Afghanistan — roots of a war without end

Viewpoint from an anarchist in Britain

Anarcho

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Opps, they did it again!

This, it should be noted, is not the last time the US state has messed up Afghanistan by failing to predict the consequences of its actions. As should be well known, in a 1998 interview with **Le Nouvel Observateur**, Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor under Carter, admitted that the Carter administration began funding the Mujahadeen in Afghanistan six months before the Soviets invaded (a statement corroborated by former CIA director Robert Gates).

Brzezinski stated that *"[a]ccording to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahadeen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise: Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention."*

He thought the idea was a grand one, as it *"had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap"* and *"a conflict that brought about the demoralization and finally the breakup of the Soviet empire."* As for having regrets about having supported the Islamic fundamentalism and given arms and advice to future terrorists, he was dismissive: *"What is most important to the history of the world? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some stirred-up Moslems or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the cold war?"*

And how many tens of thousands have died because of this? How many more?

Things are going from bad to worse in Afghanistan because of US imperial designs on Iraq. Not the first time that US imperialism has messed up that country. And now the British state stands to be further dragged into that war.

Mission Unaccomplished (yet again)

Blair and the British military are in a difficult position. The Bush Junta is putting enormous pressure on them to send more troops to Afghanistan. Afghanistan? Yes, while you may have thought that war was over the reality is somewhat different. The Taliban has regrouped and has launch an Iraq-style guerrilla war (or, for that matter, a soviet-era Afghinstan-style guerrila war — yes, US training does pay off!). In response, Blair is talking about reducing the number of their troops in southern Iraq and shifting them to Afghanistan. Yet the problems in Iraq means that Bush wants Blair to send more troops there as well as sending new units to fight the Taliban.

So Blair is a bit trapped. On the one hand, Iraq is on the brink of disaster. He has to send thousands more British troops to Afghanistan to try and stop it sliding into civil war. As in Iraq, there are warnings that the coalition faces a "complete strategic failure" in the effort to rebuild the nation.

And why has this happened? Because Bush and those sections of the elite he represents wanted (long before 9/11) to invade Iraq to secure a strong US presence in the heart of the Middle East. As such, by failing to stabilise Afghanistan Bush has created more problems in the long run.

The big question is, will we put up with being dragged into a two-front civil war and, if we are active enough, can we bring down Blair's government? So not only has Bush and Blair fucked up Iraq, they have fucked up Afghanistan as well. Impressive.