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Determinants of Pakistan's Policy towards Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan

Manzoor Ahmad Naazer**Assistant Professor, Department of Politics & International Relations, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan.***Corresponding Author Email ID: manzoor.ahmad@iiu.edu.pk*

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the factors that influenced Pakistani policy in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. This development had far-reaching implications for the entire region, and more so for Pakistan. Pakistan was already facing an existential threat from a hostile India on its eastern border. With Soviet forces on its western border, this threat has increased manifold. Both India and the Soviet Union were strategic allies and had already played a key role in the disintegration of Pakistan in 1971 besides sponsoring various separatist movements in West Pakistan since the inception of the country in 1947. Soviet military intervention was viewed as a grave threat to national security and the territorial integrity of Pakistan. This paper also explores the causes of Soviet interventions in Afghanistan. According to the study, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was a continuation of the Soviet expansionist course that saw it annex Central Asian Khanates in the nineteenth century. It could also help realize long Russian desire to access to the warm water. Apparently, it seemed that Pakistan would be a logical next target of expansionist Russia, and several factors made the former vulnerable to Soviet designs. The study uses both historical and analytical methods. Most of the information comes from secondary sources like books and articles, which are looked at using the thematic analysis method.

Keywords: Pakistan, Afghanistan, Policy; Soviet Union, Security threats, Expansionism, Intervention, Warm water.

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan's Afghan policy after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 was not a simple reaction to that event. The Soviet action had far-reaching repercussions for Pakistan as well as for the region. Neither Pakistan's reply to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan nor the Soviet decision to send its troops to a small neighboring country could be seen while separating it from changing regional as well as international scenarios. It also could not be seen without taking into consideration the historical background of the events that had led to the destabilization of Southwest Asia.

The presence of Soviet troops on Pakistan's western borders was viewed as a grave threat to Pakistan's security by the Pakistani leadership. Keeping in mind the history of Soviet expansionism in Central Asia and occupation of Afghanistan, its consistent support to successive Afghan governments in their anti-Pakistan

policies, especially promoting the Pakhtunistan issue and helping anti-state elements in Baluchistan, Soviet support to India in the United Nations Organization (UNO) and other forums against Pakistan's position on Kashmir, and its role in the breakup of Pakistan, in 1971, and; deep-rooted animosity from India; feared security threat on both of its eastern and western borders.

The paper makes a retrospective analysis of the factors and forces that caused Soviet intervention in its small, neighboring, non-aligned, but friendly country. It also delves into factors or determinants that shaped Pakistan policy and the nature of the response to the Soviet occupation of a brotherly Muslim state on its western border. The study shows how the Soviet military presence on the other side of the border changed the way decisions were made about Pakistan's security and national integrity. The study uses historical and analytical methods, and most of its information comes from secondary sources like books, articles, and so on.

SOVIET INTERVENTION IN AFGHANISTAN

Before going into the details of Pakistan's response to Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan, it is imperative to know the circumstances in which Pakistan decided the policy and the considerations it took before reaching the decision. For an understanding of Pakistan's Afghan policy after Soviet intervention, it is necessary to view it in the perspective of the developments (Shahi, 1988: 4). Even the Sour Revolution does not provide a satisfactory explanation for the problem because it was the culmination of a long process that was motivated by the historical, political, economic, and strategic motives of a superpower. The Sour Revolution was an ultimate result of the big investment made by the Soviet Union (Rais, 1994: 2) in the past few decades and could be described as the "climax of its political and economic penetration" in Afghanistan (Yousaf & Adkin, 2002: 26). Because of this, it's important to know how the Soviet Union got into Afghanistan through political, economic, ideological, and, finally, strategic means.

PRELUDE TO INTERVENTION: SOVIET PENETRATION IN AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan became a sovereign country on August 19, 1919, with only Muslim members of the League of Nations (Rubin, 1996: 54). The Soviet Union recognized Afghanistan's independence, while Amir Amanullah had sent his "greetings" to the Bolshevik Revolution. Later he sent his envoy to Moscow to meet Lenin (Ghaus, 1988: 31-3). Afghanistan was trying to keep its relationships with its two big neighbors, the Soviet Union and Britain, even and fair. This meant that it had to keep close ties with its northern neighbor. In September 1921, both countries signed a border treaty. Russia also promised Afghanistan to give it a yearly subsidy (Ghaus, 1988: 39).

Political Penetration

Russian penetration in Afghanistan under the pretext of signing various agreements and offering aid started in the 1920s. Both countries signed a treaty on neutrality and non-aggression in 1926, an airline agreement in 1927, and a treaty of friendship and non-aggression in 1931 (Ghaus, 1988: 44-50). While an arrangement for cooperation in locust eradication in the frontier region was signed during 1935, a Commerce Treaty permitting Afghan transit trade through Russia was signed in 1936, and the Soviet-Afghan Pact on neutrality and non-aggression was also extended in 1936 for another ten

years' term, while a mutually advantageous commercial agreement was signed in 1940. After the creation of Pakistan and Afghanistan's stand over Pakhtunistan and the Durand Line, and consequently its tense relations Islamabad and Afghanistan relations with the Soviet Union, particularly for the modernization of its armed forces. The goal of getting closer to Moscow was also "to stop threats from the north" (Ghaus, 1988: 56-66).

When Premier Daoud (1953-1963) initiated bilateral cooperation in the 1950s, Soviet penetration in the Afghan state was obvious (Rais, 1994: 187). He, after his appointment as prime minister of the country, decided to seek Soviet support and assistance to meet Afghan requirements. Henceforth, Soviet aid in economic and military fields started coming into Afghanistan, although most Afghans were aware of the dangers of Russian involvement in Afghanistan (Ghaus, 1988: 79). Particularly, Islamists were antagonized by the growing Soviet influence in Afghanistan (Rais, 1994: 187). For example, Mujaddidi and a few others were put in jail in the late 1950s because they "preached" against the growing ties between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. When they were released after Daoud's resignation, Mujaddidi again spoke out against the threat of communism and continued Soviet penetration in Afghanistan (Rubin, 1996: 109).

In the 1950s, Afghan leadership conveyed to the US some sort of threat from the Soviet Union. During a meeting with the American ambassador in October 1954, the then-Afghan foreign minister, Naim Khan, reportedly requested that the US play an active role and provide support for Afghanistan's merger with Pakistan in a confederation to secure the country from the Soviet threat. Consequently, the US National Security Council, in its meeting held on December 9, 1954, discussed at length the possibility of creating a federation or confederation of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Earlier, both Pakistan and Afghanistan had secretly discussed the proposal for about a year, though both governments had denied such reports. Reportedly, Pakistan's leadership was apprehensive of the proposal (Naazer, 2020: 171-72; Kent, 1954; US State Department, 1983).

Moscow exploited Afghanistan's tense relations with Pakistan to its own advantage and expanded its influence in the country. Soviet leaders openly expressed their support for the Afghan position over the Durand Line and Pakhtunistan. The Soviet Union grasped the opportunity to penetrate and cultivate its influence over Afghanistan

while supporting Afghanistan's claims on the Durand Line and Pakhtunistan (Rais, 1994: 71).

Economic Penetration

Soviet penetration in Afghanistan was multidimensional, but Afghan dependency on foreign powers for financial aid to meet its domestic requirements made it more vulnerable to Soviet penetration. Previously, Afghan rulers received an annual subsidy from British India while abandoning their sovereignty over Afghanistan's external affairs. It had lost British support when it announced its independence in the 1920s, and it had to look toward the north for economic assistance.

In 1921, the Soviet Union paid half a million rubles, the first payment of the annual subsidy of one million rubles (Ghaus, 1988: 42). Afghanistan continued receiving this subsidy in subsequent years. Due to high tension between Pakistan and Afghanistan in the mid-1950s, during Daoud's premiership, Pakistan blocked Afghan transit trade through its land, and Kabul had to carry it out through the Soviet Union, increasing its dependency on "big brother" (Ghaus, 1988: 83). Soviet leaders visited Afghanistan in late 1955, resulting in much closer relations between the two countries. Russians were also involved in different economic projects, including the construction of dams and roads, exploring oil and other natural resources, providing equipment, and training young Afghan army officers and pilots. Moscow extended full support to Afghanistan in economic and military fields, and its stand on Pakhtunistan drew it more into Soviet influence (Ghaus, 1988: 85). Moscow became a major aid giver to Afghanistan, sponsoring the recruitment and equipment of one hundred thousand men in the Afghan army. From 1955 to 1978, the Soviet Union provided \$1.27 billion in economic aid to Afghanistan, as well as roughly \$1.25 billion in military aid, while the United States provided only \$533 million in economic aid (Rubin, 1996: 20).

Ideological Penetration

Moscow also invested heavily in ideological penetration in Afghanistan to broaden its influence in the country. The origin of leftist activities in Afghanistan can be traced back to 1947 with the creation of the society Wikh-e-Zalmayan (Awakened Youth) (Ghaus, 1988: 28). The parliamentary elections of 1949 brought a large group of leftist-leaning activists to the parliament (Rais,

1994: 28). But in the subsequent years, the role of leftists was not noteworthy until the mid-1960s. The liberal political period gave an opportunity to leftists to launch their party when, on January 1, 1965, descendants of Wikh-e-Zalmayan formed the Peoples' Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), headed by Noor Muhammad Taraki. But in 1967, the PDPA split into two factions, *Parcham* and *Khalq*, headed by Babrak Karmal and Taraki, respectively (Rubin, 1996: 82). *Parchamis* were closest to army officers and had direct links with Daoud; they supported him in his coup in 1973 (Rubin, 1996: 93). Karmal helped Daoud because he wanted to move up in the political world and get more political support (Rais, 1994: 38).

In 1975 and 1976, when Daoud kicked *Parchamis* out of the government, Moscow decided to expand its options and focus on PDPA to gain political power in Afghanistan. During the cold war until the 1970s (mainly the Khrushchev period), Moscow preferred Afghan neutrality and extended support to nationalists who pursued "non-capitalism" (a protectionist and static path of development) and took an anti-Western stance. But in the 1970s, Soviet leaders changed their policy towards the Third World due to opportunistic and ideological reasons. The fact that Sadat kicked out Soviet advisors from Egypt and that Sukarno was overthrown in Indonesia made the Soviet leadership realize that alliances with non-communist nationalists were neither stable nor reliable. Moreover, the victories of Soviet-supported Marxist-Leninists in Vietnam, Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen, and Mozambique gave credence to the idea that regimes led by Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties were more trustworthy. As a result, the Soviet Union's Socialist Party (CPSU) proposed and Moscow pressed communists in India and Pakistan to join the PDPA (Rubin, 1996: 82-99). Moscow, through exerting "director pressure" and persuasion by the Indian and Iraqi Communist Parties and Ajmal Khatak of Pakistan, succeeded in reuniting the PDPA in July 1977 (Ghaus, 1988: 82, 193). Sooner, PDPA's secret members in the army were planning against Daoud, and he was, consequently, overthrown and killed in 1978 by those who had helped him ascend to power. So, the newly formed Taraki government said that the coup was a continuation of the "Good October Bolshevik Revolution" of 1917 (Shahi, 1988: 4).

Military Penetration

Moscow invested heavily in the Afghan military for future designs and began its penetration into its armed forces in the 1950s through training and the supply of military equipment. The Soviet Union was a major donor to Afghanistan from 1955 to 1978, sponsoring the recruitment and equipping of a hundred thousand men's army and providing \$1.27 billion in economic and military aid. As Rubin noted, the roads and bridges built by the Soviets were wide and heavy enough to withstand Soviet military traffic, and these roads and airports made the Soviet invasion in 1979 possible (1996: 20, 66).

Ghaus claims that a Russian expert working in Afghanistan in 1950 confided to an American in Kabul that the increasing supply and communication facilities financed by Russia would be useful to Soviet armies when they would march southward. The military action that brought Daoud to power as President was planned and engineered by a small group of military officers who were secret members of the *Parcham* faction of the PDPA and led by those who were trained in the Soviet Union. Daoud was aware of and worried about systematic Soviet penetration in the armed forces, which he had witnessed during his coup with the support of leftist army officers (Ghaus, 1988: 160, 196). While leftist Army officers plotted to overthrow Daoud in 1975, after which Daoud decided to purge the army of them (Rais, 1994: 37-9). But, once again, it was Soviet-trained army officers who overthrew Daoud's government in 1978.

SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHAN POLITICS AND ASSASSINATION OF NATIONAL LEADERS

Despite good neighborly relations between the two countries, the Soviet Union could not refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. For instance, it more than once objected to the presence of Western experts particularly involved in various projects in northern Afghanistan (Rais, 1994: 75). Moscow encouraged Afghan opposition to Pakistan in the 1950s with Daoud in power, which suited its interest in furtherance of its goals in the region. But he had to resign in 1963, after which Pak-Afghan relations became calm and normal. During Pakistan's wars with India in 1965 and 1971, Afghanistan posed no threat to Pakistan and even assured Pakistan about its complete neutrality during these wars. While Moscow openly supported India, particularly in the 1971 war, and played a vital role in the disintegration of East Pakistan (Malik, 1990: 179).

During this time, Afghanistan's policy toward Pakistan was less hostile than it was under Daoud, which was not good for Soviet interests in the area.

During the Indo-Pakistan conflict in 1971, Moscow attempted but failed to persuade Zahir Shah to apply pressure on Pakistan from the western border. Reportedly, the Soviet Union exerted pressure on King Zahir Shah during his visit to Moscow to "follow a more pro-Indian policy," which he did not accept (Jillani, 1993: 38). Probably, this displeasure on the part of Moscow became one of the factors that caused the overthrow of King Zahir in a coup carried out by Russian-trained military officers (Naazer, 2019: 31). The coup brought Daoud Khan into power, who initially pursued a policy of confrontation towards Pakistan. However, in due course of time, he strove to move Afghanistan away from Russian influence and mend relations with Pakistan as well as normalize ties with other Muslim states. It antagonized the Soviet leadership, which expressed open disapproval of Daoud policies. So, leftists in the Afghan army who were backed by Russia and worked with the PDPA killed Daoud Khan in a bloody coup (Pande, 2011: 72; Chaudhri, 2014:145-151; Hyman, 1992: 75-98).

The Russian role in the 1973 coup is not clear, but some events indicate its involvement in its happening. The military action that brought Daoud into power as President was planned and engineered by a small group of military officers and mainly implemented by army officers trained in the Soviet Union (Rais 1994, 37). Reportedly, the central committee formed by Daoud after his coup and declaring Afghanistan a republic was overwhelmingly represented by leftists, both from the military and civil, who had assisted him in his coup d'état. The Soviet leadership was kept informed of the preparation and launch of the coup by at least some of the communist participants "as part of their unquestionable allegiance to Moscow." The Soviet Union welcomed Daoud's coming into power because of a coup in 1973, and it was the first country to recognize the new regime. Even Russia's ambassador to Kabul told Afghan leaders that the Kremlin was "quite happy about the change of regime in Kabul." Russia hoped the return of Daoud in power, surrounded by pro-Russian Marxist groups, would be a "significant step" in the furtherance of Soviet interests in the region (Malik, 1990: 159). Reportedly, Anwar Sadat, the then Egyptian President, told Daoud in a meeting that Soviets had become virtual rulers of Egypt in the early 1970s, "dictating their will to

the military and civilians alike" (Malik, 1990: 152). Daoud, who had experienced the same Russian involvement in Afghanistan's internal as well as external affairs, decided to decrease Soviet influence in his country. He started reorientation in domestic as well as external policies to reduce Soviet influence in Afghanistan, but in this way, he also earned animosity both from communists in Afghanistan and their Soviet patrons. Daoud sought to reorient country's foreign policy and decrease dependence on Moscow. He signed an agreement with Iran for economic aid and sought help from Egypt and India for training military personnel to lessen dependence on SU (Rubin, 1996: 74). He also planned to go to the United States, where he would stress genuine non-alignment and criticize Cuba and Ethiopia for not following NAM principles. He wanted to patch up its differences with Pakistan and come closer to the Islamic world. He also secretly agreed to expel Baluch guerillas from the country. They had been using Afghan territory as a sanctuary to conduct terrorist activities in Pakistan since 1973 (Rais, 1994: 42.3). Daoud told Pakistani leaders that the Soviets didn't like his new policy, especially when it came to Pakistan (Ghaus, 1988: 127-42). He was planning to purge the armed forces from communist influence and to ask Russia to reduce their diplomatic staff, which was increasingly involved in non-diplomatic and objectionable activities (Ghaus, 1988: 163-81). The way Daoud tried to get Parchamis out of the government and increase Iranian influence made the Soviets suspicious, so Moscow was "not sure about Daoud" (Rais, 1994: 43-44). Fearful of Daoud bringing "external influence" into Afghanistan, which could result in its expulsion from Afghanistan, the Soviet Union seriously contemplated using PDPA as an alternative to Daoud (Rais, 1994: 45-6). Russia had become increasingly disturbed by the "emergence of new and expanded ties" between Afghanistan and the Islamic countries because this situation could lessen Afghanistan's dependence on the Soviet Union and consequently its leverage and influence over it. Ghaus witnessed a final blow in Daoud-Brezhnev relations as a member of the Daoud delegation and Deputy Foreign Minister during his visit to Moscow in April 1977 (Ghaus, 1988: 173-179). Daoud's encounter with Brezhnev in this meeting was crucial in the coup against him. It was the main cause due to which Russian had played central role in unification of PDPA (Rais, 1994: 43-44). Pro-Russian Army officers were planning a coup against

Daoud in 1977 and finally succeeded in toppling him in April 1978 (Rubin, 1996: 109). Soviet military advisors in Afghanistan played a key role in bringing about the so-called Saur Revolution. Reportedly, the coup against Daoud was a result of Russian planning and support. It was widely speculated that the "Moscow incident" had marked the beginning of the end for Daoud (Ghaus, 1988: 180-200). Ghaus, citing several eyewitnesses, said that Soviet military advisors fought against the regime's loyal forces when communists tried to overthrow Daoud. He also said that Soviet MiGs flying out of Tashkent gave air cover to rebels and helped them do "precision bombing" of the Presidential palace, where Daoud and his family were being held hostage.

The Soviet interest in removing Daoud was evidenced by several incidents. It could be seen in Brezhnev's public dislike of Daoud's domestic and foreign policies, Moscow's secret ties to the Marxists who overthrew Daoud, and Moscow's immediate help and cooperation in stabilizing the new regime in Kabul, which led to it getting more involved in Afghanistan's internal affairs. Rais said that Moscow became more involved in Afghan politics after the Saur Revolution because the regime became more dependent on Russia for its survival (1994, 10-46).

Several leftists, Soviet-trained Afghan military officers played a vital role in coups in 1973 and 1978. These included Muhammad Aslam Watanyar, Tank Officer Abdul Qadir, and Air Force Officer Pacha Gul Wafadar. The Soviet involvement in these events and the affiliation of these officers with Moscow can be understood by the fact that all three of them were made ministers in successive governments in Kabul during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (Rubin, 1996: 286-294).

The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan's internal political affairs and assassination of that country's national leaders continued. For instance, when Soviet leadership saw that Amin had lost his "credibility" for reconciliation among the PDPA and the success of the revolution, they decided to remove him. Amin was not trusted by Brezhnev, who in the latter's view could cause turmoil, spark a revolution, or move towards the USA, China, or Pakistan. Thus, Moscow decided to replace him with the Taraki-Karmal alliance, but this attempt was failed, and Taraki was brutally killed despite Moscow's request to save his life. Brezhnev took Amin's refusal to save Taraki's life as a personal insult. After taking all these considerations into account, the Soviet leadership

decided to install a more reliable ally in Afghanistan, and this time with direct Soviet military support (Rais, 1994: 11, 76). Moscow, thus, sent troops into Afghanistan to install a more "pliable" government and assert more direct control over Afghanistan. The plan to force Amin to hand over power peacefully to Karmal, a Soviet-approved leader, could not succeed, and a KGB unit attacked Amin's palace and killed him (Rubin, 1994: 109-11).

Causes for Soviet Military Intervention

Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan was influenced by pragmatic, conventional, political, and security interests. There were strong social credentials, including an Islamic orientation that was against socialist ideas and against Soviet influence that threatened Russian interests in Afghanistan. Also, Brezhnev didn't trust Amin, who could cause chaos that could lead to a revolution or move toward the U.S., China, or Pakistan. Moscow had exhausted all political means to stabilize the Marxist regime in Kabul. For Moscow's future role in south-west Asia, it was important that Afghanistan should remain a dependent and client socialist state (Rais, 1994: 76-78). Before, Daoud was worried that the Soviet Union would take direct control of Afghanistan to stop the US from putting troops in Iran, which is close to the Soviet border. Ghaus claims that the Soviet ambassador to Afghanistan had expressed Soviet concerns to him over developments in Iran and hinted that it would be difficult for Moscow to remain indifferent should the problem in Iran "acquire an international dimension" (1988: 150-51).

According to Rais, the Soviet Union had three important regional interests that motivated its interference in Afghanistan. These included countering the rising power of Islamic movements in the region, which could pose a political threat to its Central Asian Republics (CARs); ensuring stability in bordering areas; and demonstrating its ability to intervene militarily to defend its allies in the region. Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was also inspired by the Brezhnev Doctrine, according to which protection of socialist order was an international duty of all socialist states, which were, in fact, under the Soviet hegemonic umbrella (1994: 73). Reports say that Soviet leaders, academics, and intellectuals tried to explain why the Soviet Union got involved in Afghanistan by saying that Moscow responded to an invitation from the "legitimate" Afghan government under the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, which was signed in December

1878, and that it was an international duty to help a friendly (socialist) regime that was having trouble consolidating its revolution (Rais, 1994: 74-75). However, of more immediate interest, which guided the Soviet move, was the internal dynamics of Afghan politics, which included the lack of credibility for Amin in achieving reconciliation among the PDPA (Rais, 1994: 11). Also, Leonid Brezhnev sent the Red Army to Afghanistan at the end of 1979 because he was worried about the growing chaos there and worried that the US might try to make up in Afghanistan for what it lost during the Iranian Revolution in early 1979.

Soviet Expansionism

The global concern regarding Soviet intervention had its background in Imperial Russia's southward expansion in Central Asia, which had been taking place for more than a century. Russian imperial expansionism in the Caucasus and Central Asia in the later 19th century took place on the pretext of its "security" and the need to "civilize" the "barbaric" people on the periphery of the Czarist Empire. Within half a century, the Khanates of Central Asia, which were already split up, weak, and vulnerable, fell under Russian control (Rais, 1994: 69). Azerbaijan was taken over in 1813, the Kaakh Steppe in 1824, Tashkent (Uzbekistan) in 1865, Bukhara in 1868, Khiva in 1873, Goek-Teppe in 1881, Merv in 1884, and some Pamir territory in 1895 (Malik, 1990: 10). By 1878, the Russia had absorbed or vassalized most of the independent or semi-independent principalities of Central Asia, and its influence extended to the Oxus River. At the time of the second Anglo-Afghan war, the Russians had advanced their forces to Arkhal Oasis in June 1879 (Ghaus, 1988: 5-8).

Afghanistan As a Buffer State

British response to Russian threat was to pursue "forward defense policy" which ultimately resulted in famous "great game." The British Indian Empire had to fight two costly wars against Afghanistan, the first in 1839-42 and the second in 1878-80. However, the result of the Russo-British rivalry ended with the declaration of Afghanistan as a neutral or buffer state in the 19th century (Rais, 1994: 70). Thus, British-made India is secure against Russian expansionism behind a formidable barrier in the buffer state of Afghanistan. It was presumed that the Great Game in Central Asia had come to an end. Later, American containment policy in

Southwest Asia and South Asia was conceived to mirror earlier British policy of preventing the Soviet Union from entering the region forcibly (Malik, 1990: 115).

Ghaus said that every Afghan leader had been afraid of Russian expansionism and the threat it posed to their home country. For instance, he noted, Amir Abdur Rehman Khan was more fearful of Russia than Britain and saw the "Russian advance as one of accretion and incorporation, in the manner of an elephant... who examines a spot thoroughly before he places his foot upon it, and once he places his foot there, there is no going back" (Ghaus, 1988: 9–12). Even Amir Amanullah did not feel his country secure from Russia, which believed that even Afghanistan was not, but India was certainly a prime target for Soviet expansionism. Ghaus said that when he met Daoud a few days after he became President again, Daoud shared the Afghans' suspicions about the Soviets and firmly believed that the Soviets' main goal was to get access to the Indian Ocean (Ghaus, 1988: 40, 160).

Russian Quest for Warm Waters

In the 19th century, Russia had attached great importance to its access to the Indian Ocean for its colonial expansion. The Russian quest for warm waters can be traced back to Czarist Russia, which sought to extend Russian territorial dominance into northern Southwest Asia. However, despite various plans and cooperation with France, Russia thought this adventure was risky and infeasible. After the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, Soviet leaders continued to entertain the Czarist desire to expand their territorial control over the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean (Rais, 1994: 68). Ziring said that "Russian expansionism toward the Indian Ocean could not be explained as a defensive policy" (Malik, 1990: 115).

In fact, Soviet leaders, instead of repudiating Czarist expansionism, stepped up Russian expansionism. For instance, in June 1930, a Russian force entered Afghanistan from Turkestan, crossing the Oxus River (Amu Durya), on the pretext of capturing Abraham Beg, one of the last Central Asian Muslim leaders and adherent of Bacha Sacao. However, the Soviets had to withdraw after strong protests from Afghanistan. In 1937, Afghan rulers perceived threats arising out of the Moscow-Berlin axis that could destroy the country. Afghanistan communicated its concern to Britain, which considered the possibility of concluding a mutual

assistance agreement with Afghanistan that could enable it to help Afghanistan in case of a possible Soviet aggression (Ghaus, 1988: 50–58). Meanwhile, during Russo-German negotiations in 1940, both sides discussed the Russian southward expansion through Afghanistan to India and the Persian Gulf. Reportedly, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov had intimated to Germans that "the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of the Persian Gulf is recognized as the center of the aspirations of the Soviet Union" (Ghaus 1988, 61). However, Germany's attack on Russia in June 1941 diverted Moscow's attention and frustrated its expansionist designs toward the South. Later, after World War II, the Soviet Union sought to perpetuate its control over Northern Iran, but it was repelled (Amin 1994, 83). Scholars like Goodman agree that getting access to the region's oil resources has always been one of the most important factors in Soviet foreign policy decisions (Malik 1990, 22).

Socialist Transformation of the World

As Ghaus asserted, after the Bolshevik Revolution, Soviet leaders had their principal goal in Asia "to export, under the guise of nationalism, their revolution to India by aiding and abetting Indian revolutionaries, some of whom had already established close ties with Bolshevik authorities" (Ghaus 1988). Rais noted that Soviet expansionism in the form of ideological influence, political control, and military presence was the central dynamic of the Soviet system. Moscow asserted its desire to achieve its goal of world socialist transformation through class wars and national and socialist movements throughout the world. Therefore, Moscow had invested heavily in the socialist transformation of Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Angola, and South Yemen (Rais, 1994: 67). Obviously for the same reasons, the Taraki government had pronounced the coup as a "continuation" of the "Good October Bolshevik Revolution" of 1917 (Shahi, 1998: 4). In the post-war era, the Soviet Union was able to install puppet regimes in Eastern Europe, Mongolia, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, South Yemen, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Nicaragua. Therefore, the happenings in Afghanistan were not taken as an isolated event and, thus, were viewed as a part of a chain of Soviet-inspired Communist takeovers of one country after another. Due to geographical proximity, it was feared that Afghanistan could even be annexed to Russia, which was looked at as a potential 16th republic

of the former Soviet Union (Amin, 2000: 84-5). The Soviet strategy of pacifying and Sovietizing Afghanistan was analogous to the similar pattern of institutionalization of Central Asia in the past. Reportedly, new Afghan cadres were trained and indoctrinated in the Soviet Union to take over the administrative apparatus in the future. Meanwhile, Afghanistan was being Sovietized and was being pushed through the state of national democratic revolution towards socialist transformation (Shahi, 1988: 58).

Collapse of Security Arrangements

The security arrangements for the defense of the Indian subcontinent by neutralizing Afghanistan had eroded in the post-war era, particularly with British withdrawal from the subcontinent (Rais, 1994: 71). Although the United States had announced a policy of containment and made security arrangements like the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO), the Baghdad Pact, or the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), which were meant to deter Soviet expansionism in the region, it had not included Afghanistan in these security arrangements due to certain reasons. At the same time, the Soviets saw signs of American weakness, so they took the chance to move forward with their long-held goals in the area.

Moscow's military power and ability to project power around the world had grown following the Cuban crisis in 1962. Americans' defeat in Vietnam deepened their view that socialist countries were stronger than the capitalist world. These developments inspired a coup against Daoud and then the use of Soviet military power in Afghanistan (Rubin, 1996: 99). Soviet victories in Hungary (1956) and Czechoslovakia (1968) diverted people's attention from its internal problems. Crises emerging from the Iranian revolution coincided with the intensification of civil war in Afghanistan and the political isolation of the Zia regime after the hanging of Bhutto (Rais 1994, 67, 87). In this scenario, the Soviet Union did not fear any countermove by the US, whose security arrangements had collapsed after the Iranian Revolution. So, Soviet leaders "evaluated risks and opportunities" and decided to use military force in Afghanistan (Rais, 1994: 11, 81).

According to reports, 85,000 Soviet troops were stationed in Afghanistan, with another 30,000 stationed just across the Oxus River (Amu Darya) within the Soviet Union (Yousaf & Adkin 2002, 44). The Soviet military presence in Afghanistan had provided the former a

considerable advantage of geographical proximity, which could have been a strategic asset had it succeeded in stabilizing Afghanistan and consolidating its military position (Rais 1994, 69-71). A Soviet strategy of pacifying and Sovietizing Afghanistan could have replicated the history of Central Asia. Therefore, the Russian move into Afghanistan was viewed as a part of a pre-planned strategy to reach the warm waters and to control the energy resources of the Gulf. Political leaders and analysts thought it was a big threat to the security of the area, especially Pakistan.

PAKISTAN'S RESPONSE TO THE SOVIET OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN

To understand how Pakistan reacted to the Soviets getting involved, one must look at what happened after the Sour Revolution. Pakistan considered it an internal Afghan affair and gave recognition to the Taraki government. While the Taraki government pronounced it a continuation of the "Good October Bolshevik Revolution" of 1917. The new regime started propaganda against Pakistan on the Pakhtunistan issue, which gathered force and volume from the very first day of the coup. President Zia's visit to Kabul to induce Taraki and Amin to discuss the problem failed. The said problem had already been brought within reach of a settlement through negotiations with President Daoud before he was overthrown. Taraki met President Zia at the Havana Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in September 1979 and decided to continue talks to bring an end to this long problem. Later, he was killed due to differences within PDPA. When Amin, Taraki's successor, became suspicious about the Soviet Union, he tried to improve relations with Pakistan and sent messages to Pakistan's leadership in this regard. For this purpose, Pakistan's Foreign Minister was due in Kabul on December 22 to prepare the ground for a meeting between heads of both states. On the other hand, Soviet troops had been massed on the Afghan border for the preceding weeks (Shahi, 1988: 4-5). On December 28th, 1979, Soviet Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. S. Azimov, called on President Zia and conveyed an "important message" from Moscow. The message was about sending Soviet troops to Afghanistan for a "limited" period on the invitation of Babrak Karmal. Shahi asserted that only Amin, as the head of state and government and President of the Revolutionary Council, had the authority to invite Russian forces into Afghanistan. Logically, it was

concluded that Amin was opposed to the entry of Russian troops, during which Amin was killed by the Soviet forces. On the other hand, Babrak Karmal was in Moscow-protected exile when there was a coup against Amin, so he didn't have the right to invite Soviet troops (Shahi, 1988: 6).

Pakistan's Threat Perception

Pakistan's response to Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, observed Shahi, was not dictated by considerations of legality alone, but it also had implications for Pakistan's own security in the near and foreseeable future. Pakistan had to investigate the history of Pak-Soviet relations as well as Soviet interests and intentions in the region (1988: 7).

History of Pakistan-Soviet Relations

The relationship between Pakistan and the Soviet Union has not been exemplary. As Malik noted, Moscow had adopted a very cautious policy towards Pakistan in the beginning. Moscow also remained neutral at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) when resolutions were passed on the Kashmir problem. It continued this policy until the mid-1950s, when Pakistan joined SEATO and CENTO for its own security concerns, mainly threats emanating from India, not the Soviet Union. But these security measures were really meant for Moscow, which changed the way the Soviet Union treated Pakistan, sided with India at the UN Security Council, and blocked resolutions on the Kashmir issue. Meanwhile, it also encouraged Afghanistan on the Durand Line and Pakhtunistan issues and started openly supporting Afghan claims on these two points (Malik, 1990: 162-168). Meanwhile, due to the U-2 incident, relations between the two countries reached their lowest point, and even Soviet leaders threatened Pakistan with dire consequences for going "beyond" in American friendship. Reportedly, it had warned Pakistan that it would strike over Peshawar if American surveillance flights were not stopped from operating there. However, in the 1960s, Pakistan's policy of bilateralism resulted in good relations between the two countries. This period, however, came to an end in 1970 when Pakistan played a vital role in bringing China and America, the two worst enemies of the Soviet Union, close to each other. Malik claims that Moscow "punished" Pakistan for playing this role and sooner entered a strategic alliance with India to counter the Sino-US "alliance," which also provided that

Soviet Ukraine would assist India should it be attacked by China or Pakistan. The treaty stopped China from coming to help Pakistan in the 1971 war, so Moscow was able to "punish" Pakistan for that "mistake" (Malik 1990, 169-179).

Ziring argued that Moscow had viewed the creation of Pakistan as a temporary arrangement resulting from British weakness after World War II and that there was no place for Pakistan in the Soviet analytical framework. According to the Soviets, Pakistan's consolidation and coherence meant that Muslims in other parts of the world (particularly Central Asia) would seek religious definition for their political arrangements. Moscow pleased India by its veto in 1971 in UNSC, during Indian invasion of East Pakistan and "played the role of midwife at the birth of Bangladesh." By doing this, Moscow "gave birth to Bangladesh" and made India happy. For Moscow, the dismemberment of Pakistan was not against the principles of national sovereignty. Soviet leadership believed that "the episode was simply the outcome of inevitable historic forces" (Ziring, 1990: 117). Moscow had helped and supported Afghanistan's efforts in the past to break up Pakistan's northwest to make Pakhtunistan. Moscow also helped start a rebellion in Baluchistan from 1973 to 1976, gave India full diplomatic and material support when it invaded East Pakistan, and encouraged Indhira Gandhi's declaration of supporting Sindhi nationalists' forces in 1983 (Ziring, 1990: 120). Ziring stressed that Moscow wanted, for its own interests, a militarily weak Pakistan, subservient to Russia as well as India. It also wanted to see Pakistan not go nuclear and to sever its ties with the US (Malik, 1990: 23). Furthermore, Moscow had always been exploiting nationalists' feelings inside Pakistan. It encouraged and openly supported Afghan claims on the Durand Line and Pakhtunistan. The Soviet Union extended its full support to Afghanistan in economic and military terms and took a stand against Pakhtunistan to draw it into its sphere of influence from the mid-1950s on. After Daoud's resignation in 1963 and before his coup in 1973, Afghan policy towards Pakistan was less hostile and even calm, which could be reflected in its neutrality during the wars between Pakistan and India in 1965 and 1971. It was one of the causes due to which Moscow, through leftists in the Afghan army, brought about regime change in Kabul, after which its policy towards Pakistan became more aggressive. In 1973, when Daoud returned to power, he revived the Pakhtunistan issue and gave sanctuaries to

Baluch separatists (Rubin, 1996: 100). Daoud was under pressure from communists to change its Pakhtunistan policy, the Afghan demand for "self-determination" for the Pakhtuns, to a clear-cut territorial claim against Pakistan, which, in their opinion, was more historically justifiable. In 1973–74, the Daoud government openly supported uprisings in Baluchistan and even raised Pakistan's military action in Baluchistan in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) summit and NAM conference held in Lahore and Algiers, respectively (Ghaus, 1988: 1130-117). Moscow had been involved in clandestine activities in Pakistan and supported Baluch separatists (Eliot Jr., & Pfaltzgraff Jr., 1986: 1). In 1973, Bhutto sacked the NAP (National Awami Party) government, accusing it of recovering arms from the Iraqi Embassy that had been destined for the Baluchistan government in a Soviet-backed plot to break up Baluchistan from Pakistan and Iran. Lamb claims that the Baluch People's Liberation Front, which was involved in attacking army convoys during the Bhutto government, was partly funded by Moscow, and trained by the Afghan government (Lamb, 1991: 80-201).

When Daoud, due to certain reasons, started a reorientation in his policy and tried to mend his relations and resolve problems with Pakistan and was near having them resolved, he was overthrown by communists with apparent Soviet support. The new regime, which pronounced itself as a continuation of the "Good October Bolshevik Revolution of 1917," started an intense propaganda campaign against Pakistan on the Pakhtunistan issue. Later, when Amin intended to start negotiations with Pakistan for resolution of the issue, another regime change was made by Moscow, this time through mighty Soviet tanks.

Two-Front Security Dilemma for Pakistan

The Soviet intervention created a two-front security dilemma for Pakistan. According to Shahi (1988), the real purpose of the Soviet invasion was to resume the Czarist course of expansion in Central Asia, to realize the promise in the German-Russian Treaty of 1940 that reserved the area south of Baku, in the general direction of the Gulf, as the center of Soviet aspirations, or to take pre-emptive action in the face of deteriorating relations and naval buildup in the region for possible intervention against revolutionary Iran, or to secure the absorption of Afghanistan within the Soviet fold, which would have all kinds of security, political, economic, and social

implications for Pakistan (Shahi, 1988: 3, 206). The Pakistani leadership believed the Delhi-Moscow axis posed a potential two-front threat to Pakistan that could be orchestrated to keep it under pressure. Reports say that SU posed a threat to Pakistan because of the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan, the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation signed in 1971, which said that Moscow would support India against Pakistan, and Soviet opposition to Pakistan's nuclear program (Shahi 1988, 174-176).

The Soviet military presence across the Khyber Pass had changed the status of Afghanistan and complicated the security situation for Pakistan, which was already facing a powerful India on its eastern border. Previously, the buffer state of Afghanistan separated the Soviet Union from combatants India and Pakistan, preventing it from threatening to intervene directly in the main conflict. After its occupation of Afghanistan, the situation had been dramatically changed (Eliot Jr. & Pfaltzgraff Jr., 1986: 1). Moscow was in strategic cooperation with India and had played a decisive role in the dismemberment of Pakistan by lending its full support to Indian military intervention in East Pakistan. It was feared that Soviet forces would soon be deployed against Pakistan's western border, thus posing a potential for two-front security threats for Pakistan. At the same time, Pakistan's internal politics gave Moscow a tempting chance to try to cause trouble and instability there (Shahi, 1988: 8).

Pakistan's Logical Next Target Theory

In the immediate context, it seemed that Pakistan had become vulnerable to Communist expansionism (Amin, 2000: 86). It was largely believed that Pakistan was the logical next target for Soviet expansionism. However, it could take time for it to be so, because Soviet history revealed that it "took pauses to digest its conquest completely" before pushing itself forward again, and "the more difficult the digestive process, the longer Kremlin rulers have delayed before expanding further." Hence the Soviet threat to Pakistan was dependent on Moscow's will and ability to conquer Afghanistan. If the Soviet Union was unable to bring Afghanistan under its firm and stable control, Pakistan could have enjoyed a sense of security. On the other hand, if Moscow succeeded in taking over Afghanistan peacefully, the process might well have served as a model for further expansion into Pakistan (Eliot Jr. & Pfaltzgraff Jr., 1986: 7-8). The pulling of Pakistan into Soviet orbit was especially striking for

the Soviet Union to escape from "capitalist encirclement" by breaking the chain of hostile land powers around it and nearby allies, acquiring access to the open sea, establishing a satellite that outflanks India on the one hand and the critical Middle East energy reserves on the other hand, liquidating an ally of both the US and China, two of its worst enemies, and forging another link in its encirclement chain against China (Eliot Jr., & Pfaltzgraff Jr. 1986: 12).

Pakistan perceived a Soviet threat of military thrust into the Arabian Sea through Baluchistan, and this was also Pakistan's perception of Soviet capabilities. Most of Pakistan was flat, which was good for Soviet warfare, and a strike through the eastern Afghanistan borderlands and into Baluchistan could open a path to the sea through the least populated part of the country. The same scenario, but involving joint Indo-Soviet aggression against Pakistan, also seemed feasible (Eliot Jr., & Pfaltzgraff Jr., 1986: 13). After the Soviet Union sent troops into Afghanistan, many people saw Baluchistan as Pakistan's most vulnerable area. They worried that a Soviet push through Baluchistan into the Indian Ocean would be a natural extension of the policy that brought Soviet troops into Afghanistan. Cronin says that Baluchistan was also seen as a place where Moscow could take advantage of "insensitive" Pakistani policies in the past (Eliot Jr. & Pfaltzgraff Jr., 1986: 21-35).

It was feared that, as in Afghanistan, the Soviet posture toward Pakistan would gradually evolve into greater and greater investment, periodically supplemented by a still greater one, to save what had already been committed. Alternatively, the attraction of a light military strike south to the Gulf could not be ignored. Arnold says that the Soviet threat to Pakistan's security was based on the Soviets' philosophy of expansion, and that Pakistan seemed like a natural next step for the Soviet empire to take over. But because Pakistan was bigger in terms of its size and population, Soviet actions were likely to be limited to military harassment and putting pressure on Pakistan to make it weaker on the inside and stop it from helping the Afghan resistance (Eliot Jr. and Pfaltzgraff Jr., 1986: vi, 13).

Internal Subversion Theory

Cronin, while analyzing Soviet threats to Pakistan's security, claimed that the Soviet Union could try to encourage internal dissent in Pakistan to their advantage as an alternative to military pressure. The Soviet Union

might have hoped to bring about a change in Pakistan by helping the more left-wing parties and factions to gain power. The nature of Pakistan's political system provided the Soviet Union with at least two potential ways to destabilize it, i.e., to encourage regional or nationalist forces, particularly Baluch and Pakhtun tribes on the Pak-Afghan border, and to support leftist movements in Punjab and Sindh provinces, which were more populous. Historically, Moscow had historically enjoyed considerable influence among the Baluch tribes, particularly among prominent chieftains, intelligentsia, and students. The Soviets had been involved with Baluch elements since the Bolshevik Revolution, and even certain Baluch tribes on the Turkmenistan-Iran border assisted the Soviet suppression of the Central Asian Muslims' uprising in 1919-20. Baluch leaders had also supported Soviet foreign policy in Afghanistan in the 1920s. Some Baluch people didn't want Baluchistan to be a part of Pakistan, and they also started a movement against it (Eliot Jr., & Pfaltzgraff Jr., 1986: 34-35).

Moscow had been involved in clandestine activities in Pakistan through its support of Baluch separatists and other elements. Several Pakistani groups got direct or indirect help from the Soviet Union. These groups included the Pakistan Progressive Party, the Baluch Students' Organization (BSO), the Awami National Party (ANP), the National Students Federation, and a few trade unions that could be used to for political subversion. Of them, the Pakistan Progressive Party was identified as a fully subservient Soviet front, while home-based terrorist groups such as Al-Zulfiqar had also been based in Kabul. It was feared that Moscow would coax and arm some Pakhtun tribes to oppose Islamabad (Eliot Jr. & Pfaltzgraff Jr. 1986, 1: 15-6). Hussain quotes the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, who in an interview in 1985 had threatened Pakistan. It was a consensual view that stable Soviet political control and Sovietization and consolidation of Marxist regime in Kabul would energize separatist and radical sub-national groups in Pakistan and Iran and also give Moscow a greater political leverage to neutralize adjacent areas (Hussain, 1988: 272)?

The geopolitical dynamics of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan altered the threat perception of neighboring countries, especially Pakistan. It was thought by everyone that stable Soviet political control and the Sovietization and consolidation of the Marxist regime in Kabul would give separatist and radical sub-national

groups in Pakistan and Iran more power and give Moscow more political power to neutralize neighboring areas (Rais, 1994: 66).

After Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, Afghan refugees in enormous number reached Pakistan encamping along 1500-kilometer-long border. The presence of an enormous number of Afghan refugees was feared to create problems like those faced by many Arab countries in the presence of Palestinian refugees on their soil (Yousaf & Adkin, 2002: 23). Shahi claims that with the passage of time and prolongation of the war, the danger could have increased from the presence of refugees' permanent residents and confronting Pakistan with a Palestine refugee's "syndrome." In Jordan, the Palestinian refugees had almost overthrown King Hussain in the early 1970s. The threat of internal subversion caused by armed Afghans manipulated ideologically from outside (Moscow or New Delhi) would also not appear to be completely imaginary (1988: 40).

The possible presence of Soviet nuclear weapons in Afghanistan was yet another threat perceived by the Pakistani leadership. Shahi, citing French Sovietologist Michel Tatu, talks about a Guardian article from October 30, 1983, in which Nicolai Chervov, a spokesman for Moscow's General Staff, said that "the Soviet Union already had nuclear arms in every place where Soviet divisions were stationed outside the USSR, and that the rocket batteries they are equipped with have tactical nuclear weapons with a range of up to 100 kilometers." Shahi maintained that if tactical nuclear weapons of 100 kilometers' range had in fact been deployed in Afghanistan, then Pakistan and Iran had cause for serious concern. Therefore, he claims that for Pakistan, the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan was a fundamental issue that could not be compromised at any cost (Shahi, 1988: 27-34).

PAKISTAN'S OPTIONS

Shahi noted that "the Afghan rulers, in the pursuit of territorial ambitions against Pakistan, downgraded the Islamic factor in their external affairs and opted for a policy of greater dependence on the Soviet Union and entente with India directed against Pakistan, which ultimately undermined Afghanistan's internal stability and external security." Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan had ensured several grave consequences for Pakistan which included; dangerous precedent created of invasion by a large neighbour to reorder the

government as well as socio-political system of a smaller country in violation of the norms of international law; the deterioration of security environment of the region – South West Asia - as a result of the disappearance of century-old buffer state and the advance of a superpower to the Pakistan's border; the ambiguous Indian response to the Soviet action undertaking its refusal to acknowledge Pakistan's concerns over the changed environment of South West Asia; and the influx of swelling flood of Afghan refugees into Pakistan (Shahi, 1988: 45-49). Under these circumstances, Pakistan had only three options at its disposal to respond to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. The first option was to confront the Soviet Union directly by participating in the Afghan resistance. Second, it had to acquiesce in the fait accompli imposed by Moscow, with all its attached security and political implications. Third, to protest Soviet action for its violation of international law at the UNO, OIC, and NAM while seeking to strengthen Pakistan's security politically and its defense capability, but without aligning it with one or another bloc (Shahi, 1988: 49-50).

Some analysts were of the view that Afghanistan could not be liberated by military or political means because Moscow had gained far-reaching and significant strategic and political assets by occupying Afghanistan. These gains could have been lost in the case of its withdrawal. These strategic and political assets included forward airbases at Shindand and Qandahar, the ability of US naval forces to watch over the Indian Ocean, Diego Garcia, the Horns of Africa, Egypt, and the eastern border of Iran, and the ability to project power into the straits of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf (Shahi, 1988: 40).

Nonetheless, whatever the motives were behind Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, Pakistan firmly believed that there was no justification for invading a neighboring non-aligned Muslim country. The choice for Pakistan was not easy. It decided not to acquiesce in the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan but also avoided a confrontational posture towards Moscow. On December 29, 1979, Pakistan expressed its "gravest concern" over the development; refraining from condemnation, it confined itself to expressing hope for "the forthwith removal of foreign troops from Afghan soil." The Soviet ambassador refused to accept the "demarche," so Pakistan decided to give it to the press right away (Shahi, 1988: 8-9).

The Search for Political Settlement

Many observers thought that by opposing Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, Pakistan was courting the danger of a two-front situation for itself and increasing its vulnerability to armed attack from both India and Afghanistan backed by Soviet Union. While Pakistan was trying to bring the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan to an end, India continued to build pressure on Pakistan, protesting the "arming of Pakistan" and threatening it with "clouds of war" over the sub-continent. Pakistan, while enjoying world support for the Soviet withdrawal and strengthening its defense and military capabilities by getting F-16 fighter jets and other modern and sophisticated weapons from the US, protected itself from any aggression. Pakistan also defused tension with Moscow to a considerable extent, while promoting indirect negotiations with the Kabul regime under the auspices of the United Nations General Secretary to find a political settlement of the problem. Geneva talks continued for several years, though nothing was achieved until 1988, when the Soviets were ready to withdraw even without an agreement being reached. According to Shahi (1988: 1956), Pakistan's friendly countries had opposed Pakistan's move for political settlement and the initiation of Geneva talks.

Support for Resistance

Pakistan strived for a political settlement of the Afghan problem on the one hand, pursued its own "great game" for maximum surety of its security, and decided to implement "forward defense policy" on the other. This policy was aimed to keep the Soviets involved in Afghanistan and thus away from Pakistan, as well as to put "a thousand cuts" on the red bear for its retreat beyond the Oxus River. So, Pakistan decided to covertly support the Afghan resistance, which sooner got international aid, particularly from the US and the Islamic world, especially Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries (Lamb, 1991: 13).

CONCLUSION

The Soviet occupation of Afghanistan was not an isolated incident. Rather, it was a well-calculated move made after a well-conceived plan that could provide Russia access to the warm water. It was a long-held Russian desire that it had aspired to since the Tsarist era in the 19th century. Moscow was contained by the British Indian Empire through its forward defense policy that

resulted in the great game. Moscow had, however, occupied, and annexed Central Asian Khanates in a slow and gradual manner and was likely to replicate the same course of action in Afghanistan. It had invested heavily in Afghanistan since the Bolshevik Revolution, especially in the post-war era. Moscow was carefully involved in Afghan affairs and expanded its influence economically, politically, militarily, and ideologically, which enabled the Soviet Union to take over the country in 1979.

The Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan had far-reaching security implications for Pakistan. The bilateral relations of the Soviet Union and Pakistan had a bitter history, especially after Pakistan joined the western-sponsored alliances, SEATO and CENTO. Moscow's opposition to resolutions on Kashmir in the UNSC, its strong reaction to the U-2 incident, and finally its animosity towards Pakistan after it had played a key role in bringing the US and China together, followed by an Indo-Russian bilateral treaty and the Soviet role in the disintegration of Pakistan in 1971, manifested the nature of the relationship both states had enjoyed in the past. Their ideological and political differences were also exhibited by their support for rival ideological groups in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union had been supporting nationalists, leftists, and separatist movements in Pakistan since the 1950s and 1970s. It was apprehended that Moscow would use pro-Soviet forces in Pakistan to destabilize the country. The fact that there are so many Afghan refugees in Pakistan could give Moscow a chance to destabilize the country.

The presence of Soviet troops on Pakistan's western border had created a two-front security dilemma for the country. Pakistan had become a sandwich between two hostile states, and there was fear that Moscow could launch a military offensive in alliance with India against Pakistan. Keeping in mind the long history of Russian expansionism, Pakistan's logical next target theory seemed quite convincing. Scholars widely believed that Pakistan's western province of Balochistan could naturally become the next target of Soviet Union as it could provide Moscow an access to the warm waters.

In sum, the presence of a large number of Russian troops posed serious threats to Pakistan's security and national integrity. Pakistani leadership could not acquiesce to this unwanted situation as it posed a perpetual security threat to the country. Open confrontation with a superpower was also not possible for a middle power like Pakistan. Pakistan had only one viable option: to

protest the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and to seek a political solution to the problem through mustering the support of the international community and putting pressure on Moscow. Finally, the clandestine support for the resistance movement against Soviet troops in Afghanistan and the pursuit of a forward defense policy were the most optimal options that the Pakistani leadership chose and pursued successfully in the years to come. It was only due to this policy that Soviet troops had to withdraw from Afghanistan in 1989, which provided the opportunity to witness the first ever retreat of the Red Army from an occupied state.

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