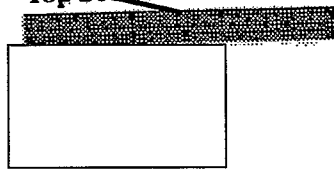


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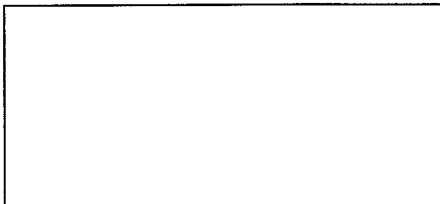
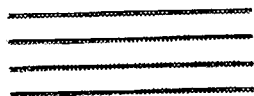
Director of Central Intelligence



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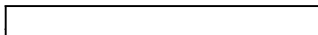
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Special Analyses

AFGHANISTAN: Taliban Victory's Impact

14



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~~Top Secret~~**AFGHANISTAN:****Taliban Victory's Impact**

Taliban's immediate focus will be to consolidate its rule in Kabul and develop a strategy to extend its sway nationwide, especially in the north where apprehension regarding the predominantly Pashtun Taliban is likely to prompt ethnic minorities to resist its attempts to enter their areas.

Taliban's Approach to Government

Taliban's leaders espouse a puritanical Islamic state. In areas under its control, Taliban has imposed Islamic law, including punishments such as stoning and amputation, and it has rigidly enforced the seclusion of women. By all accounts, many residents of Taliban-administered areas, who hope for improvements in law and order, have accepted the harsh policies.

US officials who have met with Taliban leaders have been struck by their lack of sophistication and ignorance of administrative processes. When asked about future plans, Taliban leaders indicate that details will resolve themselves once Afghanistan is "cleansed" of warring factions and Taliban consolidates its control.

- Taliban has demonstrated scant interest in the UN peace process or proposals for fashioning a broad-based coalition government.
- The group has no discernible economic policy beyond Koranic injunctions against usury, but some members decry profitmaking as un-Islamic.

Mixed Record on Terrorism

Taliban has tolerated some terrorist groups while shutting down others. Taliban has closed militant training camps associated with Prime Minister Hikmatyar, factional leader Sayyaf, and Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami. Taliban has not closed other camps associated with Usama bin Ladin, Hizbi Islami (Khalis), Pakistan's Jamiat-Ulema-i-Islam, and Harakat ul-Ansar, including the HUA's main training camp in Khowst.

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Afghanistan: Reaction in the Region

Most of Afghanistan's neighbors—with the exception of Pakistan—are wary of the group, but they are not likely to act directly against it.

- According to press reports, Pakistan appears ready to recognize Taliban as the legitimate ruler of Afghanistan. Nonetheless, Islamabad is likely to go slowly on relations with Kabul to avoid antagonizing neighbors—such as Iran—that have opposed Taliban.
- Iran has tempered its criticism of Taliban but wants a role for Afghanistan's other factions in a future government, according to press reports. Tehran's concerns about security along the border with Iraq probably will prevent it from becoming more involved in Afghanistan's civil war.
- India probably will continue to support deposed President Rabbani but can do little to influence events. New Delhi probably would regard a fundamentalist government in Afghanistan as a threat to regional stability.
- Central Asian states bordering Afghanistan are leery of Taliban's religious fanaticism. Officials in Uzbekistan are particularly concerned that Taliban harbors ambitions of spreading its influence beyond Afghanistan's borders

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~~Top Secret~~**Little Short-Term Impact on Narcotics**

Taliban has vowed to eradicate poppy production in areas it controls but has not followed through. the importance of narcotics to the local economy, the crowd of traffickers, and the probable involvement in the trade by some members have prompted Taliban to back away from its pledge.

Refugee Situation Stable

Fighting in and around Kabul is not likely to trigger a mass exodus to the countryside or to Pakistan. According to press reports, civilians are vacating only those urban areas threatened by the fighting. If Taliban commanders consolidate control over the city in fairly short order, Taliban probably will keep supply lines of food, fuel, and shelter materials open and continue to welcome international relief.

Relations With US

The Afghanistan-centric group appears to give little weight to external relations, but there is no evidence that a Taliban government would be systematically unfriendly to US interests. A handful of Taliban officials have met occasionally with US diplomats in South Asia and in Washington. Some of these officials seem convinced the US has been funneling assistance to Taliban through Pakistani authorities.

— This belief could provide openings for a dialogue on regional issues, but the dialogue would be likely to founder on profound differences, for example over human rights. Taliban's willingness to risk losing aid from international organizations over its treatment of women hints at the group's inflexibility.

— Taliban will be looking for recognition as the legitimate government of Afghanistan.

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