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DIALECTICS OF THE AFGHANISTAN CONFLICT
HOW THE COUNTRY BECAME
A TERRORIST HAVEN

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How the country became a terrorist haven

“ American Airlines Flight 11 from Boston crashed into the upper floors of the north tower of the World Trade Center ... It hit the building between the 95th and 103rd floors. Thousands of people were already at their desks in both towers. About 80 chefs, waiters and kitchen porters were also in the restaurant on the 106th floor. Many who worked for firms located in the crash zone were killed instantly. Those on the floors above were already doomed, their escape routes cut off by fire. ”

(BBC News, 11 September 2001)

The incidents of 11 September 2001 were of monstrous dimensions, the like of which was never witnessed before. The attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington were unparalleled by anything seen before in peace time. It led the Americans right back onto the Afghan trail, where they had fought a proxy war against the Soviet Union before the communist superpower disintegrated in 1991. For a decade, the United States had been indifferent to the growing anarchy and violence in post-communist Afghanistan. But the 9/11 incidents forced the newly-elected President, George W Bush, to conclude that there was unfinished business in Afghanistan, belatedly realising that the country had become a sanctuary for violent groups who, he was convinced, were determined to destroy America.

Bush had been in the White House only a few months when 9/11 hit the US. He had won the November 2000 election on a conservative Republican agenda, his vision reflecting a more unilateral approach, with a tendency

towards isolationism.¹ During the election campaign, he had claimed that America now stood alone in all its power, adding that he aimed to project the image of credibility by being strong and resolute. His message to America's adversaries like Iraq and Iran was simple: threaten our friends and you will face the consequences. The United States had to be 'guarded' in its generosity, because it could not be all things to all people and send its troops all over the world.

In essence, there already existed a glowering mood of aggressiveness as well as a tendency for isolationism in America when Bush entered the White House in January 2001. The 9/11 attacks, if anything, acted as a powerful catalyst to strengthen these sentiments. It emboldened Bush to loudly remind the world of America's unmatched military and economic power, warning its adversaries against any act or gesture of threat against US interests. In the same breath, he made it clear that US generosity had its limits and his administration was not prepared to unquestioningly help all people around the world. Reflecting the nation's shock and anger following the attacks, Bush declared a 'war on terror' to punish those responsible for the carnage and to remove any such future threats by pre-emptive use of force.

The object of this paper is to determine how the American-led invasion of Afghanistan came about. It looks at the chain of events in Afghanistan during the Cold War and examines the impact of East-West rivalries on the internal politics of that country. The combined effect of the communist seizure of power and the Soviet invasion in the 1970s and the US-Soviet proxy war in the 1980s was profoundly destabilising. Even after the end of communist rule in Afghanistan and the collapse of the Soviet empire, the conflict continued in Afghanistan and the country came to be identified with global terror in the 1990s. Thus, America's 'unfinished business' there prompted Bush to intervene once again — this time to remove the Taliban from power.

A victim of the Cold War

The last three decades of the twentieth century were a period of intense conflict between competing ideologies. That conflict was played out in Afghanistan. The country was caught up in the Cold War as early as in the 1950s. The clash of capitalism and communism, both essentially Western ideologies, magnified the internal divisions within the tribal system in Afghanistan. Such a society has two essential characteristics. One, it has an inner weakness born out of social fragmentation and, second, a strong inborn instinct to react violently against any foreign interference. These very characteristics were reinforced as intervention by massive military-economic aid and secret intelligence operations grew in Afghanistan and the country fell under Soviet domination. Afghan communists became bolder and they seized power in a bloody coup in 1978. In turn, this rise of communism radicalised Islamic groups in the country.

The transformation of Afghanistan into a sanctuary for violent groups can be seen in four - often overlapping - phases. One, the internal (tribal) conflicts, as old as history in the mountainous country, accelerated social divisions after the communist coup in April 1978. The reign at the centre of a regime with a narrow popular base created conditions in which state and non-state players increasingly began to look elsewhere for assistance. Two, the involvement of big powers and neighbours became inevitable. The US, the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, China and Iran, all had avid eyes riveted on Afghanistan. Three, external interests and ideologies fuelled the already existing internal conflict and social divisions. State institutions – the armed forces and the police, the executive and the judiciary, as well as the economy – all suffered a systemic collapse as a culture of violence became entrenched. The country reached a point where violence permeated all levels of society and became part of human thinking, behaviour and way of life. And, finally, foreign indifference to a devastated country after the US-Soviet proxy war and the fall of communism left a vacuum in which extremists found sanctuary. Let us examine the process

by which it happened.

The nature of dialectic

Attempts by the communist regime that captured power in Kabul in the April 1978 coup to impose a Soviet-style system on a deeply religious people can be seen as the main trigger for a chain of events which was responsible for the escalation of conflict in Afghanistan. There were rebellions in rural areas, mutinies and desertions in the armed forces and internal warfare in the ruling People's Democratic Party – all factors intensifying the crisis. The deeper the crisis became, the more repressive were the measures used by the first communist regime led by Nur Mohammad Taraki in 1978-1979. The short-lived second regime of Hafizullah Amin, who overthrew and assassinated Taraki, was even more repressive, as Amin engaged in large-scale purges from the regime and the ruling party. The resulting disorder in the country prompted the Soviet Union to invade Afghanistan in December 1979 and to install its chosen Afghan leader, Babrak Karmal, in Kabul. The Carter administration in America had already started giving secret aid to anti-communist Mujahideen groups, in July 1979, well before the Soviet invasion.² The US aid, although initially modest, was a significant morale booster for the Afghan opposition and a sign of things to come. These events acquired a certain pattern by the time of the Soviet invasion and violence in Afghan society began to replicate itself.

The nature of such a chain reaction, or dialectic, is self-perpetuating.³ A dialectical process acquires a life of its own by virtue of what is described as the 'power of negativity'. Negativity is the reaction produced by a subject that leads to the creation of its opposite. The first 'subject' is a thesis in the shape of an event, thought or force which is gradually stripped of its immediate certainty after coming into being. Simply put, a thesis is what forms and rises in its environment as a distinct entity, its character imposing itself before reaching a point at which that entity begins to come under challenge. In the ensuing struggle between the thesis and its opposite (anti-thesis), the

certainty of the original entity progressively weakens as doubts are raised over its viability. This explanation of the nature of dialectic is based on an acknowledgment that things are multi-faceted and always in the process of becoming something else because of the power of negativity.

So the conflict between a thesis and its negative, or anti-thesis, is a process that slowly strips the former of properties that determined its certainty and lends the latter contradictory properties. The result obtained in this conflict is a reconciliation between the two, described as synthesis. While the original and its negative were contrary to each other, their synthesis preserves both and stresses unity once again. It is at this point that the synthesis transforms itself into another thesis, leading to further contradictions and conflict before reaching the next stage of resolution. The dialectical progression goes on.

We can now begin to understand in dialectical terms the advent of various external and internal forces that eventually conspired to create a culture of violence in Afghanistan. When a small group of communist sympathisers in the armed forces, representing an ideology that was alien and contrary to the basic character of Afghan society seized power in 1978, that event was bound to lead to profound consequences. Under the communist regime, there was a short-lived experiment to restructure the Afghan society on the Soviet model – an experiment carried out by coercion, including purges, imprisonment, torture and assassination of opponents. The Marxist experiment provoked violent opposition that became progressively more stubborn as measures of the communist regime acquired greater ruthlessness. There was resistance not only in the wider society, but also within the regime. It took many forms – Parcham against the Khalq faction, internal dissidents within Khalq, non-Pashtun against Pashtun, anti-communist against communist and so on. As the conflict escalated, fear and chaos began to take hold and the outcome was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.

The scale of violence was altogether different during the years of Soviet

occupation. The overwhelming war machine of the communist superpower was at work and, in the final major confrontation of the Cold War, the United States threw its vast resources in support of anti-communist Mujahideen groups to fight that war machine. Each and every player used weapons of terror and the conflict produced millions of victims. The violence committed by the Soviet occupation army was answered by the Mujahideen opposition on the ground.

The war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan is often portrayed as one in which the Afghan resistance took on a superpower and won. This is an over-simplification, because such a view ignores the dialectical nature of the conflict which triggered intervention by other external powers in opposition to the USSR. The Mujahideen victory could not have been possible without the military and financial support from America and its allies, notably Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Egypt and China. American and Pakistani intelligence services were deeply involved in the planning and execution of the war against the Soviet occupation forces. The role of Pakistan in the recruitment and training of anti-communist guerrillas was huge and critical.

State intervention from outside also brought foreign militants to Afghanistan. General Zia ul-Haq's military regime in Pakistan allowed thousands of Islamic radicals to train in its territory before they went to fight in the conflict. The experience made them battle-hardened and reinforced their fundamentalist ideology.⁴ After the defeat of communism, they were left without a cause and many returned to their own countries to engage in struggle against regimes they regarded as un-Islamic and corrupt.

Islam and the external dimension

Islam has been a powerful force in the shaping of present-day Afghanistan. It was the main source of resistance to change from above, whether they were imperial powers like Britain and Russia which tried to impose that change, or internal regimes such as those of Mohammad Daud, who overthrew his cousin, King Zahir Shah, to rule the country between 1973 and 1978, or

subsequently the first communist leader, Nur Mohammad Taraki.⁵ Religion, interwoven with a tribal system, provided the core of this resistance.

It was endorsed by local mullahs who found their position in society threatened. The war against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan went beyond this. Islam was used as a political ideology to bind together the disparate factions and their members at the insistence of General Zia and with the active support of the CIA-ISI alliance.

The idea of Islam as a political ideology, not merely a religion, to be used to reshape and control society has come to be accepted as one of the meanings of the word 'Islamism'. Afghanistan is a deeply religious country, but 'Islamism' in the above sense had not taken root in the wider Afghan society before the communists seized power in 1978. In the early 1970s, religious militancy was primarily concentrated in Kabul, where a relatively small number of educated Afghans fought for influence with left-wing groups in student politics and the armed forces. However, the Islamists became isolated in later years. Almost all prominent activists had fled to Pakistan by 1975, when an attempt to overthrow President Daud failed.

At this stage, the Islamist movement underwent internal turmoil as it prepared to oppose the Daud regime. The movement split into two significant groups: the Hizb-i-Islami, dominated by ethnic Pashtuns and led by Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, and the (mainly Tajik) Jamiat-i-Islami under the leadership of Burhanuddin Rabbani. The Pashtun-Tajik divide was to prove permanent, but both groups had a lot in common with their Middle Eastern counterparts. They both recruited members from the intelligentsia. Many of the activists of these groups had been students in scientific and technical institutions.⁶ They were joined by more educated Afghans and foreign militants who eventually fought against the Soviet occupation forces. They were both Sunni Muslims with strong anti-Shia sentiments, reflecting the wider trend in the Arab world against Iran. Sunni Arab regimes, threatened by the growing Shia militancy following the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, wanted to keep Iranian influence in check. Their answer was to support

anti- Shia forces, whether it meant the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein in his war with Iran, or Sunni militants in Afghanistan.

It has been suggested that the ideology of the Afghan Islamists was borrowed entirely from two foreign movements, the Muslim Brotherhood, founded in Egypt, and the Jamaat-i-Islami of Pakistan.⁷ Just like these two movements, the Afghan Islamists opposed secular tendencies and rejected Western influence. Within Islam, they opposed Sufi influence, with its emphasis on love and universality of all religious teachings. Rabbani was among those prominent Afghans who had spent years at al-Azhar University in Cairo and had been active in the Muslim Brotherhood.

Hikmatyar, on the other hand, was close to Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami, which was itself influenced by the Brotherhood and its ideologue, Sayed Qutb.⁸ The writings of Qutb were a source of inspiration to a large number of Arabs who fought against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

The main appeal of Qutb comes from his assertion that the world is 'steeped in *jahiliyyah*', the Arabic term for ignorance. He argues that this ignorance originates from the rebellion against God's sovereignty on earth.⁹ Qutb attacks communism for denying humans their dignity and capitalism for exploiting individuals and nations. He claims that the denial of human dignity and exploitation are nothing but the result of challenging God's authority. The solution advanced by Qutb is that Islam must acquire a 'concrete form' and attain 'world leadership', but this, he said, was possible only by initiating a movement for its revival.

Qutb does not openly preach violence, but other ingredients of a revolutionary brand of Islam are present in his writings. He recognises that there is a significant body of educated people who are disillusioned with the existing order. These people represent a constituency for change in a number of Middle Eastern countries, where economic and social problems, corruption and a lack of involvement in political processes have created a wide gulf between governments and the people. Qutb rejects the communist and capitalist systems alike and asserts that Islam is the only alternative. His vi-

sion is idealistic and its attraction very strong for the alienated, looking for political adventure.

The Muslim Brotherhood was hostile to successive Egyptian governments and firmly aligned itself with the Palestinian cause after the creation of the state of Israel in 1948.¹⁰ When Anwar Sadat became the President of Egypt in 1970, following the death of Nasir, he promised to implement Islamic law and released all Brotherhood members from jail in an attempt to pacify the movement. But Sadat's decision to sign a peace treaty with Israel in 1979 resulted in a new confrontation, which led to his assassination in September 1981. The Muslim Brotherhood went underground and, in subsequent years, developed a complex network of more than seventy branches worldwide.¹¹

Many active members and supporters of these groups were attracted to Afghanistan and even encouraged by the US-led alliance to fight the Soviet occupation forces in the 1980s. However, it was the disintegration of the Afghan state system between 1992 and 1994 and the rise of the Taliban that turned Afghanistan into a sanctuary to which foreign fighters could return without fear of retribution. Many more new Islamic radicals came from the Middle East, North and East Africa, Central Asia and the Far East to study, train and fight in Afghanistan during the Taliban period in the 1990s. They developed personal contacts with each other, learned about the Islamist movements of other countries and planned cross-border activities. The Taliban hosts and their wealthy Arab supporters provided them with security and sustenance.

Conflict within and the birth of al-Qa'ida

No other veteran of the Afghan conflict has achieved such worldwide notoriety as did Osama bin Laden.

He had his initiation into radical Islam as a student at King Abdul Aziz University in the Saudi city of Jeddah, from where he got a degree in economics and management. It was there that bin Laden developed a deep in-

terest in the study of Islam and used to hear recordings of sermons by the fiery Palestinian academic, Abdullah Azzam. In the 1970s, Jeddah was a centre of disaffected Muslim students from all over the world and Azzam was a leading figure in the Muslim Brotherhood. His influence encouraged bin Laden to join the movement.¹²

After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, Osama moved with several hundred construction workers and heavy equipment to the Afghan-Pakistan border and set out to 'liberate the land from the infidel invader'.¹³ He saw a desperately poor country taken over by tens of thousands of Soviet troops and millions of Muslims crushed under a superpower's military might. Afghans had neither the infrastructure nor the manpower to force out the occupants from their country.

Osama bin Laden created an organisation to recruit men to fight the Soviets and began to advertise all over the Arab world to attract young Muslims to Afghanistan.¹⁴ In just over a year, thousands of volunteers, including experts in sabotage and guerrilla warfare, had arrived in his camps. Their presence clearly suited CIA operations in Afghanistan. Osama's private army became part of the Mujahideen forces based in Pakistan and was supported by the United States. Military experts with a close understanding of US policy estimated that a significant quantity of high-technology American weapons, including Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, reached bin Laden and were still with him in the late 1990s.¹⁵

Osama helped build an elaborate network of underground tunnels in the mountains near Khost in eastern Afghanistan in the mid-1980s. The complex was funded by the CIA and included a weapons depot, training facilities and a health centre for the Mujahideen.¹⁶ Osama set up his own training camp for Arab fighters as the number of recruits from the Islamic world kept mounting. After the Soviets left, however, he became increasingly disillusioned by two things. One was the continuing infighting in the Afghan resistance and the other was America's disengagement from Afghanistan that he, with many others, saw as abandonment. Osama returned to Saudi

Arabia to work for his family business.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 and it looked as though the security of Saudi Arabia was under threat, he urged the royal family to raise a force from the Afghan war veterans to fight the Iraqis. Instead, the Saudi rulers invited the Americans – a decision that greatly angered Osama. As half a million US troops began to arrive in the region, bin Laden openly criticised the Saudi royal family and lobbied Islamic leaders to speak out against the deployment of non-Muslims to defend the country. It led to a direct confrontation between him and the Saudi royal family.

Osama left for Sudan, which was going through an Islamic revolution. He was warmly welcomed, not least because of his wealth, by a country devastated by years of civil war between the Muslim north and the Christian south. His relationship with Sudan's de facto leader, Hasan al-Turabi, was close and he was treated as a state guest in the capital, Khartoum.¹⁷ Returning veterans of the Afghan conflict were given jobs and the authorities allowed bin Laden to set up training camps in Sudan. Meanwhile, his criticisms of the Saudi royal family continued. The Saudi authorities finally lost patience and revoked his citizenship in 1994. Osama bin Laden was not to return to his homeland again.

These events had a lasting impact on bin Laden. He had fallen out with the United States and the Saudi ruling establishment and his freedom of movement was severely restricted. In Khartoum, he began to concentrate on building a global network of Islamist groups.¹⁸ His business, Laden International, had a civil engineering company, a foreign exchange dealership and a firm that owned peanut farms and corn fields. Other business ventures failed, but he had enough money to support Islamic movements abroad. Funds were sent to militants in Jordan and Eritrea and a network was set up in the former Soviet republic of Azerbaijan to smuggle Islamic fighters into Chechnya. He set up more military training camps, where Algerians, Palestinians, Egyptians and Saudis were given instructions in making bombs and carrying out sabotage.

The ideological nucleus of what became al-Qa'ida also attracted Ayman al-Zawahiri, regarded as Osama bin Laden's deputy. Al-Zawahiri was born into a leading Egyptian family and fell under the influence of revolutionary Islam at an early age.¹⁹ His grandfather, Rabia'a al-Zawahiri, was once the head of al-Azhar Institute, the highest authority of the Sunni branch of Islam. His great-uncle, Abdul Rahman Azzam, was the first Secretary-General of the Arab League. When he was a boy of 15, Ayman al-Zawahiri was arrested for being a member of the Muslim Brotherhood.²⁰ He trained as a surgeon, but his radical activities led to a rapid advancement in the Egyptian Islamic Jihad. By the late 1970s, when he was still in his twenties, he had taken over the leadership of the group.

In October 1981, al-Zawahiri was arrested with hundreds of activists following the assassination of President Sadat by members of his group at a military parade. The authorities could not convict him of direct involvement in the murder, but he was sentenced to three years in prison for possessing weapons. He left Egypt after his release – first going to Saudi Arabia and then to Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province, from where large numbers of foreign fighters had entered Afghanistan during the Soviet occupation.

There is evidence that the association of Ayman al-Zawahiri with the Afghan resistance started just before his arrest in Egypt in 1981. He was a temporary doctor in a clinic run by the Muslim Brotherhood in a poor suburb of Cairo, where he was asked about going to Afghanistan to do some relief work.²¹ He thought it was a 'golden opportunity' to get to know a country which had the potential to become a base for struggle in the Arab world and where the real battle for Islam was to be fought. On his way to Afghanistan several years later, al-Zawahiri briefly worked as a surgeon in a Kuwaiti Red Crescent Hospital in the Pakistani frontier city of Peshawar. He made frequent visits inside Afghanistan to operate on wounded fighters, often with primitive tools and rudimentary medicines. Ayman secured his place in the Afghan resistance as someone who treated the sick and the wounded – just as Osama had secured his by virtue of being a wealthy Arab who spent his

money and time helping people in an impoverished country which had been devastated by Soviet forces.

In subsequent years, al-Zawahiri emerged as an intellectual and the main ideological force behind Osama bin Laden. He enunciated clear distinctions between his and other Islamist groups. Al-Zawahiri saw democracy as a 'new religion' which must be destroyed by war.²² He accused the Muslim Brotherhood of sacrificing God's ultimate authority by accepting the idea that people are the source of authority.²³ Other Islamist groups were also condemned for accepting constitutional systems in the Arab world. In his view, such organisations exploit the enthusiasm of young Muslims, who are recruited only to be directed towards conferences and elections instead of armed struggle.

Subsequently, al-Zawahiri became even more scathing in his criticism of the Muslim Brotherhood. To him, those who support democracy were by definition infidels, for 'he who legislates for human beings would establish himself as their god'. He argued that the Brotherhood was guilty of mobilising the masses of Muslim youth to the ballot box and extending bridges of understanding to the authorities. In return for a degree of freedom, he said, the Brotherhood was forced to acknowledge the supremacy of the regime. Such a relationship, he said, pollutes minds permanently.

The further al-Zawahiri went in his consideration of modern social systems, the more radicalised he became in reaction. He implied that the moral and ideological pollution was made worse by material corruption. He complained that the Muslim Brotherhood had amassed enormous wealth. This material prosperity, he said, had been gained because its leaders had turned to international banking and big business to escape the repressive and secular regime of Nasir in Egypt. Joining the Muslim Brotherhood created opportunities for its members to make a living. Their activities were driven by materialistic, rather than spiritual, aims. These views amounted to a complete rejection by al-Zawahiri and his organisation, the Islamic Jihad, of other Islamist groups and brought the Jihad closer to Osama bin Laden

and his network.

The influence of the Palestinian-Jordanian academic, Abdullah Azzam, was central to all this. Azzam was a child when Israel was founded in 1948 and had been active in the Palestinian resistance movement from an early age.²⁴ He had links with Yasir Arafat, but their association ended when he disagreed with the secular philosophy of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, eventually coming to the view that it was far removed from 'the real Islam'. Azzam's logic was that national boundaries had been drawn by infidels as part of a conspiracy to prevent the realisation of a trans-national Islamic state. And he came to the view that his goal was to bring together Muslims from all over the world.

Abdullah Azzam saw in the Afghan conflict an opportunity to realise this ambition. Recruitment of volunteers from all over the Muslim world to fight the Soviet occupation forces was to be an important step towards his goal to set up an 'Islamic Internationale'. To achieve this, these volunteers would train, acquire battle experience and establish links with other radical Islamic groups. The Mujahideen resistance in Afghanistan had already established a legendary reputation that would inspire potential followers all over the world. The resistance could eventually become a highly-motivated and trained force, ready to destroy the 'decadent' West and export the Islamic revolution to other parts of the world.

In November 1989, Azzam and his two sons were assassinated in a bomb attack as they drove to a mosque in Peshawar to pray. The identity of their murderers remains a mystery, but rumours persisted about a link with bin Laden and al-Zawahiri. There was speculation that while they both supported the idea of extending the struggle to overthrow Arab regimes, Azzam wanted the job completed first in Afghanistan by replacing the communist regime of Najibullah with a Mujahideen government. Other players, including the Soviet and Afghan secret services, also had an interest in removing Azzam. Whoever was responsible for his assassination, its most significant consequence was that bin Laden and al-Zawahiri gained almost total con-

trol of the network of foreign fighters linked to the Afghan conflict.

The split between Osama bin Laden and Abdullah Azzam in the late 1980s was the beginning of al-Qa'ida. Whereas Azzam insisted on maintaining the focus on Afghanistan, bin Laden was determined to take the war to other countries. To this end, bin Laden formed al-Qa'ida.²⁵ His main goal was to overthrow corrupt and heretical regimes in Muslim states and replace them with the rule of the Sharia, or the Islamic law. The ideology of al-Qa'ida was intensely anti-Western and bin Laden saw America as the greatest enemy that had to be destroyed.²⁶

To understand al-Qa'ida, we need to consider what conditions led to the creation of its ideology. The two main ideologies to emerge after the Second World War were communism and free-market liberalism. Competition between them during the Cold War obscured the challenge they faced from a third force, the radical Islam in the Middle East. The first significant manifestation of this force was the Islamic revolution in Iran in the late 1970s. The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s created an environment in which the challenge from radical Islam was directed against communism. America strengthened it by pouring money and weapons into the Afghan conflict, but failed to foresee that the demise of the Soviet empire would leave the United States itself exposed to assaults from groups like al-Qa'ida. In time, this failure proved to be a historic blunder.

The nature of al-Qa'ida

Al-Qa'ida is often depicted as a relic of the past and an organisation determined to take the world back to medieval times. In fact, its characteristics are remarkably similar to modern organisations and imprints of bin Laden's management skills can be found all over its structure. Like any multinational business, it developed as a loose network of groups operating in different parts of the world. Osama became the 'Emir-General', assisted by a consultative council and four committees – military, religious & legal, finance and the media. Al-Qa'ida then extended its presence throughout the Arab

world and the Israeli-occupied territories, North and East Africa, South and Southeast Asia, former Soviet territories, China's Xinjiang region and the Balkans.²⁷ Its members also set up operational and support cells in Italy, Spain, Germany, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States. These cells consisted mostly of suicide bombers, often with educated middle-class backgrounds.

Secrecy was paramount and the commando cells often knew little about the rest of the organisation. Whether bin Laden was based in Afghanistan, or briefly in Sudan, a wide distance was kept between the leaders and the units. When he returned to Afghanistan in May 1996, his Taliban hosts were closing in on Kabul, but the country stood further fragmented and isolated. State institutions and agencies such as the army and the police had disintegrated. The gulf between the dominant Pashtuns and other minority groups had increased, but the Taliban had established their supremacy in large parts of Afghanistan and the infighting between the old Pashtun warlords had been subdued.

The new Afghan rulers were intensely anti-US. Yet the lack of education and resources made them highly vulnerable to external influences. These conditions were ideal for al-Qa'ida. The Afghan conflict in the 1980s had prepared the Mujahideen in the use of high-technology devices provided by the Americans and their allies. In the 1990s, the inheritors had turned against their old masters.

The anti-Western ideology of al-Qa'ida and the Taliban was a mirror-image of the anti-Soviet policy of the Carter and Reagan-Bush administrations. The mirror was Afghanistan and the image it created was grotesque. As far back as 1977, President Carter had made a break with the *realpolitik* of Nixon and Kissinger and the United States had begun to project human rights, democracy and freedom as its core values. These were rooted in Carter's deep religious beliefs. The foreign policy of Reagan had a far more aggressive moral tone and anti-communism was the essence of his message. In a speech to the US National Association of Evangelicals, Reagan called

the Soviet Union an evil empire – armed to the teeth, vicious, expansionist and racing ahead because of America's self-doubts after the Vietnam debacle. His rhetoric advanced a simple answer: overcome these doubts and rearm in the face of Soviet aggression.

Just as it takes a zealot to recognise another zealot, the Reagan-Bush administration, with its fervent anti-communist sentiments, recognised the Mujahedin and armed it to fight the Soviet Union. For years, Reagan and his officials told these anti-communist guerrillas that they were brave freedom fighters who were defending their religious and national identity and way of life from foreign occupation. The CIA supplied weapons and copies of the Quran to both Afghan and Arab groups.

The principal beneficiaries of this policy were the Islamic radicals whose anti-US ideology had long been known. They represented the opposite of the Christian fundamentalism which dominated America in the 1980s – and opposite of the neo-conservatism of the 1990s. The neo-conservatives, who rose at a time when the Republicans were in opposition in America, sought to impose Western supremacy over Islam and the rest of the world, based on the assertion that Western civilisation was superior. Islamic radicalism, intensely hostile to all foreign influence, was the mirror-image of that ideology – opposite and distorted.

After communism, the mission of radical Islamists became the destruction of America and its allies, the Saudi royal family in particular, secular regimes in the Arab world and non-Muslims anywhere around the globe. America's assertion of its moral values abroad only strengthened the resolve of Islamic fundamentalists to assert their own ideology. The rise of al-Qa'ida and its Afghan hosts, the Taliban, was as much a reaction to America's relentless pursuit of an anti-Soviet policy as it was a symbol of the fundamentalists' will to advance their brand of Islam.

By February 1998, the Taliban had extended their grip to most of Afghanistan and bin Laden's confidence was high. Al-Qa'ida raised the stakes dramatically by announcing the formation of a new group called the World

Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and the Crusaders. The announcement, published in a London-based Arabic newspaper, al-Quds, was a charter for future activities of al-Qa'ida.²⁸ It called on Muslims to kill Americans and their allies, military and civilian, wherever possible, in order to liberate the al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem and to eject their troops from 'all the lands of Islam, defeated and unable to threaten any Muslim'.

The rhetoric was extremely powerful and provocative. It focused on the three biggest grievances in the Middle East: the Israeli control over Jerusalem, the Palestinian problem and Iraq. In a reference to the presence of US troops in the region since the 1991 Gulf War, the declaration spoke of America 'occupying the lands of Islam in the holiest of places, plundering its riches, dictating to its rulers, humiliating its people, terrorising its neighbours and turning its bases into a spearhead' to fight the Muslim peoples.²⁹ It said that 'despite the great devastation inflicted on the Iraqi people and the huge number of those killed' by the blockade against Iraq, the Americans were still not content and were 'trying to repeat the horrific massacres'. America's aims were 'religious and economic' and it wanted to serve the interests of Israel by diverting attention from its occupation of Jerusalem and the murder of Muslims in the occupied territories.

The proof of this, according to the al-Qa'ida statement, was 'the eagerness to destroy Iraq, the strongest neighbouring Arab state' and attempts to weaken all other countries in the region to guarantee 'Israel's survival and the continuation of the brutal occupation' of the Arab Peninsula. In the view of al-Qa'ida and its affiliates, these 'sins and crimes committed by the Americans are a clear declaration of war on God, his messenger and Muslims'. Their assertion was that the Ulema, the authorities on Islamic law, had through centuries 'unanimously ruled' that when enemies attack Muslim lands, jihad became every Muslim's bounden duty.

This interpretation of Islam by al-Q'ida has been described as a distortion of the nature of Islam and jihad.³⁰ It is often pointed out that the Quran speaks of peace as well as of war. Islam originates from the same Arabic root

as Salaam, which means peace, and is interpreted in various ways: cleansing the body and soul of evil, and submitting to the authority of God. Jihad is to strive for justice against evil, including one's own failings. The term may mean struggle, armed or otherwise, if one's faith, honour and homeland are in danger. Or it may involve writing books, making speeches, donating money and doing humanitarian work in the interest of all. In essence, the instruction to each follower is to do all he can (for God, peace and the people).³¹ The need for peace and mutual understanding among different faiths and races is recognised under Islam.³²

Personal freedom and dignity for men and women are enshrined in the Quran.³³ It does approve of the killing of enemies, but only for specific purposes and not at all times and places.³⁴ It certainly does not allow the killing of innocent civilians.³⁵ The Quran specifically prohibits violence against those who have not attacked.³⁶ In times of conflict, there is consolation for prisoners of war. For if there is 'any good in their hearts', then God will give them mercy and something better than has been taken away from them.³⁷

There are thousands of teachings in the Quran. The entire body of Islamic sayings and traditions attributed to the Prophet and interpreted by Islamic authorities in various ways offers a wide range of directions to Muslims, to be followed in accordance with the needs of the time and the place. When al-Qa'ida quotes verses from the Quran to justify its campaign of violence, its choice is very selective and narrow. Armed struggle is only one of many forms of jihad and is recognised as regular warfare against infidels and apostates. The relevant laws prescribe rules about the opening and closing of hostilities and treatment of the innocent and the prisoners-of-war. Islam does not allow torture. Osama bin Laden and his network adopted few, if any, of these caveats enshrined in the Islamic teachings.

Al-Qa'ida coming of age

With the open declaration of war against America, al-Qa'ida had come of age by 1998. It had been linked to a number of high-profile attacks in dif-

ferent parts of the world and its reach had extended to almost every continent. The event that fuelled the advance of al-Qa'ida was the US-led war against Iraq in 1991.³⁸ Although Saddam Hussein got virtually no support from Arab regimes following his invasion of Kuwait, the arrival of hundreds of thousands of American troops generated mass resentment in the region. This mass anger was harnessed by al-Qa'ida. The American-led coalition failed to see the long-term consequences of the situation.

Western intelligence sources estimated that bin Laden had about ten camps in Taliban-controlled parts of Afghanistan and that training in unconventional warfare was provided at several of these.³⁹

Al-Qa'ida and its associated groups had training camps in other countries, too, including Sudan, Somalia and Kenya.⁴⁰ The network had set up businesses to generate income and provide cover for 'the procurement of explosives, weapons and chemicals and for the travel of al-Qa'ida operatives'. Several underground cells had been 'detected and neutralised' in Britain, Germany, Italy, Canada and the United States, but new units had emerged in their place.⁴¹ There were many cells active in about fifty other countries. The first generation of al-Qa'ida militants included men who had fought in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the second generation in Algeria, Egypt, Tajikistan, Chechnya, Nagorno-Karabakh, Kashmir and Mindanao in the Philippines. There were enough wars going on around the world to supply fighters filled with hatred for America and willing to die for their mission to destroy what that country stood for.

In October 1993, al-Qa'ida was involved in attacks on American troops on a humanitarian mission in Somalia, killing eighteen soldiers. Western governments learned afterwards that Somali tribesmen had been trained for those attacks earlier in the same year. Leading al-Qa'ida figures had visited the country a number of times and reported back to bin Laden in Sudan. Kenya became another stronghold of al-Qa'ida, which set up businesses there and began to discuss the possibility of attacking the US embassy in Nairobi.⁴² In February 1993, a car bomb attack on the World Trade Center

in New York had taken the lives of six people and injured more than a thousand, but its symbolic impact was far more serious, coming as it did in the heart of America's financial capital. The operational leader of the attack was Ramzi Yusuf, a Pakistani Baluch born in Kuwait.⁴³

Ramzi had close ties with al-Qa'ida and had often travelled on a fake Iraqi passport. After the Trade Center bombing, he had travelled secretly to Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan (in which country he had stayed in a guesthouse run by bin Laden in Peshawar). It is also known that Ramzi spent some time at an al-Qa'ida training camp on the Pakistan-Afghan border between 1989 and 1991, before leaving for the United States. After his arrest in 1995, he told the FBI that he had spent six months at the camp learning to make bombs. His arrest was made possible only because the Filipino authorities were alerted in 1994 when an explosives experiment by Yusuf went wrong and started a fire in his Manila apartment. He escaped, leaving behind his computer which had detailed plans to blow up as many as eleven passenger aircraft and to assassinate the Pope. Following a world-wide search, Yusuf was captured in the Pakistani capital, Islamabad, a year later and extradited to America.⁴⁴

Two simultaneous bomb attacks on the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam stunned the world in August 1998. More than two hundred people were killed and nearly five thousand wounded in Nairobi. In Dar-es-Salaam, at least ten died and over seventy were injured. Within hours, al-Qa'ida had informed the world media by fax that it had carried out the bombings. According to the British government, the faxes were traced to a number that had been used to contact bin Laden's mobile phone.

In an interview with *Time* magazine at a secret location in Afghanistan four months after the embassy bombings, bin Laden was directly asked if he was responsible for the attacks.⁴⁵ His reply was that 'if the instigation for jihad against the Jews' was considered a crime, then 'let history be a witness that I am a criminal'. He said that his 'job is to instigate' and 'certain people had responded to this instigation'. Those 'who risked their lives' were 'real

men.’ They ‘managed to rid the Islamic nation of disgrace’ and the organisation held them ‘in the highest esteem’.

How could he justify the deaths of Africans? His answer was that he understood the motives of the bombers. He claimed that the killing of Muslims was ‘permissible under Islam’ if it became apparent that it would be impossible to repel Americans without launching attacks in which Muslims might also die. He played on the US fear that al-Qa’ida might be trying to acquire chemical weapons. Securing ‘weapons for the defence of Muslims was a religious duty’. If he had ‘indeed acquired these weapons’, then he thanked God for ‘enabling him to do so’.

In October 2000, the American naval destroyer, USS Cole, was attacked in Aden harbour. A small boat laden with high explosives struck the warship as it was being refueled. The explosion blew up a large hole in the ship, killing seventeen sailors and injuring thirty others.⁴⁶ The British Government said that several of the perpetrators of the USS Cole attack were ‘trained at Osama bin Laden’s camps in Afghanistan’. Earlier in January, an attempt to blow up another American vessel was aborted when the attack boat sank before carrying out the mission.

The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001 were defining events in a number of ways. Images of hijacked planes striking at the heart of America were the most dramatic illustration of an asymmetric war between the United States and Islamic militants determined to fight the only remaining superpower in the world.⁴⁷ Events on the day proved that the demise of the Soviet Union did not mean that the global challenge to American power had come to an end. A new enemy had emerged in the twenty-first century – invisible, unpredictable and able to strike anywhere. Its most lethal weapons were the suicide bombers who believed that martyrdom was the path to paradise. The Americans had reason to be deeply troubled. For, after Pearl Harbor, the United States was facing an enemy that had brought war directly onto their homeland.

The initial shock felt by America turned into anger and a determina-

tion to exact retribution. President George W Bush described the attacks as ‘more than acts of terror.’⁴⁸ He called them ‘acts of war’ and promised a ‘monumental struggle of good versus evil’ – a struggle in which ‘good will prevail’. Bush proclaimed America’s right to take pre-emptive military action, unilateral if necessary, in a new ‘war against terror’. And so, more than ten years after turning away from Afghanistan, the United States was back again to overthrow the Taliban, successors to the Mujahideen whom America had helped with billions of dollars in the war against communism. The big idea this time was to destroy al-Qa’ida, but neither the enemy nor his territory was precisely known and the ‘war against terror’ seemed to have no end.

Conclusion

It is now possible to deduce what forces and their interplay created the phenomenon of terrorism of such magnitude. The weakness of Afghan institutions, especially after the overthrow of the monarchy in 1973, and the fragmented character of the country’s tribal system made certain that there were many ethnic, sectarian and political groups in society, often at odds with each other. Conflict between these groups was frequent and, as their alienation from the Kabul regime grew, they increasingly looked outside. Extreme poverty had made Afghanistan dependent on foreign handouts. The narrow popular base of the communist regime which came to power in the April 1978 coup and growing rebellions enlarged the void in the country. The power of state institutions steadily eroded and foreign players were only too eager to move into the void.

The 1970s were a critical decade for Afghanistan. Communism was on the offensive and Islamic groups were in retreat amid military takeovers and radicalisation of society. Ideological conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union fuelled this internal upheaval in Afghanistan. The alliance between the United States and the Mujahideen to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan was opportunistic, but radical Islamic movements saw Ameri-

ca and its allies in the region as corrupt and un-Islamic. The growth of radical Islam made certain that Afghanistan became a haven for terrorism after the defeat of communism. An explosive mix of ethnic, tribal and ideological forces was already there. It was an increasingly violent chain of events triggered by the US-Soviet proxy war after the communist coup in 1978 that ultimately gave rise to the phenomenon of terrorism in the new century.

There are lessons to be drawn from the conduct of big powers in the Cold War. The ‘war on terror’ declared by President George W Bush after 11 September 2001 shows few signs of succeeding. After Afghanistan, it panned out to Iraq in March 2003. The American-led invasion of Iraq overthrew the regime of Saddam Hussein, but it also dismantled the entire state structure of the country.⁴⁹

The break-up of Iraqi national institutions – the armed forces, the police and the administrative system – was violent and sudden and alternatives were tentative and slow to emerge. The dialectic started by the US-led invasion created stubborn resistance to the occupation forces, polarised Iraqi society and created a culture in which Iraqis found themselves in conflict with fellow Iraqis and militant Islamic groups were drawn to Iraq to fight the occupation forces.

Parallels can be seen in Palestine, in Lebanon and other places, where social and institutional frailties, combined with outside intervention, fuel a dialectic of violence which, in time, becomes part of the culture. Violent players and their victims become used to coercion, their thinking and behaviour driven by the perceived justification for, or expectation of, use of force to resolve matters. Players and victims may be different in each place. What triggers a cycle of violence is unique and where events will lead to may be unknown. Still, where the appropriate agents are present, a violent dialectic and terror are close companions.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deepak Tripathi, a former BBC correspondent in Kabul, has been following with close interest the events unfolding in Afghanistan since the communist takeover in 1978. His reporting assignments also took him to India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Syria. He has written extensively on Afghanistan and South Asia in various international publications, including The Economist and The Daily Telegraph, London.

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1. Transcript of the second televised debate between Al Gore and George W Bush in the presidential election campaign of 2000. The debate was held on 11 October 2000 at Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, North Carolina (Commission on Presidential Debates).
2. The revelation was made by Robert Gates, a career CIA officer, who served as the agency's Director between 1991 and 1993. See his memoirs, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), pp 143-149. President George W Bush appointed Gates as Defense Secretary in December 2006.
3. The theory of the dialectic was developed by German philosopher, Hegel (1770 – 1831).
4. Estimates differ considerably, but according to Ahmed Rashid, who has closely followed events in Afghanistan, the number was over 25,000. See *"Pakistan: Trouble Ahead, Trouble Behind"* (Current History, April 1996), p 161.
5. French scholar, Olivier Roy, makes this point in a study of Islam in Afghan society. See "Has Islamism a future in Afghanistan?" in William Maley (editor), *Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban* (London: Hurst & Company, 2001), pp 199-211.
6. For instance, Hikmatyar and Rabbani's senior commander, Ahmad Shah Masood, had both been engineering students.
7. Roy "Has Islamism a future in Afghanistan?" , p 201. The founder of the Muslim Brotherhood was Hasan al-Banna, who started the movement in 1928. Today, it inspires organisations like Hamas and the Egyptian Jihad and there are branches of the Brotherhood in other Arab states.
8. Sayed Qutb was an American-educated Egyptian, who worked in the Ministry of Public Instruction in Cairo. His association with the Islamic Brotherhood led him to leave the civil service and he became the most influential theorist in the movement. Qutb spent years in jail. In 1965, he wrote his most controversial book, *Milestones*, after which he was accused of conspiring against the government of President Nasir, rearrested and executed in August 1966.
9. See the introductory chapter, *Milestones*.
10. See *"Muslim Brotherhood"*, Federation of American Scientists.
11. Organisations such as al-Jihad, al-Gama'at al-Islamiyya, Hamas and Islamist groups in Afghanistan.
12. Maha Azzam, "Al-Qa'ida: the misunderstood Wahhabi connection and the ideology of violence" (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, Briefing Paper No 1, February 2003), p 2.
13. See Yael Shahaar, "Osama bin Laden: Marketing Terrorism" (Herzliya, Israel: International Policy Institute for Counter -Terrorism, 22 August 1998). Osama's father, Mohammad Awad bin Laden, a naturalised Saudi citizen of Yemeni origin,

- had made his fortune from a huge empire of construction firms. He was close to the Saudi royal family.
14. The name of the organisation was Makhtab al-Khidmat, meaning the House of Auxiliaries, which bin Laden created with Abdullah Azzam. The fighters it trained usually joined the Hizb-i-Islami group of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar.
 15. Shahar, "Osama bin Laden" .
 16. Ahmed Rashid, "Osama bin Laden: How the US Helped Midwife a Terrorist", excerpt from *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
 17. Hasan al-Turabi was head of the Islamic Liberation Front and speaker of the Sudanese Parliament.
 18. See, Jason Burk's authoritative article "The making of the world's most wanted man" in the Focus section of Britain's Observer newspaper, 28 October 2001.
 19. There are many sources of information and analysis on his place in the hierarchy. See, for example, Nimrod Raphaeli, "Ayman Mohammad al-Rabi al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch-Terrorist" (Washington, DC: The Middle East Media Research Institute), originally published in the Winter 2002 edition of the journal, *Terrorism and Political Violence*; also Ed Blanche, "Ayman al- Zawahiri: attention turns to the other prime suspect" (*Jane's Intelligence Review*, 3 October 2001), and the US Federal Bureau of Investigation.
 20. Blanche, "Ayman al-Zawahiri" .
 21. Raphaeli, "Ayman Mohammad al-Rabi,, al-Zawahiri: The Making of an Arch-Terrorist" .
 22. Raphaeli examines these views, in particular, in a discussion of al-Zawahiri's two books, *The Bitter Harvest* and *Knight under the Banner of the Prophet* (his autobiography).
 23. This appears to be a reference to the Muslim Brotherhood directly or indirectly taking part in elections in Egypt.
 24. He was born in 1941 near Jenin on the West Bank. He was a member of the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood and the Palestinian Jihad. See Colonel Jonathan Fighel, "Sheikh Abdullah Azzam: Bin Laden's spiritual mentor" (Herzliya, Israel: International Policy Institute for Counter-Terrorism).
 25. Sometime during 1988-1989. See "al-Qa'ida" (Institute for Counter Terrorism) and "Timeline: Al-Qa'ida" (Guardian online).
 26. A statement by al-Qa'ida, first published in 1996, held America, Israel and the Saudi royal family responsible for the 1991 Gulf War and the Lebanon conflict. The statement called it a duty of every tribe in the Arab Peninsula to fight in the cause of Allah and to cleanse the land from those occupiers . It promised young Muslims paradise after death in the war. See "Declaration of War against the Americans occupying the Land of the two Holy Places" .
 27. For a fuller list, refer to Phil Hirschhorn, Rohan Gunaratna, Ed Blanche and Stefan

- Leader, "Blowback" in Jane's Intelligence Review, Volume 13, Number 8, 1 August 2001, SECTION: SPECIAL REPORT.
28. It was published on 23 February 1998 and signed by Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri (the Egyptian Jihad), Rifai Ahmad Taha (the Islamic Group of Egypt), Sheikh Mir Hamzah (the Jamiat-ul Ulema-i-Pakistan) and Fazlul Rahman (the Jihad Movement of Bangladesh).
 29. To end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait.
 30. For an illuminating analysis, see Bernard Lewis, "License to Kill: bin Laden's Declaration of Jihad" (Foreign Affairs, Volume 77, Number 6, November/December 1998), pp 14-19.
 31. The Quran (Chapter 9, Verse 41), which the Muslims believe to be the word of God as revealed to the Prophet Mohammad in Arabic. For three different translated versions of the Quran, see the University of Southern California website (www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/quran/).
 32. "All people are one community" (2:213); "If the enemy leans towards peace, then incline to it" (8:61).
 33. "We have honoured the sons of Adam, provided them with transport on land and sea, given them things for sustenance good and pure and conferred on them special favours" (17:70); "We have created you male and female, made you into nations and tribes, so you may know (and not despise) each other" (49:13).
 34. See, for example, 9:5, 9:28-29 for instructions dealing with the unbelievers, or the pagans, during the time of the Prophet Mohammad, specially references to "the forbidden months" and "after this year".
 35. "Whoever killed a human being – unless it was for murder or mischief in the land – it would be as though he killed the whole people" (5: 32); "We must punish those from the enemy who did us harm and treat the civilians and the innocent with kindness" (18:86); "Tell those who believe to forgive those who do not look forward to the days of Allah. It is for Him to recompense each people for what they have earned (45:14)."
 36. "Fight in the cause of God those who fight you, but do not transgress limits, for God loveth not transgressors (2:190)."
 37. See (8:70-71).
 38. See Paul Rogers and Scilla Elworthy, "A Never-Ending War: Consequences of 11 September" (Oxford: Oxford Research Group, Briefing Paper, March 2002), p 3.
 39. Hirschhorn, Gunaratna, Blanche and Leader, "Blowback" in Jane's Intelligence Review, 1 August 2001; "Responsibility for the Terrorist Atrocities in the United States, 11 September 2001 – An Updated Account" (London: UK government report). A useful source containing a list of Afghan training camps is the South Asia Terrorism Portal, the Institute of Conflict Management, New Delhi, India (www.satp.org/satporgtp/usa/Afghanmap.htm).
 40. "Responsibility for the Terrorist Atrocities", UK government report.

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41. Hirschhorn, Gunaratna, Blanche and Leader, "Blowback" in JIR.
42. "Responsibility for the Terrorist Atrocities", UK government report.
43. Ramzi Yusuf had obtained a degree in electronic engineering in Britain before moving to the United States.
44. In 1998, Yusuf was tried in New York and sentenced to 240 years in jail.
45. The interview was conducted by a leading Pakistani journalist, Rahimullah Yusufzai, and published in the 11 January 1999 issue of *Time* magazine.
46. See "USS Cole Returns to the Fleet", News Special, the US Navy Office of Information, 19 April 2002.
47. Three aircraft were used as missiles to hit the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. A fourth plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania state after a group of passengers tried to overpower the hijackers. All aboard were killed.
48. Remarks by Bush after meeting his National Security Team at the White House on 12 September 2001. See the document collection entitled "September 11, 2001: Attack on America", the Avalon Project, Yale Law School.
49. Order No 1 of 16 May 2003 (De-Ba-athification of Iraq) and Order No 2 of 23 May 2003 (Dissolution of Entities with Annex A) signed by the US Administrator of Iraq, Paul Bremer.

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The last three decades of the twentieth century were a period of intense conflict between competing ideologies. That conflict was played out in Afghanistan. The clash of capitalism and communism, both essentially Western ideologies, magnified the internal divisions within the tribal system in Afghanistan. This paper looks at the chain of events during the Cold War and examines the impact of East-West rivalries on Afghanistan. It provides a historical analysis of the rise of the Islamist group, Taliban, and the country's transformation into a terrorist sanctuary.

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