THE SOVIET GRAND STRATEGY IN CENTRAL ASIA. THE CASE OF AFGHANISTAN. TO WHAT EXTENT WAS THE SOVIET INTERVENTION A STRATEGIC MOVE?

Ioannis P. Sotiropoulos
MPhil, International and Strategic Studies

Abstract: The present work analyses certain explanations for the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, relating to the Strategic Thought during the Cold War. In one hand, the Traditionalists support that the Soviet move was of a strategic offensive nature, being a step towards the warm waters and ultimately global domination, while the Revisionists on the other advocate that it was of strategic defensive nature, being a move in order to prevent a spill over phenomenon in the Soviet Union Central Asian Republics. Nevertheless, none of the conventional perspectives for the Soviet action is confirmed. Indeed, the Soviet move was not an offensive one, as the traditionalists’ believed, nor a defensive, as the revisionists claimed, or even a combination of both. On the contrary, all the fresh primary material and official declassified documents show that there was no master-plan behind the Soviet intervention. In this work we will assess the strategic framework within which the two perceptions were fermented and the way that the conduct of the Soviet Foreign Policy was interpreted. Furthermore, we will examine whether or not, even if the Soviet Grand Strategy existed as a general norm in the Soviet Foreign Policy, the Afghan case served as a promotion for its master plan. Finally, we will investigate if a potential spill over phenomenon within the Soviet Union was indeed such a major threat for Kremlin so as to trigger the intervention.

1 Introduction
During the Cold War, and the subsequent period almost to date, two views/approaches claim the lion’s share in the analysis and identification of the Soviet foreign policy and related motivations.[1] These are the Traditionalist

---

1 In time a third view also emerged, the post-revisionism which is involved with who and
and the *Revisionist* approaches. Indeed, the western theorists in their effort to explain the origin and the sustainment of the Cold War, as well as the intentions, behaviour and the systemic role of the Soviet Union in International Politics developed the two aforementioned approaches. The Afghan case, as it was perceived in the late 1970s onwards, can be a real textbook case for those who wish to understand the limits of those fundamental western views for the Cold War and the Soviet Superpower, that is to verify one of them. Although, they both heavily rely on the neo-realistic analytical approach, the two preponderant views differ significantly on the Soviet global intentions during the Cold War.

The *Traditionalists* [2] put the burden for the Cold War on the Soviet Union and its expansion into Eastern Europe. In view of this aggression and taking into account that the Marxism-Leninism Ideology and its Principles called for a worldwide Working Class revolution, *Traditionalism* feared the continuous So-

how initiated the Cold War, but rather regarding it as a deterministic result of two different and politically and strategically equal Superpowers. Core idea of this approach is that the Cold War was initially caused by the conflicting interests of the US and the SU, that worsen by miscommunication, poor diplomacy and differences in political and social cultures of the two antagonists. In time, that led to a permanent clash of these two industrial-military complexes both aiming to global domination. Main representatives of this approach are: Gaddis, John Lewis, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War 1941-1947*, Columbia University Press, New York and London, 1972; Leffler, Martin P., *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War*, Stanford University Press, Stanford Nuclear Age Series, Los Angeles, 1993; Trachtenberg, Marc, *A Constructed Peace: Making of European Settlement, 1945-63*, Princeton Studies in International History and Politics, Princeton Press, 1999.

Main representatives of this view are: George Kennan with his 22 February 1946 Long Telegram from Moscow and also his article “The sources of Soviet conduct”, which published under the pseudonym “X” in the Foreign Affairs issue of July 1947. Both of these documents deeply influenced the American leaders, as they are considered the cornerstone of Traditionalists approach and of the implementation of the policy of Containment. A critical sample of The Long Telegram: “*It is clear that the main element of any United States policy towards the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansion tendencies…. It is clear that the United States cannot expect in the foreseeable future to enjoy political intimacy with the Soviet régime. It must continue to regard the Soviet Union as a rival, not a partner, in the political arena. It must continue to expect that Soviet policies will reflect no abstract love of peace and stability, no real faith in possibility of a permanent happy coexistence of the socialist and capitalist worlds, but rather a cautious, persistent pressure towards the disruption and weakening of all rival influence and rival power*”, 22 February 1946, Kennan George, *The Long Telegram*, Moscow. More contemporary representatives of this approach are Jean Kirkpatrick, US Ambassador in the UN and Reagan’s Administration member of the National Security Council, Stephen Ambrose, historian and biographer of Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon.

*Civitas Gentium* 2:1 (2012)
viet efforts for the total prevalence of Communism. In that sense, Moscow tried to improve its position in every opportunity, implementing a Grand Strategy Master plan in order to succeed its ultimate goal of global domination, using for decades the Peaceful Coexistence ‘tool’ and later that of Détente, aiming to overtake US, China and Western powers. As a reaction to this, US and its allies (NATO and other Western oriented states) started to contain it, both in geostrategic and ideological terms after the WWII, initiating the famous Marshall Plan in order to accelerate the post-War recovery of the European countries, countering communist insurgencies around the world, and implementing a series of Doctrines, with main purpose Moscow’s global containment. According to this approach, the Soviet decision to intervene in Afghanistan was a Marxist step towards the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf oil, both prerequisites for global domination.

On the other hand, Revisionists [3] maintained that the occupation and ideological ‘annexation’ of Eastern Europe was a defensive move by Moscow in order to avoid encirclement by the Capitalist world, which had initiated the Cold War, before WWII, fearing for the sustainable development of the, as to then, “liberal markets” of the world. For them, Soviet Union represented a global superpower which defended its own global interests as a powerful state actor in the international politics arena and it never had ambitions for global domination or any Grand Strategy in order to serve this. According to this approach, Moscow’s decision was an imperative move in order to secure its long vested interests in Afghanistan, as well as to give an end to Kremlin’s anxiety of a possible import of fundamentalist Islam within the Soviet territory.

Nevertheless, both approaches are genuine expressions of the geostrategic models that evolved during the Cold War. Their re-evaluation and testing, based on new evidence, is essential for the development of science, as it will grand them a more exact role and position on the issue, as well as define the extent to which they reflected the motivations and causes for Moscow’s intervention.

2 Soviet National Interest

It is a fact that the Soviet intervention deployed, by matter of fact, the Soviet posture closer to the warm waters, the Persian Gulf and the Indian sub continent. Even though this was a diachronic strategic pursuit of Moscow, no evid-

---

ence can be deduced from the analysis of the sources that the intervention was the outcome of high strategic planning part of the Soviet Grand Strategy in Kremlin. On the other hand, it is also true that the entire planet on a geopolitical-geostrategic and international relations and diplomatic level functioned for the past two centuries, and in any case under the new international system in the last forty years, according to the NATO adopted Spykman’s geopolitical model of containment of the Continental Power, meaning the Imperial Russia and the post-revolution Soviet Union, on behalf of the Naval commercial Powers, being the British Empire, France and in the post-war period the US and NATO.

More specifically, the approach that the Soviet intervention was an Offensive strategic move theoretically derives from the fundamental theoretical tool for the analysis of the geopolitical aspect of the approaches of British Professor Sir Halford Mackinder and American analyst Nicholas Spykman, which drastically affected, if not shaped, the architecture and NATO’s policies in the post war era. According to Mackinder [4], basic terms in world geography that directly influence the geopolitics of power are: “Heartland” (an updated version of the “Pivot Area” of 1904) which covered the continental mass of Central Eurasia around which exists a “coastal inner marginal crescent” consisting of coastal countries of Europe and Asia; with an “insular or outer crescent” comprised of Oceania, Africa and American Continent. Furthermore, he argues that any organised state with internal cohesion dominating the Heartland (Continental Power) could easily, under certain circumstances, accumulate and increase to the maximum the traditional forms of power, the continental and naval, dominating the “World Island” (the total of the continental mass off the planet, excluding Oceania) and eventually the World. “Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island. Who rules the World Island commands the World.” As it appears Mackinder believed that the continental terrestrial masses of Central Eurasia were of great geopolitical significance. This opinion was derived from the fact that they had a high degree of self sufficiency in natural resources; their inland was extremely vast in relation to human needs and activities, allowing for military maneuver

Mackinder presented his views in three consecutive phases: In 1904 in his article in “The Geographical Pivot of History” in Geographical Journal, he established the basis of his theory, and spoke of the strategic value of the “Pivot Area” in World Politics; in 1919 in his book Democratic Ideals and Reality. A Classic Work of Geography and World Power, he re-evaluated his model, shrinking the “Pivot Area” and renaming it “Heartland”; and finally in 1943 in his article “The Round World and the Winning of Peace” in Foreign Affairs, he reaffirmed the value of his theories, re-examining them in relation to the evolved military and technological means of the time.

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
whenever necessary. Moreover, the geographical area of the geostrategic upgraded Eastern Europe, the potential source of world control, is perimetrically protected by a series of mountain chains (Urals, Caucasus, Transylvanian Alps, Alps), large rivers and lakes (Volga, Danube, Caspian Sea, Aral Sea), and arctic territory. However, this also posed a geostrategic disadvantage as it did not provide a safe, operative and strategically located port (centrally in the World Island), in order to utilise the inexhaustible resources of the continent and build a predominant fleet to wipe out the naval powers. Indeed, after the Mongolian Empire, the Russian Empire, and subsequently the Soviet Union, had no port that was not frozen during the winter or with unobstructed exit, since the northern ports and those of the Okhotsk Sea are blocked by ice in the winter, while those of the Baltic, Black Sea and Murmansk as well as the Vladivostok port exits are controlled by other states.[5] Baltic Sea ports are controlled by West Germany, a member of NATO; Black Sea ports are controlled by Turkey and Greece, both members of NATO; Murmansk controlled by Norway a member of NATO; and Vladivostok controlled by Japan and South Korea, pure allies of the USA in the region of the Far East. Historically, the rulers of the area in their effort to overcome the problem and insofar as human natural drive is the drive for expansion, were pushing to move further south in order to reach the “warm waters” of the Indian and Pacific Oceans and the Mediterranean Sea, inevitably attaining, in the event of success, world domination. In order to prevent this, and since the Realistic approach commands the constant competition for accumulation of power among states, the naval and commercial powers, with main representative British Empire and after the war USA, ought to in one hand keep the Eurasian Continental powers divided politically, and on the other to keep them blocked as far away possible from the “warm waters”. In order to achieve the latter, the British Empire had created an extensive chain of friendly states or colonies (or at least hostile to the Russian Empire, as in the cases of Germany and Japan) that constituted the perimetric crescent of Eurasia (inner marginal crescent for Mackinder), from Western Europe to Japan. Mackinder’s theoretical model is the modern source of the theory of the Policy of Containment. More specifically, Spykman,[6] expanding Mackinder’s theoretical analysis, gave a new perception to the whole issue. According to him “Who controls the Rimland controls Eurasia, who rules Eurasia con-

trols the destinies of the world”. Indeed, during the Cold War the United States, successor to the British Empire, struggled to maintain control over the periphery of Eurasia, (Rimland for Spykman), blocking the descent of the Soviet Union which dominated the area of the “Heartland”. Hence, the interventions in Korea, Vietnam, Marshall and Colombo plans, the post war support to Japan and the founding of CENTO, SEATO and even that of NATO, made the USA’s foreign policy of containment obvious. On the other hand, the case of Afghanistan identified Moscow’s greatest attempt in the post war era to break the asphyxiating encirclement of the Western powers, through the inner marginal crescent for Mackinder or Rimland for Spykman, initially with peaceful means until 1979 and eventually militarily in December of the same year.

According to the Traditionalists’ view, the geopolitical consequences of the intervention (Soviet posture closer to warm waters, Persian Gulf, Indian sub continent), in relation to the current Western politico-military practice for Moscow’s containment as well as the historic traditional desire of Kremlin, created the illusion to many analysts on both sides of the Atlantic, that the consequences (Soviet posture closer to warm waters, Persian Gulf, Indian sub continent) constituted the primary strategic motivation for the intervention. More specific, at least since Peter’s the Great reign Imperial Russia struggles to reach the warm waters of the Black Sea, Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean: “‘…approach as near as possible to Constantinople and India. Whoever governs there will be the true sovereign of the world. Consequently, excite continual wars in Persia... penetrate as far as the Persian Gulf...advance as far as India.’” [7] Similarly, the Russian Minister for External Affairs addressed to Catherine the Great, referring to the southern boarders of Russian Empire: ‘‘...that which stops growing begins to rot...” [8] Furthermore, a typical example of the permanent Soviet desire to influence the developments in the Persian Gulf consisted by the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop supplementary agreement in 1940, within the framework of the Non-aggression Pact of 1939, which addressed the Soviet demand for the conclusion of a protocol with Germany given it would prefix that: “... the area at the south of Batum and Baku towards the general direction of the Persian Gulf is recognized as the centre of the Soviet territorial aspirations” [9]. Later, after the inter-

7 Peter the Great addressed to his High Command in 1775, Dmytryshyn, Basil, Modernization of Russia under Peter I and Catherine II, Wiley and Sons, New York, 1974, p. 285.
9 “Molotov-Ribbentrop Agreement”, Berlin, 26 November 1940; Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union, [Russian: Договор о ненападении между Германией и Советским Союзом; German: Nichtangriffsvertrag zwischen Deutschland und der Union der Sozialistischen Sowjetrepubliken], 23 August, 1939
vention of the Germans in the Soviet Union in 1941, London and Moscow bisectioned Iran into north and south zone [10] as it happened during the First World War, undertaking their control respectively.

So, even if not supported by evidence, given the historical experience, in the midst of the Cold War, with Khomeini’s Islamic Revolution prevailing victoriously, the American Embassy hostages thriller in full deployment in Tehran and the flap geopolitical situation in the region, one could slip through the assumption that the approaching of the Soviet Union to traditional strategic points of interest had been among the primary motivations of Kremlin in the framework of the Soviet Grand Strategy.

More specifically, the Soviet Grand Strategy refers to the ultimate goal of the global domination and the strategic and tactical moves for the achievement of it. In this context, Moscow’s traditional desire was to reach the warm waters, in order to build a material naval force, comparable enough to the “naval-commercial forces” that would eventually give it the global primacy. Furthermore, within the same framework Moscow should exploit all opportunities in the contemporary energy fields of the Middle East, in order to influence or even control the oil flow to the Western world. The combination of geopolitics with the Marxist principle of the universal prevalence of the Revolution, justifies the theoretical assumption that the intervention was one step for Moscow towards the warm waters, a prerequisite for global domination. The theory is interesting and plausible at least. However, there is absolutely no evidence that this was in the minds of the Soviet oligarchs. On the other hand, it is remarkable, that at least part of the contemporary Soviet strategic thought coincides with Mackinder and Spykman, whose ideas formed the western thought of geopolitics in the post war world era. Indeed, Commander in Chief Admiral Sergei Gorshkov [11] bids: “The goal of the Soviet sea power is to effectively utilise the

---


11 Sergey Georgiyevich Gorshkov, 1910 -1988, Soviet Admiral during the Cold War oversaw the expansion of the Soviet Navy into a global force. In Brezhnev’s years oversaw a massive naval build-up of surface and submarine forces, creating a force capable of challenging Western naval power by the late 1970s. Gorshkov is often associated with the phrase "Better" is the enemy of 'Good Enough," which is reputed to have hung on the

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
world oceans in the interests of building communism” [12]. In accordance with this approach, Moscow might follow the theoretical models both of Anglo-Saxon geopolitics and Marxism, taking advantage of the turbulent situation in Afghanistan and proceed to the intervention in an opportunistic move with the justification of the Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighbourliness and Cooperation, as an alibi for international consumption. The conclusion of Stephen Larrabee, [13] specialist of the National Security Council in the White House at the time, in an official memorandum, among many others, to the Advisor of National Security Zbigniew Brzezinski on the 31 December 1979, is absolutely illuminating and typical of the US current administration special advisors’ and analysts interpretation of the events: “—The invocation of the Treaty of Friendship as justification for Soviet actions sets an ominous precedent and suggests that the Soviets may extend the application of the Brezhnev doctrine to any country with whom they have a Treaty of Friendship. (S).” [14] Undoubtedly, Washington was the natural political recipient not only of the actual causes that led to the Soviet intervention but also of the geopolitical consequences of it irrespective of the Soviet real motives. Within the antagonistic framework of the two superpowers, Washington’s perception of high politics and strategic planning assessed that the deployment of Soviet posture in Afghanistan would seriously increase its general geostrategic position, upgrading its capacity both in defensive-operational as in offensive-operational level. Moreover, taking full control of the important geostrategic areas of airfields and national motorways, and building military and logistic bases across the country, Moscow would then acquire the capability to use the territorial dominion of Afghanistan as an effective protective buffer zone for defensive purposes, and since it deemed it necessary, as a forefront military base for offensive purposes, the ultimate being to reach the warm waters, a prerequisite for the global domination of Soviet communism. Nonetheless, the Soviet oligarchs not only had never considered the legendary Global Domination but “…were always worried about the impact which support for the Afghan Communists would have on their relations with the Afghan Government and were extremely circumspect in their direct dealings with them.” [15]. It is quite re-

—wall of his office as a motto. Wikipedia, Online Library.

remarkable that the Soviet leadership were anxious for exactly the opposite; the possible creation of an “imperialistic” base on Soviet soft underbelly which could threaten Soviet nuclear, military and industrial infrastructure in Kazakhstan, rendering Moscow Washington’s hostage. It was two days after the strenuous agreement of Helmut Schmidt in NATO deliberations for the eventual establishment of tactical missiles systems in western Europe, on 8 December, that in a small politburo meeting in Brezhnev’s office Ustinov, Andropov and Gromyko expressed, without any evidence, their deep concerns for a similar missile tactical base in Afghanistan “...could range and aim...at strategic objects in Kazakhstan and Siberia and elsewhere” [16]. In his, ex post facto rhetoric, elevating the aforementioned concerns to a security problem, Brezhnev expressed the Soviet view in a really simple and firm manner after the intervention: “To have acted otherwise [not to invade/intervene] would have meant to watch passively the origination on our southern border of a centre of serious danger to the security of the Soviet state.” [17] Even more, DCIs Memorandum clarified that the Soviet Union was uninvolved in the change of the Afghan Republic into a Marxist-Leninist regime in April 1979: “We have [absolutely] no convincing evidence to confirm reports that the Soviets were behind the coup which brought the Marxists to power”[18]

Nevertheless, within the US administration there were extremely influential analysts [19] and officials who perceived the Soviet move as an offensive, focusing heavily on the geopolitical factor of the region. Indeed, on 26 December on 1979, Brzezinski’s memo to the President warned: “As I mentioned to you a

---

16 8 December, 1979, Meeting of the “Small Politburo”, Lyakhovskiy, Aleksandr A., “Internal Dynamics in Afghanistan in the Fall of 1979 and the Soviet Response”.
17 Pravda, 13 January, 1980.
19 In late 1970’s the ‘supremacy’ of the Revisionists over the White House perspective was succeeded by the strong influence of the Traditionalists, fact that determined the US response. Amongst the Western Traditionalists foreign policy decision makers and public opinion makers can be categorized: Zbigniew Brzezinski, Robert Carl "Bud" McFarlane, both served as National Security Advisors on Presidents Carter and Reagan respectively, Stephen Larrabee, who served on the US National Security Council staff in the White House as a specialist on Soviet–East European affairs and East-West political-military relations (1978-1981), Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Foreign Policy Advisor and Ambassador in the UN and SsO D James Schlesinger and Caspar Weinberger, as well as President Reagan, and the influential British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; whilst amongst the Revisionists President Carter, Marshall Schulman and the Minister of State Department Cyrus Vance.
week or so ago, we are now facing a regional crisis. Both Iran and Afghanistan are in turmoil and Pakistan is both unstable internally and extremely apprehensive externally. If the Soviets succeed in Afghanistan and if Pakistan acquiesces, the age-long dream of Moscow to have direct access to the Indian Ocean will have been fulfilled.”

20 Concerned over the possibility of a Soviet success, the eminent gestrategist and follower of Mackinder and Spykman noted: Historically, the British provided the barrier to that drive and Afghanistan was their buffer state. We assumed that role in 1945, but the Iranian crisis has led to the collapse of the balance of power in Southwest Asia, and it could produce Soviet presence right down on the edge of the Arabian and Oman Gulfs.” [21]. However, the theory of deployment of the Soviet posture as a step for the warm waters brought the Soviet forces closer to the Pakistani and Indian harbours, which it needed to take over at some stage, in accordance with the plan for global domination. Nevertheless, the carefully built strategic relation between Moscow and New Delhi for decades did not leave room for future aggressive move by Moscow against the Indian Territory [22]. In an opposite event, such a move would be suicidal from a strategic point of view in the wider region of the sub-continent, with international consequences of undetermined size, but definitely contrary to the Soviet interests that would force Moscow to abandon indefinitely its strategic desire to reach the warm waters as far as the Indian Ocean and the Arabic Sea were concerned. On the other hand, a future pressure on Pakistan would have as the most natural consequence its total attachment to the US, a possibility that was not desired by Moscow. In reality, however this happened when the deployment of the Soviet posture in Afghanistan alarmed Pakistan and the US, significantly increasing their collaboration, proving the strategic relation of the two counties or in other words verifying that Islamabad was the precious Washington’s client in the region. Indeed, this is exactly what Brzezinski implied as a defensive measure. Among others ‘compensating factors’ of the Soviet move: “While it [Afghanistan] could become a Soviet Vietnam,…World public opinion may be outraged at the Soviet intervention. Certainly, Moslem countries will be concerned, and we might be in a position to exploit this.” [23] But again: “With Iran destabil-
ized, there will be no firm bulwark in Southwest Asia against the Soviet drive to the Indian Ocean.” [24] The US administration found itself between a rock and a hard place. Given that the role of the National Security Advisor of the White House entailed been suspicious and cautious, especially on defence nature matters, Brzezinski, in the midst of a crisis with the Soviet Union, performed extremely well. On the other hand, a retrospective analysis, that includes fresh data and utilises a more pluralist framework, than the one used by the Traditionalists during the Cold War, could produce different results.

The theory of an intervention as a part of the Soviet Grand Strategy design would be perfectly substantiated if the Soviet Union had reached the warm waters of the Indian Ocean by making just one spectacular offensive move, but then no debate would be ongoing regarding the Soviet motivations of the intervention in Afghanistan, for obvious reasons. However in our case, even though the intervention resulted in the minimisation of the distance from the Indian Ocean, the offensive-driven motivation of reaching the warm waters in the framework of the theory of global domination cannot hold as true cause, but rather as a strategic consequence, as the Soviet intervention would by definition caused more harm than good in the implementation of this specific aim. Indeed, this particular consequence of the intervention would actually put an end to Moscow’s ambitions to reach the warm waters since it would bring together, as it actually happened, all regional actors (except India) close to the US and China whose interests were persistently antagonistic to the ones of the Soviet Union.

According to the Traditionalist approach, another aspect of the Offensive strategic move was that it allowed Moscow to significantly improve the deployment of its posture acquiring a better position to influence and control the energy supply and eventually, being able to sever the west industrial states, from the global oil energy centres, so as to gain the strategic advantage for prevalence in the Cold War and Sino-Soviet antagonism.

Historically, the constant desire of Soviet Union, arising from the traditional interest of Russian Tsars, to find a more beneficial strategic location in the area of the Middle East. As it has been proved historically, Soviet Union wished “to exploit future opportunities in the area of the Persian Gulf and especially in the anti-American, at the time, Iran” [25]. With the full deployment of the operation in Afghanistan, the Soviet troops would diminish the distance from the Soviet

---

24 Ibid., p. 2.
borders to the Straits of Hormuz. Indeed, the distance from the nearest Soviet air base in Izyl Atrek in the Soviet Union to the adjacent to the Straits of Hormuz towns Muscat (Oman) and Bandar Abbas (Iran) was significantly reduced from 1720km to 1137km and 1181km to 794km respectively from the airfield of Soviet occupied Farah in Afghanistan [26]. On the other hand, the flight time between the two points is not significantly decreased, a fact that itself alone vitiates the argument, as it is inconceivable to think of that as a cause for the intervention. Moreover, the affluent area of Khuzestan in Northern part of the country is closer to the Soviet Republics of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, than Afghanistan [27].

Nevertheless, the occupation of Afghanistan served at best, as a lever of pressure towards the strategic region of the Middle East, even of limited value. Indeed, according to the Traditionalistic view Moscow in order to “seize” the control of the Straits of Aden, crafted a laborious attempt in 1970s to progressively acquire control of key states around the Persian Gulf creating pressure points aiming eventually to influence the geopolitical and geo-economic developments in the region was becoming a reality. Thus, the Soviet pressure on the geopolitical complex of the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia and Iran, from the North through the Soviet Republics and Caspian Sea, the North-Northwest via either pro-Soviet Syria or opportunistic Iraq, from the West through the Horn of the Africa and Ethiopia, South Yemen from the South, added a new link in the chain of encirclement, Afghanistan from the East. All these complemented by the Soviet naval deployment in the Mediterranean Sea, justified Riyadh’s claim: “The Soviet military presence in Cuba is not nearly so serious a threat to Western Security as the military presence of Russians in the Gulf and in the Horn of Africa” [28]. Indeed, the member of the Saudi Royal family aligned with the strategic concerns of Carter’s Doctrine, new horizons would open for the Soviet foreign policy and diplomacy not only aiming at the exploitation of new opportunities in the high economic, politically and strategically significant area of the Persian Gulf, but also to control or even sever westerns from the core sources of energy. Nevertheless, this cannot be deduced from the elaboration on the primary sources, such as minutes of Politburo sessions and other de-

28 New York Times, 8 February, 1980; about the reaction of Saudis see also Kinter, William, R., op. cit., pp. 158-60.

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
cision making bodies as for example the Special Commission for Afghanistan. Moreover, this set of explanation does not answer why Moscow according to its alleged master plan selected that specific moment for the Soviet Army to intervene. Indeed, it is highly unlikely that amidst the deterioration of the regional security, being aware of the intense reaction of the Arab and Muslim oil producing countries, as well as of the US and China, it would proceed to something disastrous for the strategic, diplomatic and political interests of Moscow in the international arena. Andropov and Gromyko, with the unanimous consent of the Politburo members in several sessions characterised a potential intervention as 'entirely inadmissible,' [29] and that 'Détente and SALT would perish' [30] with such a Soviet action, confirming all the aforementioned adverse variables.

In addition, it is of great importance for the rejection of this set of explanation that the US services were certain that: ‘... Moscow’s interest in Afghanistan seemed to be focused on ensuring the continued primacy of Soviet influence in a state on the southern border of the USSR. Before last year, Soviet interests in Afghanistan were guaranteed by two treaties (a 1921 Friendship Treaty and a 1931 Treaty of Neutrality and Non-aggression which prohibited Afghan territory from being used for actions inimical to the USSR) and by USSR’s role as chief economic and military aid donor. To be sure, Afghanistan’s foreign policy was non-aligned and Moscow’s ability to influence Afghan internal affairs was limited, but the Soviets seemed satisfied with their level of influence there, and regularly cited Afghanistan as a model of how two states with differing social systems could peacefully coexist.’ [31] Given that Moscow had always been an inspirational and financial source for Afghanistan, as well as a scientific advisor since 1950s, the Saur Revolution resulted to the elevation of the importance of Afghanistan dramatically, for ideological political and strategic reasons. Nevertheless, according to numerous sources, Kremlin was always reserved and preferred to provide monetary assistance and dispatch technical and political personnel, rather than have a military presence in the country, despite the fact that the Marxist regime would have preferred so

29 17-19 March 1979, Meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Transcript of CPSU CC Politburo Discussions on Afghanistan, TsKhSd, f, 89, per. 25 dok. 1, ll. 1, 12-25; document provided by M. Kramer (Harvard University); translation by Carter-Brezhnev Project, 18 March 1979.

30 17 March 1979, Ibid.

[32]. Indeed, in 1979 while Kabul persistently requested military aid, [33] according to DCI Interagency Intelligence Memorandum: "… Afghan capability to absorb substantial increases in foreign economic assistance is limited and because there is still some $300 million in unallocated credits from the $1.3 billion extended to previous regimes. The 60 economic aid agreements that were signed last year allocated only $200 million of the $500 million in credits outstanding at the time of the April 1978 coup. Nonetheless, the Afghans are said to be dissatisfied over the level of Soviet economic assistance actually being provided, and annoyed over their unsuccessful attempts to join the Soviet bloc’s Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CEMA) in hopes of loosening Soviet purse strings." [34]

The fact that the Soviet Union slightly improved its position from the East towards the Persian Gulf was not Moscow’s contemporary objective, but rather an oligarchs’ traditional interest, which in the case of the intervention was a geo-strategic consequence, resulting in no particular further complications. Indeed, though of limited value Afghanistan could serve more as a future pivot of pressure on Iran, already sharing common border with the Soviet Union [35], rather than a stepping stone for further military action either towards the warm waters of the Indian Ocean or the oil producing area of the Persian Gulf.

Despite the rational analysis that the Soviet Union had no intention to approach the warm waters, the mistrust and the lack of information on Kremlin’s intentions [36] in the middle of the Cold War, solidified the myth, in Washington and elsewhere, that one if not the ultimate of the goals of the intervention was the desire of the polar bear to warm its feet in the Indian Ocean, the Arabic Sea and the Persian Gulf. Indeed, it is a fact that from the very beginning of the crisis, Washington was concerned over a regional instability which would result in seismic changes in the region, adverse to its interests. As early as December of 1978 the American Embassy estimated that: "……we wonder if and when the situation cels a bit more, whether the DRA will become a docile camp-follower dominated by the USSR, or a radical leftist regime on the fringe of the non-aligned

32 11 July 1979: [Confidential, NOFORN] Cable from USDAO Kabul to DIA Washington DC, "Soviet Intentions in Afghanistan/Pakistan" (Kabul 5249).
36 17 September 1979: [Top Secret] Memorandum from Thomas Thornton for Assistant to the President for National Security, Zbigniew Brzezinski, "What Are the Soviets Doing in Afghanistan?". The response by Thomas Thornton to himself is characteristic of the era: "Simply we don’t know. Speculation is however intriguing".

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
movement but with peculiar Afghan characteristics and a degree of independence. The most adverse development in terms of our interests would be the introduction of Soviet combat troops in Afghanistan, which would seriously disturb the entire reason.’’ In addition, it called upon other countries concerns: “…the assessments of Afghanistan’s neighbours are similar to ours although Pakistan and Iran contend that Afghanistan is already irrevocably ‘lost’ to the Soviet Union.” [37] On the other hand, irrelevant if it was a cause or consequence, the Soviet posture of 75,000 to 80,000 LCOSF with mechanised battalions, armoured brigades, artillery units, offensive helicopters and Special Forces, was there, providing justification for actions opposing the Soviet occupation in the form of international declarations in the UN to covert programmes of assistance to the Mujahidin. As a result, the consequences of the intervention shook the “international waters” of the Cold War. To a large extent, without being on Moscow’s agenda of objectives for the intervention, as they are erroneously considered by many, not only did they trigger the international reaction against Moscow, but they also created an unprecedented line of support for the bigger covert operation that ever took place in history, in favour of the Mujahidin in a corresponding and proactive way. Indeed, the US would be the first, followed by Pakistan, China, Arab world and Iran, to be irreparably affected in case the Soviet venture was met with success. The conclusion of Stephen Larrabee in an official memorandum to the Advisor of National Security Zbigniew Brzezinski on the 31 December 1979 leaves no room for doubts: “— If the Soviets are successful, Pakistani security and the balance of power in Northeast Asia will be seriously affected.” [38]

In theoretical level, the consequences to a large extent provided the ground for the creation of a singular type of security dilemma in the wider region which was related to the Soviet Grand Strategy and its global and regional components. Without a doubt, intervention geopolitical consequences became a pet aversion, the target for all involved anti-Soviet actors. An important role to this direction played the US foreign policy which was heavily influenced, at the time, by the “traditional framework” of the Cold War. This was intensified by the geopolitical analysis in terms of the Soviet containment, the evolution of the ideological principles of Marxism-Leninism, the imperial Russian past, as well as the progressive Soviet ‘penetration’ over the last 25 years in the country, while the Soviet military built-up in Brezhnev era and Moscow’s policy in

---

37 1 December 1978: [Secret, LIMDIS] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Kabul, "Assessment of Afghan Developments and U.S.-Afghan Relations" (State 304356).

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
the Third World during 1970’s were also aggravating factors. Therefore, the strategic choice of the US to immediately react by building a strategic alliance with all anti-Soviet, regional and international actors, for the assistance towards the insurgency was considered at least reasonable.

One of the most powerful, and significant strategic ally was China. Indeed, even though Peking perceived the politics of détente between the US and the Soviet Union as an alibi, a tactical disorientation of the rest of the world, (‘Chinese Traditionalism’), it was obligated to seek the broader possible international coalition, including the US, thus there was a clear common interest against Soviet “hegemonism” in the region. Furthermore, for Peking, Moscow apart from promoting its master plane was revealing its intentions of encircling China. In addition, according to Peking, being legally covered by the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation of 1978, it followed its typical Soviet tactic, to entered treaties with countries bordering China, such as India, Vietnam, Mongolia; in the case of the latter seen as already tied to the Soviet Union [39]. In the same manner, Peking interpreted the Vietnamese intervention of Cambodia [40] as a further step of its encirclement and coupled with the positioning of large number of Soviet troops at the Sino-Soviet borderline and in Mongolia [41], raised its anxieties of encirclement. In view of the above, the strategic value of Afghanistan for China increased significantly, vindicating its reactions after the Soviet intervention in the country. Following the Soviet intervention and the deployment of Soviet troops and establishment of Soviet airbases in Afghanistan, China felt encircled even more, and given the impact of the speedy and successful mobilisation and air-transfer of Soviet troops the feeling was accentuated. Furthermore, the occupation of Wakhan Corridor [42] and the control of the Kowtal-e Wakhjir Pass

40 In December 1978, the Vietnamese launched a sudden attack against the regime of Pol Pot in Cambodia. This opened a new Soviet point d’ appui for applying naval and air pressure on China, Kintner, William, R., op. cit., p. 179.
41 Vertzberger, Jaacov, op. cit., p. 9.
42 Great Britain and Russia at the 1895 Pamir Conference had drawn the original boundary between China and Afghanistan. In order to leave a buffer zone between them, the two Treaty powers awarded a 300km long salient-known as the Wakhan Corridor- to Afghanistan. According to the subsequent Afghan governments the boarder between Afghanistan and China was about 100km long (75km long according to Chinese sources), running from the Afghanistan-Pakistan-China trijunction to the Afghanistan-China-USSR trijunction at 37° 3’ N and 74° 33’E. China, which had not been present at the Pamir conference refused to recognise this settlement and demanded the Wakhan Corridor for itself, as part of its claim to all the Pamir Mountains, op. cit., p. 3.
to and from China and Kowtal-e Barowjhil Pass from and to Pakistan created new developments in the region. More specifically, Moscow was then able to influence the situation on the Kashmir issue with possible benefits for India, as well as block the strategic replenishment route from China to the Afghan guerillas. Finally, China’s limited ability to take advantage of the relations of its own Muslim minority residing in Xinjiang with the Afghan Muslims, using them as intermediaries on the Afghan issue, was practically eliminated.

Nevertheless, the Soviet intervention clearly did not constitute an offensive strategic move, not confirming the Traditionalist approach of analysis of the Cold War. The reasons for which Moscow dispatched military forces in Afghanistan were far from the improvement of its geopolitical position within the Cold War framework and the Soviet National interest, while the pursuit of strategic advantage vis-a-vis US and China, never put any weight in the Decision Making Process.

3 Soviet National Security Concerns

On the other hand, according to the Revisionist approach it was Moscow’s deep concern for its national security that was derived from the possibility of a spill over phenomenon in the neighbouring country of Afghanistan that would have as a natural acceptor the South Soviet Republics in Central Asia. The Soviet leadership became anxious for such a development, due to the reports of the Soviet generals about the deterioration of the military situation as well as after the meeting of 8 December in which Andropov and Ustinov ‘revealed’ CIA’s plan for the creation of a new Great Ottoman Empire at the expense of the Soviet Union’s Central Asian Republics [43].

The existence of 50 million Muslims Soviet citizens, (20% of the total Soviet population) the majority of which, i.e. 40 million, lived in the three Soviet Democracies of Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kirgistan) which border Afghanistan and apart from religion share the same ethnic origin with many of its ethnicities, worried Moscow due to the possibility that the crisis may be imported into the Soviet Union. The actual figures about the Soviet Muslim population reveal that its development and growth was rapid. While in 1939, Muslims constituted only 8.7% of the total Soviet population; in 1989, came to 19.2% of the total population. In 1970s they accounted almost the one third of the total Soviet population increase [44]. The dynamic of the

43 8 December, 1979, Meeting of the “Small Politburo”, Lyakhovskiy, Aleksandr A., “Internal Dynamics in Afghanistan in the Fall of 1979 and the Soviet Response”.
44 Perevendentsev, V., “Demographic Features,” Literaturnaia Gazeta, Moscow, 2 October, 1979. Also, Olcott, Martha, “Central Asia: the Reformers Challenge in a Traditional Soci-

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
Muslim element is evident as in 1979 comprising only one-sixth of the total Soviet population, they had almost as many children as the other five-sixths of the total population [45]. In one way or the other, their existence alone was always considered strategic element in Soviet politics. In that sense, the Soviet officers assessed that the Islamic fanaticism, either in the form of social revolution of Khomeini in Iran, or in the form of the dynamic insurgency of Mujahidins in Afghanistan, was able, with the appropriate handling, to encourage a Pan-Islamic tendency in Central Asia and Islamic Caucasus [46]. But what about the Soviet Muslims?

Following Lenin’s principle “Religion must be of no concern to the state” [47] the Bolsheviks issued the first decree on religious affairs under the title “On the Separation of the Church from the State and the School from the Church” [48] on 23 January 1918, guaranteeing all citizens of Soviet Russia complete religious freedom, including Islam as “a matter of the individual conscience.” [49] With the opportunity of the adoption of the new constitution in 1977, Moscow gave the chance to the Muslims to discuss any suggestion for improvement in their mosques, in order to include in the new draft. Both ulamas and Muslim population welcomed the draft constitution and contributed to the open discussion, with exceptionally positive results: [50] “Having read the draft constitution carefully, we Muslims saw that its purpose and meaning is to meet the growing materials and cultural needs of the people, to give every Soviet citizen a greater part in running the country, to safeguard the freedom and equality of all the people of our country and to strengthen friendship and brotherly cooperation among them. Very many articles of the draft constitution are the consonant with the doctrine of the Holy Koran and pronouncements of our Prophet Muham-mad. We endorse the draft constitution totally and without reservation because it expresses the will and cherished aspirations of all

46 Valenta, Jiri, Potter, William, op. cit., p. 223.
48 Ibid., p. 143.
the peoples of our country including the Turkmenian people.” [51] Also, the Caucasian Muslims approved the New Constitution with the Mufti of Makhachkala in Dagestan sending a congratulation letter of approval [52].

Even before the new Constitution of 1977, all Muslim populations [53], as Soviet citizens, enjoyed a high standard of living, compared to their coreligionists in neighbouring Afghanistan. They might fall short to a large degree from the average of Western Europe or the US, but the quality of health care, education, economic and industrial development as well as their residences was by far higher than that of the Afghan Muslims. Although they felt different from the other Soviets, and mainly the Russians, they did not demonstrate any desire for autonomy from Moscow, or even homogenisation under a common religious version of political Islam. Furthermore, the different ethnicities, linguistics and traditions were hard to overcome, in order for them to become a significantly coherent strategic power. Typical example is the unsurpassed difficulty of their brother muslims in Afghanistan, who amidst their war with the Soviets did not adopt at any time a unified political front with strategic and ideological depth. Indeed, the biggest 7 Afghan parties that joined an alliance called the Islamic Unity of Afghan Mujahidin (IUAM-7), never agreed on any form of conceptual, practical or political platform. They only agreed on a political minimum; that of their opposition to the Soviet intervention and their continuing struggle against the Soviets.

Nevertheless, especially after the small Politburo meeting of 8 December where Andropov and Ustinov signaled the alarm, implicating the CIA and Paul Henze, for a plan for the creation of a New Ottoman Empire which would have included parts of the Southern Republics of the Soviet Union, the possibility of importing the crisis could not remain unobserved [54]. The truth is that the triumvirate of Andropov-Gromyko-Ustinov that rose the issue, with the later as the prominent advocate, anticipated personal gains, at least Ustinov and to a lesser degree Andropov. The document that the Soviet oligarchs were based on was a memorandum for Zbigniew Brzezinski on his imminent visit to

---

51 Haji Atajan Abdullaev, the Imam-khatib of the Talhatan Baba Mosque of Turkmenistan praising the draft of the New Constitution of 1977 regarding the way it respects Islam and Holy Koran.
54 8 December, 1979, Meeting of the “Small Politburo”, Lyakhovskiy, Aleksandr A., “Internal Dynamics in Afghanistan in the Fall of 1979 and the Soviet Response”.
China in May 1978. Its author, CIA official Paul B. Henze praises Hugh Seton-Watson’s new book “Nations and States”, which deals with the area of the soft underbelly of Asia Continent, from India to Iraq. Henze also noted that Seton-Watson “…points out that all the states of this region are potentially brittle and none fully meets his definition of nation.”, and that “The Russians have been keenly interested in this area since the 19th century and now, with its oil wealth and the absence of a major outside counterforce, it offers them almost irresistible [sic] temptations, possibly as a diversion from the growing nationalism of their mushrooming Central Asian Muslim populations.” [55] Finally, Henze believed that: “There is a real case in this part of the world—especially as between Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan—for some political restructuring. But to expect this to occur peacefully and without external major power involvement may be as unrealistic as in the Horn of Africa.”. Indeed, the idea was very tempting for him and he concluded that: “The Chinese will be very interested in knowing how we view all this and what we plan to do to bolster Iranian and Pakistani confidence. We have an instrument at hand: CENTO. It doesn’t amount to much. It has not been popular or fashionable recently; we have come close to letting it go the way of SEATO. It may be handier than we think as a device for putting some tone into the soft underbelly of Asia. But in the end it will depend upon unilateral and consistent U.S. initiative to get anything meaningful started.” [56]

It is extremely interesting how Henze combines the current regional turbulence with the idea ‘for some political restructuring’ and also suggests that the US had a plan ‘to bolster Iranian and Pakistani confidence’, while all this entailed a final US action since the whole alleged venture ‘it will depend upon unilateral and consistent U.S. initiative’. Even more, apart from the overall revisionist geopolitical dimension for the soft underbelly of the Soviet Union, this scenario resulted linking to the “the growing nationalism of their [Soviet] mushrooming Central Asian Muslim populations”. However, the memorandum was drafted on 3 May 1978, when Persia was not yet became an Islamic Republic. Indeed, even if Henze’s views had been adopted, they would have been completely ineffective as the riots that had commenced in Persia in October 1977 and intensified in January 1978 led to Shah Pahlavi’s exile in mid-January 1979. In February of the same year Ayatollah Khomeini returned and on 1 April Persia become an Islamic Republic, with the known adverse consequences for its relations with the US. As a result, the absurd scenario for an attempt to link-reconstruct the underbelly states with entirely different ver-

---

56 Ibid., p. 2.

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
sions of Islam which traditionally have been competitive to each other could not preoccupy the Soviet leadership for long though an existing concern.

Nevertheless, in an environment of uncertainty, with the triumphant Islamic Revolution in Iran and the fanatically anti-Soviet stance of Ayatollah R. Khomeini, who was not limited to verbal statements, but as the Soviet intelligence knew very well, supported the Shi’á element of the Afghan insurgency both with radio broadcasting as well material supplies and infiltrating agents of Islam, the conditions for a pan Islamic front were becoming more favourable. Kremlin had proof that Teheran could, with little effort, disrupt the smooth social and political life of western part of Afghanistan, with the example of the Shi’á uprising in Herat in March 1979 that Taraki could not control. Another important fact was Khomeini’s decision to cut-off the gas supply pipeline from Iran and the cancellation of the construction of a second one to the Soviet Union [57]. Moreover, it would be natural coherent thought for the Soviet Muslims to wonder if they could challenge the Marxist infidel Soviet ruling systems, in the same way that Khomeini challenged the US in the name of Islam and thunderously succeeded to overthrow Shah Pahlavi. It is interesting that in the first months that he assumed power in Iran, Khomeini and other religious leaders urged the Muslims all over the world with public statements to uprise. Despite the fact that the Soviet Muslims were Sunnites, nobody could assure Kremlin that this would not occur again and have an impact in the future. All these indications, considering the vantage of the Muslim insurgents, who shared the same origin, culture and religion with the Soviet Muslims, put the Soviet leadership in a dilemmatic position. It brought back memories of the Basmachis rebellion, which Stalin tried for ten years to suppress it, until mid 1930s [58]. Though, to what extent did the existence of almost 40 million Muslims in the Central Soviet Republics pose a potential threat to the integrity of the Soviet Motherland? This question was never adequately answered by the Soviet leadership in the relevant sessions, as other matters of more important nature existed and had priority, such as the safeguarding the achievements of the Saur revolution according to the callings of Marxist-Leninist Principles in Afghanistan. In any case, the Soviet oligarchs agreed that the particular trend of “…Muslim further emancipation in the countries of the region is

definitely encouraged and with the appropriate manipulation of the imperialistic forces could deliver disastrous results to the USSR.” [59] A Pan-Islamic tendency in Central Asia and Islamic Caucasus was far from being a reality, nevertheless from Ankara to Islamabad Muslims expressed religious and moral solidarity to their co-religionists insurgents [60]. However, It was not only the Politburo’s ‘reasonable concern’ and the misjudgement for the assumed US attempt to create a new Ottoman Empire, amaglinating part of the Southern republics of the Soviet Union, but also there were many Soviet Generals of the Districts of the Central Asia, with almost 80% Muslims in their Districts who argued that “... [the border if not inside the border, was] “...a real seat of war on the USSR’s Southern border.”” [61]. Indeed, Col. General Maksimov, military command of the Uzbek District on the other hand, in his article: ‘Mighty guard of Socialist achievements’ in Pravda Vostoka, superficially touched the issue putting remarkable emphasis on the ideological aspect of the imperative need to invade as a last resort for the Soviet Union: “the presence of our troops will permit the stabilisation of the situation in Afghanistan, will allow the democratic forces to consolidate themselves and the gains of the revolution to be secured, and will permit the cooling of the ardour of those initiated military adventures.” [62] Maksimov, even though he suggested that Soviet Union’s main mission was to consolidate Moscow’s interests and the Socialistic achievements of the Saur revolution in the country, he also implied a strategic perspective of the Afghan crisis.

Finally, the Soviet press also implied the possibility of creating a hot nucleus within the boundaries of the Soviet state, obviously referring to the aggressiveness of particular aspects of Islam. As far as regarding the press, this concern was never openly discussed, for obvious reasons, but only after the end of the war and after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. According to Media Lens in 2007, obviously familiarised with notion of preventative war, the “Soviet public were told [at the time before the intervention that] they faced a stark choice: either fight the menace [meaning the Muslim Insurrection] abroad, or do nothing and later face a much greater threat on home soil...”[63] and according to Sovetskaya Rossia “put the USSR in a very difficult situation” [64].

59 8 December, 1979, Meeting of the “Small Politburo”, Lyakhovskiy, Aleksandr A., “Internal Dynamics in Afghanistan in the Fall of 1979 and the Soviet Response”.
61 Sovetskaia Kirgizia, 23 February 1980, also Turmenskaia Iskra, 23 February, 1980.
64 Sovetskaya Rossia, 11 February, 1993.
Although the national security threat of an Islamic uprising by the Soviet-Muslim populations, within the country, is retroactively considered as extreme, the current data were not clear enough for the Soviet oligarchs. Despite the fact that the threat to its national security and stability by the possibility of import of fundamentalist Islam (spill-over phenomenon) was always a concern for Moscow, was never elevated to a crucial reason for Kremlin to oppose dynamically the insurgents with an intervention. Even though, according to the sources, this was never extensively discussed among them, Andropov and Ustinov’s exaggerated suspicions for US manipulation of the Muslim element along with the echoes from the reports about the sweeping victories of the Muslims insurgents against the Marxist Regime of Kabul, raised a true concern but did not influence the Soviet leaderships’ Decision Making Process and clearly was not the driving factor for the Soviet intervention.

4 Conclusion
After the Second World War the analytical framework of geopolitics became the most popular in the scientific community and not without a reason. The successful deterrence and containment of the Soviet Union were of crucial importance for the Western world. While in the beginning there was a concurrence on the theoretical origins and practical policies towards Moscow, in the course of history a debate broke-out, mainly relating to objectives of the Soviet Union, which influenced the western policy vis-a-vis Moscow. Traditionalists, perceived the Soviet Union as an imperialistic revisionist power with clear hegemonistic ambitions and called for a permanent, firm stance towards it from a position of power. Much of their argumentation was derived from the Marxist-Leninist Ideology as well as the realistic tradition of international theories. For them, Peaceful Coexistence and Détente were all part of the great communist deception in order to gain an advantage over US and the liberal world, in their attempt for global domination. On the other hand, according to the Revisionists, the competition between the two superpowers did not originate nor focus on their different social systems. It was obvious for them that the basic reason of antagonism in the Cold War was the respective strategic interests of each Superpower. Thus, it is for the benefit of the smooth function of the international system, for every state to take into serious consideration and respect these strategic interests. This required, instead of an unconditional continuous antagonism and fruitless arms race, the establishment of a strategic balance between US and Soviet interests, through the much preferable cooperation, mutual understanding and trust. This proposal of mutual benefit, was promoted and ap-
plied by the principle of Peaceful Coexistence and the policy of Détente to a great extent.

It is a fact that both perceptions framed the analysis of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in a restricted analytical field and limited scope. Indeed, the possible causes and motivations of strategic nature for the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan monopolised both the western analyses and reactions. Nevertheless, the motivations of strategic nature were not a sufficient lever to drive the intervention. The analysis of new source materials show that these explanations proved to be irrelevant to a large degree to what really happened. The Soviet move was not a strategic action, as this would presuppose a pre-defined master plan and a reasonable processing and evaluation of the consequences of such a move. On the contrary, the Soviet intervention had a “complete suicide” character since it coiled all the anti-Soviet factors, US, China, Arab nations and all the regional actors against Moscow. In particular, for the offensive strategic version there is absolutely no evidence in the Soviet Decision Making sessions or elsewhere. It is worth noting that some of the Western analysts confused the nature of the deployment of the Soviet posture which occurred with the intervention considering it as Moscow’s primary objective. In reality, it was only the geopolitical consequence of it, being absolutely absent from the Soviet agenda. On the other hand, in the strategic defensive version even though relevant discussion among the Soviet leaders took place, these remained in the minutes of the DM sessions, and were not of a decisive nature for triggering the decision to intervene.

All in all, in a complicated case that took place in one of the most geopolitically important areas of the planet, many of the consequences of the intervention were erroneously taken for motivations and causes. Those misconceptions mainly related to the perceived as offensive strategic-driven motivations such as the Soviet ambition to reach the warm waters, or the oil producing Persian Gulf in the implementation of the Grand Design of global domination, which reflects the Traditionalists’ perception. On the other hand, the Revisionists’ approach on the concern for a pan-Islamic movement leading to the spill over phenomenon in the Soviet Central Republics can be judged retrospectively, as too excessive and unrealistic, was a clear concern in the minds of the Soviet leadership but not enough to impact the final decision to intervene.
Map 1: Mackinder’s “Heartland” (1904). "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland, Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island, Who rules the World Island commands the World.". Traditionalists, among others, supported that the intervention in Afghanistan took place heavily influenced by the ideological base and aggressive nature of Marxism-Leninism. Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin

Map 2: Spykman’s "Rimland" (1938). Source: Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin
Source: Perry-Castapeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin.

Map 4: The Soviet Air Assault Operation with Code Name ‘Storm 333’ was undertaken by 
KGB Special Forces and VDV units on the 24th of December and was succeed by a large-

*Civitas Gentium* 2:1 (2012)
scale land invasion with Motor Rifle and Mechanized Armored Battalions of the Soviet Armed Forces the next two days. Source: Perry-Casteneda Library Map Collection, University of Texas at Austin

Bibliography

Primary Sources

6. CPSU CC Politburo Decisions on Afghanistan, 13 September 1979 (excerpts), CPSU CC Politburo meeting of 13 September 1979, Source: APRF, from notes taken by A. Dobrynin and provided to Norwegian Nobel Institute; provided to CWIHP by Odd Arne Westad, Norwegian Nobel Institute; translation for CWIHP by Daniel Rozas.]


17. CPSU CC Politburo decision on Afghanistan, 7 January 1979.

18. Transcript of CPSU CC Politburo discussions on Afghanistan, 17-19 March 1979, all sessions.


20. Transcript of telephone conversation between Soviet Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin and Afghan Prime Minister Noor Mohamed Taraki, 17 or 18 March 1979.


22. Transcript of the CPSU CC Politburo Session on Afghanistan, *(regarding the issue of the situation in Afghanistan)*, 22 March 1979.


25. CPSU CC Politburo Decision and Instruction to the Soviet Ambassador in Afghanistan, 24 May 1979, *(about providing supplementary military assistance to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan)*.


27. Record of conversation between Soviet Ambassador AM Puzanov and Taraki, 10 July 1979.


The Soviet Grand Strategy in Central Asia

35. Information of the KGB USSR to CC CPSU International Department, (in relation to the leadership of Iran on the external security of the country), 10 October 1979.


37. CPSU CC Politburo Decision, 17 January 1980, on the situation in Afghanistan.

38. Andropov Report to CC CPSU, on Talks with Afghan Leaders, 5 February 1980.


40. Information from the CC CPSU to Erich Honecker, 21 June 1980.

41. Report by Soviet Defence Minister Ustinov to CPSU CC, on Foreign Interference in Afghanistan, 2 October 1980.

42. CPSU CC Politburo Transcript, 20 March 1986, (excerpts).


44. UN DOC. S/13717, 31 December 1979.

45. UN DOC. S/13724, 3 January 1980.


47. UN DOC. A/ES-6/PV.1, 14 January 1980.

48. Soviet-Afghani Treaty on Economic Cooperation, 14 April 1977

49. Brezhnev’s and Kosygin’s congratulatory message to H. Amin on his assumption of power in Afghanistan, 18 September 1979.


51. Soviet criticism of Western interference in the Afghani Problem, 12 May 1981.

52. Soviet objections to linking their East-West relations with the Afghanistan problem, 1 January 1983.


55. Protocol on extending the terms of the Treaty of Neutrality and Non Aggression between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Afghanistan, 10 December 1975.


*Civitas Gentium* 2:1 (2012)
64. President Jimmy Carter, State of the Union Address, 23 January 1980, Jimmy Carter Library
65. Memo, Brzezinski to State, Defence, Treasury Departments and White House Staff, 12th February 1980, “CF O/A – 706” (Box CF-1 WHCF Subject File, Jimmy Carter Library).
68. Memo of Z. Brzezinski to the President 26 December 1979
69. Memo to the President from Z. Brzezinski, 29 December 1979.
75. Interview with Lim Philby, in Sunday Times, 10 April 1988
76. George Mitsios Interview with a local Hazara Commander Ghowr Province December 2001.
77. George Mitsios Interview with a part time fighter Heart, March 2002.
78. George Mitsios Interview with a HIK Commander, Kabul, September 2002.
The Soviet Grand Strategy in Central Asia

84. FBIS/SU 85, 4 March 1983, Alexander Bovin in Dagens Nyheter, Stockholm, p. 25.
86. The Economist, April 1983.
87. AI ASA 11/04/79, Amnesty International, pp. 8-9
91. Private Correspondence of 1st February 1985. Sender was the Afghan Saffi Rasul and the recipient was the Pakistani contact Hial Mohammad, Peshawar.
94. “Congressional quarterly Almanac for 1979”.
99. 11 July 1978, Dobrynin, Anatoly, Political Letter of the Ambassador to the United States Anatoly F. Dobrynin to the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Commissioner Gromyko A.A.

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
104. 8 December, 1979, Meeting of the “Small Politburo”, Lyakhovskiy, Aleksandr A., “Internal Dynamics in Afghanistan in the Fall of 1979 and the Soviet Response”.


107. 15 March 1976, “Statement of Conference of the Communist and Workers’ Parties of Europe”, (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, the FRG, France, Greece, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey). Materialy XXV”ezda KPSS. Moscow, 1976.

108. [Early December…], Personal Memorandum Andropov to Brezhnev, n.d. [early December 1979], APRF, from notes taken by A.F. Dobrynin and provided to Norwegian Nobel Institute; provided to CWIHP by Odd Arne Westad, Director of Research, Nobel Institute; Trans. for CWIHP by Daniel Rozas.


123. SNIE11-37-89, November 1989: Afghanistan: The war in Perspective, Director of Central Intelligence (Key Judgments only), Special National Intelligence Estimate.
124. SNIE11-37-88, March 1988: USSR Withdrawal from Afghanistan, Director of Central Intelligence (Key Judgments only), Special National Intelligence Estimate.
131. 27 December 2009, RIA Novosti, Oleg Balashov interview, Soviet assault on Afghan president remembered.
133. Record of Conversation Brezhnev-Taraki, 20 March 1979
134. CPSU CC Politburo Decision, 1 February 1980, with telegrams to Soviet Ambassador To West Germany (Willy Brandt) and Finnish Socialist Democratic leader K. Sorsa (not printed)
135. Political Letter from USSR Ambassador to Afghanistan A. Puzanov to Soviet Foreign Ministry “About the Domestic Political Situation in the DRA,” 31 May 1978 (notes)
136. Record of Conversation, Soviet Ambassador A.M. Puzanov and Taraki, 18 June 1978
137. Record of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan A.M. Puzanov and Taraki, 18 July 1978
138. Information from CPSU CC to GDR leader Erich Honecker, 13 October 1978
139. CPSU CC Politburo Decision on Afghanistan, 7 January 1979
140. Transcript of CPSU CC Politburo Discussions on Afghanistan, 17-19 March 1979
141. CPSU CC Politburo Decisions on Afghanistan, 18 March 1979
142. Transcript of Telephone Conversation Between Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin and Afghan Prime Minister Nur Mohammed Tarki, 17 or 18 March 1979
143. Meeting of Kosygin, Gromyko, Ustinov, and Ponomarev with Taraki in Moscow, 20 March 1979
144. Transcript of CPSU CC Politburo Session on Afghanistan, 22 March 1979

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)
145. Record of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan A.M. Puzanov and Taraki, 22 March 1979
147. CPSU CC Politburo Decision and Instruction to Soviet Ambassador in Afghanistan, 24 May 1979
148. Gromyko -Andropov-Ustinov-Ponomarev Report to CPSU CC on the Situation in Afghanistan, 28 June 1979
149. Record of Conversation Between Soviet Ambassador A.M. Puzanov and Taraki, 10 July 1979
152. Report from Soviet Deputy Defense Minister Army Gen. Ivan Pavlovskii during visit to Afghanistan, 25 August 1979
153. CPSU CC Politburo Decisions on Afghanistan, 13 September 1979 (excerpts)
154. CPSU CC Politburo Decision 15 September 1979, with report by Gromyko, Ustinov, and Tsvigun
155. Cable from Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to Soviet Representatives in Kabul, 15 September 1979
156. Information from CC CPSU to GDR leader E. Honecker, 16 September 1979
157. Excerpt from transcript, CPSU CC Politburo meeting, 20 September 1979
158. Excerpt from transcript, Meeting of Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko and Afghan Foreign Minister Shah-Valihi, New York, 27 September 1979 (excerpt)
159. Information from the CC CPSU to GDR leader Honecker, 1 October 1979
160. Transcript of Brezhnev-Honecker summit in East Berlin 4 October 1979 (excerpt on Iran and Afghanistan)
161. Information of KGB USSR to CC CPSU International Department, 10 October 1979
162. Gromyko -Andropov-Ustinov-Ponomarev Report to CPSU CC, 29 October 1979
163. Record of Conversation Between Soviet Ambassador Puzanov and Amin, 3 November 1979
165. Record of Conversation between Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan F.A. Tabeev and H. Amin 6 December 1979
166. Extract from CPSU CC Politburo Decision, 6 December 1979
167. Personal memorandum, Andropov to Brezhnev, n.d. [early December 1979]
169. Meeting of Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko and Afghan Foreign Minister Shad Mohammad Dost 4 January 1980
170. CC CPSU Politburo transcript, 17 January 1980 (excerpt)
171. CPSU CC Politburo decision, 17 January 1980
173. Andropov Report to CPSU CC on Talks with Afghan Leaders, 5 February 1980
174. CC CPSU Politburo transcript, 7 February 1980 (excerpt)
175. CPSU CC Politburo Decisions on Afghanistan, 7 February 1980
176. CPSU CC Politburo Decision on Soviet Policy on Afghanistan, 10 March 1980 with report on Proposal by Fidel Castro to Mediate between Afghanistan and Pakistan and approved letter from L.I. Brezhnev to Fidel Castro
177. 30 January 1978: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Afghanistan in 1977: An External Assessment" (Kabul 0820)
178. 03 May 1978: [Secret] Cable AMEMBASSY Tehran to SECSTATE, "Biographic data on the Afghan Cabinet" (Kabul 3423)
179. 11 May 1978: Memorandum from Paul B. Henze to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Asian 'Soft Underbelly' and your Visit to Peking"
180. 13 June 1978: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Six Weeks After Afghanistan's Revolution: A Summing Up" (Kabul 4801)
182.1 August 1978: [Secret] Action Telegram from the SECSTATE to USMISSION USNATO, "Undersecretary Newsom's Trip to Southern Asia" (State 194166)
183.26 September 1978: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Tehran to SECSTATE, "Iranian Assessment of Afghan developments and u.s. –Afghan relations" (Tehran 9279)
184.1 December 1978: [Secret, LIMDIS] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Kabul, "Assessment of Afghan Developments and u.s.-Afghan Relations" (State 304356)
185.11 April 1979: Memorandum of Conversation between Vasiliiy K. Gorovoi, First Secretary Soviet Embassy, Washington, and Ronald D. Lorton, Country Officer for Afghanistan, State Department
186.8 May 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE: "The 'Big Lie' Becomes Standard Khalqi Tool" (Kabul 3557)
187.8 May 1979: [Confidential, NOFORN] Cable from AMEMBASSY Moscow to SECSTATE, "Pakistani Diplomat Discusses Soviet-Pakistan Relations, Afghanistan" (Moscow 11355)
188.14 May 1979: [Secret] Cable from AMEMBASSY Islamabad to SECSTATE,
192. "Gailani Representative Reports Progress in Unifying Afghan Dissident Groups" (Islamabad 5531)
193. 24 May 1979: [Secret] Cable from AMEMBASSY Moscow to SECSTATE, "Afghanistan: Prospects for Soviet Intervention" (Moscow 13083)
194. 24 June 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Islamabad to SECSTATE: "Law and order in Baluchistan-Growing Concern and Tension over Afghanistan" (Islamabad 7075)
195. 25 June 1979: [Confidential] Cables from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Meeting with Soviet Diplomat: Observations on the Internal Afghan Political Scene" (Kabul 4888 and 4889)
196. 11 July 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Puzzlement of the East German Ambassador over 'Contradictions' of the Khalqi Regime" (Kabul 5246)
197. 11 July 1979: [Confidential, NOFORN] Cable from USDAO Kabul to DIA Washington D.C., "Soviet Intentions in Afghanistan/Pakistan" (Kabul 5249)
198. 16 July 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Afghan Underground Propaganda Calls for the Ouster of Prime Minister Amin" (Kabul 5360)
199. 18 July 1979: Cable [Confidential] AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Soviet Effort to Urge DRA to Find a Political Resolution of Domestic Conflict May Be Underway" (Kabul 5433)
200. 18 July 1979: Cable [Secret, EXDIS] AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "GDR Ambassador Reports that Soviets Hope to Replace Prime Minister Amin with a Broader Based Government" (Kabul 5459)
201. 19 July 1979: Cable [Secret, EXDIS] AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Further comments by East German Ambassador about Soviet efforts to alter Afghan regime" (Kabul 5470)
202. 29 July 1979: Cable AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Amin Given More Direct Role in Prosecuting Counterinsurgency" (Kabul 5683)
205. 6 August 1979: [Secret, NOFORN] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "An Initial Evaluation of the Rala Hisar Mutiny" (Kabul 5967)
206. 8 August 1979: [Secret] Cable from USMISSION USNATO to SECSTATE, "POLADS discussion of Afghanistan" (USNATO 05615)
207. 16 August 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Nature of the Afghan opposition" (Kabul 6251)
208. 20 August 1979: [Secret] Cable from SECSTATE to USMISSION USNATO, "POLADS Discussion of Afghanistan" (State 218144)
209. 2 September 1979: [Secret, EXDIS] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Pavlovskiy Mission to Kabul" (Kabul 6604)
The Soviet Grand Strategy in Central Asia


213. 18 September 1979: [Confidential, LIMDIS] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Some Reflections on the Afghanistan Political Crisis" (Kabul 6978)

214. 24 September 1979: [Secret] Memorandum from Thomas Thornton to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Regional Cooperation re Afghanistan"

215. 27 September 1979: DCI Interagency Intelligence Memorandum, "Soviet Operations in Afghanistan"

216. 29 September 1979: [Confidential] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Kabul, "Newsom Meeting with Afghan Foreign Minister" (State 256809)

217. 1 October 1979: [Secret, EXDIS] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Reports of Soviet Combat Troops in Afghanistan" (Kabul 7252)

218. 1 October 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Ankara to SECSTATE, "Turkish Views on USSR-Afghanistan: Follow-up" (Ankara 7248)

219. 2 October 1979: [Confidential] Memorandum from Thomas Thornton to David Aaron, "Soviet-Afghan Contingency Planning"

220. 2 October 1979: [Confidential, EXDIS] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Afghanistan's Amin Roup: Local Yugoslav and Soviet Views" (Kabul 7281)

221. 3 October 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "Soviet Official Comments on Status of Taraki and the Purged Military Officer Cabinet Ministers" (Kabul 7318)

222. 10 October 1979: [Secret, LIMDIS] Cable from USMISSION USNATO to SECSTATE, "Soviet Intentions in Afghanistan" (USNATO 06927)

223. 19 October 1979: [Secret, LIMDIS] Cable to SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Algiers, Ankara, Belgrade, Bucharest, Canberra, Colombo, Dacca, Jakarta, Jidda, New Delhi, Tehran, Tokyo, Wellington, USINT Baghdad, Beijing, Islamabad, Kathmandu, USMISSION USNATO, Kabul, Moscow, USMISSION USUN, CINCPAC, "Dialogue on Afghanistan" (State 273949: Talking Points)

224. 24 October 1979: [Confidential] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Islamabad, "US-Pak Talks: Regional Issues" (State 277901)

225. 25 October 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Ankara to SECSTATE, "Turkish Information on Afghanistan Situation" (Ankara 07955)

226. 25 October 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to SECSTATE, "New East German Ambassador to Replace Central Figure in Last Summer's Reported Attempt to Broaden Regime's Political Base" (Kabul 7706)

227. 30 October 1979: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY Kabul to AMEMBASSY Ankara, "Turkish Information on the Situation in Afghanistan" (Kabul 7784)

228. 29 November 1979: National Foreign Assessment Center Report, "Near East and South Asia Review" (extract)
229. 15 December 1979: [Secret] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Moscow, "Soviet Military Deployment"
230. 17 December 1979: Special Coordination Committee Meeting, "Iran Summary 231. of Conclusions"
232. 26 December 1979: Special Coordination Committee, Summary of Conclusions: SCC Meeting on Soviet Moves on Afghanistan
234. 27 December 1979: Presidential Review Committee Meeting, "Southwest Asia"
235. 28 December 1979: [Confidential, NODIS] Cable from SECSTATE, "Our Assessment of Recent Events in Afghanistan" (State 333161)
237. 28 December 1979: [Confidential] Memorandum from Michel Oksenberg for Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Afghanistan"
238. 28 December 1979: [Confidential] Memorandum from Robert Blackwell to Zbigniew Brzezinski and David Aaron, "The President's December 28 telephone calls to European leaders"
239. 29 December 1979: [Secret, Action] Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski for the President, "Our Response to Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan"
240. 29 December 1979: [Confidential] Memorandum from Robert Blackwell to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Summaries of President's Telephone Conversations with European Leaders"
244. 31 December 1979: Department of State Papers on Afghanistan sent to White House for 2 January 1980 NSC meeting, "us. Soviet Relations and Afghanistan" (with attachments)
245. 2 January 1980: "scc Meeting on Soviet Forces in Afghanistan-Summary of Conclusions"
246. 2 January 1980: Minutes of the National Security Council Meeting
247. 2 January 1980: [Secret] Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to the President: "Possible Steps in Reaction to Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan"
248. 2 January 1980: Memorandum from Fritz Ermarth for Zbigniew Brzezinski, "NSC on Afghanistan"

*Civitas Gentium* 2:1 (2012)
251. 2 January 1980: Memorandum from Michel Oksenberg and Don Gregg to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "NSC Meeting on China/Brown Trip"

252. 2 January 1980: [Secret] Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to the VP, Sec. State, Sec. Defense, Chairman, JCS and DCI, "Results of NSC Meeting, 2 January 1980"

253. 2 January 1980: "Implementation of Instructions Emerging from 2 January 1980 NSC Meeting"

254. 2 January 1980, [Top Secret] Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to the Secretary of State, "Presidential Decisions on Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India"

255. 2 January 1980: [Eyes Only] Memorandum from Hedley Donovan to the President

256. 3 January 1980: Letter from Jimmy Carter to Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd

257. 6 January 1980: [Confidential, EXDIS] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSIES, "US. Response to the Soviet Intervention of Afghanistan"

258. 8 January 1980: NSC Memorandum for the Director, International Communication Agency, "Results of NSC meeting of January 2, 1980"

259. 10 January 1980: [Secret] Memorandum from Marshall Bremen to Christine Dodson (NSC Staff Secretary), "Implementation of January 2 NSC Decisions"

260. 10 January 1980: Department of State Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski, NSC, "Actions Taken to Carry Out NSC Decisions of January 2, 1980"


262. 4 January 1980: Memorandum [Top Secret/Codeword] from Jerry Schecter to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "sec Working Group on Iran and Afghanistan: Public Posture" (excised paragraph found in another document copy at National Security Archive, Afghanistan Collection)

263. 15 January 1980: [Secret] Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to the President, "SCC on Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf"

264. 17 January 1980: Special Coordination Committee Meeting, "Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf: Summary of Conclusions"


266. 30 January 1980: [Confidential] Memorandum from Jerry Schecter to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Summary of the Seventh and Eight Meetings of the SCC Working Group on Iran and Afghanistan: Public Posture"

267. 30 January 1980: Cable from AMEMBASSY Moscow to SECSTATE, "Meeting with Gromyko" (Moscow 01670)

268. 30 January 1980: Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Moscow, "Meeting with Gromyko"

269. 16 February 1980: Letter from Soviet Foreign Minister Anatoly Gromyko to Secretary of State
270. 27 February 1980: Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to Secretary of State, "Schmidt Memcon," with attached Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary of State Vance and West German Chancellor Schmidt, Bonn, 20 February 1980

271. 4 March 1980: [Secret] Briefing Memorandum from Ronald I. Spiers (INR) to the Secretary of State, "Soviet Motives in Afghanistan"

272. 7 March 1980: Memorandum from Jerry Schecter to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "sec Working Group on Iran and Afghanistan: Public Posture"

273. 11 March 1980: Memorandum from Marshall Brement to Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Reported Use of Chemical Weapons" (with attached 7 March 1980 Department of State Memorandum to Zbigniew Brzezinski)

274. 12 March 1980: Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to Peter Tarnoff, DOS,

275. 18 March 1980: Special Coordination Committee, "Iran/Afghanistan"

276. 20 March 1980: Special Coordination Committee, "Iran/Afghanistan: Summary of Conclusions"

277. 16 April 1980: [Top Secret] Special Analysis, "Pakistan-Afghanistan: The Refugee Problem"

278. 2 June 1980: Information Report from USDAO Kabul to JCS/DIA WashDC,

279. "Aid to Afghanistan Insurgents"

280. 3 June 1980: [Secret] Memorandum from Zbigniew Brzezinski to the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Energy, the Director, OMB and the Director, DCI, and the Chairman JCS, "Persian Gulf Security Framework"

281. 12 November 1982: [Secret] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Islamabad, "Special National Intelligence Estimate on Pakistan" (State 318440)

282. 29 November 1982: [Secret] Memorandum from Nicholas A. Veliotes (NEA) for Secretary Shultz, "Your Briefing of the President in Preparation for His Meeting with President Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan, 10:30AM, Tuesday, December 7, 1982"

283. 29 November 1982: [Secret] Memorandum from Nicholas A. Veliotes (NEA) for the Secretary of State, "Your Meeting with President Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, Monday, December 6, 1982, at 11:00 AM"

284. 29 November 1982: [Secret] Memorandum from George P. Shultz for the President, "Visit of Zia-ul-Haq, President of Pakistan, December 6-9"

285. 6 December 1982: Memorandum of Conversation between Vice President Bush and Pakistani Foreign Minister Yaqub-Khan

286. 6 December 1982: Memorandum of Conversation between Secretary Shultz and Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haq

287. 7 December 1982: Memorandum of Conversation between President Reagan and Pakistani President Zia-ul-Haq

288. 11 December 1982: [Secret] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Islamabad, "Indo-US Consultations re Zia's Visit" (State 345278)
291. 13 December 1982: Memorandum of Conversation between Vice President Bush and President Zia-ul-Haq on December 8, 1982
292. 13 December 1982: [Secret, NODIS] Cable from -Nicholas A. Veliotes (NEA) to Secretary, "Information Memorandum - SIS No. 8238186 Pakistan President Zia US Visit"
293. 16 December 1982: [Secret, EXDIS] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSIES, "State Visit of President Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq of Pakistan" (State 348949)
294. 1 June 1983: [Confidential] Cable from AMEMBASSY New Delhi to SECSTATE, "Official-Informal" (New Delhi 11063)
295. 1 June 1983: [Secret, EXDIS] Cable from AMEMBASSY Islamabad to SECSTATE, "The Secretary's Visit to Pakistan: Afghanistan" (Islamabad 09475)
296. 13 June 1983: [Secret] DOS Briefing Memorandum from Nicholas A. Veliotes (NEA) to The Secretary, "Your Meeting with President Mohammad Zia-Ul-Haq of Pakistan, Sunday, July 3, 1983"
297. 4 July 1983: [Secret] Cable from SECSTATE to USDEL Secretary, "Secretary's meeting with President Zia-Ul-Haq of Pakistan" (State 186302)
298. 4 July 1983: [Confidential, EXDIS] Cable from USDEL SECRETARY Islamabad to SECSTATE, "Secretary's Meeting with Foreign Minister Yaquib Khan, July 2, 1983: Indo-Pak Relations" (Secto 07187)
299. 4 July 1983: [Secret, NODIS] Cable from USDEL SECRETARY Islamabad to SECSTATE, "Secretary's Meeting with Foreign Minister Yaquib Khan, July 2, 1983: Afghanistan" (Secto 7194)
300. 4 July 1983: [Secret] Cable from USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT to WHITE HOUSE, "My Visit to Pakistan. July 2-4, 1983" (Secto 07197)
301. 22 September 1984: [Secret, NODIS] Cable from USUN New York to SECSTATE, "Gromyko-Yaqub Khan Bilateral" (USUN New York 02255)
302. 1 October 1984: [Secret, NODIS] Cable from USDEL SECRETARY New York to SECSTATE, "Pakistan: UNGA Bilateral Memcon"
303. 4 April 1986: [Sensitive] Release of American hostages in Beirut
304. 23 November 1985: Exhibit OLN-326, "Weapons Transfers to Freedom Fighters"
305. June 1986: [Confidential] Memorandum from George P. Schultz to the President: "Your meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo, (July 16, 10:30AM)"
306. June 1986: [Secret] DOS Briefing Memorandum from Richard W. Murphy (NEA) to The Secretary, "Your July 16 Lunch at the Department and you July 17 meeting with Pakistan Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo (Presidential Suite, Madison Hotel. 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.)"
308. 20 November 1986: "US/Iranian Contacts and the American Hostages: Historical Review"
309. March 1987: Cable from JCS, "Impact of the Stinger Missile on Soviet and Resistance Tactics in Afghanistan"
310. 9 October 1987: CIA Directorate of Intelligence Report, "India's Actions and Intentions on Afghanistan"
311. 18 March 1988: CIA Directorate of Intelligence Report, "India's Interests in Afghanistan"
313. 21 November 1988: Directorate of Intelligence Memorandum, "Indian Policy Toward Afghanistan"
314. 25 March 1989: [Confidential] Cable from SECSTATE to AMEMBASSY Kabul: "Situation in Afghanistan"
315. June 1989: "Lessons from the War in Afghanistan"

Secondary Sources
Monographs
Arnold, Anthony, _Afghanistan, the Soviet intervention in perspective_, Stanford, Calif, Hoover Institution Press, 1981.
The Soviet Grand Strategy in Central Asia

Aspaturian, Vernon, et al., The Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan: Three Perspectives, Center for International and Strategic Affairs, University of California, Los Angeles, 1980.


*Civitas Gentium* 2:1 (2012)
Gromov, B. V., Ogranichenny kontingent, Progress/Kultura, Moscow, 1994.
Handel, Michael, Masters of War: Sun Tzu, Clausewitz and Jomini, Frank Cass and Co Ltd., Portland, Oregon, 1992


Lawless, Richard, *Foreign policy issues in the Middle East Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, Morocco*, University of Durham, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies 1985.


Lenin, V. I., *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*; Martin Lawrence, Moscow, 1933.


Tse-tung, Mao, *Strategy in Guerilla Warfare Against Japan*, Selected Military Writings.


*Civitas Gentium* 2:1 (2012)
Articles
Baxter, Craig, “India’s Relations with Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan” in Soviet-American Relations with Pakistan Iran and Afghanistan, Macmillan, Basingstoke, 1986.
Brezhnev, L. I., ‘Delo Lenina Zhivet i Pobezydayt’ [Lenin’s Cause is Alive and is Tri-umphing], Politizdat, Moscow, 1970, p. 21.

Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)


Grinder, Lawrence E. “Avoiding the Burden, the Carter Doctrine in Perspective”, in Air University Review, Jan-Feb 1983.


Hough, Jerry, “The future of Soviet –American relations”, *Current History*, vol. 85, no 513, October 1986, pp.305-8


Jackson, Paul “Warlords as Alternative Forms of Governance”, Small Wars and Insurgencies, vol 14, no 2, Summer 2003, pp 131-150.


Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)


* Civitas Gentium 2:1 (2012)

*Civitas Gentium* 2:1 (2012)


