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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

28 August 1986

Afghanistan Resistance Spokesman

Sibghatullah Mojadedi--In Search of Unity

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Summary

Sibghatullah Mojadedi began a three-month stint as spokesman for the Afghan insurgents' seven-party alliance in July. He leads the traditionalist Jabha-i-Najat-i-Milli Afghanistan (Afghanistan National Liberation Front or ANLF), the smallest and probably least militarily effective of the groups. He has consistently called for cooperation among the alliance factions and the eventual establishment of a government-in-exile. Mojadedi possesses first-rate Islamic credentials and hails from one of the country's most prominent families; his ability to promote unity, however, is limited by his lack of political and administrative skills, the poor military and financial condition of the ANLF, and his antagonistic relationship with two key members of the fundamentalist faction.

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In July 1986 Sibghatullah Mojadedi, leader of the Jabha-i-Najat-i-Milli Afghanistan (Afghanistan National Liberation Front--ANLF), was named to a three month term as spokesman for the Afghan insurgents' seven-party alliance. Mojadedi has consistently

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stressed the need for unity within the resistance. Since the beginning of the war, he has participated in every moderate alliance, and from 1982 until 1985, he served as chairman of the Islamic Unity of Afghan Mujahidin, a three-party moderate alliance. While he insists that without solidarity the resistance cause might be lost, we believe he sees the alliance as serving his best interests. The ANLF is in poor military and financial condition, and unity provides Mojadedi with more exposure and power than he would have otherwise and gives him increased access to funding and logistical aid. [redacted]

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Life with the fundamentalists, however, has not been easy. According to US officials in Peshawar, Mojadedi has labeled Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, the leader of the Hizbi Islami-Gulbuddin (the Gulbuddin faction of the Islamic Party), and Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, the leader of the Ittihad-i-Islami Barai Azadi Afghanistan (the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan), as fanatics for their support of a Khomeini-style government. In addition to their differences over the form of a post-Communist government in Afghanistan, they are at odds over the nature of the present coalition. Mojadedi maintains that Gulbuddin and Sayyaf have little regard for unity and hinder the alliance by refusing to cooperate with it. He blames their arrogance and intransigence on their allegedly close ties to Khomeini and Qadhafi. He is especially hostile toward Gulbuddin, whom he has branded the "world's biggest terrorist" and has accused of assassinating fellow resistance commanders. He may also be jealous of Gulbuddin's military prowess and Sayyaf's financial support from the Saudis. Mojadedi appears to have better relations with fundamentalist Burhannuddin Rabbani, head of the Jamiat-i-Islami (Islamic Society). [redacted]

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The Spokesman: A PR Man

The role of the spokesman has always been defined by the man who occupies it. Mojadedi, no stranger to the limelight, will probably continue to stress public relations during his tenure. He has personal ties to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, Libya, Western Europe and the United States, and he speaks fluent English and Arabic and some German and Urdu. He is an experienced public speaker and has delivered some powerful and moving speeches. His personable nature comes across well in press interviews, which he gives often (he even appeared in 1982 on the 700 Club). Realizing that world opinion is important, he will present the view of a united resistance, while working toward achieving that objective. [redacted]

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Mojadedi has stated his goals as further unifying the alliance by opening offices abroad, consolidating the work of the various alliance committees, and promoting the formation of an assembly to create a government-in-exile. He has also publicly called for resistance participation in the UN-sponsored proximity talks. [redacted]

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Mojadedi's success, however, will probably be limited, since the seven leaders must reach a consensus before the alliance can act on issues. According to the US Embassy in Islamabad, Sayyaf and Gulbuddin have not cooperated in the effort to open an alliance office in Jidda. They also disagree with Mojadedi and the traditionalists over relations with the United States and the method of selecting representatives for the proposed loya jirga, or grand council (a traditional form of self-rule based on popular representation), to establish the future government of Afghanistan. More importantly, Mojadedi lacks the financial support and military effectiveness as well as the political savvy to influence the other alliance leaders. We expect he will have to move slowly toward his objectives while preserving the facade of alliance unity. He will also work behind the scenes to enlist US aid in weakening Gulbuddin's and Sayyaf's veto power over alliance decisionmaking. [redacted]

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A Mullah . . .

According to Western scholars, Mojadedi, 60, is one of the leading Islamic philosophers and scholars alive today. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in Islamic law from the prestigious Al-Azhar University in Cairo. During the 1950s he taught theology at two secondary schools in Kabul and was a professor of Islamic jurisprudence at Kabul University. From 1974 until 1978 he headed the Islamic Center of Scandinavia in Copenhagen. [redacted]

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Mojadedi's religious and family status form the base of his potential support. He has made a particular study of the Naqshbandi order of Sufism, which his family has headed for more than a century. Nearly three million sect members regard him as the latest holy man of a dynasty that traces its roots back through the revered Mullah Shore Bazar to Mojadedi Alf-Sani.

[redacted]

His father and great uncle, both religious scholars, added prestige and great wealth to the family's credentials. They were well rewarded by the monarchy for their efforts in fighting the British in 1919. [redacted]

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. . . Not a General

Mojadedi, who lacks any military or political training, has been unable to convert his religious following into a broad insurgent movement. The ANLF is the smallest and probably least effective of the Peshawar-based resistance groups. We believe that its claim to have between 10,000 and 40,000 armed men operating from bases in Kabul City, Lowgar, Nangahar, Qandahar, and Konarha Provinces is greatly exaggerated. [redacted]

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[redacted] the ANLF's few supporters are restricted to operations in the eastern provinces near the Pakistani border.

[redacted] the ANLF has often taken credit for other groups' military successes. [redacted]

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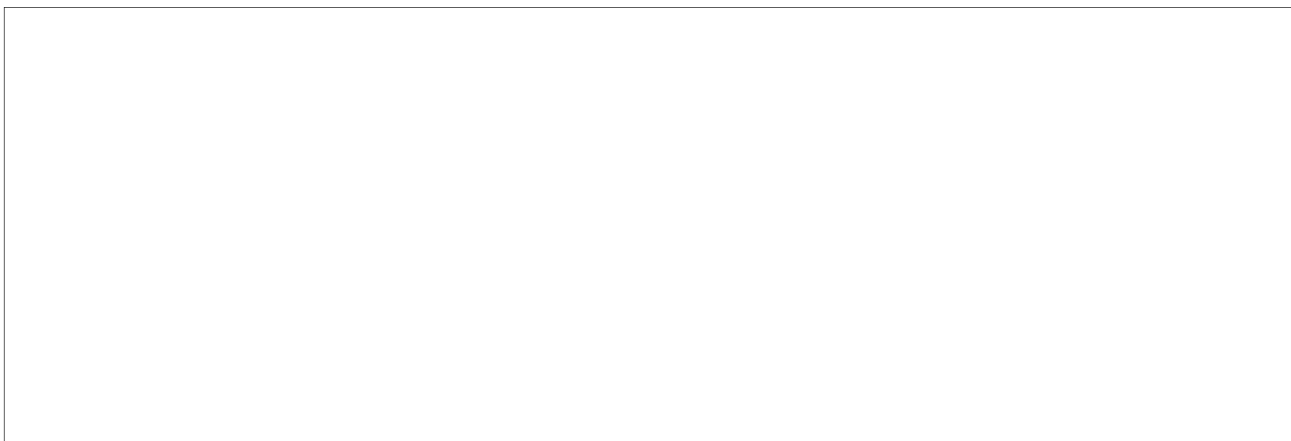
ANLF is chronically short of munitions and funds; logistical

[redacted]

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breakdowns keep supplies that are sent from reaching the battlefield. [redacted]

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Anything but Communism

Mojadedi has a long history of anti-Communist and anti-Soviet activities. In 1959 he was arrested for allegedly plotting to assassinate Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev during his official visit to Kabul. He subsequently served a four-year prison term including three years in solitary confinement. From his release until 1974, when he fled the country for Denmark, he served as a translator at the Saudi Arabian Embassy. During that period he was active in organizing anti-Communist street demonstrations. In 1972 he formed the secret Jamiat al-Ulami Mohammadi as an Islamic counterweight to the growing communist influence in Kabul. While in self-imposed exile, he traveled around the Middle East trying to mobilize opposition to the regime of Mohammed Daoud, which he saw as leftist. [redacted]

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Mojadedi has never hesitated to use Islam as a political tool, but he opposes the establishment in Afghanistan of an Islamic republic modeled after Iran. He has said that he favors a nonaligned democracy based on Islamic and traditional Afghan values but would support the decision of the loya jirga, once it is established. [redacted]

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While the other traditionalist leaders have taken a consistent stand on the role of former King Zahir Shah, Mojadedi has flip-flopped. In 1984 he told US officials that the monarchy was an anachronism and that the King, to whom he is distantly related through his second wife, had made mistakes that led to the present political chaos. During the past two years he has told the same officials that the monarch was still popular among his former subjects and could be a useful rallying point in the face of rivalries within the resistance. We believe that he would probably welcome a role for Zahir Shah, if popular opinion seemed to favor it. [redacted]

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[REDACTED]

Looking to Uncle Sam

Mojadedi has always looked favorably on the West. He sought and received refuge in Scandinavia and has traveled throughout the free world. He has visited the United States at least four times--twice on official visits, once to visit his brother and two sons who live in Florida, and once for treatment of a heart condition. He has been straightforward with US officials and has called on them to provide more humanitarian and military aid--to the resistance in general and the ANLF specifically--and to increase diplomatic pressure on the Soviet Union. After his most recent trip to Washington--in June 1986--he told US officials in Islamabad that he appreciated meeting President Reagan and was impressed with his knowledge of the resistance effort. He also told them that as spokesman he intends to maintain close contact with this country. Mojadedi is not, however, as positive about relations with Pakistan. He has complained bitterly of Pakistani interference in resistance affairs, and to emphasize his dissatisfaction he initially refused to accept his turn as spokesman for the alliance. [REDACTED]

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