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Fighting the Mujahideen Lessons from the Soviet Counter- Insurgency Experience in Afghanistan

Tony Balasevicius and Greg Smith

The Canadian Forces currently in Afghanistan as part of a NATO coalition are playing a major role in a counter-insurgency campaign directed against a resurgent Taliban threat. Dealing with this menace will not be easy as the Taliban, realizing they cannot defeat NATO's superior military strength, have resorted to asymmetric actions that strike at the coalition's will through the cumulative effects of terror and small-scale "hit and run" military operations. Although NATO must contend with these tactics, concentrating solely on the military aspects of the problem will not address the real danger.

The true nature of the Taliban's threat rests in its political strength and not in its military capability. In order to destroy the Taliban's influence in the region a combination of political, social, economic, and military means are necessary. The complexities of dealing with these issues in a coherent manner are significant, but in the case of Afghanistan there is no precedent. Interestingly, the Soviets faced many of these same challenges while fighting a counter-insurgency campaign against the Mujahideen through much of the 1980s.¹

The Soviet experience should be of interest to coalition members as it provides a contemporary example of the challenges of conducting counter-insurgency operations within that country. Contrary to popular belief, the Soviets followed a logical and multifaceted, if somewhat brutal, counter-insurgency strategy in Afghanistan. A critical examination of the

Soviet performance reveals that many of their failings can be directly attributed to a lack of resources and in this respect, there are a surprising number of similarities between the operational environment the Soviets faced and the situation that now confronts NATO. This paper will explore aspects of Soviet counter-insurgency operations during their occupation of Afghanistan, and assess strengths and weaknesses relevant to current operations in that country.²

* * * * *

In the most basic terms, an insurgency can be viewed as an uprising against an established form of authority such as a government or occupying military force.³ Brad E. O'Neill defines an insurgency as a "struggle between a non ruling group and the ruling authorities in which the non-ruling group consciously uses political resources (eg. organizational expertise, propaganda and demonstrations) and violence to destroy, reformulate, or sustain the basis of legitimacy of one or more aspects of politics."⁴ In this context, insurgencies are often used by the disaffected who recognize their inability to win against conventional military forces and, therefore, resort to actions that exploit popular grievances and attack the will and motivation of the status quo authority.⁵

Conversely, counter-insurgency operations are carried out by the established authority and seek to destroy the insurgent, in part through political, social, and economic reforms to





A Soviet rifleman in Afghanistan.

alleviate the same grievances the insurgents are attempting to exploit. The established authority must carry out reforms while simultaneously attacking the physical entities of the insurgents' military and political apparatus.⁶ Counter-insurgency forces must be very cautious in their military actions, however, so as to limit collateral damage to the population. That is a very great challenge, as in many instances insurgents attempt to embed themselves within communities. Winning the "hearts and minds" of the populace, therefore, is critical for both the insurgents and the established authority. The cooperation of the population provides the basis for long-term operational sustainment and is a key enabler in developing the other conditions that are an essential precondition for the success of insurgency and counter-insurgency alike.

In order for the established authority to win "hearts and minds" they must first be able to show they can protect the population and defeat the insurgents.⁷ As Lieutenant-Colonel John McCuen points out, "the most important part of a counter-insurgency is having the population organized for its own self-defence...Even in this early phase of the war, organization of local auxiliary police and militia units should be the first priority of the governing authorities."⁸ Establishing a secure environment within Afghanistan was a critical first step for the Soviet counter-insurgency effort, but it proved to be an extremely difficult challenge for them once they entered the country.

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The genesis of Soviet involvement in Afghanistan was the seizure of control in Kabul by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), a Marxist organization, on 27 April 1978. The new government announced a number of broad and ill-conceived reforms that alienated large segments of the population, and then did little to implement these reforms, which also alienated those who might have supported them.⁹ Rebellion broke out in the Nuristan region of eastern Afghanistan and in the following months spread widely. Increasingly, the PDPA relied on Soviet military assistance, and in October 1979 was forced formally to request Soviet intervention.

Although initially hesitant, the Soviets eventually acquiesced and in December 1979 deployed the 40th Army, which consisted of three motorized rifle divisions, an airborne division, an assault brigade, two independent motorized rifle brigades and five separate motorized rifle regiments.¹⁰ The Soviets swiftly and efficiently took control of large population centres and secured key lines of communication,¹¹ but pacification of the rural, warrior society proved far more difficult. Shortly after the invasion, Afghanistan erupted into a popular revolt against the occupying forces. The Soviets were confronted by a number of difficulties, including the formidable geography, a fragmented society that held no allegiance to a central authority, and a force structure that proved ill-suited for counter-insurgency.¹² The most significant problem, however, and one never rectified, was a lack of resources, specifically adequate numbers of "boots on the ground" to establish security.¹³

The Soviets deployed and maintained about 100,000 troops in Afghanistan. According to American intelligence estimates, "An increase of perhaps 100,000 to 150,000 men might [have allowed] the Soviets to clear and hold major cities and large parts of the countryside or block infiltration from Pakistan and Iran, although it probably could not do both.... An even larger reinforcement of 200,000 to 400,000 men probably would [have allowed] Moscow to make serious inroads against the insurgency if the efforts could be sustained."¹⁴ There have been a number of theories put forward as to why the Soviets did not provide sufficient manpower to

meet the needs of the Afghan theatre. According to declassified US military reports, the Soviets believed, “that the primary purpose of [their] intervention of December 1979 was to take over security responsibilities, so that [Afghani] government forces could concentrate on putting down the ever-growing insurgency.”¹⁵ Although, the Soviets may have initially expected the Afghan Army to carry the main burden of the fighting against the insurgents, the idea quickly proved unrealistic, at least in the short term.

Afghan soldiers were of extremely poor quality and in most cases unwilling to fight.¹⁶ Morale in many of the units was so low and desertion to the Mujahideen so common that, by August 1980, the Soviets were forced to remove all anti-armour and anti-aircraft weapons from Afghan units for fear they would fall into the hands of the resistance. The incapacity of the Afghan Army forced the overstretched Soviets to assume additional duties. In so doing the Soviets became the center of gravity for success.¹⁷

Unable readily to improve and expand the Afghan Army, the Soviets focused their efforts on securing their hold on cities and major towns.¹⁸ This was the most logical course, as the Soviets could not realistically regain the initiative until they had secured their own strategic bases. Unfortunately, they never had sufficient resources to move beyond the major cities as almost 85 per cent of the approximately 100,000 troops in theatre were needed for these basic security tasks.¹⁹

The inability to expand control outside the major centres proved costly as more than 80 per cent of the country’s population lived in rural areas and these people were left vulnerable to the Mujahideen’s influence.²⁰ In this respect, a key condition for success in the counter-insurgency effort appears to have been forfeited from the beginning of the campaign. Interestingly, the failure of the Soviets to provide a permanent security infrastructure for the population did not deter them from attempting to persuade

Helicopters were essential to provide the Soviets with mobility in a mountainous country which lacked basic infrastructure.

the people to stop supporting the insurgents. In fact, Soviet methods to win the “hearts and minds,” of the Afghans were quite sophisticated and varied considerably depending on the area they were targeting.

Shortly after the occupation the Soviets introduced a number of reforms that were designed to strengthen the relationship between religion and state. They gave the government in Kabul control of its own finances and this included the distribution of endowments to the country’s mosques. Religious leaders were granted exemption from military service and permitted a gratuity for visits to Mecca. These concessions quickly won over the Afghan mullahs who became an important source of support as they preached that Islam and Marxism sought a common goal and denounced the activities of the resistance fighters.²¹

Other “hearts and minds” initiatives included having the Afghan state press emphasize the government’s intention to respect and observe Islam as a “sacred religion.” In an attempt to showcase Afghan independence the Soviets allowed the use of the traditional Afghan flag, considered land reforms, attempted a rapprochement with its former enemies and released a large number of political prisoners.²²

The Soviets also took a number of steps towards creating a more homogeneous society within Afghanistan by slowly moving the country towards a Marxist philosophy. In this effort the regime in Kabul made extensive changes to the country’s education system. The curriculum was modified to emulate the Soviet model



courtesy of Andrew Godefroy



A portion of a circa-1985 Soviet topographic map of the Kabul region.

in the hope of making the populace more frightened of the security forces than they are of the insurgents.”²⁹ Over the course of the war such measures became a key part of Soviet strategy in areas where the Mujahideen had firmly established their authority. Unable to put sufficient forces into these areas, the Soviets ruthlessly attempted to separate the Mujahideen from the villages. Using Mao’s metaphor that guerrillas are supported by the population the way fish swimming in the sea are supported by the water, the Soviet approach in Afghanistan was to progressively empty the water out of the bowl, thereby killing the fish.³⁰ The Soviets used reprisal attacks and terror causing what has often been referred to as migratory genocide.³¹

This strategy was based on rapid retaliation against any rebel attack on Soviet troops with an overwhelming military response against villages in the immediate area of the assault.³² In certain rural areas where the rebel forces were strong, the Soviets deployed heavy mechanized forces with the simple goal of exterminating the local population.³³ During these operations they destroyed the agricultural system upon which the rural population depended. Irrigation facilities, livestock, orchards, vineyards, water wells and crops were actively targeted with the express purpose of forcing civilians to choose between flight and starvation.³⁴ After one such attack a Swedish official reported: “Russian soldiers shot at anything alive in six villages – people, hens, donkeys – and then they plundered what remained of value.”³⁵

The scope of this effort and the results were staggering. At the end of 1986, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated there were approximately 3.2 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan with a further 50,000 scattered in Europe, India and the United States.³⁶ Towards the end of the war, it was believed that there were upwards of 5 million refugees in Pakistan and India, with a further 2 million rural Afghans seeking refuge in Kabul and other Afghan population centres. In their efforts to eliminate potential bases of support, it is believed that the Soviets killed as much as nine percent of Afghanistan’s pre-invasion population.³⁷



courtesy of Andrew Godefroy

Although extreme, the Soviet emphasis on eliminating bases and logistic support of the Mujahideen through relocation is not surprising.³⁸ Insurgents need a secure place from which to operate and where they can rest, train, organize, draw supplies, and to provide a centre from which to control operations. In fact, the importance of bases and logistic support to the insurgents should make these assets a priority target for counter-insurgent forces.³⁹ As the Soviets were unable to secure control of many villages and thus eliminate their use by the Mujahideen through occupation, they adopted a policy of relocation through destruction. The main difficulty with this policy was that it backfired causing both international indignation and increased local and international support for the Mujahideen.

Significantly for the Soviets, these counterproductive actions did little to address the important problem of eliminating rebel bases. This is because the Mujahideen had established a number of secure bases or sanctuaries along both sides of the Afghan-Pakistani border where they were able to regroup and continue operations.⁴⁰ Understanding the significance of these safe havens the Soviets made concerted efforts to close the border area.⁴¹ Initially, they



Top left: A Russian convoy defends itself against a Mujahideen ambush.



Bottom left: The Soviets achieved greater success in Afghanistan when they employed lighter, better trained and more professional forces, such as the Spetsnaz troops pictured here.

attempted to create government posts along the Afghan-Pakistani border from which they could launch attacks against Mujahideen columns. This proved unsuccessful due to the sheer length of the border, so the Soviets tried financially to co-opt border tribes to harass the Mujahideen bands.⁴² When these efforts failed, the Soviets started to carry out direct actions on both sides of the border. Although initially hesitant to violate Pakistani air space, by 1986 the Soviets had become so desperate they were striking all known rebel bases with air and artillery attacks. It is estimated that 700 air and 150 artillery attacks were carried out inside Pakistan during the latter part of the war.⁴³

In the end all measures to separate the Mujahideen from their sanctuaries failed. Even in 1986, which logistically was the worst year for the Afghan rebels, the Soviets only intercepted a third of supplies crossing the border.⁴⁴ The failure to destroy the sanctuaries allowed the Mujahideen to continue to wear down the Russians' strength with the cumulative effects of hit and run actions. To strike back at the elusive enemy, the Soviets launched large-scale military operations with their mobile reserves on suspected rebel positions.⁴⁵

Employing techniques that the Western media often referred to as "Hammer and

Anvil" operations, the Soviets would establish blocking positions and then conduct massive mechanized sweeps intended to crush any guerrillas that were caught between the two forces. These large-scale operations, using heavy mechanized forces, became a standard counter-insurgency tactic for the Soviets during the early part of the campaign. In the long term, these tactics proved futile largely because of the poor training of the soldiers in these units and the fact that the tactics were totally inappropriate for the conditions in Afghanistan.⁴⁶ Over time, the Soviets realized the limitations of these actions and were able to adapt their organizations and operations accordingly. Moving away from their reliance on motor rifle units they started focusing on lighter, better trained, and more professional soldiers that included airborne, air assault, and special purpose (*spetsnaz*) forces. They also introduced new types of formations including mountain motor rifle battalions, and developed training and tactics that focused specifically on in-theatre operational requirements.⁴⁷

Despite these reforms, which clearly increased operational efficiency, the Soviets were unable to achieve decisive results. These mobile reserves did not operate in conjunction with territorial units, police forces and local militias organized and coordinated to provide an essential security framework. As a result, the Mujahideen were able to maintain their mobility, and Soviet attacks often fell on empty countryside, as the Russians were rarely able to achieve tactical surprise or fix the enemy.⁴⁸

The Mujahideen's control of the population allowed them to develop an extensive network of observers and messengers throughout much of the country and this network maintained an almost continuous watch over Soviet movements.⁴⁹ The Soviets, on the other hand, were forced to rely on technical intelligence provided by such means as aerial reconnaissance and radio interception, and these sources often failed to produce usable tactical information in a timely manner. Moreover, since the ground

forces were always short of combat elements, reconnaissance forces that could have provided the badly needed human intelligence capability that the Soviets lacked, were often tied down in close combat duties.⁵⁰

The Soviets did attempt to disrupt rebel actions and gain information through subversion, carried out by the Soviet intelligence services using Afghan spies and collaborators. Exploiting the fragmented nature of the population, the Soviets were able to persuade some villages to reach a truce and reject rebel demands for logistic support. Such villages were often found near major population centres and would form their own militia groups that protected the village and enforced law and order within the community. In certain cases, rebel groups were bribed into switching allegiances, while tribal chiefs were paid off with land and money to renounce support for the Mujahideen. These techniques of co-opting the population had the effect of creating “a stratum of people in the countryside that have a vested political and economic stake in the system and are likely to defend it.”⁵¹

Subversion was particularly successful when used to spread conflict and division among the various resistance groups. Afghan society, and the rebel groups it produced, were inherently divided.⁵² The Soviets repeatedly attempted to exploit these divisions and turn the groups against each other. Agents were infiltrated into rebel organizations to attempt assassination of leaders, and spread disinformation in an effort to create conflict among bands or to discredit Mujahideen leaders. The fact that the rebels acted independently and did not possess modern means of communication to verify information or resolve differences made this technique all the more effective. One Mujahideen leader stated that “the KHAD (Democratic Republic of Afghanistan’s secret police) agents have rendered mujahed groups completely useless by getting them to fight among themselves.” He added, “Why should the Soviets worry about killing Afghans if the Mujahideen do it for them?”⁵³

The Mujahideen enjoyed substantial international support in the form of funding and weapons. Sophisticated items such as Stinger ground-to-air missile took a heavy toll on Soviet forces.

Despite this success, the Soviet policy of pitting the various Mujahideen bands against each other proved to be of limited value. Subversion tactics were often disrupted by the same weaknesses they were trying to exploit, the fragmented nature of the Afghan people. “At the root of the Soviet difficulties,” noted one military analyst, “military as well as political, lies the fact that Afghanistan is less a nation than an agglomeration of some 25,000 village-states, each of which is largely self-governing and self-sufficient.”⁵⁴ As one scholar put it, “Much has been written about the lack of unity within insurgent ranks, but little note has been taken of the extraordinary difficulties that such disunity poses to the counter-insurgent.”⁵⁵

Overcoming the disunity of the country would have been a key step for the Soviets in winning the counter-insurgency campaign, but the reality on the ground was that they lacked the resources needed even to start the process. As General M.Y. Nawroz and Lieutenant-Colonel L.W. Grau lament in their article “The Soviet War in Afghanistan: History and Harbinger of Future War”:

The Afghanistan War forced the 40th Army to change tactics, equipment, training, and force structure. However, despite these changes, the Soviet Army never had enough forces in Afghanistan to win. Initially, the Soviets had underestimated the strength of their enemy. Logistically, they were hard-pressed to maintain



courtesy of Andrew Godefroy



a larger force and, even if they could have tripled the size of their force, they probably would still have been unable to win.⁵⁶

The direct result of the insufficiency of “boots on the ground” was the Soviets’ inability to establish a permanent presence in the rural areas where the majority of the population lived. This single factor prevented the achievement of the basic security conditions necessary for winning the “hearts and minds” of the people and without this support, defeat was inevitable.



This lesson is the most significant for NATO forces currently in theatre. In a conflict where “boots on the ground” are critical to setting the conditions for success, the coalition has only 40,000 soldiers currently deployed in the country.⁵⁷ This compares to the 100,000 troops the Soviets deployed. To overcome the shortfall of troops NATO will need to train effective Afghan security forces in sufficient numbers to carry out the police and territorial defence tasks needed to establish security throughout the country, as well as providing some type of mobile capability. Doing so could shift the center of gravity for the conduct of operations from NATO to the Afghan government. However, without a significant increase in troop strength, NATO will not have the capacity to establish the conditions necessary to influence the population and if this cannot be achieved the coalition is unlikely to create the operational conditions needed for success in Afghanistan.

Another failure was the Soviets’ inability to cut off the Mujahideen from their supplies, especially along the border areas. This is the same problem currently plaguing NATO forces.



The Soviets staged a well-organized withdrawal from Afghanistan in early 1989 leaving behind a great stock of hardware.

Left and below: Guns lowered, hatches open, Soviet tanks wait for crews that will never return. The Tank Graveyard, a huge locked compound near Kandahar Airfield, is full of deactivated Soviet armoured fighting vehicles, artillery pieces and trucks, all parked in neat rows.

(Canadian Forces Joint Imagery Centre
IS2007-7466 & IS2007-7468)





Unless the Taliban's bases and sanctuaries are identified, attacked, and destroyed they will be able to continue fighting even with significantly reduced numbers. This in turn will allow them to continue striking at NATO forces, eventually wearing down the coalition's resolve through the cumulative effects resulting from long term fighting. As a result, NATO and Afghan national forces must eliminate Taliban bases and sanctuaries, regardless of where they are located. Moreover, destroying a large portion of the Taliban's infrastructure in one hard punch offers the best chance of hurting the Taliban sufficiently to buy the necessary time to get the Afghan national security forces trained, organized and in place for territorial defence missions.

Finally, the Soviets' inability to fix the Mujahideen for decisive battle was due in part to the fact that the Soviets placed far too much emphasis on technical intelligence gathering. The important lesson that should be noted from this failure is that nothing can replace human intelligence in counter-insurgency operations. If NATO is to be successful in destroying the Taliban and other insurgents, they must first be able to find and fix the enemy and to do this they need to have excellent intelligence. To achieve this, a network of informers needs to be established throughout the country to report on insurgent movements, which must be a priority for the coalition's intelligence capabilities.

Despite following a logical, multifaceted counterinsurgency strategy that clearly recognized the tenets for tactical and operational success, the Soviets were hampered throughout their campaign by a lack of resources. In the end, this prevented them from denying the insurgents any of their basic needs. Central to the failure was the Soviets' inability to secure the country, allowing the rebels to operate freely by maintaining bases, mobility, supplies and information. In this respect, the Soviets were unable to influence what increasingly became a hostile population. Unable to sway the rural populations through persuasion, the Soviets turned to conventional military options in an effort to contain the growing resistance. When these methods did not work the Soviets started using terror, which eventually turned the population against them and removed

any trace of legitimacy from their involvement in Afghanistan. Conversely, with the basic conditions for survival in place, the Mujahideen were, despite significant casualties, able to sustain a protracted conflict, eventually forcing the Soviets to withdraw. Can NATO learn from Soviet mistakes?

Notes

1. Mujahideen means "Those who participate in Jihad (Islamic Holy War) - Soldiers of Islam." See <<http://www.rawa.org/glossary.html>> Accessed 21 October 2006.
2. The concept of insurgency is not new to military operations. In fact, insurgencies have been around for almost as long as organized warfare. Examples of such struggles can be found in ancient Egypt and China, while the Roman, Ottoman and Napoleonic empires each had to deal with various types of insurgencies throughout their histories. See Gerard Chaliand, *Guerrilla Strategies: A Historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp.1-7.
3. Land Force Doctrine and Training System (LFDTS), "Canadian Army Counter-Insurgency Operations" (Draft), 2005, Chapter 1, pp.10-14.
4. Bard E. O'Neill, *Insurgency & Terrorism: Inside Modern Revolutionary Warfare* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1990), p.13. Over the past few years' western nations have come to recognize the trans-national nature of modern insurgencies and now refer to insurgency as, "a competition involving at least one non-state movement using means that include violence against an established authority to achieve political change (Definition as developed by a COIN study group during USMC Joint Urban Warrior 2005. Taken from "Canadian Army Counter-Insurgency Operations" (Draft).
5. "Canadian Army Counter-Insurgency Operations," p.11.
6. <http://earthops.org/sovereign/low_intensity/100-20.2.html> accessed 20 October 2006.
7. Julian Paget, *Counter-insurgency Campaigning* (London: Faber and Faber Limited, 1967), p.168.
8. John J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War: The Strategy of Counter-Insurgency* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p.107.
9. Lester W. Grau, *The Soviet-Afghan War: A Superpower Mired In The Mountains* (Foreign Military Studies Office, Fort Leavenworth, KS). This article was previously published in the *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, March 2004, Vol.17, No.1, (March 2004).
10. *Ibid.*
11. Stephen J. Blank, *Afghanistan and Beyond: Reflections on the Future of Warfare* (US Army Strategic Studies Institute, PA, 1993), SSI Special Report), pp.9-10.
12. Ethnic groups in Afghanistan are broken down by percentage as follows: Pashtun 42 percent, Tajik 27 percent, Hazara 9 percent, Uzbek 9 percent, Aimak 4 percent, Turkmen 3 percent, Baloch 2 percent, other





- 4 percent. <<http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/afghanistan/canada.html>> accessed 12 October 2006.
13. Grau.
 14. Defense Intelligence Agency, *The Economic Impact of Soviet Involvement in Afghanistan* (Directorate for Research, DIA Declassification Release, May 1983), p.17.
 15. United States Army, *Lessons from the War in Afghanistan Part 1 Introduction* (National Security Archive: Declassified October 9, 2001), p.22. <<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB57/us.html>> accessed 1 November 2006. The initial Soviet objectives were to control the cities and towns, secure the major lines of communications and train and equip government forces.
 16. General (Ret) M.Y. Nawroz, and LTC (Ret) L.W. Grau. *The Soviet War in Afghanistan: History and Harbinger of Future War?* (Fort Leavenworth: Foreign Military Studies Office), p.2.
 17. Blank, p.21.
 18. E.R. Girardet, "Afghanistan: Eight Years of Soviet Occupation," *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol.88, No.2132 (March 1988), p.2.
 19. Nawroz and Grau, pp.7-9.
 20. Raimo Vayrynen. "Focus on Afghanistan," (*Journal of Peace Research*, Vol.17, No.2, Special Issue on Imperialism and Militarization (1980), pp.93-102.
 21. R. Klass, ed., *Afghanistan: The Great Game Revisited* (London: Freedom House, 1987), p.309. Also see A. Arnold, *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion in Perspective* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1985), p.106.
 22. *Ibid.*, pp.149.
 23. J.B. Amstutz. *Afghanistan: The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation* (Washington: National Defence University, 1986), p.304.
 24. M. Hauner and R.L. Canfield. *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union: Collision and Transformation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989), p.55.
 25. Arnold, p.106.
 26. R.H. Shultz Jr, R.L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr, U. Ra'anan, W.J. Olson and I. Lukes, *Guerrilla Warfare and Counterinsurgency: U.S.-Soviet Policy in the Third World* (Toronto: Lexington, 1989), p.285
 27. *Ibid.*, p.285. As a result, these people found themselves tightly targeted by the more direct and violent Soviet practices, which were based on the premise: "kill one, frighten a thousand."
 28. Paget, p.169. Paget emphasizes that "This is not likely to be an acceptable policy to any western power today, for it is morally unacceptable that any government should try to out do the average insurgent force in terrorism."
 29. Paget, p.169.
 30. Klass, p.174.
 31. T.T. Hammond, *Red Flag Over Afghanistan: The Communist Coup, the Soviet Invasion, and the Consequences* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), p.161.
 32. Klass, p.341.
 33. Amstutz, p.145.
 34. Quoted in J. Laber and B.R. Rubin. *A Nation is Dying*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988), p.62. The significance of these attacks was not lost on villagers: "The irrigation system was built through generations to make this landscape fitted for men to live in."
 35. Amstutz, p.145.
 36. Klass, p.91.
 37. *Ibid.*, p.173.
 38. Klass, p.343.
 39. Paget, p.170.
 40. Girardet. "Afghanistan: Eight Years of Soviet Occupation," p.37. Also see *Lessons from the War in Afghanistan*, p.6.
 41. *Ibid.*, p.37. The attempt was complicated by the extremely long and rugged nature of the border between these two countries – over 1,400 miles with approximately 320 mountain passes
 42. Klass, p.180.
 43. *Ibid.*, p.181.
 44. O. Roy, *The Adelphi Papers: Lessons of the Soviet/Afghan War* (London: Brassey's, 1991), p.22. Also see F. Freistetter, "The Battle in Afghanistan: A View from Europe," *Strategic Review*, Vol.IX, No.1 (Winter 1981), p.41.
 45. This was about 15 percent of their force or 15,000 to 20,000 troops. If they used more they would have to take them from security duties in quiet areas.
 46. Shultz, p.345
 47. Nawroz, and Grau, p.9.
 48. Arnold, p.100. In fact, by 1984, Soviet casualties were as high as 30,000 with a \$12 billion price tag and the loss of 536 aircraft, 304 tanks, 436 APCs and 2,758 other vehicles.
 49. Nawroz, p.10.
 50. *Ibid.*, p.10.
 51. Alex Alexiev, *The United States and the War in Afghanistan* (Santa Monica: Rand, 1988), p.4.
 52. E.R. Girardet, *Afghanistan: The Soviet War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), p.36.
 53. *Ibid.*, p.129.
 54. Arnold, p.97.
 55. Shultz, p.164.
 56. Nawroz, p.8.
 57. And even with this small number, national caveats prevent many of the troops deployed to Afghanistan to be used in hot spots, such as Kandahar where they are really needed.

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