

# U.s. intervention in the ussr mujahideen assignment

[History](#)



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The United States, a capitalist democracy founded on Christian beliefs, but nominally secular, and Afghanistan, a tribal society that is majority Muslim are very dissimilar, as was also the case in the late 19th century when each state found that despite their differences, each had something that the other needed. Afghanistan was invaded by the USSR and the Afghan rebels attempting to wrench back their homeland from Soviet control had little in the way of funds, equipment or training in defense. Without those, these guerrillas had only prayer to save their country from the Soviets, and knew that it may not be enough.

The U. S. Government in turn provided aid to the rebels in exchange for fighting the USSR, a state that was the United States primary adversary at the time, and eventually driving them out of Afghanistan after what would be a long and protracted conflict. The United States partnership with the rebels was successful in reaching its goals, but there were also long term unintended consequences that cost many American citizens and many, many Afghans their lives. This unfortunate outcome was a result of the following: A U. S. foreign policy that acted wholly in its own self-interest, covertly facilitating the USSR's move toward invasion in Afghanistan and then acting as a benefactor, providing funding and tactical support to the Afghan rebels who fought against the USSR and their puppet government, but only until the USSR withdrew, and not one moment more. The U. S. Used the Afghans to fight a proxy war on their behalf, and once the U. S. Goals in the war were achieved, they left the Afghans to pick up the pieces of their state, and find a way to move forward with no solid alliance or assistance from their former friend.

Second, U. S. Policy focused on supporting the entirety of the rebel fighting force, called the Unimagined without enough regard for the hem which had unified this disparate groups of Afghans into one army; the theme of Jihad. The term Unimagined is defined as fighting a Jihad, a holy war against Muslim non-believers, and U. S. Policy did not seem to recognize that Jihad, a concept strong enough to war over, would affect the opinions and actions of Afghans toward the non-Muslim United States after the war with the USSR was over, especially after the deserted them in the way that they did. And finally, U.

S. Policy did not appear to concern itself With the diversity of the rebel group's cultures or interpretations of Islam, both of which, with groups from a number of tribes and regions joining the Unimagined was apparent during the war. And in turn, did not consider the significance that the variances in lifestyle, and in opinion on the issue closest to their hearts - Islam, would mean for the rebels ability to govern the state of Afghanistan together once the war was over. The United States insertion into the USSR Afghan conflict was a byproduct of the political climate which was occurring during that time.

The United States and the USSR were both superpowers, with great influence over the world's stage. As neither state was interested in sharing power nor in having the other State usurp their own superpower status, and possibly dominate their own territories as a result, they were embroiled in what has been termed the Cold War. In addition to the fears of each that the other would succeed in seizing some or all of their political power, the TV'0 states held ideologies which were diametrically opposed. In the late sass's, the IS.  
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S. As a democracy, as it is today, where the people ruled by electing representatives meant to serve their interests, and developed a capitalist society where property was privately owned and exchanged on an open market. This was in steep contrast to the USSR which had become communist where ownership of the means of production were biblically owned and the governing bodies were produced around this system. In an effort by each superpower to maintain their global eminence, and defend against the beliefs and the institutional result of those beliefs, they each attempted to expand their own sphere of influence outward to other states and actors.

Afghanistan was one of these states caught in a tug of war between the Soviet Union who were their neighbors and the United States who worked each day to bring about the downfall of the USSR. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was capitalizing on the political instability that was present in the country since 1963 when then Prime Minister Prince Mohammed Doodad resigned from power, and from the foothold into Afghanistan that Doodad had given them. Doodad was the last ruler who had the express permission and trusts of the ruling class to govern (Arnold, 32).

He also chose " . To seek closer relations with the USSR and accept one million dollars in credit cementing a fiduciary relationship between the two states (Arnold, 33). In 1963, Doodad was asked to step down by Chair, King of Afghanistan, who had decided that it was time for the royal family to " lay down its burden of a generation and let the Afghan educated class run the country' (Arnold, 45). Doodad was replaced by Mohammed Houses and then

by Mohammed Hashish Midland before returning to power by exiling the King and taking part in a bloodless coup.

During his new term, Doodad was not as friendly to the USSR as he was in his first term since his priority was to mollify the Mullah's who had primary influence over the Afghan Muslims that made up much of Afghan society. As a result, the USSR had to find another way to advance their interests in Afghanistan, which they did successfully, through a growing communist party called the PDA. It was a PDA faction, of which there were two, the Parches and the Chalkiest that took Doodad out of power in a bloodier coup than the one he had perpetrated, called the Saucer Revolution, which culminated in Doodad's assassination in 1977.

By 1978, a Friendship Agreement was signed between the USSR and Afghanistan, which included a provision stating that the two states " shall consult each other and take by agreement appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence and emotional integrity of the two countries," which would make way for the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan (Arnold, 79). They brilliantly assisted in creating the unrest then cite the insecurity and integrity occurring based on the unrest as a legal reason for intervention.

In a move as cunning and possibly more brilliant, the United States allowed the PDA and the USSR to believe that the new President of Afghanistan Habituat Main was a CIA plant despite his ever strengthening ties to the USSR. The USSR responded by demanding that Main sanction their invasion of his country, which he refused to do. The USSR would not be deterred and

through some smart manipulation they managed to cut off all Afghan government communications, sabotage the tanks, and imprison all high level officials by inviting them to a dinner and then arresting them upon arrival.

They also had another PDA member that had been receiving support from them ready to step in as the newest Prime Minister of Afghanistan. Even before this invasion, the United States, with incredible cunning, was funding Afghan rebel groups in anticipation of an intervention that they assumed would occur when the USSR realized that they were aiding Afghan rebel groups. As Kibitzing Breeziness, the United States National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter who was in office before and during the initial invasion later related to a reporter: " That secret operation was an excellent idea.

It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap and you want me to regret it? The day that the Soviets officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter: We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam War. Indeed, for almost 10 years, Moscow had to carry on a war unsupportable by the government, a conflict that brought about the demutualization and finally the breakup of the Soviet empire (Cookbook et al).

Once the Russians invaded, the United States ramped up their efforts to support the counterrevolution, starting with a propaganda machine that generated outrage for the USSR's actions (Bonbons, 208). Soon the rebels were receiving aid from China, Egypt, Iran and Saudi Arabia, as well as other assistance like a radio station broadcasting their side of the story called

Radio Free Kabul from Britain and additional medical help from France. “ Soviet weapons were bought from Egypt then sent to Pakistan who funneled it to the resistance” (Arnold, 118).

There were refugee camps in Pakistan for Afghans who had run from their newly communist country, but were continuously alleged to be used to recruit and train rebel fighters. There was also money and weapons from the United States, Pakistan, which came from all of these sources and funneled down to the rebels. Pakistan was the conduit for which most aid was funneled and rebels and refugees were sheltered. They took on this responsibility for a variety of reasons. One was based upon the geopolitical implications of the United States’ eye south and invading and controlling a country so close to Pakistan’s borders (Cordovan, 170).

The USSR were also friendly with India, Pakistan’s arch enemy and Pakistan was tremendously concerned about their geographic position between the USSR and India if the USSR retained its dominance in Afghanistan. Just as importantly, Pakistan was a predominantly Muslim country, and as one Pakistani involved in the resistance explained, the country felt it was their duty to assist, that, “ It is the spirit of Islam. The Afghans are our brothers. They are Moslems like us” (Van Dyke, 55).

The support from these various sources, primarily the United States allowed the Mujahideen to feed and train their men, but it was not enough for the rebels to win the war. The USSR had purloined the entire Afghan army and had helicopters that were bombing regions known for rebel activity and destroying agriculture and infrastructure, and for the first three years of war

the Unimagined did not have any equipment that would deter or shoot down the helicopters, hampering their ability to be successful. This may have been by design since the U. S. Logic was to destabilize the USSR by getting them onto a long and enduring conflict and keeping the Unimagined running on will and old ' WW-era British Lee-Enfield . 303 bolt-action rifles... " Was most likely a piece Of the policy (Grab). The Unimagined were the first to admit that they were outmatched, but articulated that they would keep fighting since it was Allah's will that they should fight. The most well-known Unimagined rebel leader Cladding Hexameter responded to this by saying, " Because with God we are not afraid. We are fighting Jihad (holy war) and we cannot lose.

Our strength is our faith (Van Dyke, 61). And when one guerilla was asked if it was ore important to fight for God than to win, the man said he's. Yes. We fight until the death". This was because the Unimagined saw Communism and Islam as mutually exclusive. This automatically made Communism a threat to Islam that must be fought with a jihad. As the guerilla explained, " In this holy war against Communism, if a man is killed in battle, he is a shade, a martyr. He goes directly to heaven. He is not held accountable for his earthly sins" (Van Dyke, 1 12).

One failure of both the USSR and the United States was to wholly recognize that Islam was the overwhelming principal that guided Afghan rebels, as well as the Pakistanis and Egyptians that came and joined in the fight. This was far more important than territory, especially since Afghanistan's borders were in dispute more often than not during the sass's, and many of the Unimagined were nomadic tribesman or from small rural villages that did not <https://assignbuster.com/us-intervention-in-the-ussr-mujahideen-assignment/>



own calendars or clocks or maps, so “ country as a modern concept did not exist for them (Bonbons, 179).

This devotion to Islam also made the rebels perception of power very different than the way that the U. S. And USSR both conceptualized it. Power was a means to fight for Allah hen they felt that non-believers threatened their faith, and to influence others to live for Allah in the way the fighters believed that Allah expected them to. This faith translated into a ragtag fighting force that would never quit, believing that the USSR and the proxy government which they had imposed on Afghanistan, were according to Islam- infidels, deserving of defeat.

The head of the User’s proxy government was Prime Minister Bark Karma, a Parch PDA member who through the USSR attempted to convert all Afghans into Communists. U. S. Intelligence Analyst Anthony Arnold rites of the Soviets aspirations, that, “ Essentially the goal was to establish the PDA as a unified party in charge of a unified state (the DRAG) that in turn would administer a pacified public” (Arnold, 100). As a result, Karma and those who supported him were viewed by many Afghans, especially the rebels”... S quisling puppets of an alien power” (Arnold, 103). Unfortunately for the USSR, under new rules, university students were being forced to commit to 4 years of military service before they could attend school, imports and exports were down, as was Afghanistan’s overall GAP, and army exertions were frequent, which did not produce a wholly pacified public. The USSR did make sure that internal press was propagandist with stories of the successes of the army, Bark Karma and the PDA, which may have lessened the discontent among the non-rebel population.

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At the same time the United States had developed a propaganda machine of their own, circulating stories from “ diplomats” and “ travelers” about the victories Of the Unimagined and the atrocities of the USSR and Afghan Army. Some of these stories may have been accurate, but journalist Phillip Bonbons states that he as at the locations where the conflicts in articles were meant to have occurred, at the times they were said to have ensued, and in actuality, nothing had happened (Bonbons, 153-155).

He also points to an article about heavy fighting around the Kabul airport, which was printed in the Washington Post who later had to write a follow-up article when they found out that the event in question had never happened (153). Bonbons assumes and in one case verifies that quotes from some of the articles that were given by unnamed sources were from CIA staff inside Afghanistan and Pakistan, Counterspy magazine also touted some of these spies, but without tying them to the articles written at the time.

Bonbons and Counterspy fingered the following individuals and organizations as CIA: Pakistan Embassy Station Chief Robert Leasers, The Asia Foundation, the Narcotics Control Authority, Louis Duper and George Griffin, who was a source according to both the New York Times, and Blitz, an Indian weekly paper who revealed him as their unnamed quoted “ diplomat’ (Bonbons, 186-187). For the first few years of the war, even through the U. S. Presidential transition from Jimmy Carter to Ronald Reagan, the U. S. Assistance to the Unimagined Was fairly limited, though it did gradually increase, a fact which was validated by journalist Michael Kaufman who reported in 1981 that “ No longer do representatives of various factions engage in diatribes about the need of Western governments to support their <https://assignbuster.com/us-intervention-in-the-ussr-mujahideen-assignment/>

struggle with arms and money. Instead, they say they are doing quite well” (Bonbons, 210). Legislation was also introduced in the U. S. Congress by Representative Paul Torgas and supported by Representative Charlie Wilson which was passed in 1984 that called for a large increase in CIA appropriations for support of the Unimagined.

This legislation tripled the amount that the U. S. Made available to the Unimagined, funneling \$200 million dollars through Pakistanis SIS by 1984 with Saudi Arabia matching these amounts (Cordoned, et al, 157). This legislation helps to explain why “ in 1985, [the] CIA shifted from a plan of attrition to one that would help the rebels win” and how this came about (Central Intelligence Agency). This included over 10,000 tons of weapons and ammunition, including Stinger missiles strong enough to shoot down the helicopter gunship that the Unimagined had needed so badly, IS.

S. Owned mules for supply transport, ND a new protocol that allowed for more communication between spooks and rebel leaders (Central Intelligence Agency, Grab, Sullivan). One major form of support that came early on titled the Afghanistan Relief Committee (ARC) was founded by a CIA agent who also worked on Wall Street. ARC raised money that would primarily be used by Doctors Without Borders and Freedom Medical of Washington DC to give medical treatment to injured Unimagined (The Anglo-American Support Apparatus behind the Afghans Unimagined).

The Unimagined was a large army unit made-up Of guerilla fighters from smaller rebel groups. These groups had unified in order to more efficiently fight the USSR and Afghan Army and acted under the direction of a Tribal

Chief or Mullah, who is a person trained in Islamic doctrine and law. There were 7 main groups and any others if they wanted funding had to join one of them to receive it (Grab). Though fighting for the same cause and united under the Unimagined umbrella, these groups were very different and received very different amounts of support. Each group was Muslim, though four were fundamentalist and three were moderates.

Because Pakistan, which had become a wholly Islamic state acted as trustee ND bagman for the Unimagined, the more extreme Islamic groups received more funding than the moderate groups, and the most fundamentalist group, Whiz-e-lilacs run by Gladden Hexameter received the most financial assistance of the 7. Hexameter also received additional money from The Muslim Brotherhood, and Saudi Arabia to fight the anti-Soviet Jihad (Girdled, 108). Under the Unimagined umbrella, the groups, working in concert were able to use the funds and supplies they received to battle the USSR and the Afghan army.

They used hidden weapon silos, hideouts, lookouts, rocket anchors, sting missiles, camels, donkeys, horses and motorcycles. They had coordinated strategies such as code words to use during conflicts and escape routes. “ Unimagined offensive tactics included the ambush, the raid, the shelling attack, mine warfare, attacks on strong points, blocking lines of communication and conducting sieges. Unimagined defensive tactics included defending against raids, fighting helicopter insertions, defending against a cordon and search, defending base camps, counter ambush and fighting in encirclement’ (Gag).

Using these tactics proved fruitful for the Unimagined. The Soviet Army was not trained in arduous guerilla warfare and found themselves doing most of the fighting themselves rather than fighting through a proxy war fought by the Afghan army the way they had initially planned. Additionally, the USSR had not planned on such extensive foreign support for the Unimagined. The Soviets were also experiencing some political instability on the homegrown when long time President Yuri Namedrop died and was replaced first by Constantine Coherence and then Mikhail Geographer.

The USSR also replaced the Afghan leader Bark Karma, urging him to resign in 1986 and replacing him with Mohammad Incunabula, a mounding member of PDA. Even with this change, both sides in the war were at a stalemate, Afghanistan's GAP continued to sink as did its domestic production and " by the mid-sass it became apparent that the Kremlin had committed a colossal mistake" (Grab; Sullivan; The Far East and Australia 2003, 90). 10 years after the war began, it ended with the USSR pulling their troops out of Afghanistan.

The last of the Soviet servicemen to cross the Friendship Bridge, between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, on the way back to the USSR did so on February 15, 1989 (Russia Marks 25 Years since Troop Withdrawal from Afghanistan). Incunabula and the PDA were still in power, but their backers had gone, them alone to face the Unimagined who with the assistance of the United States and other allies had held strong and won the war. Though they emerged victorious, the Unimagined lost their benefactors as well, which was a massive blow to the major transition they faced from guerilla fighters to everyday citizens.

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This situation arose when U. S. President Ronald Reagan in February of 1988 agreed to cease all support for the Unimagined if the USSR withdrew from Afghanistan (Clement, 304). This was an easy and self-serving decision for the U. S. Government to both make and make good on since “ the Soviet withdrawal in 1989 eliminated the key interest that the United States had shared with the munching” (Central Intelligence Agency). Once the Soviets left Afghanistan, the United States closed their embassies, ended arms supplies, and stopped all funding to the Unimagined.

And by 1992, their participation in Afghan politics was officially over (Clement, 305-308). Many scholars have alleged that this war was one of the factors that lead to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Stanford University’s Ronald Hilton discusses the fact that, “ The war in Afghanistan cost the United States about \$1 billion per annum in aid to the Unimagined; it cost the Soviet Union eight times as much, helping bankrupt its economy (WAIS). And Anthony Arnold puts this theory forward when he compares [the] Soviet Union with a sick old man and Afghanistan as the pebble which this exhausted sick man stumbled on and fell (Alike, 376).

If this is the case, that the war against the Unimagined contributed to the fall of the USSR, than the U. S. Policy to support the Unimagined was incredibly successful. The United States main adversary and competition for international power and influence had crumbled leaving them as the hegemony, the single most powerful state, controlling the lesser states in the system (Nee, 186). Their goal had been met. They had been an integral part of the success of the Mushiness’s war against the ISRC without utilizing or

endangering any of their own army personnel, with no conflict on their soil and no real damage except to their pocketbook.

In the short term, the U. S. Were as much victors of the war as the Unimagined. In the long term, the U. S. Decision to leave the Unimagined to their own devices once the war was over cost the U. S. Dearly. This was the sentiment of Robert Gates who later said: “ I was deputy director of CIA and then deputy national security advisor during the period when the Soviets did withdraw from Afghanistan, and the United States essentially turned its back on Afghanistan. And five years later came the first attack on the World Trade Center.

And so, you know, one of the lessons that think we have is that if we abandon these countries, once we are in there and engaged, there is a very real possibility that we will pay a higher price in the end” (Dish, he Daily).

The United States ended support to the Unimagined while communist President Mohammad Incunabula was still in power, leaving the Unimagined to figure out how they would proceed politically without U . S. Support, or the authority or the bully pulpit to do so.

In 1989, the 7 groups Of the Unimagined created an Afghan Interim Government, but Incunabula refused to step down, and so the Unimagined continued to fight the Afghan government in an effort to cement a place in it (Clement, 305-306). The war may have been over from the U. S. Perspective, but the Unimagined saw that unionism was still alive in Afghanistan and its government, and that they still had a long way to go before the infidels were fully extinguished. They also saw that the U. S. Overspent, other than

offering initial arms support had chosen to desert them in the midst of this. The Mushiness's jihad against communism continued for three more years, which was the amount of time that Incunabula stayed in power before being forced out and then assassinated. During the three years of conflict against Incunabula and the PDA, schisms were created between some of the groups that made up the Unimagined. This was inevitable as these 7 groups, despite their devotion to Allah were incredibly distinctive.

These groups came from numerous tribes located in dozens of cities and provinces with different traditions and customs, and most divisively, they were congregants of more than one Moslem sect, split pretty evenly between moderate and extremist Islamic views with some sects disrespecting the teachings and interpretations of another's. These differences were set aside by members of the resistance while they were fighting the Infidel in life or death battles, but by 1 989 they ere no longer fighting one enemy without a plan for the future as they were prior to the USSR withdrawal.

The future had become a reality and the picture of what it looked like group by group was very different. Two of the seven groups that made up the Unimagined, the Islamic Society and the Islamic Revolutionary Movement began to fight over territory in the Hellman Province. Following this, the Islamic Revolutionary Movement and another Unimagined group, the Islamic Union for the Liberation of Afghanistan also began to fight over Hellman Province where both wanted control of taxes ND tolls on the bridge. In the same week, Cladding Hexameter, leader of the Islamic Party split off from the Unimagined alliance.



Then the newly independent Islamic Party began fighting with Amed Shah Mason from the Islamic Society whose group successfully took over the Presidential Palace (Clement, 306-307). They eventually called a ceasefire at the urging of the Islamic Party leader Yuan's Challis who resigned shortly after from the Islamic Council, splitting the alliance even farther. Then Arabian, leader of the Islamic Society became President of Afghanistan, but Hexameter continued to attack Rabbi's forces and all of Kabul.

At this time, a group run by Madam Dictum who fought against the Unimagined began their fight for control over the Afghan state, as did the Taliban, many of them students of the Pakistan madras's entered the picture. U. S. Support was gone and in its place was civil war, and the United States had failed to concern themselves with the potential for these types of post war problems that occurred despite the set Of circumstances that made them inevitable. These issues did not initially harm the U. S. , but as Robert Gates had readily admitted, in the end, this session to distance themselves from the Unimagined hurt America immensely.

All of these groups thought that they were the most able to bring the form of society and justice that Allah expected them to. There were egos and personal issues, but overall these men all believed that theirs was a holy mission and that they were the only people capable of delivering it. In the end though, the group that managed to secure political power in Afghanistan was the Taliban. Prior to their reign, they were very well liked for being the equivalent of Muslim robin hoods, meting out vigilante justice against rapists ND thieves, and following a strict interpretation of the Koran, which they constructed their entire lives around.

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The aims as declared by the Taliban were to restore peace, disarm the population, enforce the Shari law and defend the integrity and Islamic character of Afghanistan (Rasher, 22). Their aims for peace were difficult when their movements towards this were typically bomb attacks and offensives meant to eradicate their opposition. Their ambitions also meant that a population, many of whom had become communist, while the rest fought the communists were all forced to become Muslim fundamentalists, strictly following the Koran in every aspect of their lives.

And the Unimagined who had already fought for 13 years for the freedom to live on their land and practice their version of Islam had been usurped by men who had spent most of their lives in Pakistan studying rather than fighting the USSR and the Afghan Army. In response, many of the groups that made up the Unimagined continued to fight (Clement, 320-322). They were unified again, but against a foe who understood guerilla tactics and was receiving support from Pakistan while the rebel commanders turned warlord ad lost theirs when the U. S. Walked away.

Aimed Rasher describes the Taliban, saying: " They had no memories of the past, no plans for the future while the present was everything. They were literally the orphans of the war, the rootless and the restless, the jobless and the economically deprived with little self-knowledge. They admired war because it was the only occupation they could possibly adapt to. Their simple belief in a messianic, puritan Islam which had been drummed into them by simple village mullahs was the only prop they could hold onto and which gave their lives some meaning.