

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Stands for United States' Proxy Conflict in West Asia during the Cold War Time: A Critical Inquest

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ABSTRACT

The Cold War in West Asia was come across by the world in shape of Afghanistan conflict. This battle besides unfocused the USSR from her armaments competition by way of the USA, consequently let America to achieve a scientific plus. USA ratcheted up stress on USSR all the way through several means. The Reagan government initiated introducing missiles in Western Europe, principally in Western Germany, tactically positioned to terrorize Eastern Europe and the USSR Reagan moreover initiated buttressing the United States armed forces. Reagan custom-built innovative jumbo jet carriers and long-drawn-out America's stealth aircraft curriculum. Toward the Soviets, these measures indicated a broaden armaments fissure, in particular in terms of scientifically sophisticated armaments.

KEYWORDS: Cold-War, Soviet-Guiding-Principle, USSR-USA, Afghanistan, West-Asia, Proxy-Conflict.

HISTORICAL LOCALE

Russian interest in Afghanistan goes back to the Tsarist time. The pocket-sized non-coastal and taciturn country was then a buffer zone between two empires and it was keenly aware of its powerful northern neighbor. By virtue of its size and common border, the USSR has held an important place in Afghan foreign policy, even though the intensity of Moscow's relations with Kabul has varied. Here Soviet objectives in Afghanistan are examined and gauged Soviet success in achieving these objectives and the cost that is involved.

Afghanistan did not in the 1950's turn out to be a party to the anti-Soviet alliances, which were linked by its neighbors, Iran and Pakistan. One of the focal aims had been to continue to stay Afghanistan out of the western orbit. Like articulated by the then President Podgorny at the conclusion of a visit to Afghanistan in June 1967, the Soviet Union had "high evaluation of Afghanistan's foreign policy, which was based on principles of positive neutrality, nonparticipation in blocs and military groupings. [1] & [2]

A subsequent purpose of Soviet course of action had been to exercise its relationship with Afghanistan to fashion complexities for Pakistan, a US ally and one-time base for spying operations against the Soviet Union.[3] Unstated support from the USSR was significant in Afghanistan's decision in December 1953 to repudiate the 1921 treaty in which Afghanistan had recognized the Durand Line as the international boundary between Afghanistan and what was then British India.[4] The same year, the Afghan premier declared that American military aid to Pakistan constituted a threat, a view that was shared in Moscow. And when Kabul articulated its support for Pakhtoonistan,[5] Moscow announced and repeatedly confirmed its support of the Afghan moves.[6]

The anti-Pakistan policies of Afghanistan elicited strong Soviet support in the diplomatic crises, which on two occasions led to diplomatic breaks between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Nor has the Soviet objective in playing up the nuisance value of Afghanistan for Pakistan always been subtle. To that day, Moscow pressed on Islamabad the need for strong Soviet-Pakistani relations as the only real guarantor of improved Pakistan-Afghan relations and of a peaceful northern border for Pakistan.[7]

The 3rd Soviet objective in Afghanistan was to demonstrate its "good neighborly" policies. The Soviets had repeatedly emphasized a policy termed by Khrushchev in 1960 as never having "a friendly neighbor alone in her needs." [8] & [9] Soviet aid to Afghanistan was part of this policy and Soviet cultivation of good relations with Muslim Afghanistan kept their common border peaceful and did not provoke the ethnically related Soviet Muslims. The USSR's objective here was to demonstrate in Afghanistan the advantages that accrue to a Third World country that remain outside the American orbit.[10]

The 4th soviet objective could be' characterized as an outgrowth of the Soviet Union's perceptions of it role. The USSR was an Asian as well as a European power and it projected it image in the Third World more as an Asian

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power, which identified with the concerns of the less-developed countries.[11] Despite the challenge from the People's Republic of China in that quarter, Moscow had persisted Soviet involvement with Afghanistan helped to legitimize the Soviet Union Asian's concerns. That also offered a foothold for Soviet operations in a region that had seen rivalry between the three superpowers. The Soviet objective was to neutralize and if possible to exclude other powers from the region, and Afghanistan was an important part of that regional strategy.[12]

MECHANISM OF SOVIET GUIDING PRINCIPLE

The USSR as a superpower had numerous means at its disposal, which it could utilize in pursuit of its foreign policy objectives. The Soviets offered Afghanistan military aid as well as training for the Afghan armed forces, much needed economic aid to help develop their backward neighbor, trade which helped to offset the foreign aid debt and to offset the geographic disadvantages of diplomatic support for Afghan causes in particular the Pakhtoonisian quarrel with Pakistan. Each of these is analyzed below.[13]

Primarily, the Soviet Union gave military aid to Afghanistan to counter US aid to Pakistan and Iran. Reflections of realpolitik demand that Soviet concentration to Afghanistan in the interests of refuting that bordering country to the rapidly growing American alliance system. Stuck between 1955 and 1972 Afghanistan, officially, nonpartisan, was given \$455 million in military aid.[14] & [15] To that date "Soviet military aid deliveries to Afghanistan were in excess of \$600 million." [16] Since 1956 the USSR has made available 95 percent of Afghan military paraphernalia. Additionally, as of 1979 there were some 4,500 Soviet military gurus in Afghanistan serving to maintain military equipment and to direct the fighting against rebels.[17] As Afghanistan moved closer to Moscow, its military dependence increased. With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet military had essentially taken over all of the functions previously performed by the Afghan army.

Soviet military instructors accompanied modern Soviet weapons. In fact, Soviet instructors replaced the Turkish and German officers who were the traditional instructors of the Afghanistan. Both at the military academy in Kabul and in the field Soviet mentors became strictly involved with the enlargement of the Afghanistan military, helping with the assemblage and maintenance of military equipment, schooling local personnel in the use and maintenance of military apparatus and advising staff and armed forces officers.[18] Besides, Soviet instructors had skilled a substantial number of Afghan pilots and crewmen to operate the modern jets delivered by the USSR. The closeness of that affiliation had developed strong pro-Soviet elements inside the officer corps in the Afghan military, and that was that group, which carried out the coup d'état against King Zahir Shah in 1973 and played a key role in the 1978 coup against President Daud which "brought the Communists to power in Afghanistan.

Military support to Afghanistan had been a part of the overall prototype of Soviet relations.[19] It was originally given to increase Soviet power and prestige. Military support to Afghanistan had been a part of the overall prototype of Soviet relations. It was originally given to increase Soviet power and prestige. In order to continue the pursuit of that power and prestige, Moscow had had to undertake a greater military commitment to the Afghan regime than it might at first have foreseen.

Economic aid had also been an important component in the Soviet-Afghan relationship. Between 1954 and 1975 the Soviet Union gave \$1.263 billion in aid to Afghanistan, making it one of the largest recipients of Soviet assistance." [20] Grants comprise a larger share of Soviet aid to Afghanistan than to any other Third World country. About 1,500 Soviet economic advisors and technicians were assisting Afghanistan in a massive amount of projects.[21]

Afghan dependence on the USSR for economic aid had been pronounced since the fall of Daud. Indeed, the offer of \$2 billion made by the Shah of Iran to help counteract that dependence was a factor in the overthrow of Daud, who was perceived by the pro Soviet factions in Afghanistan as moving to the right and also as weakening the growing ties to Moscow. Economic aid from the United States reached \$500 million by 1977 but was cut off in February 1979 after the murder of the American Ambassador Dubs.[22] Thus Kabul was no longer able to exploit the competition between Washington and Moscow, as previously it had done so successfully.

The Soviet Union was Afghanistan's principal trading partner. Afghan Trade with Eastern Europe was also shipped from first to last the USSR, while trade with the West and with India in handled through Pakistan. Pakistan kept constant to allow transit facilities but because of the unfortunate state of its relations with Afghanistan the latter's reliance on trade with and through the Soviet Union had increased.[23]

Soviet diplomatic support had been influential in strengthening Afghani claims against Pakistan, Afghan calls for Pakhtoonisian had been believable because of Soviet backing, and that was for that reason 'that they had been taken gravely in Pakistan. Soviet diplomatic hold up was used as an instrument for gratifying the "appropriateness" of Afghan policy toward the USSR.

REVIEWED EVALUATION OF PROCEEDS AND OVERHEADS

King Zahir Shah's epoch was the most trouble-free time in Soviet-Afghan relations. In retrospect, it is ironic that Moscow's tacit support was instrumental in the king's overthrow the subsequent declaration of the Republic by his

pro-Soviet cousin Mohammed Daud, who took over as President and the pro-Soviet elements in the Afghan military for a time after taking over, Daud followed a classic pro-Soviet and anti Pakistan stand. Thereby pleasing the activists in the military who felt that Soviet backing was essential for a solution to Afghanistan's only problem-the Pushtoonistan issue.[24] Moscow greeted the Daud coup with enthusiasm and hailed the new regime's determination to pursue a policy of non-adherence and no adherence to military blocs. [25] Reaffirming the classic Soviet approach to South Asian politics, Pravda stated.

"Naturally the people of the Soviet Union cannot be indifferent to the political changes taking place in Afghanistan. The question is not merely concerned with the fact that our southern neighbors, Afghanistan, and the Soviet Union have a common border more than 2,000 km. long, but that Afghanistan is a friend and its people are our friends."[26]

There were supplementary contestants for Soviet benevolence, at a distance from Daud himself and the Soviet-trained Afghan military personnel. The Marxist-Leninist Khalq party led by Taraki and Hafizullah Amin set off Daud's program by working for a course of action which would lighten "the boundless sufferings of the oppressed natives of Afghanistan," through a conquest of international Marxism over intercontinental entrepreneurship," incomparability of municipal over clandestine sector, and land reorganization to overhaul the feudal organism overlooking Afghan society. The Parcham party led by Babrak Karmal was an derivative of the Khalq party from which it had come apart in 1966, as an upshot more of devices than philosophy.[27] Parchamies were more in good turn of working within the structure and were ever accused after the 1978 coup of group effort with Daud, even though they had turned out to be disheartened with the weakening of the progressive side of his rule and had largely inhibited their hold. Even though they had helped in the 1978 coup beside Daud, Parcham leaders were either sent out of the country or shut down when the Khalq party took power.

The 1973 coup was projected to auxiliary Moscow's objectives in Afghanistan, and for a while it did. Daud in the beginning allowed bigger contribution for the pro-Moscow left in Afghan political affairs and reaffirmed Afghan thankfulness for Moscow's support largesse he not only moved closer to the Soviet Union in municipal support, but he also articulated support of Moscow's Asian united safekeeping sketch and became aggressive to Iran and Pakistan but in a little while Daud set in motion to run into complexity, losing the support of pro-Soviet fundamentals who well thought-out his modernization curriculum and reform a farce exportation that Daud would make wider the decision making bottom to comprise those who helped him to muscle proved false, and the constricted base of power remained in actual fact in Mohammadzai hands.[28] What's more, the conventional traditionalist essentials in Afghan world were apprehensive of Daud for his known flirtation with Moscow and his dependence on the latter in his 1973 invasion.[29]

The expenditure to the Soviet Union of Daud's takeover got more rapidly in-increased aid support in the economic and military sectors. While half of the \$ 1.3 billion aid committed by Moscow to Kabul had been delivered, the pace of delivery was stepped up after 1973. The Soviet Union committed itself to 20 major projects in agriculture, irrigation, electric power, oil and gas exploration, mineral and metal processing and transportation.[30]

Moscow's honeymoon with Daud began to bitter later than the Shah of Iran lucratively enticed the Afghan President away from exclusive reliance on Moscow. Daud, who was in problem with household splinter groups of the left and the right, acted in response by straightening out his differentiation with Pakistan? He blamed domestic troubles for the stoppage in signing a concord identifying the Durand Line as the authorized border line between Afghanistan and Pakistan. When Daud, at some stage in a visit to Sadat's Egypt in 1978, reprimanded Cuba for its inclined stand in the nonpartisan pressure group, the Soviet Union saw that the accomplishment of its intentions in Afghanistan, pulled off decades of international relations, was in danger of spinning to malfunction.[31]

THE NUR MUHAMMAD TARAKI COUP AND UNION IN FAVOR OF MOSCOW

Although Daud's removal from power came at a time when Moscow was progressively gloomier with his course of action, there is little substantiation to put forward direct Soviet intervention in the April 1978 overthrow. There, Daud was killed by the side of 29 other associates of his family and a projected 3,000 others who were either Mohammadzaies or minimally blameworthy by unification with the ruling family.[32] There is, on the other hand, the prospect that Moscow's despondency with Daud's policies was a fundamental dynamic in heartening the Parcham and Khalq divisions to amalgamate and integrate.[33]

The new Soviet leverage in Afghanistan was best understood in historical perspective. Whereas, the successive Afghan rulers had been competent in the 19th and 20th centuries to take part in oil. Russian concentrations against those of the British and later the Americans, their aptitude to carry out that paired act then had been complicated by the existence of domestic forces named or predisposed by Moscow.[34] In other words, Moscow had got hold of neighboring allies who could force down for transformations and policies that could be approving and favorable for the USSR, which it could not bear down, directly. Pro-Soviet rudiments in the military, a decisive resource of support and muscle in Afghanistan organism had provided evidence principally helpful to Moscow in carrying out that strategy.[35]

The 1978 revolution had been referred to as the "unintended overthrow" by an observer of the Afghan scene who

witnessed it from close quarters.[36] It resulted from the aggravation caused by Daud and moved toward a direct upshot of the assassination on April 17, 1978, of Akbar Khyber, the ideologue of the Parcham splinter group. Although the Khalq faction was suspected of attachment, annoyance was lined and veined against Daud, and he well thought-out an onslaught and crackdown beside leftist leaders, Hafizullah Amin, the Khalq co-leader who afterward grew to be president of Afghanistan, was proficient without more ado before his apprehension to get in touch with three military officers (a couple was major in the army and a colonel in the air force), who set off the rebellion because of a feeling of "at this time or on no account." The 2000 bodyguards of Daud were to conclude subdued by air force terror bombing campaign. Air force squadrons trustworthy to Daud could not get their own back owing to a communicational collapse.[37] As a consequence the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan was born espousing open-mindedness, the wellbeing of peasants, workers, and land reforms.

Once upon a time, the budge towards Moscow came instantaneously; Soviet acknowledgment was absolute to the new government, and Moscow showed its gladness at Afghan gradient in her favor. Soviet intentions of pro-Soviet Afghan administration, serving as an example for next-door "countries and backing up in rebuffing the area to great-power contestants, was being fulfilled and pleased.[38] Afghanistan had become yet another "triumph" in a series that encompassed Angola, Ethiopia, and South Yemen. It confirmed and demonstrated the hostile source of power (followed dynamically or by failure to pay) of budding Soviet credence and weight. The United States, by contrast, appeared in the eyes of regional countries to be on the self-protective and condemned to inaction.

The 1978 coup was followed by stepped up Soviet economic and military aid. The price of coalition could be witnessed here in greater than before support. 72 up-to-the-minute economic support accords were signed by Moscow between April 1978 and March 1979, and those were accompanied by an incursion of almost 4,500 Soviet counselors. As the Taraki administration exchanged blows for authenticity, legitimacy and power, which schemed the Soviet Union (by virtue of its self-declared alliance with Moscow) into giving greater support.[39]

The vigilant equilibrium in Afghanistan policy under Daoud. Who had hunted fiscal support from both east and west, was once another time went down in favor of entire reliance on Soviet, relieve. For the reason that the Taraki management turned not in favor of all technically trained or opinionated Afghans. Most of whom were connected to the prior rule; it very much needed Soviet consultants to fill in the space in all ministries of the government. Additionally, Soviet advisers were posted in the office of the president. The finale of the slant came in the office of companionship signed by Taraki in Moscow on December 5, 1475. That concordat institutionalized Afghan reliance in the USSR.[40] Taraki was not capable to get a mainstream of Afghans to support his hallucination of an original Afghanistan. His transformation in education, land, over ship, and communal strategy ran into complicatedness as a mutiny by a small number of tribesmen grew into an extensive confrontation in a mainstream of the 28 Afghan provinces. A dribble of refugees entered Pakistan after May 1978, and by August 1979 their number had augmented to 100,000. They had a discussion regarding the movement beside the Communist rule in Kabul as a religious over and above a nationalistic upheaval, since Taraki had been abnormal and got against Islam and "put up for sale Afghanistan to the Soviet Union." [41]

Pakistan was the first country to recognize the Taraki government and had offered full mutual aid in transportation, travel and trade amenities and facilities. The President of Pakistan, General Zia Ul Haq, visited Kabul devoid of invitation in September 1978. On the other hand, as well-liked opposition to the Taraki regime spread, Pak-Afghan relations deteriorated. [42] Pakistan counted 56 violations of its air and ground space (penetrations of up to three miles above the 1,200 mile Pak-Afghan border) and Afghanistan charged Pakistani (over and above Chinese, Iranian, and American) involvement in the mounting insurgency inside the country. These charges were hold up by the Soviet Union, as Afghanistan's neighbors were made scapegoats on a campaign to influence Afghans that the revolt was not internally based.[43]

The Soviet Union sustained to put anxiety on Pakistan to send back the 450,000 Afghan refugees because their occurrence was seen as constituting an embarrassment and mortification to the victory of a socialist regime. Pakistan had responded that it couldn't force them back for humanitarian and compassionate reasons. Furthermore, these refugees had relatives and unavoidable associates in Pakistan with whom many were staying. The border was a porous one and Pakistan was unable to stop them from crossing over. [44] Nevertheless, consistent with the Pakistan government, that was up to the Afghan government to stop them, that could one way or another be managed. Moscow had subsequently put pressure on India to persuade Pakistan to return the refugees. The Indian response under Desai was to give advice the Afghans to generate in-house state of affairs, which would make possible their comeback. [45]

As the fighting increased, the Soviets were drawn in with increased military aid, and soon there were reports of Soviet pilots flying combat missions against rebel strongholds. In addition, an East German embassy was opened, and the Cuban mission enlarged to eighty persons. In contrast Kabul asked the missions of the United States, China, Iran and Pakistan to decrease their staffs.[46] While the Soviet Union benefited in that Afghanistan began to follow Moscow's line slavishly after April 1978, the costs were increasing as Moscow became more heavily committed. It could be seen as a case of the tail wagging the dog and Moscow, for the first time, faced a dilemma in Afghanistan. It had a duty to support a self-declared socialist regime, but the cost in material and diplomatic terms was

increasingly high. Not to support the regime meant the collapse of Afghanistan's socialist experiment and a victory for "reactionary elements there as well as in Iran, Pakistan, China and the United States, since Soviet propaganda has repeatedly linked these countries as conspirators seeking the overthrow of the Communist regime. There appeared to be no easy responses and Moscow's search for a solution was complicated once more by yet another coup.[47]

THE HAFIZULLAH AMIN COUP: A PUNTER STATE FOR MOSCOW

Soviet advisers cautioned Taraki and Amin to act more slowly in implementing reforms in order not to alienate so many so rapidly shah who lived in tome sparked rumors of the kings return under a soviet aegis. This may have contributed to the September 1979 coup in Kabul.

Hafizullah Amin was the strongman and ideologue of the Khalq party. He perceived that Taraki was succumbing to pressures to moderate for example at the Havana Summit of Nonaligned Nations. Taraki moved away from the direct confrontation with neighbors that he had previously threatened that this moderation was not distasteful to the Soviets is suggested by the fact that Taraki stopped in Moscow on his journey home from Havana and was given a warm welcome.[48] However, reports circulated that Moscow was less than satisfied with the Prime Minister, Hafizullah Amin, and would seek to replace him in a move to win support from the rebels. Instead, Amin moved first, and a week after Taraki returned from Havana he was overthrown in a coup and was killed. Amin declared that Taraki was alive but sick and almost a month later admitted he was dead as a result of a "long illness"[49]

Amin declared that his September 16, 1979, coup marked the "beginning of a better socialist order" in which the enemies of the people had been eliminated.[50] He moved harshly against the opposition, dropping napalm on rebel villages, removing political opponents, organizing the secret police under his personal control, appointing his brother as Governor of four provinces and other friends and relatives to key posts. He had not previously listened to Soviet advice to go slowly, and there was little to indicate that he would do so after he assumed power.[51]

Soviet stakes in Afghanistan were high, and Moscow was put in a position where it had to support Amin at least for a limited time or face the prospect of a backlash (similar to the anti-US feelings in post-Iran) if the rebels won. But Moscow was looking for an alternative leader even as President Brezhnev sent Amin a letter congratulating him on his "election" shortly after the coup.[52] Amin was committed to ensuring that reforms launched after 1978 were not set back. The coup was a desperate attempt to prevent a change in policies. To win Moscow's concurrence, Amin acted as a client of Moscow's but a client that told its patrol that it couldn't be forced off its chosen path to socialism. It was a new version of the patron-client relationship, and it turned out that Moscow did not like its new equation with Amin.

SOVIET INFRINGEMENT AND BABRAK KARMAL, A GLOVE PUPPET

On December 27, 1979, the Soviets moved with 50,000 troops into Afghanistan and established control. In the process, they killed Hafizullah Amin and brought in-three days after the "coup d'état" Babrak Karmal, the leader of the Parcham party, to be the new President of Afghanistan. This move, characterized as the most serious challenge since World War II" by President Carter, destroyed detente and put Southwest Asia directly in the path of a possible US-Soviet confrontation.[53]

The timing of the Soviet move was curious. As early as June 1979 there had been reports in Pakistan of a Soviet division within Afghanistan's borders waiting to interject direct Soviet force. It is surprising that US intelligence reports did not pick up this information. Contrary to many reports, the rebel movement was inflicting no more damage against the Kabul government in December than it had been in the months past. In fact, there was some indication that the Soviet-backed Afghan army would make a successful bid against the insurgents before the winter snows deepened. So why did the Soviets invade Afghanistan now?

There were a number of plausible reasons for the Soviet move. Principally, Moscow perceived US policy in Southwest Asia to be essentially bankrupt and US responses limited by an inability to project American power beyond a temporary naval presence. The 100,000 men Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) was operationally years away, and the lesson learned in projecting US forces even 90 miles from American shores in Cuba could not have been lost on Moscow. The exercise hopelessly delayed by foul weather and bogged down in bureaucratic and logistic problems, demonstrated the inadequacy of any US response in a critical situation half a world away.[54]

Subsequently, the Soviet Union took advantage of the American-preoccupation with Iran. The spectacle of a United States condemned and held hostage in a country where only in January 1978 President Carter had proclaimed the Shah to be "an island of stability in an unstable area of the world" permitted a unique chance for Moscow to move to project its own power in a region where the United States had only recently been dominant.[55]

In the same way, in the foray of Afghanistan the Soviet Union took advantage of a golden opportunity to move towards the final play of the Great Game. By fulfilling its ambitions to secure a warm water port on the Indian Ocean-then only 300 miles from Soviet army positions through troubled Baluchistan.[56] The temporary collapse of detente seemed a price-worth paying for the achievement of such a major and concrete objective. While the United state may threaten future action against further Soviet moves for then the Soviet Union had dramatically changed the

political map of areas under its domination and control.[57] One had to understand the larger objectives of that invasion-Afghanistan in and of itself was not a sufficient prize. The Soviet invasion had destroyed what remained of the "regional" leaders, a concept put forward by Dr. Brzezinski and endorsed in the Carter visit to New Delhi and Teheran. With the collapse of the Shah and his role as the policeman of the Persian Gulf, the return of a Moscow-oriented Mrs. Gandhi, and the Soviet takeover of Afghanistan, Washington could no longer count on any of its regional powers in Southwest Asia to guard its interests in a game where the stakes were high.[58]

Correspondingly, the Soviet Union did not wish to see an uncompromising Islamic revivalist area encompassing Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan, which might encourage its own Muslim population-a goal it probably shared with India. This could not have been a goal uppermost in the minds of the Soviet planners, but in combination with the other factors it undoubtedly influenced the decision to intervene.[59]

As a final point and lastly, the prospect of a failing Socialist experiment invited a Soviet response to move-with force sufficient to get the job done. While socialist honor had to be defended, Moscow must have recognized that the negative publicity of the move would not redound to its propaganda advantage, as seen in the condemnations of the Soviet move in the General Assembly and Islamic Nations Conference.

Babrak Karmal had, in the words of one Afghan, been brought to power "perched on Soviet tanks." Despite his efforts to harm the reputation of Amin as a "stooge of the CIA" and his undertakings to wipe down the atrocious excesses of the Amin regime through gesticulations such as the release of Afghan opinionated prisoners, there were few indications that he was perceived as being more benevolent-or more in dependent.[60] At the same time as the USSR was carrying out policies to soften the dead set against religion and rebellious traditional perceptions of the Communist. Organization in power the presence of Soviet troops everywhere fed the opposite belief that Babrak Karmal was not the master of his fate even in his own house.[61]

In nutshell Soviet policy in Afghanistan had so far been a success. Soviet Objectives to keep Afghanistan out of the Western orbit, to use the country to legitimize Soviet concern with Asia, to demonstrate to Pakistan the need for Soviet friendship-had then largely been realized. While the virtues of Soviet friendship were suspect in light of the strong embrace of Afghanistan, there was grudging respect for the extent of the support that a Soviet commitment brings.

The primary position of Moscow was ensured in Afghanistan by virtue of its size and common border and because it was Afghanistan's foremost trading partner. Soviet international relations had sophisticated Afghan good will over decades. In the last 5 years, it had become more heavily committed to the course of events unfolding in Kabul. Post-1973 success for Soviet policy in Afghanistan came as Moscow reaped the benefits of domestic discontent and pro-Soviet Afghan groups sought to initiate "progressive" changes. They had operated, at times, with direct Soviet approval, but had always had Moscow's tacit support in aiming Afghan policy towards a clearly Soviet orientation.[62] These groups were encouraged by their perception of American unwillingness to get involved in regional problems driven by a desire to settle scores with their neighbors-Pakistan foremost among them.

The USSR was then heavily involved in Afghanistan. The cost of that involvement was rising. While Moscow might wish reconciliation between the Afghan government and the rebels who disagreed with "the socialist path," and might even look for a compromise, there was little indication that the regime would be able to get the support of the population. But they had military control and while Soviet power was dominant, their control was ensured. The Soviets might even succeed in "pacifying" the rebels with their vastly superior force and the use of nerve gas. They would run a puppet regime in Kabul knowing that otherwise the conservative Muslim rebel forces could win, there by changing the Southwest Asian scene to a "mullah" controlled one-with possible adverse implications for Soviet control of the USSR's Muslim population.[63]

The Soviet invasion might have been the last card that Moscow chose to play, but there was no doubt that it preferred to play the card rather than to lose its long cultivated and hard won place in Afghanistan. Moscow could not have wished for the souring of the Afghan revolution, but faced with its demise again the Soviets would protect the Revolution."[64]

AFGHANISTAN: BUTT OF COUNTERFEIT VIEWPOINTS

It is too fact that Afghanistan is one of those unfortunate countries that have been the victim of false beliefs. The Afghan confrontation between Afghanistan and British Indian were not measured opinionated wars by several Afghans but were between Islam and Christianity. As a result of these wars, abhorrence urbanized between the Afghanistan and the British.

King Amanullah of the Mohammadzai dynasty wanted to bring Afghanistan to the same level as any European country. Although there was great hatred against the British, king Amanullah advised the Afghans to learn the English language, as it was the key to technological and scientific knowledge. He also thought that devoid of educating the women the new generation could not originate evolution. King Amanullah advised the afghans to seek knowledge giving the example of the holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who said that of necessary, one should go

even as far as China to seek knowledge.[65] But some of the fanatical groups disagreed with Amanullah Khan. They disagreed that the prophet (PBUH) had meant that those in the hunt for Islamic knowledge should go to China. King Amanullah Khan also used to say that in Islam any person could lead the prayers consequently he himself used to lead the Friday prayers but the fanatical clergy used to say that he was not eligible to do so, for the reason that he did not wear a beard.[66]

King Amanullah did not hope the flatterers around him and in order to be familiar with what the people considered with reference to him and his government, he made it a customary practice to camouflage himself and roam in the bazaars of the Afghan people. On one occasion he was more or less recognized by an Afghan who said to him, 'your eyes are as beautiful as the eyes of the king Amanullah'. The king by the way had been blessed with a pair of extremely attractive eyes. It can be expressed that Afghanistan has the dubious honor of being the first state outside Moscow's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe to be invaded by the Soviet Union since the Second World War.[67] The invasion of this out-of-the-way country, in December 1979, also sounded the final death knell for 1970s-style East-West detente. The continued presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan still sours relations between East and West, and between the Soviet Union and China. But strangely enough, this poor and remote land has a history of drawing the attention of great powers.[68]

Russian interest in the orientation of Afghanistan could be traced to the 18th century expansion of the Czarist Empire southward, taking over central Asian khanates. For some two hundred years the Russian and British (India) empires battled for influence in Afghanistan, the key buffer state in the Great Game. Britain established and helped maintain an independent kingdom in Afghanistan until a coup in July 1973 by the King's cousin. Afghanistan had remained neutral in two world wars and non-aligned in the early days of the cold war. After a request for aid from the United States was refused in the early 1950s, Afghanistan turned to a closer relationship with its Soviet neighbor.[69]

This pro-Soviet gradient was of little consequence for many years, except to Pakistan (a CENTO collaborator of the United States). Afghanistan's population of fifteen million included and integrated eight million Pathans, who every now and then sought an independent and sovereign Pushtoonistan, which would take in Pakistan's the then North West Frontier Province (now KPK). Conflict with Pakistan along the frontier was contained, but continuous, and led Afghanistan to lean more heavily on Soviet aid. The 1973 coup installed a more pro-Soviet regime but at the time the Soviet Union seemed to have done little directly to bring this about. Further unrest, especially in the armed forces, led to another coup in April 1978. [70]

The armed forces put in power the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, a radical Marxist group sharply divided between two factions, the Parcham and Khalq. The new Prime Minister, N.M. Taraki was a Khalq leader and immediately set about radical land reform. He also antagonized wide sections of the population with vicious attacks on members of the Parcham faction. Above all, he pursued uncompromising Marxist policies, including anti-Islamic campaigns, and a growing Soviet influence emerged in social and political life. The resulting alienation of the people led Taraki's deputy, Hafizullah Amin, to strengthen his position.[71] In September 1979 Taraki, with Soviet support, botched an attempt to purge Amin and was himself killed.

It was at that point that the Soviet Union began serious plans to invade Afghanistan. In the meantime, Amin began undoing Taraki's handiwork. He even signaled his desire to re-open contact with Iran and Pakistan, as well as western states, in order to win support against the growing Muslim fundamentalist opposition movements in Afghanistan. The Soviets feared the 'loss' of Afghanistan and invaded on 24 December 1979. They installed Babrak Karmal, a Parcham faction leader in exile in Moscow, and arranged for him to 'request' Soviet assistance. The 'basic Soviet motive was the security of its southern border and maintenance of a friendly Afghan regime. [72] Apparently the Soviet Union did not fear a spread of Iranian-type Islamic fundamentalism to its own central Asian territory, because Moscow used its own Muslim troops and at first relied on the Afghan army to control the rebels. However, it soon became clear that Muslim fundamentalism was a greater threat than originally' appreciated. Troops from the European part of the Soviet Union were hurriedly brought in.[73]

By sooner or later sending some 115,000 Soviet troops into Afghanistan, Moscow demonstrated its ability to deploy large numbers of troops beyond its territory and its determination to wage a dirty and prolonged war. By 1985, it was estimated that the campaign had cost \$12 billion and at least 25,000 Soviet casualties. Perhaps half-a-million Afghan soldiers and civilians have been killed out of a population of 14 million. But the war can hardly be seen as a success, except in its most limited objective of keeping the Afghan regime out of hostile hands. The Soviet armed forces appear to be bogged down in a war where superior firepower merely allows the Russians to control towns and most major roads but not the three-quarters of the countryside.[74] Cynical observers noted this might be called 'socialism in one town'. Soviet access to the Gulf is not significantly enhanced and, on the international scene, Moscow has earned widespread criticism from the non-aligned and Muslim worlds, not to mention the West. New Soviet tactics in 1984 concentrated on using air power to depopulate the countryside, creating 'free-fire zones'. The short-term military position was stabilized but the regime in Kabul seemed no more secure than in 1980. Factional politics in the ruling Afghan party and low morale in the army were the most serious problems.

Rebel forces could take pride in holding the Soviet Superpower at bay, but they were just as far from achieving power in Kabul in 1986 as in 1980. The two hundred or more rebel movements lacked a common Programme (even if they had a common enemy) and offered no real alternative to the Soviet-supported regime. They found uneasy allies in the United States, Egypt and, to a certain extent, China and Pakistan, all of whom provided limited arms to the rebels. Western interests were more straightforwardly anti-Soviet than pro-rebel.[75] After all, the fundamentalists among the anti-government rebels had much in common with Khomeini's Iran. While these anti-Soviet forces cheered every minor military triumph over Soviet troops, they regularly expressed concern every spring when Soviet forces swept into rebel-held areas in force. The result has been military stalemate.[76]

The Soviet intention was to impose a military solution but, in the longer term, to drive Pakistan into cutting off the rebels' access to arms. Some four million refugees from Afghanistan (the largest concentration in the world) were already straining Pakistan's resources, especially since the refugees were mainly Pashto and threatened to destabilize Pakistan's northwestern border province. The challenge to the Pakistan regime also gave the Soviet Union some hope that a new leader in Pakistan would solve their problems. Pakistan's policy is to sit tight, arguing that only a more broadly based Afghan regime has any chance of survival. It is also unclear whether Pakistan could now move against rebel bases on its territory without destabilizing its own border region.

Negotiations, organized by the United Nations and managed by Diego Cordovez, began in 1982 and, despite early indications of progress, have remained deadlocked. The key question was whether and when Soviet troops would quit and whether the Kabul regime would really change its character. After five years of war, the Soviet Union was unlikely to quit without having confidence in the stability and friendliness of the regime in Kabul. To be sure, the war was a drain on a Soviet economy now looking for savings but in the Soviet definition, national security has always been worth a high price. Some political concessions on the nature of the Kabul regime may be possible and the reforming Mikhail Gorbachev did install a more pragmatic Dr. Najib in May 1986 as the Afghan leader. In January 1987, Najib proposed a unilateral ceasefire and the Soviet Union indicated that it was prepared to quit Afghanistan soon. There is little evidence that the Soviet Union intends to transform Afghanistan into yet another central Asian republic. However, the incentive for Afghanistan's neighbors to help arrange a deal is not very high. Only Pakistan seems vulnerable to pressure but a direct Soviet attack on Pakistan would certainly raise the stakes since that country has enjoyed American support. In the flurry of diplomatic activity in early 1987 the United States made it clear that it was discouraging Pakistan from accepting the new Soviet offer of a ceasefire and troop withdrawal within eighteen months. Thus, despite much apparent diplomatic and military activity, the political and military situation in Afghanistan seems deadlocked. Perhaps the best the Afghans can hope for is to become the Asian Finland.[77]

CONCLUSION

In nutshell, this research paper shows that Mr. Gorbachev came to power in March 1985; Afghanistan presented his most immediate foreign policy dilemma in the Third World. His approach to this problem provided the proof that "new thinking" did involve a substantive change in Soviet foreign policy and that Moscow would no longer allow secondary, regional issues to drive its foreign policy to the detriment of its primary objectives.

Gorbachev's policy toward Afghanistan provided a model for Moscow's subsequent approach to other regional conflicts. In Afghanistan, Gorbachev demonstrated that his commitment to the peaceful resolution of regional disputes was not rhetoric alone and that the drawdown of military force was a primary objective. In Afghanistan, the national reconciliation emerged as the favored Soviet political solution to those regional disputes in which Moscow sought a face-saving compromise. Furthermore there in Afghanistan, Moscow showed that, while it would seek to reduce the costs and risks associated with its Third World realm and sphere, it would go on with to make available its clients with the indispensable assistance and backing to shore up them.

Moscow's conclusion to pull out Soviet ground forces from Afghanistan was an inferred admission of its incapability to hold back the uprising. It was also an acknowledgment and admission that the unrelenting pledge of Soviet forces to an unwinnable conflict and inconsistency was a bleed dry on sparse domestic possessions and a pricey embarrassment and loss of composure. As a final point, the decision was a sign of Moscow's acknowledgment that the charisma and magnetism of Soviet combat forces in Afghanistan was a foremost obstacle impediment both to its long-standing regional objectives and to the relaxation of the intercontinental milieu, which Gorbachev needed in order to chase his domestic precedence and primacy.

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