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THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN :

There is no single reason for the invasion by the Soviets.

The Russians have built their empire by conquering and annexing independent states. Russia's new Soviet leaders inherited their present empire from the Tsars and consolidated it. The Communist leaders of Moscow adapted their expansionist tactics to suit the new political situation. Communist ideology and a desire to establish 'the united workers' government of the whole world gave them the energy to work towards this aim. Afghanistan is therefore not their first target and nor is it their last.

In the context of super-power rivalry the strategic importance of Afghanistan, the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and Afghanistan's proximity to the Soviet Union, military and economic weakness and the stupidity of its rulers made it too desirable a morsel for the Soviet leaders to resist.

How did they do it ? :

The Soviet regime called itself the true and reliable friend of the oppressed nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. It claimed to support all liberation movements and was quick to recognise the emergent governments. It was therefore difficult for them to conquer neighbouring countries by armed force. So, they changed their tactics. The Soviets extended the hand of cooperation towards these countries but at the same time tried to lead all economic development in a direction designed to fulfil their future strategic aims. It is not chance, for example, that they built the Salang Highway, Bagram, Kabul and Shindand airports. They are now using them to conquer Afghanistan. Aid projects which were to become the cornerstone of Soviet attempts to conquer Afghanistan. They encouraged Pushtoonistan separatist agitation in order to weaken the Afghan army. They gave loans to the government in exchange for guarantees of immunity for the pro-Soviet parties. They bullied successive threatened governments into suppressing any religious and national movement which did not follow

the Moscow line and KGB agents even assassinated national and religious figures who were considered potential enemies of Soviet influence in Afghanistan.

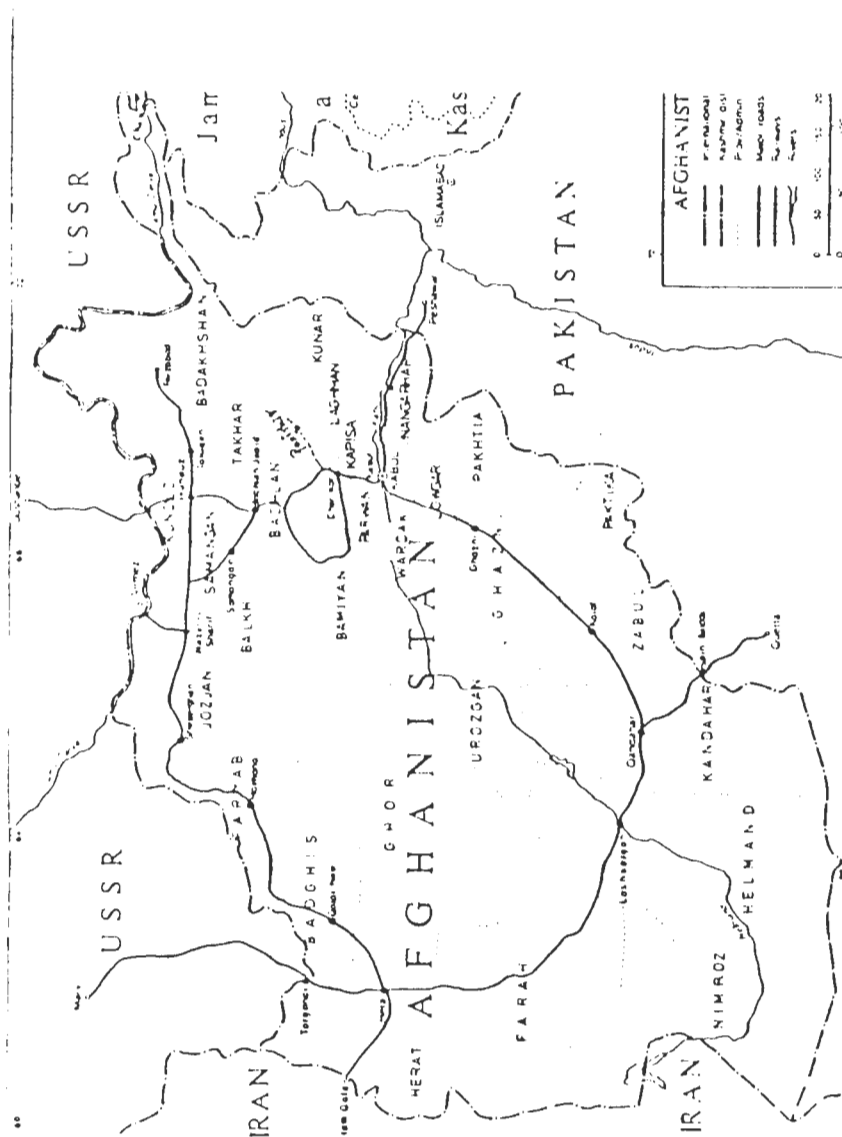
Organising coups :

The Soviets were not satisfied with the slow development of their plans. They therefore tried to engineer pro-Soviet coups with the help of their Afghan agents and their own advisers in the Afghan army. They had a hand in Daud's coup against the king and, planned Taraki's coup against Daud. Finally they themselves overthrew their friend Amin and occupied Afghanistan.

The big mistake :

Soviet understanding of the Afghans has always been poor. Their different culture limits their contact with the people of Afghanistan. Their political system prevents them from mixing with other peoples and their ideological dogmas categorize individuals without any understanding. Their sources of information are their puppet members of the PDPA who themselves suffer at least partly from the same shortcomings. Equally these puppets pursue their own ends which do not necessarily coincide with the aims of their masters. Very often they change the facts in order to achieve their own ambitions.

Believing the information the puppet parties supplied, they overthrew Daud and began to impose an economic, social and political system on our people which contradicted all the norms and values of Afghan society. People from all walks of life began to resist and the government resorted to force. Thousands of people were killed, jailed and tortured. The people then took up arms to defend themselves. The Soviet puppets tried to use the army but it began to disintegrate under the pressure from the resistance. The Soviets tried to correct the situation but it was too late and things were out of control. They decided to send in the Red Army to protect their interest under the pretext of an invitation from a friendly regime.



In The Name Of Allah

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN

The occupation of Afghanistan is an important event. The effect of the Afghans' struggle cannot be confined to the geographical boundaries of Afghanistan but must unbalance its neighbours and, given the region's geopolitical importance, produce worldwide effects.

We all belong to the world family and the tragic events in Afghanistan trouble the conscience of good men and women of all nations. No civilised citizen of the world can remain indifferent to the suffering of so many innocent Afghans killed, wounded, tortured, jailed or forced to leave their country by a super power's relentless war machine.

The Afghan people have discovered to their own cost the price of their former leaders' friendship with the Soviets. The rest of the world should look and profit from the lesson.

The outcome of this war will have a big impact on Muslim and third world countries. A successful outcome of the Afghan's struggle will raise these countries' morale and contribute to international peace and stability. If it fails no small country in the world would feel safe and world peace would become more fragile.

The result of this war will affect the future behaviour of the Soviet leaders. If aggression is buried in Afghanistan they will not take such venturesome steps in the future. If they succeed the world should expect further similar incidents.

In order to understand the present situation in Afghanistan it is necessary to go back a little to see why the Soviets invaded in the first place.

between Mujahideen (the resistance fighters) and the civilians. While they wanted to deal with Mujahideen militarily, they intimidated the civilians to try to stop them offering help to the resistance. Massacres and indiscriminate bombing was used as a means of terrorizing the population.

At this stage they made life difficult for the people of the liberated areas by an economic blockade. They burnt the harvests and killed the livestock. At the same time they encouraged people to join the army by offering high salaries.

At this stage it would appear that the resistance was not taken very seriously. They were seen as bandits with no organisational structure and no definite political aim.

But the Soviet mechanism for takeover followed its course; the KHAD (the Afghan secret police) was established. KHAD is directed and controlled by KGB experts. It has a big budget and unlimited power. The main task of the KHAD in its first phase was infiltration of Mujahideen ranks inside Afghanistan and amongst exiled groups. They succeeded in some cases to create mutual distrust within resistance groups and have even sparked armed clashes between them. Mock desertions by groups of Mujahideen have been arranged by the KHAD to demoralize the resistance and mislead foreign observers. KHAD agents have been involved in the assassination of some important resistance figures. Even women and children are employed by the KHAD for espionage and terrorist activities. The KHAD have also been active outside Afghanistan and have sent a lot of agents to neighbouring countries and the West to spy in those countries on Mujahideen activities. India who has a friendly relationship with the Soviets became a spring board for these activities. KHAD work even outside Afghanistan is under direct orders of the KGB. But despite KGB training and assistance the KHAD has not developed well and displays many weak points.

The first phase did not last long. The Soviets realised that there was no clear distinction between Mujahideen and the rest of the population. Civilians provided Mujahideen with moral and material support. Mujahideen provided them with protection and the hope of freedom.

The Soviets also realised that the ordinary people of Afghanistan do not look up to them as big brothers but regard them as enemies. The excuses they made for the invasion seemed unreasonable to the ordinary Afghan and promises of a good life seemed unrealistic in the face of the hard facts of the lives of ordinary Soviet citizens.

The Soviets began to recognise that Afghans considered them 'unbelievers' and that this in itself was enough reason for the ordinary man to be against them.

The ordinary Afghan's pride is hurt by the Soviet presence, a feeling which forces him to take revenge on the invaders. So much a part of the Afghan character this too began to make an impression on the Soviets.

The Soviets also started to fear the organisation of the resistance and its ability to deal with one of the more professional and highly equipped armies of the world. They were alarmed by the increasing reputation of some of the political and military leaders of the resistance and their good relations with their people.

Because of all this the Soviets dropped their earlier tactics and adopted a new operational policy against the resistance. They became harsher and more destructive.

A NEW PHASE — NEW TACTICS

The end of 1983 and the beginning of 1984 witnessed a change of Soviet tactics in Afghanistan.

There was an escalation of the war. The Soviets launched major offensives against strongholds of the Mujahideen in different parts of Afghanistan. Soviets' offensives against Panjshir, Qandahar, Herat, Logar and other regions were heavier and more prolonged than previous ones. Some of the new tactics they used in these later offensives can be listed as follows:

1. *High altitude bombing.* — The Soviets introduced TU-16 medium-range bombers for high altitude bombing operating from air fields inside the Soviet Union. This means more death and destruction for the civilian population. Since the Mujahideen are not fighting 'positional' warfare this

Soviet assumptions :

Soviet leaders underestimated the strength of the Afghan resistance. They had thought that by replacing one puppet with another they might win the confidence of the people. They had thought that an ill-armed and disorganised resistance would not be able to stand against their mighty army. They thought that Afghans would greet them with flowers, embrace them and call them the defenders of Afghanistan against an invisible imperialist aggression. They had expected Afghans to build a minaret to the memory of 100,000 armed guests. But nothing of that sort happened. They were faced with bullets. Many of their ordinary soldiers were surprised to find that the Afghans whom they had been led to believe had turned to shooting at them — a clear breach of the Afghan tradition of hospitality.

The armed resistance was not weakened by the Soviet invasion, but rather gained strength as a result of the presence of a foreign invading force.

Furthermore the Soviets had underestimated the reaction of the world community and were surprised by the support it gave to the resistance. The Soviets also thought that as time passed the world would forget Afghanistan but that did not happen either.

The Soviets were forced to face hard facts and began to pay the price of their aggression bit and in different ways.

THE FIRST PHASE OF THE SOVIET MILITARY PLAN :

The Soviets invaded Afghanistan with approximately 85,000 soldiers, thousands of tanks and hundreds of jets and helicopters. They had effectively demobilised the Afghan army by calling in tanks and vehicles for servicing before the invasion. Kabul and the important air bases were the first targets. In this phase they confined themselves militarily to securing control of the main cities and establishing bases in strategic areas but they made attempts to secure the roads between the main cities, especially the important Salang highway from Kabul to the Soviet Union.

The military operations were accompanied by a propaganda offensive: all responsibility for past difficulties was blamed on Amin. He was branded by them as a CIA agent. They gave false hope to the people that as soon as foreign intervention was finished they would go home. (Even now they blame foreign powers for their long stay in Afghanistan).

Almost immediately after the invasion they began to take control of government offices and to organise a KGB-style secret service. They started extensive underground work to infiltrate possible resistance groups. They tried to buy off resistance leaders and create difficulties between different resistance groups and ethnic groups. They offered a general amnesty for all those who laid down their arms to join the government, a tactic to disarm our people.

Soviet tactics in the first phase :

The Soviets' main tactic in securing the cities from Mujahideen attack was to create security posts around the cities. In order to avoid high casualties they prepared the way by buying off groups of people around the cities and manned the posts with units of the DRA forces (the Afghan army) and the police. Similar tactics were employed to establish posts along the highways.

The Soviets divided Afghanistan into different operational zones and gave the responsibility of military and political work in each zone to the zonal headquarters.

They launched big offensives against the strongholds of Mujahideen and bombed specific targets in the liberated areas by both air and ground attack. At this stage they concentrated on enforced conscription for the puppet army and trained army personnel in specialist fields. In order to compensate for the continuous purges of the armed forces and to fill gaps created by the flight of Afghan experts from the country, they started to send large numbers of people to be trained in different fields in the Soviet Union. Their education included political studies. It was envisaged that these people would give stability to the divided puppet regime and guarantee its future loyalty.

It seems that the Soviets at this stage differentiated

tactic is not effective against them. SU-25 jets, MIGs, and helicopters were however still used in large numbers.

2. *Large commando operations - mobile warfare.* — Soviet heliborne-troops were used for the first time. These groups, which usually in major offensives number between 500 and 1500 were airlifted to the target areas and given supporting fire by the helicopters. They surrounded isolated towns and villages, then searched the houses, killing, taking prisoners and looting the property. They set on fire what they could not take. To defend a village with no or little vegetation with a few bolt action rifles is almost impossible. These operations had a demoralizing effect on the population and threatened all sorts of educational, medical and economic activities. If resistance forces are to deal with this new development it is vital they reorganise their forces, gain more light weapons, and better communication systems and develop active cooperation between the different groups.

3. *Expansion of the war zone.* — In the past the Soviets fought in limited areas. This time the resistance front along a highway was several hundred kilometres away from Soviet attacks on the positions of the Mujahideen deep in the liberated zones. They bombed everywhere and dropped mines on all the passes and roads. There was no fixed line of fighting because the war was mobile, unlimited by region. The main purpose of this tactic was to disturb normal life in the liberated areas, create fear in the population supporting the fighters and to try to distract the resistance from its main target.

4. *Psychological and Economic war.* — When the Soviets failed to achieve their aims through military means they turned their war machinery on the civilians in an attempt to gain their objectives.

On the one hand, they wanted to frighten the people as much as possible to force them not to support the resistance, on the other, by destroying their means of living, they wanted to make life for the people a real burden. By following this policy the Soviets hope either to force the people to surrender and accept Soviet rule or to drive them out of the country. If the civilians are forced to leave the country

everyone knows the resistance will be weakened by the loss of their support. The current tragedy of 150,000 internal refugees, in the Panjshir area alone who are without food, clothes or shelter is the direct result of this policy. The situation is mirrored elsewhere in Afghanistan.

High altitude bombing is very destructive but it is not enough in the eyes of the Soviet invaders. They have started dynamiting those houses which have survived bombs and rockets.

High altitude bombing and large commando actions are frightening to defenceless men, women, and children, but that is not enough for the Soviets. So they explode people by dynamite. Some of the people killed in this way were 90 years old with no power to walk. Burning people alive is happening everywhere. They throw anti-personnel mines on fields, farms, roads and villages to kill passers-by, animals or innocent children.

Their terrorist actions are not limited to the war zones. They follow refugees along mountain trails and bomb them sometimes even beyond the borders of Afghanistan. They force city refugees to return to the war zones and settle them around Soviet bases to provide protection from Mujahideen fire. Those who did not obey the order were sent to jail.

The invaders and their puppets daily burn the harvests, kill the cattle and loot the property of the people. Most of the fruit trees have been cut by the soldiers for fire wood or have been destroyed by bombs or have died because the irrigation system has been destroyed.

The Holy Book and the mosques are regularly scorned to hurt the religious feeling of the people.

In short, the Soviets fight by all means to destroy a nation and eliminate a culture. This coming winter (which will last for more than five long months) will be critical. So many homeless people with nothing to eat with no effective help from outside are in danger of dying. They have become a burden of a resistance which is striving for its very survival and is facing a lot of difficulties.

THE SOVIET ARMY

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan they brought about 85,000 soldiers along with their planes, helicopters, tanks and trucks. Later we saw that in most operations in the North, and in some large operations in the central, North-Eastern and North-Western Afghanistan they airlifted soldiers from the Soviet Union for this attack. Their bombers and jets were also flown from Soviet airfields on the other side of the border. With the escalation of the war, more troops are being brought and our estimation shows their number to be approximately 150,000 permanently based in Afghanistan. The total number of Karmal troops (including militia units and police) is around 40,000.

Some effective weapons of the Soviet army

Afghanistan has become a training ground for the Soviet army and air force and their weapons and tactics. Some heavy tanks which were brought at the beginning of the invasion were replaced by light and fast moving tanks, BRDS and APCs. Different models of planes were introduced and those which proved to be more effective are being increased in number. The SU-25 jet is a good example. Changes have also been witnessed in their fighting methods and organization.

The morale and discipline of the Soviet soldiers

The Soviet army is believed to be well-trained and highly disciplined, but we have seen something different. In the first year of the invasion they were bold and fought bravely. At that time the Mujahideen did not have strong fire power. Today the Soviet soldiers are not so bold. They are afraid. Their fear can be estimated from the following observations:

Individual Soviet soldiers steal anti-personal mines and plant them in front of their own positions to protect them from close resistance attack. They do not mark these mines on the map and when there is troop rotation, new soldiers step on the mines planted by their predecessors and are killed or wounded. These individual mines are usually planted in the heart of their camp a hundred meters away

from the defensive lines which are protected by barbed wire and rows of anti-personal mines.

Most of the Soviet soldiers do not know why they are fighting. They are told to kill the cattle of the farmers, destroy the mud houses of the people and set the harvests on fire. For an ordinary soldier whose father is like a poor Afghan farmer, this mission is in contradiction to the explanation they receive that they are helping the poor people of Afghanistan against foreign intervention.

Stealing is a common habit of the Soviet soldier on the battle ground or in the towns or camps. They steal from the enemy (the people of Afghanistan) or friend (the Soviet army itself). They do this because they are not well fed or they want money for drugs or alcohol. They sell everything including their weapons and ammunition.

We have witnessed tension between the ranks of the army. Ordinary soldiers despite their officers and officers hold ordinary soldiers in contempt.

The level of hygiene in the Soviet army is appalling. They are very dirty and smelly. Their camps smell bad even months after they have left the area.

Some weak points of the Soviets

The Soviets are suffering from several weak points:

1. *Lack of moral values.* — Communism takes away from people their moral and religious values and replaces them with some vague values which are not accepted as the common heritage of mankind. For example honesty is accepted by all people throughout history as something very good, but communists say that anything which promoted the cause of communism is honesty and anything which opposes it is dishonesty.

The Soviet soldiers who were born under the Soviet socialist regime and have been brought-up in their education system are unaware of moral and religious values. When they arrive in a hostile land they try to humiliate the mosques and the Holy Book. But this way they create hatred in the minds of the population and make people determined to fight till

the last drop of their blood. The behaviour of the Soviet soldiers gives one the impression that the Soviets are completely unaware of civilised standards of life.

2. *Lack of precise information.* — The Soviets have no means of collecting precise information about the Afghans' mentality and behaviour. Their puppets provide them with misleading information. They analyse the information and make their plans based on that. The puppet communist party members are divided amongst themselves and this affects the type of the information they give. These puppet communists have their own motives which in some cases are not the same as the Soviets, so they provide information in such a way as to influence the decision for their own benefit. The Parcham faction always tries to encourage the Soviets to attack Mujahideen. They provide such information as to make this possible irrespective of the outcome of the campaign. On the other hand the puppet communists themselves are separated from the population and have lost freedom of thought under the influence of their party dogma, so their information cannot be reliable.

3. *Avoiding casualties.* — The Soviet army in Afghanistan has tried so far to avoid taking casualties as much as possible. This tendency affects the result of each campaign. In the first days only of each offensive they take part then after a few days they put DRA forces in the front line while they take the job of guarding the rear to make sure the DRA forces do not desert. The Soviets want to support DRA forces by artillery and air cover but the DRA forces are reluctant to lead an offensive alone.

THE MUJAHIDEEN, THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROBLEMS

The people of Afghanistan love freedom. They have lived free and when their freedom has been in danger they have taken arms to defend it. Those who fight to defend their faith and land against an invading enemy are called 'Mujahideen' which means Muslim freedom fighters.

When the Communists took power in Kabul through a military coup and started to impose a foreign way of life on our people, the people started to resist. They knew that if

they did not resist they would sacrifice their religion, culture and even the independence of their country. Communist leaders used force to suppress the people, the people took arms to defend themselves.

It was the middle of 1978 when armed struggle started in parts of Afghanistan. At the beginning of the war the people were ill-organised and ill-armed too. But slowly, bit by bit, they liberated local areas, disarmed local army units and police and increased the number of their guns. At the end of 1979 many districts and even some provinces were freed from the Communist regime's control. The Afghan army which numbered about 100,000 men disintegrated as the result of this war. Mujahideen gained experience and learned new tactics and the use of new weapons.

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan at the end of 1979 Mujahideen faced a new situation. They were gaining ground against a puppet army but fighting against a professional army equipped with the most sophisticated weapons was something different.

Before the Soviet invasion two jets or two helicopters were bombing a valley twice a day, each time for 15 to 20 minutes. The number of tanks which attacked a base did not usually exceed twenty.

Similarly Mujahideen had few guns and little ammunition. Anti-tank weapons were very rare. Anti-aircraft guns were not available. Mines were improvised and ineffective. Each gun had only a few bullets. The Mujahideen had no training and no experience of war. Their organisational structure was very weak and crude. Their logistic system was poor and slow. On those days Mujahideen expected a quick victory and were not ready to accept the difficulties of an organised war. There was a plethora of local commanders and the war was going on more on traditional lines than on the lines of modern guerrilla warfare.

The political and military leaders of the resistance were unknown to the world and even to Afghans themselves.

The world was not thinking seriously about Afghanistan and since the Soviets were not directly involved it was thought of as a civil war.

Finally the Soviets invited themselves — the strengthening of the resistance

It is not surprising that the Soviets were not afraid of such an ill-armed, disorganised and disunited resistance. The Soviets who already had control of the army were expecting weak resistance which could last only a few months.

But after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, despite their many soldiers and sophisticated weapons, when they launched their first offensive against the strongholds of the resistance in the spring of 1980 a strange thing happened. A professional army with modern weapons could not achieve any major victory against ill-armed local Mujahideen. When the first campaign of the Soviets failed the Mujahideen felt more confident and people flocked to join the resistance.

After the Soviet invasion the Mujahideen gained more support from the population and the puppet communists were isolated and their military forces were weakened to a large extent. Defection from the Afghan army increased, and more weapons were captured and bought.

Some Mujahideen commanders appreciated the need for a protracted war. They started to know the importance of natural bases. They understood the need of good training for volunteer fighters. They learned that political training was as necessary as military training for a Mujahid fighter.

The Mujahideen started to realise the importance of urban guerrilla warfare and economic war against the army of occupation. Even though they lacked facilities they did not wait but started to do what they could.

The Mujahideen realised the importance of good intelligence. They started to establish intelligence cells inside the Government establishment to give information about the enemy's actions and intentions. The achievements of some of the commanders in this field is amazing.

The Mujahideen began to realise that this war is not only a military war. They learned about the importance of political work among the population. They started to form local organisations to deal with law and order problems. Schools were established, weekly papers were published and some small radio stations started to broadcast with the help of some private international organisations. Hospitals were opened to take care of the wounded and sick. To publicize the war Mujahideen escorted a lot of foreign journalists inside the country.

Generally speaking, many lessons were learnt by the Mujahideen and they made use of what they learned, but it should be mentioned here that not all resistance fronts have achieved the same organisational level and not all of them have learnt equally. Those who have learned and have shown their capabilities, have developed well and have become stronger and well respected by the people. Those commanders are the hope of the future. They do not belong to just one party nor do they come from one region or ethnic group.

The political leaders of the resistance have also gained in reputation as the war has gone on. The performance of each party's fighters inside the country influenced the strength of the political leadership. Those whose men fought well and were organised became more important and the world took them more seriously.

Thanks God that those who are moderate in their ideas, independent from foreign influence and sincere to the cause are gaining weight.

The war has now reached a level which cannot be met by localised fighting. A small group of local Mujahideen is not effective in blocking a major road, capturing a post or foiling an offensive.

All of the Mujahideen in each region (4 to 6 provinces) must work together. We call this coordinated action and it is a must for the survival of the resistance. To be able to do this a lot of political and military work is needed. Mujahideen have been able to make use of this tactic very effectively in some regions but this should become something common. The Soviets are very sensitive towards this development and make use of every means to stop it.

THE NEEDS OF MUJAHIDEEN

1. *Humanitarian needs.* — Mujahideen are human beings. They need food to eat, clothes to wear and arms and ammunition to continue the war.

The main source of the Mujahideen's income is donations given by the people and taxes which are collected. As the time passes, in the face of the Soviet's destructive tactics and economic war, the people become poorer and are not able to help the resistance. If the resistance puts added pressure on the people by collecting higher taxes, the people get tired and the resistance loses support and without the support of the people, the survival of the resistance would be in danger. More than that as a result of continuous offensives and deliberate destruction of houses, fruit trees, harvests and cattle a large sector of the population is left without means to live. They have become a burden on the resistance. There are three options: either they must flee to Pakistan or Iran to become permanent refugees or they must barter their honour and freedom with the Soviet invaders. The third option is to give them some kind of help to enable them to remain in their country and continue to support the resistance.

If they become permanent refugees the resistance will lose their active moral and material support. If they surrender, this would be a big gain for the enemy who would even then ask them to take up guns and fight the resistance.

So far foreign governments have turned a deaf ear to the cries of these depressed people and charity organisations are either too weak to take such a step or their sophisticated rules and regulations do not permit them to help effectively.

Medicine, food and clothes are urgent needs for civilians and Mujahideen. Without effective help the situation will develop in favour of the invaders.

Because of the winter and Soviet plans to launch major winter offensives, the problem of internal refugees has become more acute. If urgent help is not given to these people one can expect a disaster.

2. *Military needs.* — The war in Afghanistan developed very fast. This year witnessed the escalation of the war by the Soviets. Soviet tactics have changed and a new situation has prevailed. In order to survive, Mujahideen need to develop and expand their organisation and increase their arms. This war is a guerrilla war and it must develop if it wants to survive. As soon as it stops developing it will be defeated. Development means expansion of the organisation, an increase in the number of fighters, an improvement in the quantity and quality of weapons and better communication systems.

There is no doubt that Mujahideen have better weapons than some years back. It is also correct that they are more experienced than before. But by comparison with the enemy's forces our growth has not been proportional.

In theory guerrillas must take their ammunition from the enemy stock and we do that to some extent. But the situation is not always ideal and we are not fighting a small scale guerrilla war. In a campaign in which 50 jets, more than 200 helicopters, more than 1000 AFVs and 20,000 soldiers are involved, it cannot be considered a small scale guerrilla operation. More than that some of the weapons that we use are not used by the enemy so Mujahideen cannot capture their ammunition.

Transportation costs are very high. Sometimes in the middle of the war Mujahideen are not able to transport the ammunition, food and clothes they need, because they do not have the money.

Communication equipment is vital to today's war. In order to carry on an organised attack, you need to have some kind of control of the field commanders. In order to coordinate regional attacks, you need to have some communication system. In Afghanistan Mujahideen do not have even tactical communication.

Even simple things like metal detectors, military books, maps, sleeping bags, tents, rucksacks, shoes and warm winter clothes are among the needs of Mujahideen.

THE NATURE OF THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE

Afghanistan of today is completely different from the past. The Soviet invasion caused a lot of social disturbance and displacement of the population, as a result, a new social and political order has developed.

In the past the country was ruled by one family with the help of city bureaucrats and country landlords. When the pro-Soviet coup took place these landlords and bureaucrats were not able to defend their interests so they were divided into two groups. Some of them left the country and took refuge in the Western countries and others started to cooperate with the invaders and their puppet regime to preserve their property, at least for a short time.

The burden of defending the country fell totally on the shoulders of the ordinary masses. Now in the villages the man who is conducting the war and runs the affairs of the people is either a religious scholar, a teacher, a student, or a farmer. These people look at things from an angle different from previous rulers. The future of the war depends on these people. Their way of thinking and background will give shape to the future political structure of Afghanistan.

One of the difficulties of the Afghan resistance takes root from this fact that none of the effective political and military leaders of the resistance had an important position in Afghan governments in the past. Their names do not appear in any biography books of important people or in "Who's Who" manuals. Because of this the outside world does not feel easy working with them because they do not know them fully.

The situation is improving little by little and some of the political and military leaders have become famous and the world has started to know about them. Most of the present resistance leaders are reasonable people with sincere feelings and serious thoughts. As time passes, the best ones will become better known and some of the present difficulties will be solved.

Clear aims

In some revolutions the aim of the struggle is not very clear or readily understandable to an ordinary man. In some others the real aim is hidden from the public and the party leading the struggle presents some appealing objective to the people. The real objectives of the struggle may not be acceptable to the majority of the people. As time passes the real aims of the party reveal themselves to the people, they leave the party and the struggle becomes weak.

In the case of Afghanistan we do not have any of the above difficulties. The aims of the struggle are clear and understandable. In our struggle it is not a war against the belief, moral and social norms of people but it takes root from them.

Our enemies, the Soviets and their puppet regime challenge those beliefs and norms and that is their difficulty. Some of the so-called liberal leaders in the resistance have run into trouble. In order to please outsiders they speak to them in one way and with Afghans they speak another way. But these types of people are the minority. The majority of Mujahideen know what they are doing and believe in the justice of their way.

It is more than just a reaction

Some people think that the war of the Afghans against the Soviet invasion is just a reaction and that Mujahideen have no clear political, social or economic message for the people who are suffering.

This way of thinking is based on assumptions and ignores the changes that have taken place in our society. Mujahideen clearly know the fact that their struggle is a political-economic war which cannot be divided. A war which is fought by people is naturally a political war. It is true that the people are mainly motivated by religious ideals but their religion itself gives them the duty of raising the banner of social justice and forming a society which is morally and materially prosperous. A good proof of this is the efforts of the commanders inside and the political leaders outside to do something for the well-being of their people. We know

that the war which is fought in our country is fought for the control of people's minds. Some people can be motivated by pure religious ideas, but most others think about their future in this world too. Therefore the war which is fought in Afghanistan is not just a reaction against the Soviets but also has political, social, economic and moral messages as well.

Freedom from foreign influence

One of the unique features of the Afghan resistance is its independence. History has shown that a lot of liberation movements made the mistake of taking sides with one Super-Power while fighting the other one.

In the case of Afghanistan, as far as the majority of Mujahideen are concerned, they are independent. They fight for their country not taking orders from anybody outside. We believe that because of the nature of the Afghans and because of the subjective and objective conditions of our country, no military or political model from outside will fit us. While we need the help of all freedom loving people of the world, we do not accept any strings attached to the help they give. This takes root from the nature of the Afghans and their historical and traditional way of life. This seems to be a strong point of the resistance.

If we fight the Soviets this is not because we are playing any other power's game. We fight them because they have invaded our country. This is our natural right and we feel proud of ourselves as freedom fighters. If there is only one true liberation movement in the world, that is the Afghan resistance. We have not gone out of our borders to create problems for others. We have been attacked in our houses, our people are being killed, our property looted, our Holy places degraded and millions of our poor people driven out of their country. By any religious, moral and legal code we have the right to kill the invaders and die honourably.

In the past Afghans had not committed any mistake to make the Soviets angry and did not have any bad intentions towards them. They came to our country, called us friends and brought with them gifts in the form of death and destruction.

The role of Islam in our struggle

Islam is our religion and religion to us is a way of life. Islam is affecting all sides of our social, economic and political life.

More than that it gives us energy and direction in the war against the Soviet invaders. It is a symbol of the unity of our people and the sign of their strength. It connects us to the Muslim world and the human race as a whole. It provides internal peace and teaches us to be disciplined, serious, dedicated and useful in our lives.

We are Muslim but we are not following any model of government or revolution from outside Afghanistan. We do not feel responsible for the actions of any other Islamic state.

We think a good Muslim is not aggressive; neither a fanatic nor a trouble-maker. A good Muslim is the one who conducts a good life, is useful to all mankind and has a noble aim in life. So there should be no fear of a good Muslim or an Islamic country if run by this type of people.

Instead of judging things by names it is better to pay more attention towards the real nature of the things.

The problem of unity in the Resistance

One of the weak points of the Afghan resistance is the lack of unity among different groups. Lack of unity is a problem that is bothering every Afghan and our friends all over the world are concerned about it.

Natural factors

There are some historical, political and geographical reasons which explain the lack of unity.

In the past there was no strong central government to control all sections of the Afghan population. Instead of bringing understanding between different groups of people, governments in the past tried to keep them divided to rule them easily.

The geographical structure of the country and the lack of contact between the people of different regions made it possible for people of local areas to keep their special dialect, clothes and loyalty to their group.

In the last fifteen years we saw more contact between the people of different regions, but the time was too short to expect big changes. Political parties on a national scale were not sufficiently well based in the Afghan society to introduce mutual understanding between people of different regions.

When Afghanistan was invaded the people of each region rose-up against the invaders haphazardly. Although some political parties had been active before the invasion, they had no influence on the society. Different parties intensified their activities and for differing reasons people joined them. The resistance started fragmented, pride in your party meant competition with another party.

Because of all the above reasons it seems natural to have different parties and it is not practical to bring immediate understanding between people of different regions. Like any social change it will be gradual.

Artificial reasons for the lack of unity

There are some unnatural reasons for disunity and lack of harmony among the resistance groups. The wrong policies of some of the parties, the ambitions of some short-sighted commanders and the underground activities of the enemy have played a big role in keeping Mujahideen separated from each other and has been the source of misunderstanding between people of different regions. Like any social change it will be gradual.

Positive changes

Although the resistance is suffering from lack of unity and this is a black spot in our history, one can see positive changes which give us hope for good developments in the future.

As a result of this war, people of different regions have come into contact with each other and understand each other more than before. We witness a closeness between different fighting fronts. Clashes between groups have become fewer and more limited in scale. Those parties who made trouble for others have lost ground and earned hatred. Good commanders are trying to bring about some kind of understanding among different groups on a practical basis and they are to some extent successful. The political leaders are also trying to find a way for cooperation amongst the parties.

The Soviets' pressure on the Resistance is increasing and each group understands the bad consequences of disunity. The Soviets change of tactics has made cooperation between groups an urgent need. Public opinion inside the country is putting pressure on the parties to end their differences.

More important than all, the parties so far have not given their differences religious and ideological colour. Every party and group which is involved in clashes feels guilty about it and admits its mistake.

Afghans have started to realise that to gain their freedom they need to continue the war. It is necessary to continue the war to force the Soviets to accept a political solution of the problem of Afghanistan. For the effective continuation of the war and reaching a political solution a single representation of the resistance is needed. If unity is needed to free Afghanistan it would be all the more necessary to reconstruct Afghanistan and run it smoothly.

All the parties of the resistance understand that none of them in isolation will be able to liberate Afghanistan or after independence run it smoothly. So they know the importance of unity and its effect on the future of our struggle.

Taking into account all the objective and subjective conditions, an immediate solution to the problem of unity seems impractical while gradual and practical cooperation seems reasonable and a solution to the problem.

WHAT IS THE SOLUTION TO THE AFGHANISTAN PROBLEMS ?

'The Afghanistan problem' means the presence of the Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan. All other problems take root from one central difficulty: the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Therefore any solution to this problem must include total and unconditional withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

How do we achieve this ? The answer can be neither purely military, nor purely political. A proper combination of the two will bring an acceptable result.

When we say there is no purely political solution it is because we know the nature of the Soviets. Begging, crying and passing resolutions does not soften the heart of the Soviet leaders. We must be strong enough to ensure our survival and put enough pressure on the Soviets to force them to feel the burden of the war. We should be strong enough to create enough headache for them not to think of Afghanistan as a picnic place. We should make the war as expensive as possible for them.

If there is no strong resistance in Afghanistan there will be no side to negotiate with the Soviets and even the political solution becomes meaningless. If there is no strong armed resistance in Afghanistan the world will forget the cause of the Afghans as they have done in other places.

On the other hand the Soviet Union is a super-power with a big war machinery and the power to destroy Afghanistan, if it can not conquer it. The Mujahideen with their limitations cannot force the Soviets out of Afghanistan by military means alone. Therefore the solution to our problem must be both military and political.

Factors of a solution — the Soviets have their own problems

The Soviet Union is a super-power. It is big and it is powerful but it is not without weak points in connection with the problem of Afghanistan.

Economic pressure

The Soviets are feeling the economic burden of the war in Afghanistan. It is not very much now, but in the long term its weight will be felt more. Mujahideen have realised this and are intensifying their activities against economic targets. The number of trucks and tanks they lose each year, the number of jets and helicopters which are shot down, plus all the ammunition they spend and the cost of transportation adds up to a big amount of money. By escalation of the war and the beginning of coordinated action by Mujahideen, the cost can increase to several times the present level. Financial support to the regime the services and a demoralised puppet army is another burden which has fallen on their shoulders.

Political pressure

Being a super-power, the Soviet Union has a lot of obligations in front of the world community and has signed a lot of treaties which put moral and legal responsibilities on her.

The Soviets have claimed in the past and still are claiming to be the natural ally of third world countries and a close friend of liberation movements. It wanted to be seen as a reliable neighbour and an important factor in preserving the peace in the world. But their continuous involvement in an occupation war against an innocent third world Muslim country under the name of friendship has adversely affected their relations with other countries. These countries have already shown their anger on several occasions by passing resolutions in condemnation of the Soviets' intervention in Afghanistan. But what they do not reveal is much deeper. Now the third world and Muslim countries are worried about the intentions of the Soviet leaders. As long as this war continues, as long as the blood of innocent Afghans is shed by the Red Army in the land of Afghans, no country deep down will trust the Soviets.

The Soviet Union is an ideological country. Soviet leaders believe in the propagation of communist ideas. What they are doing in Afghanistan is blackening the face of com-

munism. Sophisticated MIGs and SU jets are destroying mud huts in rural areas. These and other weapons claimed to be used against imperialists are cowardly when used against the defenceless people of Afghanistan.

As long as this strange drama is on show who will believe in Soviet preaching about the communist way of life. This is why some communist parties, under pressure of public opinion, condemn Soviet actions in Afghanistan in an attempt to save their ideology.

What to do

In order to help the solution of the problem of Afghanistan a three-pronged attack is required.

On one side work can be done to consolidate the position of the resistance in Afghanistan militarily and make it a really effective power. It needs organisational work, political work and material support.

The second prong is humanitarian aid. In the face of the Soviet atrocities and their policy of indiscriminate bombardments the humanitarian side has gained more importance than before.

The third element is intensive political work and support. Work should be done to mobilize the third world countries behind the cause of Afghanistan and keep the interest of the whole world on the issue. The problem of Afghanistan should be an issue in every international forum. This problem should be publicised and should become an important news topic.

We are serious and determined

The people of Afghanistan are determined to carry on the war until they regain their freedom. No matter what the situation, the war will continue in one way or the other. But this is not a war we can win alone. We fight and we are determined to continue, in one way or the other. We fight and we are determined to continue, but we are not made of iron. We are human beings with some strong and some weak points. We would be only able to continue the war if we are supported politically, morally and materially.

Our victory would be the victory of freedom and our defeat would be a defeat for the free people of the world. Do not let freedom be defeated by the forces of tyranny.

CONCLUSIONS

The war in Afghanistan has escalated. The Soviets are putting more pressure on the civilians to force them to surrender or leave the country. As a result of this policy the ordinary people of Afghanistan are facing severe problems of food and shortage of other essential commodities.

The civilians provide cover, moral and material support for the resistance and their stay in Afghanistan is necessary for the resistance to be strong.

There is no need to be worried about the military situation. Mujahideen are fighting well, their morale is high and their casualties are limited. They have become relatively well organised, more experienced and are aware of the importance of political work.

The resistance is in a better political position than before. The good political and military leaders are being taken more seriously and our friends outside are more aware of the situation in Afghanistan.

The lack of unity among Mujahideen is a weak point, but there is no room for disappointment because extensive work is going on inside and outside Afghanistan to achieve unity. The future is promising. Strong desire for cooperation is witnessed among fighting fronts.

The tragedy of war should end as soon as possible. We are not warmongers but the war is imposed on us.

The majority of the resistance groups are free from foreign influence and do not follow any political model outside the boundaries of Afghanistan. The resistance is a true Islamic movement but not prejudiced, fanatic or extremist.

The solution to the problem of Afghanistan is the withdrawal of the Soviet forces, and the recognition of the

right of the people of Afghanistan to choose their own type of government. This will be achieved through military activities inside Afghanistan and political work inside and outside.

The people of Afghanistan will continue to fight till the last drop of their blood but this is not a war that can be won by them alone. The free people of the world should feel their responsibility towards this cause. The victory of the Afghans is a victory for all free men and their failure is a disaster to all.



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