	DR
6	DR	IR	IR
7	DR	IR	DA
8	DR	IR	IA
9	DR	DA	DR
10	DR	DA	IR

11	DR	DA	DA
12	DR	DA	IA
13	DR	IA	DR
14	DR	IA	IR
15	DR	IA	DA
16	DR	IA	IA
17	IR	DR	DR
18	IR	DR	IR
19	IR	DR	DA
20	IR	DR	IA
21	IR	IR	DR
22	IR	IR	IR
23	IR	IR	DA
24	IR	IR	IA
25	IR	DA	DR
26	IR	DA	IR
27	IR	DA	DA
28	IR	DA	IA
29	IR	IA	DR
30	IR	IA	IR
31	IR	IA	DA
32	IR	IA	IA
33	DA	DR	DR
34	DA	DR	IR
35	DA	DR	DA
36	DA	DR	IA
37	DA	IR	DR
38	DA	IR	IR
39	DA	IR	DA
40	DA	IR	IA
41	DA	DA	DR
42	DA	DA	IR
43	DA	DA	DA
44	DA	DA	IA
45	DA	IA	DR
46	DA	IA	IR
47	DA	IA	DA
48	DA	IA	IA
49	IA	DR	DR
50	IA	DR	IR
51	IA	DR	DA

52	IA	DR	IA
53	IA	IR	DR
54	IA	IR	IR
55	IA	IR	DA
56	IA	IR	IA
57	IA	DA	DR
58	IA	DA	IR
59	IA	DA	DA
60	IA	DA	IA
61	IA	IA	DR
62	IA	IA	IR
63	IA	IA	DA
64	IA	IA	IA
			2016

PAIRWISE COMPARISONS:

The seventh step in LAMP is to perform a “pair-wise comparison” of all alternate futures within the scenario to determine their relative probability. In layman’s terms this means to compare each alternate future to the others. For example, starting with alternate future number one, the analyst looks at future number one and future number two. Whichever future seems to be more likely gets a “vote.” The analyst then moves on to compare future number one with future number three. Again, the most likely scenario gets the vote. After future number one has been compared to all of the remaining 63 alternate futures, the analyst goes back to the top of the list and compares alternate future number two to alternate future number three, then to number four and then five and so on until each future has been compared against the others. The equation for determining how many comparisons must be made in each scenario is $X = (n-1) + (n-2) + (n-3) \dots (n-n)$ which can also be stated as $X = N(N-1)/2$ where $N = 64$. In this case, the total number of comparisons (X) for each scenario is 2,016. The analyst

will be left with a list of alternate futures that have a number assigned to them. The higher the number, the more likely the alternate future may be.

Table 2: Scenario 1

Taliban As New Government				
Possible Future #	Russia	Pakistan	Iran	Votes
1	DR	DR	DR	50
2	DR	DR	IR	40
3	DR	DR	DA	35
4	DR	DR	IA	42
5	DR	IR	DR	48
6	DR	IR	IR	54
7	DR	IR	DA	33
8	DR	IR	IA	45
9	DR	DA	DR	47
10	DR	DA	IR	49
11	DR	DA	DA	39
12	DR	DA	IA	50
13	DR	IA	DR	48
14	DR	IA	IR	52
15	DR	IA	DA	31
16	DR	IA	IA	47
17	IR	DR	DR	37
18	IR	DR	IR	33
19	IR	DR	DA	17
20	IR	DR	IA	27
21	IR	IR	DR	47
22	IR	IR	IR	51
23	IR	IR	DA	19
24	IR	IR	IA	43
25	IR	DA	DR	52
26	IR	DA	IR	37
27	IR	DA	DA	17
28	IR	DA	IA	47
29	IR	IA	DR	53
30	IR	IA	IR	56
31	IR	IA	DA	17
32	IR	IA	IA	55
33	DA	DR	DR	12
34	DA	DR	IR	9

35	DA	DR	DA	5
36	DA	DR	IA	6
37	DA	IR	DR	10
38	DA	IR	IR	12
39	DA	IR	DA	0
40	DA	IR	IA	12
41	DA	DA	DR	21
42	DA	DA	IR	19
43	DA	DA	DA	0
44	DA	DA	IA	0
45	DA	IA	DR	16
46	DA	IA	IR	18
47	DA	IA	DA	0
48	DA	IA	IA	1
49	IA	DR	DR	37
50	IA	DR	IR	35
51	IA	DR	DA	27
52	IA	DR	IA	29
53	IA	IR	DR	41
54	IA	IR	IR	39
55	IA	IR	DA	19
56	IA	IR	IA	29
57	IA	DA	DR	47
58	IA	DA	IR	47
59	IA	DA	DA	32
60	IA	DA	IA	47
61	IA	IA	DR	49
62	IA	IA	IR	28
63	IA	IA	DA	17
64	IA	IA	IA	34
				2016

Table 3: Scenario 2

Pseudo Government Run By Taliban				
Possible Future #	Russia	Pakistan	Iran	Votes
1	DR	DR	DR	25
2	DR	DR	IR	29
3	DR	DR	DA	21
4	DR	DR	IA	23
5	DR	IR	DR	47

6	DR	IR	IR	49
7	DR	IR	DA	21
8	DR	IR	IA	23
9	DR	DA	DR	49
10	DR	DA	IR	45
11	DR	DA	DA	39
12	DR	DA	IA	52
13	DR	IA	DR	49
14	DR	IA	IR	47
15	DR	IA	DA	36
16	DR	IA	IA	38
17	IR	DR	DR	45
18	IR	DR	IR	36
19	IR	DR	DA	27
20	IR	DR	IA	28
21	IR	IR	DR	29
22	IR	IR	IR	52
23	IR	IR	DA	7
24	IR	IR	IA	28
25	IR	DA	DR	38
26	IR	DA	IR	39
27	IR	DA	DA	20
28	IR	DA	IA	54
29	IR	IA	DR	46
30	IR	IA	IR	53
31	IR	IA	DA	33
32	IR	IA	IA	55
33	DA	DR	DR	13
34	DA	DR	IR	16
35	DA	DR	DA	5
36	DA	DR	IA	6
37	DA	IR	DR	15
38	DA	IR	IR	14
39	DA	IR	DA	2
40	DA	IR	IA	14
41	DA	DA	DR	14
42	DA	DA	IR	19
43	DA	DA	DA	2
44	DA	DA	IA	4
45	DA	IA	DR	9
46	DA	IA	IR	6

47	DA	IA	DA	5
48	DA	IA	IA	5
49	IA	DR	DR	30
50	IA	DR	IR	27
51	IA	DR	DA	38
52	IA	DR	IA	29
53	IA	IR	DR	48
54	IA	IR	IR	45
55	IA	IR	DA	39
56	IA	IR	IA	48
57	IA	DA	DR	53
58	IA	DA	IR	51
59	IA	DA	DA	49
60	IA	DA	IA	51
61	IA	IA	DR	45
62	IA	IA	IR	47
63	IA	IA	DA	45
64	IA	IA	IA	39
				2016

Table 4: Scenario 3

New Government With Heavy Taliban Influence				
Possible Future #	Russia	Pakistan	Iran	Votes
1	DR	DR	DR	9
2	DR	DR	IR	0
3	DR	DR	DA	0
4	DR	DR	IA	0
5	DR	IR	DR	10
6	DR	IR	IR	6
7	DR	IR	DA	7
8	DR	IR	IA	5
9	DR	DA	DR	19
10	DR	DA	IR	29
11	DR	DA	DA	39
12	DR	DA	IA	49
13	DR	IA	DR	43
14	DR	IA	IR	47
15	DR	IA	DA	49
16	DR	IA	IA	39
17	IR	DR	DR	34

18	IR	DR	IR	37
19	IR	DR	DA	24
20	IR	DR	IA	17
21	IR	IR	DR	29
22	IR	IR	IR	30
23	IR	IR	DA	28
24	IR	IR	IA	28
25	IR	DA	DR	49
26	IR	DA	IR	48
27	IR	DA	DA	51
28	IR	DA	IA	57
29	IR	IA	DR	32
30	IR	IA	IR	47
31	IR	IA	DA	29
32	IR	IA	IA	45
33	DA	DR	DR	26
34	DA	DR	IR	16
35	DA	DR	DA	0
36	DA	DR	IA	4
37	DA	IR	DR	12
38	DA	IR	IR	17
39	DA	IR	DA	21
40	DA	IR	IA	29
41	DA	DA	DR	39
42	DA	DA	IR	39
43	DA	DA	DA	47
44	DA	DA	IA	53
45	DA	IA	DR	43
46	DA	IA	IR	43
47	DA	IA	DA	42
48	DA	IA	IA	36
49	IA	DR	DR	19
50	IA	DR	IR	29
51	IA	DR	DA	25
52	IA	DR	IA	17
53	IA	IR	DR	21
54	IA	IR	IR	37
55	IA	IR	DA	32
56	IA	IR	IA	41
57	IA	DA	DR	47
58	IA	DA	IR	49

59	IA	DA	DA	47
60	IA	DA	IA	56
61	IA	IA	DR	47
62	IA	IA	IR	50
63	IA	IA	DA	45
64	IA	IA	IA	51
				2016

RANKING & ALTERNATE FUTURES:

Tables 2, 3 and 4 from the previous section show each alternate future and the number of votes that those same alternate futures received in the pair wise comparisons for each of the three scenarios posed by Iran. The next step of analysis is to rank the alternate futures from the highest relative probability to the lowest based on the number of votes received by each future. Tables 5, 6 and 7 are the alternate futures tables for each scenario with each table arranged in terms of alternate future votes.

Table 5: Scenario 1 Ranked Alternate Futures

Taliban As New Government				
Possible Future #	Russia	Pakistan	Iran	Votes
				0
30	IR	IA	IR	56
32	IR	IA	IA	55
6	DR	IR	IR	54
29	IR	IA	DR	53
14	DR	IA	IR	52
25	IR	DA	DR	52
22	IR	IR	IR	51
1	DR	DR	DR	50
12	DR	DA	IA	50
10	DR	DA	IR	49
61	IA	IA	DR	49
5	DR	IR	DR	48
13	DR	IA	DR	48
9	DR	DA	DR	47
16	DR	IA	IA	47

21	IR	IR	DR	47
28	IR	DA	IA	47
57	IA	DA	DR	47
58	IA	DA	IR	47
60	IA	DA	IA	47
8	DR	IR	IA	45
24	IR	IR	IA	43
4	DR	DR	IA	42
53	IA	IR	DR	41
2	DR	DR	IR	40
11	DR	DA	DA	39
54	IA	IR	IR	39
17	IR	DR	DR	37
26	IR	DA	IR	37
49	IA	DR	DR	37
3	DR	DR	DA	35
50	IA	DR	IR	35
64	IA	IA	IA	34
7	DR	IR	DA	33
18	IR	DR	IR	33
59	IA	DA	DA	32
15	DR	IA	DA	31
52	IA	DR	IA	29
56	IA	IR	IA	29
62	IA	IA	IR	28
20	IR	DR	IA	27
51	IA	DR	DA	27
41	DA	DA	DR	21
23	IR	IR	DA	19
42	DA	DA	IR	19
55	IA	IR	DA	19
46	DA	IA	IR	18
19	IR	DR	DA	17
27	IR	DA	DA	17
31	IR	IA	DA	17
63	IA	IA	DA	17
45	DA	IA	DR	16
33	DA	DR	DR	12
38	DA	IR	IR	12
40	DA	IR	IA	12
37	DA	IR	DR	10

34	DA	DR	IR	9
36	DA	DR	IA	6
35	DA	DR	DA	5
48	DA	IA	IA	1
39	DA	IR	DA	0
43	DA	DA	DA	0
44	DA	DA	IA	0
47	DA	IA	DA	0

Table 6: Scenario 2 Ranked Alternate Futures

Pseudo Government Run By Taliban				
Possible Future #	Russia	Pakistan	Iran	Votes
				0
32	IR	IA	IA	55
28	IR	DA	IA	54
30	IR	IA	IR	53
57	IA	DA	DR	53
12	DR	DA	IA	52
22	IR	IR	IR	52
58	IA	DA	IR	51
60	IA	DA	IA	51
6	DR	IR	IR	49
9	DR	DA	DR	49
13	DR	IA	DR	49
59	IA	DA	DA	49
53	IA	IR	DR	48
56	IA	IR	IA	48
5	DR	IR	DR	47
14	DR	IA	IR	47
62	IA	IA	IR	47
29	IR	IA	DR	46
10	DR	DA	IR	45
17	IR	DR	DR	45
54	IA	IR	IR	45
61	IA	IA	DR	45
63	IA	IA	DA	45
11	DR	DA	DA	39
26	IR	DA	IR	39
55	IA	IR	DA	39
64	IA	IA	IA	39

16	DR	IA	IA	38
25	IR	DA	DR	38
51	IA	DR	DA	38
15	DR	IA	DA	36
18	IR	DR	IR	36
31	IR	IA	DA	33
49	IA	DR	DR	30
2	DR	DR	IR	29
21	IR	IR	DR	29
52	IA	DR	IA	29
20	IR	DR	IA	28
24	IR	IR	IA	28
19	IR	DR	DA	27
50	IA	DR	IR	27
1	DR	DR	DR	25
4	DR	DR	IA	23
8	DR	IR	IA	23
3	DR	DR	DA	21
7	DR	IR	DA	21
27	IR	DA	DA	20
42	DA	DA	IR	19
34	DA	DR	IR	16
37	DA	IR	DR	15
38	DA	IR	IR	14
40	DA	IR	IA	14
41	DA	DA	DR	14
33	DA	DR	DR	13
45	DA	IA	DR	9
23	IR	IR	DA	7
36	DA	DR	IA	6
46	DA	IA	IR	6
35	DA	DR	DA	5
47	DA	IA	DA	5
48	DA	IA	IA	5
44	DA	DA	IA	4
39	DA	IR	DA	2
43	DA	DA	DA	2

Table 7: Scenario 3 Ranked Alternate Futures

New Government With Heavy Taliban Influence
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Possible Future #	Russia	Pakistan	Iran	Votes
				0
28	IR	DA	IA	57
60	IA	DA	IA	56
44	DA	DA	IA	53
27	IR	DA	DA	51
64	IA	IA	IA	51
62	IA	IA	IR	50
12	DR	DA	IA	49
15	DR	IA	DA	49
25	IR	DA	DR	49
58	IA	DA	IR	49
26	IR	DA	IR	48
14	DR	IA	IR	47
30	IR	IA	IR	47
43	DA	DA	DA	47
57	IA	DA	DR	47
59	IA	DA	DA	47
61	IA	IA	DR	47
32	IR	IA	IA	45
63	IA	IA	DA	45
13	DR	IA	DR	43
45	DA	IA	DR	43
46	DA	IA	IR	43
47	DA	IA	DA	42
56	IA	IR	IA	41
11	DR	DA	DA	39
16	DR	IA	IA	39
41	DA	DA	DR	39
42	DA	DA	IR	39
18	IR	DR	IR	37
54	IA	IR	IR	37
48	DA	IA	IA	36
17	IR	DR	DR	34
29	IR	IA	DR	32
55	IA	IR	DA	32
22	IR	IR	IR	30
10	DR	DA	IR	29
21	IR	IR	DR	29
31	IR	IA	DA	29
40	DA	IR	IA	29

50	IA	DR	IR	29
23	IR	IR	DA	28
24	IR	IR	IA	28
33	DA	DR	DR	26
51	IA	DR	DA	25
19	IR	DR	DA	24
39	DA	IR	DA	21
53	IA	IR	DR	21
9	DR	DA	DR	19
49	IA	DR	DR	19
20	IR	DR	IA	17
38	DA	IR	IR	17
52	IA	DR	IA	17
34	DA	DR	IR	16
37	DA	IR	DR	12
5	DR	IR	DR	10
1	DR	DR	DR	9
7	DR	IR	DA	7
6	DR	IR	IR	6
8	DR	IR	IA	5
36	DA	DR	IA	4
2	DR	DR	IR	0
3	DR	DR	DA	0
4	DR	DR	IA	0
35	DA	DR	DA	0

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATE FUTURES:

SCENARIO 1:

Should scenario one come to fruition it would appear in the form of a full re-assertion of Taliban power as the group moved to reinstate itself after a U.S. and Coalition pull-out. This new regime would be clearly under the control of the once ousted party. Under this scenario, the two alternate futures that received the most votes will be referred to as the “primary” alternate future and the “alternate” alternate

future.

Primary: Alternate Future #30

In alternate future number 30, which received 56 votes, a fully Taliban controlled government is seated in Afghanistan following a Coalition removal from the area. In this future Russia takes an indirect path to resisting the new leadership, Pakistan will indirectly assist them and Iran, like Russia, will indirectly resist the change. What this would actually look like in reality would be Russia halting any humanitarian aide and even refusing to go along with any previously agreed upon military contracts. As it stands, Russia is in the position of potentially supplying Afghanistan with helicopters, parts and training for the personnel to operate them. In this future, this would come to an abrupt halt. Russia would stop short of any military action due to its own dire economic straits and a short memory full of bad experiences in the mountains of Afghanistan.

Pakistan, however, in its never ceasing desire to influence and control the events of its neighbor will indirectly offer its support to the new regime. Because of the sensitive nature of the change of powers and the shaky ground it stands on with the United States, Pakistan will be careful to avoid overt gestures of goodwill and will offer humanitarian aid and might even revert to covert means of funneling money to the leadership, as it did before. Iran, like Russia, will resist the change despite its social and cultural ties to the area. In the end, Afghanistan represents a majority Sunni nation run by a group of people that has historically harbored much animosity toward Shi'ia dominated Iran. While the moral victory of seeing the West lost ground in the Middle East may be worth it in some Iranian minds, overall, Iran will be highly concerned about

the negative changes the Taliban may cause to the Iran's economy as well as the regional economy.

Alternate: Alternate Future #32

Alternate Future number 32 received 55 votes. In this future, Russia will still indirectly resist the Taliban dominated regime, Pakistan will still indirectly assist the new government but instead of indirectly resisting, Iran will indirectly assist the Taliban in Afghanistan. As stated before, Russia's concerns over regional stability and the ever-mounting threat of Islamic extremism will keep it from throwing any support behind an extremist regime. But due to economic limitations, no military force will be used. Pakistan will attempt to reassert some control over the Taliban via humanitarian aid but will be more guarded than before, due to lessons learned from the last Taliban government. Iran's role is what makes this scenario so different. As stated before, an unstable Afghanistan may serve Iranian needs by keeping the United States off-balance in its endeavors in the Middle East. Iran fancies itself a rising regional power and in this scenario, it may choose to bridge the gap between Sunni and Shi'ia. By offering humanitarian aid and continuing with infrastructure upgrades, Iran may hope to influence the Taliban and possibly gain an ally against the West, while at the same time keeping a closer watch on the way that Shi'ia Afghans, such as the Hazara, are treated.

SCENARIO 2:

In scenario number two, the United States-backed government of Afghanistan is replaced with an extremist regime resembling the Taliban. Recognizing the negative impact that directly aligning themselves with the Taliban may have on their international credibility, this new government will simply be the Taliban under another name. They

will espouse the same extremist ideologies and adhere to many of the same practices, such as maintaining close ties to the heroin drug trade. This attempt to create legitimacy may work to some degree and some nations may find it more favorable to assist this fledgling regime.

Primary: Alternate Future #32:

In scenario two, alternate future number 32 received 55 votes, making it the most likely future. In it, Russia will recognize this new regime for what it is and indirectly resist it either through sanctions or recanting previous trade agreements. Pakistan will hope that it can influence Afghan policy in its own favor through direct assistance. This will take the form of overt actions meant to recognize and treat the government as legitimate and rightful. This may come in the form of humanitarian, financial or military aid. Pakistan will hope that its help goes unchallenged due to the new government's reorganization and relabeling. In creating close economic ties, the more secure Pakistan will have an upper-hand over the fledgling government. Trade agreements and treaties may even be signed, with the intent of tying Afghanistan closely to its neighbor, with each step indebting the Taliban-like government to Pakistan. Despite the new look, though, the extremist ideology that was cast out with the American invasion is still alive and well and now ruling over Afghanistan.

Likewise, Iran will hope that it can influence this new government to its own benefit through humanitarian and non-military aid. In this future, Iran is willing to trade regional stability for a lack of Western presence in the region. It will continue with the building projects (such as railways and cell phone networks) that it had started before,

in an effort to gain the trust of the new government and then hopefully gain the ear of those policy makers that may affect Afghan-Iranian relations.

Alternate: Alternate Future #28:

In alternate future number 28, which received 54 votes, Russia indirectly resists the new extremist government, and Pakistan as well as Iran indirectly assists it. Like alternate future number 32, Russia will recognize an extremist government for what it is and do everything short of engage it militarily. Russia's primary concerns will be to hamper the drug trade, which claims so many of its citizens lives and to keep extremists from influencing its problem area- Chechnya. Pakistan will not overtly throw its support behind the regime for fear of its still shaky international standing as a possible facilitator of terrorism, a left over from the early days of Operation Enduring Freedom. Instead, it will seek to influence in back channels, possibly through its Interservices Intelligence Directorate. Iran, still clambering to install itself as a regional power, will also seek to influence this new form of government. It too may use back channels to funnel funds with the overall goal of keeping Western influences out of Central and Southwest Asia.

SCENARIO 3:

In scenario three, a new government has replaced the Coalition-backed Karzai government. This new leadership regime may be a more moderate form of extremism, if there is one. While not controlled by the Taliban, many previous members of the Taliban may now hold government offices and with that, hold sway over national policy. This is certainly, from a Coalition standpoint, the most positive of the possible scenarios. While still heavily influenced by extremist and anti-West philosophies, this new form of government may be more open to positive influences from its regional partners.

Primary: Alternate Future #28:

For scenario three, alternate future number 28 received 57 votes. In it, Russia indirectly resists the new government that, while not directly Taliban controlled, is still heavily influenced by Taliban ideals. Russia's primary concerns remain controlling the drug trade, of which Afghanistan is a primary hub, and keeping extremist ideologies at a minimum, particularly in the high tension area of Chechnya. Pakistan, however, will embrace this new form of government and offer direct assistance through military, financial and humanitarian means with desired end result of gaining the ear of those responsible for making policies that affect Pakistan. Pakistan will attempt to assert control over this new form of government, quite like it did to the Taliban of the 1990s. Iran, too, will indirectly assist its neighbor, but with less enthusiasm. While it may offer humanitarian aid and continue its infrastructure projects, its primary concern will be for the well-being of Shi'ia Afghans.

Alternate: Alternate Future #60:

In alternate future number 60, which received 56 votes, Russia will offer indirect assistance to its neighbor in the hopes that good trade relations and a positive perspective may help it demonstrate its own acceptance of a Muslim nation to Russian Muslims, which may help it quell violence in war-torn Chechnya. Because the new government does not directly tout the extremist ideologies of the past, Russia may feel more comfortable about involving itself. Like alternate future number 28, Pakistan will offer direct assistance in the form of military, humanitarian and financial aid. Pakistan will not have to worry about international consequences of backing an extremist government because the Taliban will not be in direct control of Afghanistan. Iran,

grateful for the break in Sunni extremism as well as Western influence, will offer indirect assistance in the form of humanitarian and infrastructure support.

FOCAL EVENTS & INDICATORS:

Determining the focal events as well as their indicators comprises the final stage of analysis. Focal events and indicators serve as a checklist of sorts. Before any natural or man-made event occurs, certain other events happen just prior. These prior events can tip off the analyst as to the timeline and direction that future events might take. By looking closely at what events might trigger a certain outcome, one may be able to pre-determine what course events may take. Because few things are actually set in stone, it is highly important to have an idea of what to look for in preparing for the future. Even if things do not play out exactly as the analyst foresaw, a little preparation is better than none at all.

A “focal event” is an occurrence of sufficient magnitude that it changes the relative probability of the universe of alternate futures (Lockwood, 1993). Dr. Lockwood describes focal events as “a line drawn in time, beginning with the present and ending in the future.” These focal events occur at the intersection which divides the line into multiple branches, each leading into a different alternate future. The most likely future, according to Dr. Lockwood, would be the one offering the “path of least resistance,” in this case, the fewest focal events, or in the LAMP analysis, the futures receiving the most votes. The more unlikely futures will have more focal events associated with them, increasing their unlikelihood. In a LAMP analysis, these futures would be the ones that received the fewest votes. In addition to these focal events, certain indicators will hint at

a change in the status quo. In the field of intelligence, the field is known as Indications and Warnings. Once an indicator is present, the analyst may start looking at the forecasted futures to see which ones contain the indicator, and therefore are the most likely.

In this study, the analyst is concerned with what may happen if the U.S. led Coalition in Afghanistan fails to secure the nation against Islamic extremist groups, such as al Qaeda. Several potential scenarios have been developed and presented and now it is necessary to determine what world events might occur to tip off the analyst as to what course the major actors may take, should the time come. A good starting point is to consider what the status of these actors and the overall situation is as of this moment. In this case, Russia is offering indirect support to the Karzai government in Afghanistan and is in the position to offer more and become directly involved in the scenario. Pakistan is riding the fence between direct and indirect support, half hoping for stabilization but still unwilling to relinquish its ties to the Taliban both in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Iran continues its support to the Shi'ia Hazara populous in the Western province of Herat, but is struggling with accusations of funneling supplies to extremist groups inside the country. Therefore the focal points that need to be considered are any that change the status quo enough to transition Afghanistan into one of these futures. Not all focal events need to occur together to transpose the current future into an alternate future, however at least one of the focal events must occur in order to do so.

SCENARIO 1:

Alternate Future #30: Russia Indirectly Resists, Pakistan Indirectly Assists, Iran Indirectly Resists

Focal Events:

- The United States and Coalition partners withdraw military support from Afghanistan without restoring faith in the current government system
- President Karzai's government is unable to fight charges of corruption and gain the faith of the Afghan people
- Afghanistan's economy begins to lose ground and strides made in bettering it are negated
- An increase in anti-Western rhetoric from leadership groups

Indicators:

- Karzai is ousted and new government is inducted without elections or elections are very limited
- Blatant pro-Taliban personnel are installed
- Afghanistan moves toward extremist theocracy
- Violent protests erupt in regards to corruption in the government
- Schools are shut down
- Heroin production and distribution begins to rise
- Foreign aid drops off
- Inflation rises and unemployment grows
- Pakistan continues to funnel in humanitarian aid
- Any military contracts between Afghanistan and Russia are frozen or cancelled
- Iran ceases humanitarian and infrastructure projects in Herat

Alternate Future #32: Russia Indirectly Resists, Pakistan Indirectly Assists, Iran Indirectly Assists

Focal Events:

- The United States and Coalition partners withdraw military support from Afghanistan without restoring faith in the current government system
- President Karzai's government is unable to fight charges of corruption and gain the faith of the Afghan people
- Afghanistan's economy begins to lose ground and strides made in bettering it are negated
- An increase in anti-American rhetoric from leadership groups

Indicators:

- Karzai is ousted and new government is inducted without elections or elections are very limited
- Blatant pro-Taliban personnel are installed
- Afghanistan moves towards extremist theocracy
- Violent protests erupt in regards to corruption in the government
- Schools are shut down
- Heroin production and distribution begins to rise
- Foreign aid drops off
- Inflation rises and unemployment grows
- Pakistan continues to funnel in humanitarian aid
- Any military contracts between Afghanistan and Russia are frozen or cancelled

- Iran determines there is more to be gained by aiding the new government and maintains or increases humanitarian or infrastructure projects

SCENARIO 2:

Alternate Future #32: Russia Indirectly Resists, Pakistan, Indirectly Assists, Iran

Indirectly Assists

Focal Events:

- The United States and Coalition partners withdraw military support from Afghanistan without restoring faith in the current government system
- President Karzai's government is unable to fight charges of corruption and gain the faith of the Afghan people
- Afghanistan's economy begins to lose ground and strides made in bettering it are negated

Indicators:

- Karzai is ousted and new government is inducted without elections or elections are very limited
- Personnel with ties to the Taliban are installed as new leadership
- Afghanistan moves towards extremist theocracy
- Violent protests erupt in regards to corruption in the government
- Heroin production and distribution begins to rise
- Foreign aid drops off
- Inflation rises and unemployment grows
- Pakistan continues to funnel in humanitarian aid

- Any military contracts between Afghanistan and Russia are frozen or cancelled
- Iran maintains humanitarian and infrastructure projects in Herat

Alternate Future #28: Russia Indirectly Resists, Pakistan Directly Assists, Iran Indirectly Assists

Focal Events:

- The United States and Coalition partners withdraw military support from Afghanistan without restoring faith in the current government system
- President Karzai's government is unable to fight charges of corruption and gain the faith of the Afghan people
- Afghanistan's economy begins to lose ground and strides made in bettering it are negated

Indicators:

- Karzai is ousted and new government is inducted without elections or elections are very limited
- Personnel with ties to the Taliban are installed as leadership
- Afghanistan moves towards extremist theocracy
- Violent protests erupt in regards to corruption in the government
- Heroin production and distribution begins to rise
- Foreign aid drops off
- Inflation rises and unemployment grows
- Pakistan continues to funnel in humanitarian aid as well as military support and equipment

- Any military contracts between Afghanistan and Russia are frozen or cancelled
- Iran ceases humanitarian and infrastructure projects in Herat

SCENARIO 3:

Alternate Future #28: Russia Indirectly Resists, Pakistan Directly Assists, Iran Indirectly Assists

Focal Events:

- The United States and Coalition partners withdraw military support from Afghanistan without restoring faith in the current government system
- President Karzai's government is unable to fight charges of corruption and gain the faith of the Afghan people
- Afghanistan's economy begins to lose ground and strides made in bettering it are negated

Indicators:

- Karzai is ousted and new government is inducted with elections taking place, but only on a limited scale
- Personnel with ties to the Taliban are installed as leadership
- Afghanistan moves towards extremist theocracy
- Violent protests erupt in regards to corruption in the government
- Heroin production and distribution begins to rise
- Foreign aid drops off
- Inflation rises and unemployment grows
- Pakistan continues to funnel in humanitarian aid

- Any military contracts between Afghanistan and Russia are frozen or cancelled
- Iran maintains humanitarian and infrastructure projects in Herat

Alternate Future #60: Russia Indirectly Assists, Pakistan Directly Assists, Iran Indirectly Assists

Focal Events:

- The United States and Coalition partners withdraw military support from Afghanistan without restoring faith in the current government system
- President Karzai's government is unable to fight charges of corruption and gain the faith of the Afghan people
- Afghanistan's economy begins to lose ground and strides made in bettering it are negated

Indicators:

- Karzai is ousted and new government is inducted with elections taking place, but only on a limited scale
- Personnel with ties to the Taliban are installed as leadership
- Afghanistan moves towards extremist theocracy
- Violent protests erupt in regards to corruption in the government
- Heroin production and distribution begins to rise
- Foreign aid drops off
- Inflation rises and unemployment grows
- Pakistan continues to funnel in humanitarian aid as well as military support and equipment

- Any military contracts between Afghanistan and Russia are frozen or cancelled
- Iran maintains humanitarian and infrastructure projects in Heart

CONCLUSION:

While the possible realization of these scenarios may be far off at this point in time, it is still imperative to examine the possibilities. With the United States set to add 30,000 more troops to the Afghanistan area of operations within the next year and a half, the focal events required to start this chain reaction are highly unlikely to occur within that timeframe. That being said, it is never too early to start looking at the outcomes, should the Coalition fail its goals. The primary concern of this paper was to examine the consequences should the United States not achieve its goals in Operation Enduring Freedom. Specifically, this paper was concerned with the future of the nation of Afghanistan involving three parties: Russia, Iran and Pakistan.

The three potential scenarios presented come in the order of most troublesome to least troublesome. The first scenario took into account a full overthrow of the Karzai regime by the Taliban which would usher in a state of heavy human rights violations and recreate a safe haven for al Qaeda. The second scenario would include an overthrow of the current government and the installation of a Taliban-like government which still espoused the extremist ideology but did not necessarily cling to the Taliban identity in an effort to gain international credibility (or at least not draw international fire immediately). The final scenario included the ousting of the Karzai government and its replacement by a new regime, sympathetic to the extremist ideology.

As each scenario progressed, it bore some resemblance to the trends seen in the previous and more destructive scenario. In all scenarios, Russia is less than overjoyed with any regime change because a new Taliban spells trouble for Russia's anti-drug programs. However, in alternate future number 60, Russia might be more willing to work with a government that is the most legitimate option that still has extremist sentiments. Pakistan, in all three scenarios, maintains a willingness to assist the new regime no matter who takes over. However, as the regime becomes less and less directly tied to the Taliban, Pakistan becomes willing to take a more direct role in assisting the new government. Despite the differences between Shi'ia Iran and Sunni-dominated Afghanistan, in all but the primary alternate future of scenario number one(number 30) Iran attempts to maintain a guarded but helpful attitude toward the new government. This is likely because of its wish to keep the West at bay in Middle Eastern affairs, even at the cost of regional economic and security stability.

On a strategic level, what these findings mean in the mind of the analyst are that no matter what may come of Afghanistan, according to this analysis, should the Coalition not meet its goals of securing Afghanistan from extremist groups and assisting them in setting up a working government, Afghanistan's Muslim neighbors will step in and attempt to avoid a repeat of the past. Russia seems to be less likely to assist unless the regime that comes in is less extreme and closer to looking legitimate. Pakistan appears to be the key player who will attempt to influence when others balk. Despite some of the grim aspects of the scenario, it is positive that at no point does direct military conflict enter into the picture between the three actors and Afghanistan. For future studies, it would be best to narrow the analysis down to specific scenarios that

would lead to a coup/overthrow of the Afghan government with special care being given to specific Taliban personalities which might lead it. Instead of analyzing state actors, it might behoove the next analyst to focus the study within the confine of Afghanistan and its own government.

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