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The US Policy Pitfalls in Afghanistan and Their Impacts on the Resurgence of the Taliban

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Abstract

The US stayed in Afghanistan for two decades, but the Taliban's insurgency didn't decrease. Instead, each year, the Taliban grew stronger against the both National forces. Notably, the dysfunctions experienced under Republican governments, as well as the coercive tactics employed by US and Afghan national forces, such as night raids, unlawful detentions, cum with bribery, unemployment, poverty, nepotism in both public and private spheres, and rampant injustice, furthered the frustration among Afghan citizens. As a result, many Afghans, driven by their frustration, joined the Taliban against both the US, Afghan national forces, and republican governments to reclaim their due rights and outpour the aggression. Under these circumstances, the Taliban strategically capitalized on a range of persuasive tactics to entice and captivate the Afghans. The multifaceted approach played a significant role in drawing these individuals towards the Taliban's cause and cementing their allegiance in the face of mounting frustrations and grievances.

Keywords: Trauma, Afghans, Frustration, Taliban, Aggression, Coercion, Detentions, Corruption, Injustice

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The US Policy Pitfalls in Afghanistan and Their Impacts on the Resurgence of the Taliban

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Abstract

The US stayed in Afghanistan for two decades, but the Taliban's insurgency didn't decrease. Instead, each year, the Taliban grew stronger against the both National forces. Notably, the dysfunctions experienced under Republican governments, as well as the coercive tactics employed by US and Afghan national forces, such as night raids, unlawful detentions, cum with bribery, unemployment, poverty, nepotism in both public and private spheres, and rampant injustice, furthered the frustration among Afghan citizens. As a result, many Afghans, driven by their frustration, joined the Taliban against both the US, Afghan national forces, and republican governments to reclaim their due rights and outpour the aggression. Under these circumstances, the Taliban strategically capitalized on a range of persuasive tactics to entice and captivate the Afghans. The multifaceted approach played a significant role in drawing these individuals towards the Taliban's cause and cementing their allegiance in the face of mounting frustrations and grievances.

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Introduction

The reverberating aftermath of every war is marked by profound and indelible wounds, as the traumatizing experience of witnessing conflict leaves an enduring impact. Undeniably, such is the case with the United States-led war in Afghanistan. Civilians bear the brunt, particularly when they find themselves caught in the midst of crossfire, bomb explosions, and night raids. The combination of prevalent bribery, corruption, poverty, and

unemployment, alongside the constant specter of night raids, explosions, and injustice, profoundly damaged the mental well-being of Afghan citizens. This bred frustration towards the ruling elite and the United States armed forces. The destabilization of mental health placed significant strain on social well-being, leading to diminished self-esteem, impaired interpersonal connections, and diminished hope among the Afghan populace. Consequently, many have sought solace and support

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from opposing forces in their resistance against the US and Republican forces.

The US-led war in Afghanistan caused 46,319 civilian deaths constituting one of the most violent chapters in human history (Brown University, [2021](#)). The impact of war trauma is felt by various groups, including families, communities, and even entire countries, as exemplified by the US invasion and its effect on the impoverished Afghan population. This tragic event served as a catalyst, sparking frustration among the people towards the ruling elite and its patronages.

Throughout history, young people have always been involved in the conflict, and so were the Afghans. Typically, they do not have much choice except to encounter, at the very least, the same traumas as their parents—as victims or even participants in combat. The emotional and psychological effects of war and terrorism, which are acts of violence committed by humans, have lasted for generations of kids and teenagers.

Afghanistan has witnessed a bloodied journey from being called the 'Graveyard of Empires' to a 'Trauma State'. Afghanistan has developed a traumatized state and is caught in a destructive spiral whereby frustration brought on by war fuels further frustration brought on by further war, and so forth. Unfortunately, when the world stepped into the 21st century with high hopes for modernization, progress, technological development, and economic engagements, Afghanistan went otherwise and was mired in another war called the War on Terror (WoT). The first generation after post-Taliban has witnessed the horrendous shocks of blasts, firings, and weeping voices of the people who lost their loved ones to war. Further, the Afghans have paid the cost of war for the last two decades through their blood and mental health, apart from infrastructural catastrophes, and disturbed social equilibrium owing to internal replacements and economic meltdowns. During the WoT, the Afghans were fixed between a hard land and a rock as from one side the Taliban were violent toward the Afghans, and on the other side, the allied powers killed thousands of civilians in Afghanistan. For instance, according to the Save the Children report (2021), 33,000 children have been killed in the last twenty years of perpetual war. As a result of the war, Afghanistan has suffered a significant loss of its youth population, which can be considered as a depletion of its human capital.

The parents who were affected by this tragedy have developed frustration towards those responsible. This frustration could have been alleviated if mental health facilities had been accessible to the Afghan people. However, in Afghanistan despite billions of dollars being poured in by the West in general and the US in particular, the mental health system remained mal-functional. Mental health care was near zero in most of the rural areas of Afghanistan (Scholte, [2004](#)). Notably, the World Health Assembly's resolution from May 2005 underlined the significance that the WHO (2005) places on treating the psychological traumas of war. Nonetheless, only 3% of Afghans were getting mental health care in Afghanistan, which was shockingly very little as compared to the recommended target; of 10-15% of the WHO (ReliefWeb, [2023](#)). This meager number orchestrates the failure of Afghan Republican governments to provide mental health facilities for common citizens. Resultantly, a great pervasiveness of mental health issues exists in Afghanistan as a result of decades of war, oppression, and migration.

The confluence of factors such as the joint military operations conducted by US and Afghan forces, widespread poverty, unemployment, inadequate healthcare facilities, pervasive corruption, ingrained bribery practices, and a prevailing sense of injustice and unwarranted detentions in Afghanistan has resulted in an alarming rise in mental health issues among the Afghan populace, particularly frustration. As a consequence, this frustration has transformed into aggression directed towards the ruling elite, compelling frustrated Afghans to align themselves with anti-US forces like the Taliban.

In response, the Taliban implemented strategies to attract more recruits, including offering financial incentives in the form of monthly wages to new members. Additionally, their establishment of a swift justice system appealed to Afghans seeking quick resolutions. Furthermore, the Taliban successfully persuaded locals to join their ranks by presenting fighting against invaders as a righteous cause with potential benefits not only in this world but also in the afterlife. Consequently, the Taliban managed to secure the commitment of Afghans on three fronts - emotional commitment from those who had lost loved ones due to US and Afghan national forces, pragmatic commitment through

financial incentives, and ideological commitment by portraying themselves as defenders of the homeland.

Theoretical Framework

Approximately two and a half millennia ago, Gautama Buddha presented (Breuer & Elson, 2017) a philosophical outlook on a phenomenon known as frustration, claiming that it often arises because of desire and attachment to specific ideas. In contradistinction, the Graeco-Arabic medical tradition approached frustration intolerance from a distinctly physiological perspective, specifically relating it to the Choleric personality type. This individual is characterized by an abundance of the bodily fluids responsible for the aforementioned temperament; that is, an inclination to respond rapidly and with persistence in periods of immense agitation, the heat and dryness of which ultimately symbolize the surge of the yellow bile. Research conducted in the past has indicated (Van der Dennen, 2005) that frustration can act as a notable factor in nudging individuals towards aggressive and hostile behavior when linked to a personal attack. Specifically, studies have demonstrated that frustration is more aggressively inclined when it is considered as being arbitrary, unjustified, deliberate, or uncompromising, rather than unintentional or properly justified.

Put forth the idea that the most violent responses are those that are aimed toward the perceived causes of the aggravation when discussing the level of aggression. One kind of retaliatory behavior is aggression towards the source of the annoyance (Van der Dennen, 2005; 7) Whereas, the idea that an aggravating circumstance may cause aggressive behavioral reactions has its roots in Dollard's (1939; 33) book, *Frustration and Aggression*. Human violence, according to Dollard and his associates, is motivated by dissatisfaction. Actually, the authors initially even went so far as to claim that "Aggression is always a consequence of frustration" in the manuscript (Crawford, 1970). In their original definition, Dollard (1939, 5) said that frustration happens when a person working towards a goal is interrupted by something that gets in the way of achieving that goal. For instance, in the workplace, a number of situational and relational restrictions may prevent an individual from achieving favorable performance ratings. Losing a

goal due to corruption, nepotism, and bribery wracked a streak of frustration among the Afghans.

Additionally, the frustration-aggression hypothesis, introduced in 1939 by Neal Miller, John Dollard, Leonard Doob, Robert Sears, and Orval Mowrer, provides an explanation for the aggression and frustration relationship (Breuer & Elson, 1970). According to the Frustration-Aggression theory, anger invariably results in violence. The blocking of a goal-directed behavior is referred to as frustration. Any behavior that is meant to hurt another person is considered to be aggressive (Berkowitz, 1989). The frustration-aggression hypothesis has been supported by a number of studies. For example, a study presented by Fox & Spector (1999) found that people who were frustrated were more likely to lash out at others verbally or physically. Another study found that people who were frustrated were more likely to express aggressive thoughts and feelings. Despite the criticisms, the frustration-aggression hypothesis remains an important theory of aggression. It has helped to explain a number of different types of aggressive behavior, and it has led to the development of a number of interventions for reducing aggression.

There are two types of frustration (Deeksha, 2016): internal and external. Internal frustration can occur when individuals face challenges in satisfying their personal goals, desires, instinctual drives, or fulfilling their needs. It can also emerge when dealing with perceived deficiencies, like a lack of confidence or fear of social situations. On the other hand, external frustration arises from obstacles present in the environment, such as a daunting task, limited resources, or the actions of others.

Civilian Deaths and Illicit Detentions: A Rising Tide of Frustration among Afghans

The loss of loved ones amplifies the intensity of frustration experienced by individuals. In the context of Afghanistan, the civilian casualties caused by the heavy-handed actions of US and Afghan national forces are recognized as a significant factor contributing to the external frustration felt by the Afghan population. According to Brown University, 5.9 million Afghans were displaced during WoT (Vine, D., et al, 2021). In addition, according to Conflict Monitor Airwars, 91,340 airstrikes are conducted by the USA, and 48,308 Afghan civilians

have been killed during War on Terror (Piper & Dyke, 2021).

The ill-fated loss of Afghan civilians during night raids can fundamentally be attributed to the intelligence fiascoes of both the US and Afghan intelligence agencies operating within Afghanistan. According to Open Society Foundations (2011) and The Liaison Office report (2011), "The Cost of Kill/Capture." between December 2010 and February 2011, the United States Special Forces, operating in conjunction with Afghan government forces, conducted an average of 19 night raids per night. During these raids, entire families perished and the primary earners were killed. The distress grew even greater after losing the male members of the family, and in some cases, the children were also casualties. In Pashtun-dominated areas, the night raids became permanent nightmares for the residents because the US forces entered their homes without permission, which the Pashtun people viewed as a dishonorable act. The agony of losing a loved one, combined with the violation of their honor, compelled the Afghans to resort to aggression against the perpetrators due to their overwhelming frustration.

Moreover, the escalation of frustration among Afghans can be attributed to the coercive policies implemented by both US and Afghan forces. These policies, characterized by heavy-handed actions, have not only intensified resentment from individuals subjected to unlawful detentions but also from their families towards the US and Afghan forces. Shockingly, an alarming report from Brown University reveals that over the first three years of the WoT, a staggering 50,000 individuals were detained under suspicion of terrorism (Brown University, 2017). Thus, the unlawful detention of Afghan civilians by US forces in Afghanistan has had shocking consequences on the mental health of many of those affected, as well as their families.

Additionally, in an effort to suppress opposition to the US and Afghan national forces, the US provided support to local leaders known for their cruel and inhumane treatment of the population. For instance, Gen. Abdul Raziq was infamous for his inhumane treatment of Afghan villagers while operating under the open support of US soldiers. He was one of several officers who employed cruel iron hands against these defenseless people. Gen. Abdul Raziq's inhumane tortures, for which he was named "Torture in Chief" by Human Rights Watch (2017).

The horrible acts of Gen. Raziq were covered in a study by UNAMA (2017) titled "Treatment of Conflict-Related Detainees: Implementation of Afghanistan's National Plan on the Elimination of Torture" in 2017. According to this report, detainees in Kandahar were subjected to the most gruesome forms of torture and ill-treatment, including having water forced into their stomachs, having their testicles wrinkled with locks, being choked to the point of losing cognizance, and having electric current applied to their genitalia. Consequently, individuals who suffered from the inhuman treatment inflicted by Afghan national forces sought revenge by aligning themselves with the Taliban. The aggression displayed towards the US and Afghan national forces was a manifestation of their deep-rooted frustration, serving as a cathartic release for the distressed Afghans.

The implementation of coercive strategies by the US and Afghan national forces had a profound and traumatic effect on the Afghan population. Whereas, the Taliban, in parallel launched its web of intrigues to attract the support of the victims of the atrocities of the US and Afghan national forces. Consequently, this served to further exacerbate the prevalent mental health challenges faced by individuals in Afghanistan, contributing to the growth of anti-American sentiments within the country. For example, according to Carnegie Endowment for International Peace report (2009), "The Taliban's Winning Strategy" in Afghanistan the public support amongst Pushtuns for the US presence remained very low. They transitioned from seeing the US as a guest, to an enemy. Special Forces operations were often politically and psychologically disastrous for the common and innocent Afghans. For example, in Logar Province, where the Taliban are strong, it was believed that innocent people had been killed by Special Forces, and despite compensating the families, resentment remained in the hearts of the bereaved family. In Chombar district, the Special Forces arrested a number of suspected Taliban in 2008, and this led to rumors of female rape, which further worsened the local population's view of the US. Moreover, bombings by the US caused the most damage to the perception of the US, and the Farah Province bombing in 2009 caused a national outcry (Salahuddin, 2009). The Taliban have also used violence against civilians, but public resentment was more to be directed at the US for similar actions. War-induced psychological

distress has severely damaged the psychological well-being of Afghans and led to a loss of social competence, social esteem, social optimism, and social capital. As a result of their frustration, the victims began to perceive the members of the Afghan national forces as 'Others'. This perception further accentuated the divisions and dichotomies between the victims and the perpetrators of violence.

The Broken Justice System of Afghanistan: A Recipe for Frustration

Furthermore, the injustice system in Afghanistan under the republican governments pushed the Afghans to take refuge in the Taliban's rapid justice system. A study conducted by Mercy Corps (2015) in Somalia, Afghanistan, and Colombia has found that it is the presence of injustice that drives people to oppose their incumbent governments. In an interview with Mercy Corps, an Afghan man explained that while unemployment is a difficult situation to be in, it is not necessarily something that would provoke a person to become angry. The same could be said for bad luck or the will of God. However, it is corruption, discrimination, and instances of being cheated or humiliated by public officials that truly ignite a deep sense of anger among individuals. The absence of a swift and efficient justice system further fuels what can be termed as 'structural frustration' within the Afghan population. Notably, this frustration at a structural level often leads to widespread societal aggression against the existing status quo. This phenomenon was observed in Afghanistan, where the combination of a deficient justice system, poverty, and persistent violence compelled many Afghans to align themselves with the Taliban.

Likewise, The Asia Foundation Survey (2013) has revealed that approximately one-third of people in Afghanistan are in support of the insurgency. Additionally, the survey revealed that a large majority of Afghans (77%) reported they would feel fear when encountering international forces, traveling from one part of Afghanistan to another (75%), participating in a peaceful demonstration (68%) and voting in a national election (59%). The long-standing apprehension among Afghans, brought about by their experiences of encounters between the Allied and Afghan National Forces, has become deeply entrenched in the psyche of the

populace. It was evident that a considerable proportion of Afghan society continues to feel mentally disenchanting, depressed, and frustrated due to the lack of safety, corruption in government, poverty, and the increasing disparity between social classes. This dissatisfaction was exploited by the Taliban and made many Afghans vulnerable to being swayed to their cause, especially when their indignation is fomented by skepticism of the government or international organizations.

Even Dorronsoro (2009) opines that the motivations of Taliban fighters were complex and varied. While some may join the group for financial gain, the majority were driven by a desire to defend their homeland, their values, and their way of life. The Afghan government was often seen as corrupt, ineffective, and illegitimate. This perception is exacerbated by the fact that the government is unable to provide basic services to many Afghans, such as security, education, and healthcare. With the passage of time, the frustration ascended to the level where a division between the US and THEM surfaced. The 'US' were the people, who were affected by the US and Afghan forces whereas the 'THEM' were the US and Afghan national forces. As a result, many Afghans feel that the government does not represent them or their interests. This frustration of being marginalized and being less privileged even from the basic needs of life, translated into aggression against the Afghan government under the broader movement of the Taliban.

In addition, the US policymakers and decision-making circles were well aware of the mounting frustration among people and the increasing recruitment pool of the Taliban. Seth (G. Jones, 2008) a former advisor to the U.S. Special Operations Command in Afghanistan, for instance, asserted (Landinfo, 2017) that the key leaders of the Taliban viewed their uprising as a struggle against the West and its affiliated government in Kabul, and that their motivation largely centered around an Islamic basis. However, he posited that it was the lower-tier cadres of the Taliban who were primarily driven by financial incentives, as well as feelings of frustration.

Moreover, individuals who were not directly exposed to the violence inflicted by the US and Afghan national forces found themselves ensnared in a relentless cycle of frustration. This was primarily

due to the absence of employment opportunities, scarcity of food, and the pervasive issue of nepotism. The Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), reported (2016) that Afghan officials in Kunduz had professed to the Pajhwok news agency that lack of job opportunities, poverty, and lack of attention from the government had created conditions that left young people with few course of action other than to join the Taliban. It was said that hundreds of educated youth had been driven to the organization due to a lack of work opportunities. This report also identified that in Khanabad district (Kunduz), local residents resorted to siding with the Taliban in a bid to secure protection from pro-government militias whose activities entailed harassment, abuses, illegal taxation, and forced recruitment (2016; 21). The interconnectedness between unemployment, poverty, frustration, and aggression in Afghanistan is strikingly evident.

Frustration Led Afghan National Forces Joined the Taliban

As time went on, intriguingly, the heightened level of frustration began to infiltrate the ranks of the Afghan national forces, presenting a prime opportunity for the Taliban to recruit individuals from within their ranks. Members of the Afghan National Forces, feeling frustration due to their lack of timely payment, reports of prejudice, a dearth of appropriate resources, and the prevalence of nepotism, began to look towards the Taliban as an alternative option (Giustozzi, 2014). Most of the ANF members remained unpaid for months, job timings were unplanned and weakly equipped with weapons and training even (Carter, S., & Clark, 2010). Therefore their emotional, pragmatic, and interpersonal commitments with the ANF dwindled day by day. Whereas, lack of commitments heightened the frustration as a result that was cashed by the Taliban. Further, the Taliban after 2012, increased (Forbes & Dudley, 2013) attention to the desertion of government forces and law enforcement to their cause. Nevertheless, within a year, the collective claimed that these deserters were a result of the Recruitment and Amnesty Commission's rules. Such views were presented in the Taliban's Khalid bin Walid campaign declaration in April 2013, which acknowledged: In the current Khalid bin Walid operation, all regulations, instructions, and pronouncements issued by the Call

and Guidance/Recruitment Commission will be observed, just as previously, when we granted protection for life, possessions, and respect to a great number of people who defected from the ranks of the enemy and joined our mujahidin. The insurgency in Afghanistan has seen a number of recruits, largely believed to be the result of the widespread poverty and lack of access to basic services such as electricity and water experienced by a large proportion of the population. James Fearon and David Laitin's analysis of insurgencies occurring between 1945 and 1999 discovered the presence of inadequate financial, organizational, and political capabilities of the government as being conducive to insurgencies, due to the lack of effective local policing or ineffectual procedures for suppressing such movements (Forbes & Dudley, 2013; 15). Particularly amongst young people in rural areas of Afghans, the situation was particularly dire, as only 53% of this demographic group was believed to be literate (Leao, Ahmed & Kar, 2018). Moreover, the inequality is compounded by a number of other factors such as corruption, ineffective modes of administration, insecurity, and destruction of property caused by ongoing conflict.

The Widespread Mistrust of Republican Governments in Afghanistan

Most shockingly, Transparency International (2018) estimated that as many as one in five young Afghans between the ages of 15 and 24 were unemployed. Notably, the lack of effective governance can lead to a heightened risk of insurgency as states are unable to provide security and maintain law and order. Robert Rotberg's research demonstrates that malfunctioning states are unable to exercise control over their peripheral areas, especially those areas populated by minority groups, ultimately leading to the loss of authority in these areas (2018; 17).

The same trend of behavior was witnessed in Afghanistan, with the population becoming so anguished with the lack of a form of reliable governance that they chose to endorse an alternative administration out of despair. For instance, according to the Department of International Development (DFID) report (2009, 20), respondents from diverse geographic regions expressed discontent with the unavailability of an accessible and responsible formal justice system. These opinions are exemplified by the following

statements: "There is no accountability in the courts, even if you commit a capital crime you get released after bribing" (youth, Kandahar) and "In the last seven years of this government not a single case has been resolved in the state court of this district" (Wardak). So, justice, the very basic pillar of a social contract between the government elite and the people remained mired in the thick of corruption, nepotism, and bribery.

The Role of the Taliban's Justice System in Quelling Frustration in Afghanistan

The prompt justice system of the Taliban was the foremost appeal for the frustrated Afghans from the injustice system of the Afghan republican governments. In his book "La Guerre par le droit – Les tribunaux Taliban en Afghanistan (War through Law – The Taliban Courts in Afghanistan)", Adam Backzo (2021) posits that the Taliban emerged victorious in the war thanks to the effectiveness and success of their judicial system. This was particularly evident in the territories they controlled over the past decade. Furthermore, Backzo analyzes the flaws in the Karzai and Ghani administrations' approach to the judicial system. These include insufficient funding allocation, with only 3% of the budget dedicated to this sector compared to 6% for mine clearance. Additionally, 45% of appointed judges lacked proper legal qualifications, and a substantial portion of judicial structures, about 57%, had to be built from the ground up (2021; 120-121). Moreover, the Afghan public was prevented from effectively accessing court services due to the cost, frequent acts of corruption, and the failure of local police to enforce court orders (2021; 126). Backzo also identifies numerous missteps that were taken by the international community during the course of this process, largely arising from not adequately familiarizing themselves with the customs of Afghanistan. In particular, Backzo highlights the problematic decision to assign Italy with the role of establishing a functional judiciary system, as well as certain members of the international community attempting to bypass the judiciary to advance their own stakes, such as by introducing labor and commercial codes during parliamentary recesses. Additionally, Backzo addresses the Western forces' refusal to be subject to a legal framework, especially during the far-reaching campaign to execute targeted eliminations (2021, 145-151). Thus, Afghans,

with near to zero surety with the justice system turned their backs towards the state-run judiciary system. In addition to the unjustness, feeling of unease, and lack of job opportunities plaguing the country, the unfortunate fact that bribery had been an intimately ingrained cultural practice further exacerbated the sense of distress among the Afghani people.

Bribery: A Culture of Frustration for Afghan Youth

The legitimate rights and benefits were denied in Afghanistan due to a widely extended bribery culture. Bribery remains an integral part of the republican governments of Afghanistan that comes with the opportunity cost of merit, due rights, and deserving benefits of the common Afghans. A considerable amount of research has been conducted regarding the problem of bribery in Afghanistan, and while much of this research is pertinent to this particular discussion, the most important and applicable, cases have specifically been included in this section. Firstly, Lorenzo Delesgues, the Director of Integrity Watch Afghanistan, a local think tank, conducted (Northam, 2009) an investigation to determine the implications of corruption on the lives of Afghan citizens. The results of this research revealed that a typical Afghan family is estimated to sacrifice inordinately, with an average expenditure of one hundred United States dollars annually to provide bribes. A figure that equates to two months' salary for the median income earner, a stark reminder of the ubiquity and necessity of paying bribes to receive services, regardless of the level of utility associated, be it acquisition of a driving license, consistent access to electricity or the successful operation of businesses. Consequently, every Afghan family was giving bribes more than its daily income. In addition, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, an anticorruption watchdog based in Kabul, conducted (Gardizi, 2010) a survey of 6,500 citizens, encompassing a representative sample of around 95 percent of the general population, with the exception of two provinces. More than 70 percent of the survey consenters were from rural villages. It is acknowledged to be the greatest survey yet, pertaining to the pervasiveness and magnitude of corruption. The outcomes highlighted corruption as the third most preeminent concern of the Afghan

population, trailing security and unemployment. One in every seven adults reported direct bribery experiences in the two years leading up to the survey, with the cumulative total of bribes paid country-wide in 2009 adding to around one billion US Dollars – a considerable increase compared to the figure in 2007. The stories of bribery did not stop there but some more research raised the eyebrows of the readers. For instance, it has been perceived that the institutions responsible for ensuring security and justice are the most corrupt. Evidence of this can be seen in the results of a survey in which 42 percent of respondents identified the Ministry of Interior (which is in control of the national police force) as the most corrupt organization, with the Ministry of Justice not far behind at 32 percent (2010, 16-19). However, it is thought-provoking to apprehend that the highest amount of bribes is reportedly (Mashal, [2010](#)) paid in exchange for reach to simple social services which include public education and health care. It is estimated that the average amount paid as a bribe for one of these services is as much as \$217. Later, in 2012, it was found that half of the population paid bribes to get their legitimate public services from public offices (UNODC, [2012](#)). Once Mr. Jean-Luc Lemahieu, Regional Representative of UNODC said "The bribes that Afghan citizens paid in 2012, equals double Afghanistan's domestic revenue or one-fourth of the Tokyo pledge (OCHA, [2013](#)). Nobody doubts the seriousness of the issue; the art is to design the correct strategy to remedy the situation. The findings of the survey will allow us to do so". The government's failure to duly grant the rightful rights and benefits to the youth has significantly bolstered the level of frustration prevalent within society. Concurrently, the Taliban, employing a variety of tactics, including both propaganda and practical measures, seized upon every opportunity presented by the malfunctioning of the republican governments. As a result, the frustrations experienced by the populace have widened the existing chasm between the people and the

governing authorities within Afghanistan. Notably, the Taliban adeptly exploited the faultlines that manifested as a consequence of the actions and policies of the republican governments. Consequently, in a bid to attain their much-yearned-for rights, which had regrettably been cloaked under the menacing veils of corruption and bribery, the populace gravitated towards the Taliban as a means to redress their grievances.

Conclusion

In Afghanistan, amidst the hegemony of the United States armed forces and the dominion of the US-led republican administrations, a relentless and unending series of violence, unjust detentions, and unlawful killings. Along with a severe deficit in security, widespread corruption permeating both the public and private sectors, sky-high rates of unemployment and poverty, and a notable dearth of justice, have all culminated in severe frustration among ordinary Afghans. In the face of such overwhelming frustration, the opposition group - the Taliban has been steadily amassing strength and power with each passing day. Resultantly, a considerable number of aggrieved Afghans, having joined the ranks of the Taliban, have begun venting their pent-up aggression against the United States forces and the Afghan national armed forces, as well as targeting government officials within Afghanistan, as they perceive them to be the architects of their countless misfortunes.

One of the contributing factors to the failure of the US forces in Afghanistan can be attributed to their failure to comprehend and acknowledge the brewing and simmering frustration amongst the Afghan population towards their presence. This deep-seated frustration left unaddressed, eventually manifested and transformed into a palpable and undeniable wave of aggression. Slowly, steadily, and with a creeping persistence, this aggression began to spread and proliferate throughout the entirety of Afghanistan, permeating every corner of the nation.

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