



# COMMUNISM IV. IN AFGHANISTAN

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## COMMUNISM

### iv. In Afghanistan

The Afghan Communist party, *Ḥezb-e demōkrātik-e ƙalq-e Afġānestān* (People's democratic party of Afghanistan, P.D.P.A.) was officially founded in 1344 Š./1965, at a time when political parties were illegal in Afghanistan. Two other durable Afghan Marxist-Leninist groups were active in the same general period. The first was the pro-Chinese *Šo'la-ye jāvīd* (Eternal flame, nicknamed *Šo'la*, founded in 1342 or 1343 Š./1963 or 1964 by Dr. Raḥīm Maḥmūdī and Dr. Hādī Maḥmūdī), which drew its support from the professional classes (doctors, lawyers) and in the late 1960s actually outnumbered P.D.P.A. The second was *Setam-e mellī* ([Against] national oppression), which broke off from P.D.P.A. in 1347 Š./1968. *Šo'la-ye jāvīd* had been persecuted to virtual extinction by the early 1980s. *Setam-e mellī*, after the execution of its leader Ṭāher Badaḳṣī in 1358 Š./1979, was eventually reborn as *Sāzmān-e enġelāb-e zaḥmatkašān-e Afġānestān* (Revolutionary organization of the working people of Afghanistan; Dari acronym SAZA), which became a legal but token opposition party in 1367 Š./1988. Since at least as early as 1356 Š./1977 P.D.P.A. has been the dominant Marxist-Leninist party in Afghanistan (Arnold, 1983, p. 39).

*The background and early years of P.D.P.A.* The roots of P.D.P.A. can be traced



back to the violently nationalistic and anticolonial Afġān zalma (Young Afghans) movement of the 1920s, centered in the German-oriented Najāt school in Kabul. The proclaimed goal of this group was “subverting the existing government and its basis, the Islamic code.” A member of this group, ‘Abd-al-Ķāleq, assassinated Nāder Shah, on 17 ‘Aqrab 1312 Š./8 November 1933 (Dupree, 1978, pp. 475-76). After the consequent suppression of Afġān zalma its role in the anticolonial movement was taken over by Ķodāy ĳedmatġārān (Servants of God), led by Khan ‘Abd-al-Ķāffār Khan and based in British India. Unlike the Young Afghans, the Servants of God preached religion, community, and fatherland and sought to achieve by nonviolent means an independent Pashtun state in what is now Pakistan (Dupree, 1978, pp. 487-89).

The true heir to the spirit of the Young Afghans was, however, Vīĳ zalmīān (Awakened youth, A.Y.; also known as Ṭarīq-e nowjavānān-e bēdār). In 1326 Š./1947 it published a manifesto setting forth its goals: universal education, elimination of obsolete customs, freedom from foreign influences, national and intellectual independence and self-determination, women’s rights, a work ethic for youth, elimination of corruption, promotion of local industry, and use of government wealth to promote progress (Gerasimova and Girs, pp. 103-04; Anwar, pp. 26-27). The A.Y. based its foreign policy on the single issue of carving an independent Pashtun state out of newly formed Pakistan; members of its radical wing agitated against the clergy and monarchy, and most of its leaders were jailed in 1331 Š./1952 (Dupree, 1979, pp. 4-5). One of the founding members of A.Y., Moġammad Dā‘ūd, Moġammad Zāher Shah’s cousin and brother-in-law, became prime minister of Afghanistan in 1332 Š./1953 and gradually freed most of the jailed leaders. He also promoted closer economic and military ties with the Soviet Union, which became the sole supplier of arms to Afghanistan. In 1342 Š./1963, however, the king dismissed him and established a constitutional monarchy, barring members of the royal family from holding important government posts (see [constitutional history of afghanistan](#)). Afghan policy became less favorable to the Soviets, who probably were involved in organizing the P.D.P.A. at about that time (Eliot and Pfaltzgraff, p. 3).

The Maġmūdīs, from a family of physicians, founded Šo‘la-ye jāvīd in 1343 Š./1964, shortly after Dr. ‘Abd-al-Raġmān Maġmūdī died from the mistreatment he had received as a political prisoner in 1331-42 Š./1952-63. His brother Dr. Raġīm Maġmūdī and his nephew Dr. Hādī Maġmūdī founded the party and launched a newspaper of the same name, both as uncompromising



in their hostility toward the Soviets as they were toward the capitalist world. Their support came not only from professionals, but also from a combination of members of the Shi'ite minority in Afghanistan, illiterate Ḥazāra workers, and leftists who did not trust the Soviets (Arnold, 1983, pp. 38-39). Šo'la-ye jāvīd helped to launch some strikes in the 1960s and 1970s, but, though ideologically attuned to Maoism, it does not seem to have received any direct material support from the Chinese.

From at least as early as the 1950s there had been informal Marxist discussion groups in Kabul. The first congress of P.D.P.A. was convened on 11 Jady 1334 Š./January 1965 at the home of Nūr-Moḥammad Tarakī in the Kārt-e čār district of Kabul. Twenty-seven men (and possibly one woman, Anāhītā Rātebzād) from "different Marxist circles" attended (Klass, p. 140; *A Short Information*, p. 1). Tarakī (b. 23 Saraṭān 1296/14 July 1917 in the Moqor district of Ġaznī province) was a Ġelzay Pashtun, son of an illiterate seminomadic livestock breeder. After receiving his primary education in Moqor he worked as a clerk with the Pashtun Trading Company in Bombay from 1313 Š./1934 to 1316 Š./1937; there he met Khan 'Abd-al-Ġaffār Khan and became a communist (Amstutz, p. 33). After returning to Kabul in 1317 Š./1938 he worked in the Ministry of economics while taking a bachelor's degree in law and political science at Kabul university. In 1331 Š./1952 he joined the Bākṭar news agency and also began to write short stories and poetry. In the following year he was posted to the Afghan embassy in Washington, D.C., as press and cultural attaché, but he was soon dismissed for public criticism of his government. He worked as an English translator for the American aid mission in Kabul in 1335-37 Š./1956-58 and operated his own Nūr translation agency from 1337 Š./1958 to 1341 Š./1962. He was probably an agent of the Soviet Komitet Gosudarstvennoĭ Bezopasnosti (K.G.B.), and in 1342-44 Š./1963-65 he devoted his full time to organizational work for P.D.P.A.

From the beginning P.D.P.A. was split between two main factions, named for their respective newspapers, *Ḳalq* (Masses) and *Paṛčam* (Banner). Tarakī, the secret head of *Ḳalq*, ran for parliament in 1344 Š./1965 and 1348 Š./1969, losing on both occasions (Arnold, 1983, pp. 15-19). The first chief of *Paṛčam* was Babrak Kārmal (b. 16 Dalw 1308 Š./6 January 1929 at Kamarī, near Kabul), the son of the Tajik general Moḥammad-Ḥosayn. He was educated at the Najāt school, then at Kabul university in the faculty of law and political science. He was a poor student and writer but a gifted speaker. As an A.Y. member he was jailed in 1332 Š./1953 and freed in 1335 Š./1956. By that time he had become a



communist. In 1336-37 Š./1957-58 he worked as a German translator while performing obligatory military service. After receiving his B.A. degree in 1339 Š./1960 he spent four years in the translation and compilation section of the ministries of education and planning. He was elected to parliament in 1344 Š./1965 and 1348 Š./1969 (Arnold, 1983, pp. 31, 42).

The secret constitution adopted by the party at the founding congress defined party ideology as “the practical experience of Marxism-Leninism”; it was a virtual carbon copy of Soviet communist-party rules. Paṛčam and Ḳalq differed, however, in both their constituencies and their tactics. Paṛčam, though predominantly Pashtun, included varying ethnic groups and drew its support from the relatively rich, upper-class Kabul intelligentsia; it was sometimes derisively called “the royal Afghan communist party.” Its leaders concealed their revolutionary goals. Ḳalq was almost purely Pashtun and recruited new members among less affluent Kabul boarding-school students from rural backgrounds (Arnold, 1983, app. B); it was unabashedly Marxist-Leninist. Probably as a compromise between the two factions, Tarakī was elected secretary-general, but Paṛčam gained a four-to-three advantage on the central committee; Kārmal was named deputy secretary-general (Arunova, p. 60). The four candidate members of the central committee were divided evenly between Paṛčam and Ḳalq. In 1346 Š./1967 Kārmal tried to force a vote of support for Paṛčam by resigning from the central committee, but without his own vote his supporters were unable to muster a majority, and he was forced off the committee; he then formed a rival structure within P.D.P.A. In 1347 Š./1968 the Tajik Ṭāher Badaḳšī, who, after a few months as a member of Paṛčam, had switched to Ḳalq, became disillusioned with what he perceived as Pashtun domination of both factions and left to form his own party, Setam-e mellī (Arnold, 1983, p. 39).

In the early days of P.D.P.A. activity Paṛčam seemed the more politically realistic of the two main factions; of the eight known P.D.P.A. candidates for the first parliamentary elections in 1344 Š./1965 four of five Paṛčamīs (including Rātebzād) but none of the three Ḳalqīs were elected. After student riots led by P.D.P.A. members in 1347 Š./1968, however, only one Paṛčamī (Kārmal) and one Ḳalqī, Ḥafīz-Allāh Amīn, were elected in 1348 Š./1969 (Arnold, 1983, pp. 31-32, 42). Amīn (b. 1308 Š./1929 at Paḡmān, near Kabul) was the second son of a minor government clerk. He had a successful career in education, becoming principal of the respected Ebn Sīnā high school in Kabul in his late twenties and receiving two scholarships to Columbia University in



New York, in 1957 and 1962 (Arnold, 1983, pp. 80-81). He was abroad when P.D.P.A. was founded, but soon after his return in late 1344 Š./1965 he became a pro-Ḳalq member of the central committee. Dā'ūd delegated to him the military-recruitment program and introduced him to the K.G.B. (*Novoe Vremya* 38, 1991, p. 37). He was an ambitious man, hated by the Paṛčamīs.

*Shifting Tactics.* Both Paṛčam and Ḳalq at first favored a long-term strategy of patiently recruiting media figures and teachers, especially normal-school teachers, with the goal of influencing future generations of Afghans. Progress was slow; in 1351 Š./1972 the U.S. State Department estimated that there were only 300-500 communists in Afghanistan (Bradsher, p. 50), including not only both factions of P.D.P.A. but also Setam-e mellī and Šo'la-ye jāvīd, at that time the largest single group.

After the P.D.P.A. failure at the polls in 1348 Š./1969 Paṛčam entered into a secret alliance with Dā'ūd; in July 1973 he overthrew the monarchy in a nearly bloodless coup and established himself as president of the new Republic of Afghanistan. His first civilian ministers and advisers were mostly Paṛčamīs, who expected to inherit power after his death. Dā'ūd demanded that they cease recruiting efforts among state officials, but the Ḳalqīs had no such inhibitions and undertook an aggressive clandestine recruitment campaign among military officers, many of whom had been trained in the Soviet Union. In 1356 Š./1977 Amīn informed the K.G.B. that he had recruited 300 members of the armed forces (*Novoe Vremya* 38, 1991, p. 37). Meanwhile Dā'ūd was quietly demoting some of his Paṛčamī advisers and posting others abroad as ambassadors. These moves angered both the Paṛčamīs and the Soviets. On 13 Saraṭān 1356 Š./4 July 1977 the Soviet government forced a temporary reconciliation between Paṛčam and Ḳalq, through the mediation of the Communist party of India (C.P.I.), in preparation for the planned coup of 1357 Š./1978. By the time the coup actually took place the Ḳalqīs had built their membership to between twice and three times that of the Paṛčamīs; total P.D.P.A. strength at that time was later estimated in the West at about 5,000 but in Kabul at 15,000 (Arnold, 1983, pp. 47, 116; *Pravda*, 3 November 1984, p. 5).

The coup had been planned for the month of Asad (August), but it was triggered prematurely by the simultaneous arrest of all top P.D.P.A. leaders (except Amīn), following mass demonstrations in reaction to the murder of Mīr Akbar Ḳeybār, a leading Paṛčamī theoretician, on 28 Ḥamal/17 April. Early on 6 Tawr/26 April, just before he, too, was to be arrested, Amīn issued



prearranged orders to Ƙalqī military officers to launch the coup (the “Great April Revolution”), and the next day, after sharp fighting, rebel units under their command stormed the royal palace, killing Dā’ūd and his immediate family and proclaiming the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (D.R.A.; *A Short Information*, pp. 12-16).

*Ƙalqī rule (1357-58 Š./1978-79)*. After the success of the coup the Ƙalqīs assumed a commanding position in the new government, which was headed by Tarakī. By prearrangement both party and state posts were distributed between members of the two factions, but, though the minister of defense, General ‘Abd-al-Qāder, was a member of Paṛčam, the troops were mostly loyal to Amīn (Arnold, 1983, pp. 64-67).

In June and July 1978 most leading Paṛčamīs were sent abroad as ambassadors: Kārmal to Czechoslovakia; Rātebzād to Yugoslavia; Najīb-Allāh, a twice-jailed activist under the monarchy and a future chief of the secret police, to Persia; Maḥmūd Baryālay (Kārmal’s stepbrother) to Pakistan; Nūr-Aḥmad Nūr, a former official in the Ministry of foreign affairs and member of parliament, to the United States; and ‘Abd-al-Wakīl, also formerly in the Ministry of foreign affairs, to the United Kingdom. All except Najīb-Allāh are known to have attended the first P.D.P.A. congress. In August their plans for a Paṛčamī countercoup against the Ƙalqī regime, scheduled to coincide with Islamic celebrations at the end of Ramaḏān in early September, were discovered. The Afghan ambassador to India, Pāčā Gol Wafādār, ostensibly a Paṛčamī but secretly a Ƙalqī, was mistakenly advised of the conspiracy; he informed Tarakī and Amīn. The ambassadors were immediately stripped of all party and state positions, and a sweeping purge of the Paṛčamīs remaining in Afghanistan followed; thousands were executed, jailed, or dismissed, including Minister of Defense ‘Abd-al-Qāder, whose duties, after he was jailed, were assumed by Tarakī. The ambassadors refused to return and took refuge in eastern Europe, three of them absconding with embassy funds. The Soviets, who favored Paṛčam, had probably been involved in the plot (Anwar, pp. 119-20; Arnold, 1983, pp. 69-73).

When they first took power the Ƙalqīs had publicly denied their Marxist beliefs, but they soon dropped this pretense. A new national flag, a replica in red of the Soviet flag, was adopted in place of the old tricolor. Debts owed by small holders and landless peasants were reduced or annulled, and a land-reform program involving expropriation of large tracts and redistribution among peasants was undertaken. The ancient custom of the bride price was



banned, and young P.D.P.A. officials were sent into the villages as Marxist teachers and administrators. At the request of the Kabul government, thousands of Soviet party advisers arrived to help it to consolidate power. These measures were generally unpopular, however. The red flag was anathema to religious believers, and the abolition of the bride price challenged centuries-old custom. The annulment of debts also brought with it an end to assistance from landlords to their tenants, and expropriation of private property was seen as a violation of koranic prescriptions. The officials from Kabul were despised in the villages. Popular resentment grew into resistance, and resistance soon became rebellion. In the next year Kabul lost control of about two-thirds of the countryside, where its representatives were regularly murdered (Amstutz, p. 41; Shansab, pp. 54-59).

Rebellion also spread among army units, which suffered individual and group defections. In March 1979 the population of Herat rose up en masse, and some forty Soviet civilian advisers were slaughtered. In August the garrison in the famous Bālā Ḥeṣār fort at Kabul mutinied. Both these uprisings could be put down only with the aid of aircraft and helicopters manned by Soviet crews. Amīn became premier in late March and had replaced Tarakī as minister of defense by July. Although Tarakī was still technically chief of state, he was becoming a figurehead (Bradsher, pp. 107-08).

*New coup attempt.* On 19 Sonbola/10 September, returning from a trip to Havana for a conference of nonaligned nations, Tarakī stopped in Moscow, where the Soviets arranged a reconciliation with Kārmal. With plans to depose and arrest Amīn and to establish a new coalition government of representatives from Paṛčam and Ḳalq, Tarakī returned to Kabul the next day, only to discover that Amīn had already learned of the plot and taken preemptive action. After the failure of an attempt to ambush Amīn, in which Soviet ambassador Alexander Puzanov took an active part, on 23 Sonbola/14 September the conspiracy collapsed (Arnold, 1983, pp. 88-90). Tarakī's Afghan supporters, including Minister of Interior Moḥammad-Aslam Waṭanjār, Minister of Communications Sayyed Moḥammad Golābzoy, Minister of Frontier and Tribal Affairs Lieutenant Colonel Šēr Jān Mazdūryār, and secret-police chief Asad-Allāh Sarvarī, were dismissed but took refuge in the Soviet embassy. Tarakī was arrested; Amīn, after detecting no Soviet objection to his assumption of all the former titles of the "Great Leader," ordered two security officers to suffocate Tarakī with pillows on the night of 16-17 Mīzān/8-9 October. All power was thus in Amīn's hands (Arnold, 1983, pp. 92-93).



*The Soviet invasion and its aftermath.* Amīn continued, against Soviet advice, the unpopular *Ḳalqī* program of sovietization. On 5 Jady/24 December, with the country poised on the brink of collapse from widespread popular rebellion, a quiet but massive airlift of Soviet forces into Afghanistan began. Three days later there was an invasion of land forces, while various deceptive operations ensured the immobilization of Afghan army units and disrupted communications (Arnold, 1985, p. 94). That same evening a team (*spetsnaz*) of K.G.B. special forces in Afghan uniforms overcame Amīn's personal guards and killed him in the *Dār al-Amān* palace (*Stolitsa* 1, 1990, pp. 58-59). By 11 Jady 1368 Š./1 January 1980 there were 50,000 Soviet combat troops in Afghanistan, and the number rose to 85,000 within a few months. By 1364 Š./1985 the figure had risen to about 120,000, the maximum that could be supported logistically by the underdeveloped transportation network of Afghanistan (Isby, p. 59).

The six former *Paṛčamī* ambassadors who had escaped to the Soviet Union returned with the invaders and took control of the party and the state under the leadership of *Kārmal*. Of the thirty known members of Amīn's central committee six were killed during the invasion or executed shortly afterward, seventeen vanished into house arrest, and only seven remained on the new central committee; of the thirty newly appointed members sixteen had been dismissed earlier by the *Ḳalqīs*. Among the twenty ministers only *Esmā'īl Dāneš*, minister of mines and industry, remained from Amīn's regime (Arnold, 1983, pp. 102-03). The invaders had hoped for a quick victory and withdrawal, leaving a firmly pro-Soviet but outwardly noncommunist regime in power. The word "socialist" vanished from government propaganda, and *Kārmal* promoted the concept of a "broadened base" in support of a "national democratic government" that would include not only *Ḳalqīs* but also noncommunist liberals. Eight noncommunists were appointed as ministerial advisers (Malik, p. 194).

Within a year, however, all but one of the noncommunists had left the government. The *Ḳalqīs* remained unreconciled, and *Kārmal* (and the Soviets) resorted to typical Marxist-Leninist forms of rule. The National Fatherland Front (N.F.F.) was established in June 1981 as an umbrella organization for other front groups; the first chairman was a veteran *Ḳalqī*, *Šāleḥ Moḥammad Zerey*. The component groups included Democratic youth organization of Afghanistan (D.Y.O.A.), a training ground for future P.D.P.A. members, analogous to the Soviet *Komsomol*; Democratic organization of Afghan women



(D.O.A.W.); unions of journalists, writers, artists, agricultural cooperatives, and various trades; Organization of peace, solidarity, and friendship with foreign countries; Economic consultative council; Council of scholars and clergy; and a *jerga* (council) of tribal representatives. The purpose of all these front groups was to mobilize nonparty supporters and to carry party decisions to the public, but they were not effective. Outside Kabul they had little strength, and their leaders were frequent targets for assassination (*Yearbook*, 1982, p. 160).

*Changes in ideology and leadership, 1364-65 Š./1985-86.* In the autumn of 1364 Š./1985, after nearly four years of unsuccessful Soviet military operations designed to crush the resistance of the guerrillas, there was a marked change in P.D.P.A.'s public posture. In September Kārmal declared that the role of the state apparatus was merely to fulfill the party's directives, yet on 18 'Aqrab/9 November he turned sharply away from traditional Marxist-Leninist rhetoric and appealed to such traditional "class enemies" as landowners, businessmen, the clergy, and traders. In subsequent propaganda the regime dropped such standard themes as the "vanguard" role of P.D.P.A. and the "irreversibility" of the revolution. Kārmal warned P.D.P.A. that it would have to give up its monopoly of political power, and he voiced stinging criticism of party nepotism, corruption, bombast, disunity, and unpopularity. In December Kārmal suddenly expanded the revolutionary council, which generally functioned as a rubber stamp for government policy, from 69 to 148 members; the number who were not members of P.D.P.A. rose from 2 to 58. He also named twenty-one new ministers, of whom fifteen were allegedly not from P.D.P.A. These changes were parallel to but slightly ahead of the policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* that were being introduced in the Soviet Union at that time and were undoubtedly inspired by Soviet advisers in Kabul.

These measures appear not to have been sufficient, however, for on 14 Tawr 1365 Š./4 May 1986 the Soviets replaced Kārmal with the long-time chief of the Afghan secret police, Najīb (formerly Najīb-Allāh), who had resigned in November 1985 to devote all his time to party work (Malik, pp. 199-201). Najīb, an Aḥmadzay Ġelzay Pashtun, born in 1325 Š./1947 in Paktiā province, was, like Amīn, the son of a minor government official. He joined P.D.P.A. in 1344 Š./1965 after the founding congress. He studied medicine at Kabul university and was graduated in 1354 Š./1975, after serving two jail terms for illegal political activities. He became a member of the Afghan politburo only in 1360 Š./1981. As a protégé of the K.G.B., his accession to power in 1365 Š./1986 was probably evidence that the K.G.B. had taken over responsibility for Afghan



affairs in the Kremlin. Najīb criticized P.D.P.A. even more strongly than Kārmal had done, and he pushed hard for “national reconciliation,” a policy to end the war while keeping Afghanistan under P.D.P.A. control. Under the Afghan constitution adopted in December 1987 five small “opposition” political parties, including the reborn Setam-e mellī, were permitted to function, though they attracted few followers. This pretense of pluralism heralded a Soviet plan, as yet not publicly announced, to withdraw its military forces (*Yearbook*, 1987, p. 425; 1989, p. 460).

In October 1987 Najīb changed his name back to the more religious Najīb-Allāh and began to emphasize his supposed dedication to Islam; the media began designating him with the epithet “esteemed” instead of “comrade.” On 2 Ḥamal 1367 Š./22 March 1988 the official English-language daily *Kabul New Times* also reverted to its prerevolutionary name, *Kabul Times*, and on 1 Jawza/22 May the revolutionary council was replaced by a bicameral national assembly. In these attempts to gain legitimacy Najīb denied that P.D.P.A. was or had ever been communist (*Yearbook*, 1989, pp. 458, 460; 1990, p. 470).

*Ḳalqī attempts at a coup, 1367-69 Š./1988-90.* These developments were viewed with dismay by the Ḳalqīs, who undertook a series of attempts to overthrow Najīb’s regime. In 1367 Š./1988 their leader was Minister of Interior Sayyed Moḥammad Golābzoy, who made no secret of his dislike for his successive Paṛčamī superiors, Kārmal and Najīb, but had held his Ḳalqī sympathies temporarily in check. After Najīb initiated his version of *perestroika*, however, Golābzoy attempted a high-level coup in October 1988; it failed, and he was posted as ambassador to Moscow; in November it was reported that as many as 300 people had been arrested after the coup, including between seventeen and fifty members of the central committee (*Yearbook*, 1989, p. 459).

After Golābzoy’s departure the Ḳalqī leadership devolved on Minister of Defense General Šahnavāz Tanay, who appeared equally unreconciled to abandonment of traditional Marxism-Leninism. During 1368 Š./1989 there were three coup attempts against the regime, and Tanay was implicated in at least the latter two of them. After the second, in August 1989, Najīb adopted a conciliatory line, appointing four known Ḳalqīs to the central committee. In December, however, after the third attempt, he responded forcibly by arresting 127 people, including 11 generals. In March 1990 Tanay’s forces tried again, this time bombing the presidential palace and attacking the Ministry of defense building. Najīb barely escaped with his life, but the plan failed, and Tanay and some of the generals who had supported him fled to Pakistan. The



plot, which resulted in the arrests of 623 people, included five of the fourteen politburo members, at least twenty-four members of the central committee, and numerous generals. The most remarkable aspect of Tanay's coup attempts was the later discovery that he had been in league with Golbadīn Ḥekmatyār, leader of the most radical Islamic resistance group, Ḥezb-e eslāmī (Islamic party), which was operating from Pakistan. Tanay later led resistance troops in operations against Najīb's forces (*Yearbook*, 1991, pp. 469-71).

These plots had delayed the program of renaming the various groups supporting the regime, but it was resumed after Tanay's flight. On 5 Ḥamal 1369 Š./25 March 1990 the National front became the Peace front. On 7 Saraṭān/28 June P.D.P.A. itself, at its second and probably last party congress, was renamed Ḥezb-e waṭan (Homeland party). D.Y.O.A. was renamed Afghanistan youth union, and the party daily became *Payām* instead of *Ḥaqīqat-e enqelāb-e ṭawr* (19 Mīzān/11 October). There was also wholesale renaming of party organs: Congresses became general assemblies, the central committee became the central council, the politburo became the executive committee, and party cells became zones (*Yearbook*, 1991, pp. 465-68).

*Membership of P.D.P.A. and front groups.* In [Table 14](#) P.D.P.A. statistics of total membership for the decade of the 1980s are given, as well as percentages of members under thirty years old and percentages serving in the security forces (army, police, secret police). In addition, the composition of the politburo and politburo alternates, the secretariat, the central committee, and candidate members of the central committee are given. The ratio of members in the Paṛčam and Ḳalq factions has been estimated by the author. The figures for total party membership not only are probably exaggerated but also do not reflect the qualitative changes that had taken place in the party. Before the coup of 1357 Š./1978 approximately 95 percent of P.D.P.A. membership had consisted of intellectuals. By October 1987 only 36.9 percent considered themselves intellectuals (*Yearbook*, 1989, p. 456). Among those under thirty years old most were in the various security services, where heavy pressure from superiors could force nominal membership without ideological conviction. Comparatively little independent statistical information on front groups is available, but it seems to reflect the same general pattern of growth experienced by P.D.P.A. ([Table 15](#)).

At the beginning of 1371 Š./1992 both the United States and the former Soviet Union had ceased to supply arms to the warring factions in Afghanistan. The Soviet supply program had been more important to its communist clients than



American aid to the Mojāhedīn, however. United Nations efforts to reach a peaceful settlement of the conflict by democratic methods were showing some progress, but the future of Afghan communism did not seem promising.

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[Table 14](#). Claimed P.D.P.A. Membership, 1359-69 Š./1980-90

[Table 15](#). Reported Growth of Front Groups, 1361-68 Š./1982-89 (in 1000s)