

The truth behind the Soviet Afghan coup

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

This past week, the Soviet military command did what I have been warning they would do in the event of a new Peking threat to Vietnam. I warned that in case of an imminent Peking invasion of Southeast Asia, or threat of a great-power confrontation in the Middle East, the Soviet military command would choose to launch a massive Soviet military deployment into Afghanistan.

Although the past week's massive Soviet military deployment occurred in the context of a coup d'etat most probably conducted by the Soviet KGB, the military operation was not under the command of the KGB. It was the reaction which I have expected for months from the top levels of the Soviet military command. The two developments should be studied separately for purposes of formulating United States policy toward them.

All leading Western military and intelligence commands have copies of my earlier report on a probable Soviet military "Afghanistan scenario" in their possession. This should have been brought to President Carter's attention immediately once the predicted operation went into effect this past week. Apparently, that was not done. Instead, the Carter administration is acting on the basis of an incompetent estimate attributed to crazy Zbigniew Brzezinski.

President Carter's reaction to the past week's Afghanistan developments is about 180 degrees off-target. Carter's reaction was ignorant and dangerously incompetent.

The LaRouche Afghan-scenario analysis

My discovery of the "Afghan scenario" response of the Soviet military command developed as a by-product of a summary warning I circulated in relevant channels, in an effort to induce the Carter administration to halt U.S. operations in support of the overthrow of the Iran government of Prime Minister Shahpour Bakhtiar, operations in favor of the establishment of the Khomeini-led dictatorship.

In the course of outlining the chain-reactions a Khomeini coup d'etat would set into motion throughout the region, I included focus on the implications for Afghan-

istan. The securing of the Muslim Brotherhood's dictatorship over Iran meant a hardening of the Muslim Brotherhood's dictatorial control over Pakistan, and the launching of massive destabilization operations against Afghanistan involved use of Iranian and Pakistan bases for such operations. I underlined the point that Moscow would not tolerate such an operation against its southern flank. Either it would deploy Soviet military capabilities to deliver heavy penalties against Iran and Pakistan by way of Afghanistan, or it would defer such Soviet military involvement no longer than the continuing destabilization of Afghanistan brought that nation to the verge of collapse. This latter qualification I made in a later memorandum on the situation in that area.

All this has occurred as I have outlined during the spring and summer of 1979.

The present Soviet Afghanistan scenario I discovered this past summer, while examining the strategic situation on the Soviet southern flank in broader terms.

The most deadly feature of the present global strategic situation is Carter administration adoption of a lunatic thesis usually associated with the name of Henry A. Kissinger. This doctrine insists that an actual thermonuclear war can not occur, since both superpowers know the extent of the devastation such a war would mean. Therefore, the doctrine continues, Moscow will accept warfare at a lower-than-thermonuclear threshold, limited to one or two theaters of conflict, each theater's warfare confined to the boundaries of warfare defined by "flexible response" doctrines.

That is the Kissinger-associated doctrine denounced earlier this year by the late Lord Louis Mountbatten and others as an insane plunge into thermonuclear war by gross strategic miscalculation.

This past autumn, two leading Soviet spokesmen issued an extended interview to the West German press in which they identified such a Kissinger-like doctrine with a Carter administration secret resolution of Aug. 25, 1977. Close study of patterns of statements from relevant Soviet and Warsaw Pact sources during the same period showed that that reference to a Carter administration secret document of Aug. 25, 1977 was an official reflection of the policies of the Soviet command.

The Soviets are determined (A) to counteract each and every U.S./NATO development they view as consistent with the implications of such a Kissinger policy, and (B) to display an indisputable signal demonstrating their unwillingness to discount a total thermonuclear response to a decisive effort at exploiting what Kissinger et al. view as the advantageous potentialities of the Kissingerian doctrine of "only flexible response."

The hottest of the hot-spots, with respect to such a Soviet response is Southeast Asia. The following scenario shows why.

1. Peking launches its now-prepared invasion of Southeast Asia.
2. This invasion brings an assured military action by Soviet forces against China itself.
3. If the United States honors its secret agreements with Peking, World War III probably occurs right then and there.

Since Soviet military action against China is "locked in" in Moscow for such a case, the principal concern of the Soviet military command is to avoid war with the United States by giving a strategic signal which makes clear that Moscow will not act according to the Kissingerian doctrine. My views on this point coincide with the arguments of the late Lord Mountbatten, who correctly identified the "China option" as the most probable trigger for imminent eruption of general thermonuclear war by strategic miscalculation.

Examining the overall strategic situation in that light, it becomes clear that a Soviet military deployment into Afghanistan was the uniquely defined Soviet response to the imminence of a Peking invasion of Southeast Asia.

The reasons are summarily as follows:

1. Afghanistan is indisputably a matter of Soviet strategic interest, of no proper strategic interest to the United States or NATO. A U.S. adoption of Afghanistan as a sphere of U.S. or NATO interest would, in fact, be viewed by Moscow as tantamount to a U.S. commitment to thermonuclear war. Only a lunatic in Washington or Brussels would argue against this thesis.
2. Therefore, beyond making threatening diplomatic faces at Moscow in event of such a Soviet military operation in Afghanistan, only a lunatic administration in Washington would go beyond the mere making of faces.
3. Similarly, limited military penalties delivered in Iranian and Pakistani border areas by Afghanistan-based Soviet military forces would not be of strategic interest to the United States, provided these were thrust-and-withdrawal operations of a "hot pursuit" variety, limited to destruction of military concentrations and logistical support capabilities. While a U.S. administration would make faces and some unpleasant noises about such developments, private judgment would be that the Iranians and Pakistanis have brought such punishment upon themselves.
4. If the Soviet command wished to deliver a clear signal of rejection of the Kissingerian thesis to NATO and Washington, Soviet military action in Afghanistan would be escalated way beyond actual requirements of the Afghan operation itself. This would involve a show of Soviet deployment capabilities; however, the display of capabilities would be of secondary

significance. It is the show of strategic determination that would be crucial.

5. The uniqueness of this Soviet option is determined by the fact that Afghanistan is the only available place in the world in which the Soviet command could effect such a massive show of determination to such effect without risking some degree of direct actual confrontation with the interests of the U.S. and NATO.

This past week, that signal was delivered.

The Afghan coup

The past week's coup d'etat in Afghanistan is to be judged an almost coincidental feature of the military display as such.

The limited information my intelligence organization has so far developed concerning the coup d'etat itself is as follows.

Moscow finds detente 'at a standstill'

The Soviet military daily *Krasnaya Zvezda*, in a Dec. 30 commentary headlined "The Wind of History," declared that "detente has come to a standstill." Strategic commentator Col. M. Ponomarev wrote that the U.S. has shifted increasingly toward "politics from a position of strength," due to the deepening economic crisis in the capitalist world and the "breakdown" of American domination in the West. "This breakdown is final and irreversible," he said.

Ponomarev described NATO's Dec. 12 decision to begin production of new medium-range nuclear missiles for deployment in Western Europe as a reflection of this U.S. policy. He went on to warn that playing "hazardous games" with China will have unpleasant results for those who do so.

The Soviet colonel ridiculed NATO's claims that arms buildup and an offer for arms control negotiations can proceed in parallel. "The Atlanticist gentlemen have a very strange understanding of geometry. Back in the time of Euclid it was already known that parallel lines never come closer to one another and never cross. ...The NATO bloc has destroyed the basis for negotiations on medium-range missiles with its decision."

1. The official Soviet line on the coup d'etat centers around the allegation that the deposed, and now deceased former ruler, Amin, was "an American agent." I have no reliable information concerning that allegation itself.

2. Search of the pedigree of the newly installed ruler so far shows him to have a Philby family dossier as far back as searches have gone. This probable evaluation of the newly installed ruler coincides with the position of H. "Kim" Philby as a recently appointed general of the KGB.

Therefore, the coup d'etat itself is most probably an operation of the Soviet KGB, or an operation of the KGB in cooperation with the Soviet military-intelligence agency, the GRU.

However, the military operation itself is not a KGB operation. It is entirely an operation of the Soviet military command. According to best highly placed Western

intelligence sources consulted so far, the operation of the Soviet military command was ordered through the highest levels of the overall Soviet command, at a much higher level than either the KGB or the military itself.

The proper evaluation of this admittedly limited information focuses on the gross dissymmetry between the requirements of a KGB-directed coup d'etat and the extent of Soviet military forces deployed in the context of that coup d'etat. The implications of that dissymmetry are conclusive. The coup d'etat is merely an incidental correlative of the principal operation.

Iranian implications

It is an "open secret" in most best-informed Western European and other relevant circles that the Carter administration has established a secret agreement with Moscow for the present Iranian crisis. In part, this secret agreement involves exercise of old treaty agreements under which the Soviet Union occupies the northern portion of Iran and the United States takes control of the southern portion.

It is also generally held opinion that this Moscow-Washington secret agreement will go into operation at about the point combined U.S., British, and Australian task forces commence military operations against Iran.

For this reason, some experts speculate that Soviet deployment into Afghanistan is a preparation for Soviet occupation of the northern section of Iran—according to the secret Washington-Moscow agreement. The fact that the Soviet deployment coincides with President Carter's press for United Nations sanctions gives credibility to such speculations. It is true that a Soviet thrust into northern Iran would impel Iranian military forces toward Afghanistan, and that Soviet Afghan forces would therefore be preemplaced for greeting that deployment.

However, against this, there is the dissymmetry of the scale of the present Soviet Afghan deployment with the required operations for such a preparation. The imminent Soviet thrust into northern Iran is a secondary implication of the Afghan deployment, but just that.

This is no Soviet bluff. They mean exactly what they imply by this demonstrative deployment. Now is the time for the Carter administration to sit down hard on Ramsey Clark and his friends who have been manipulating this Iranian hostage situation from the beginning. It is time to cease tolerating the virtual treason of Brzezinski, Vance, and such Kennedy-machine types as Clark and his friends. There are penalties against the Muslim Brotherhood internationally which would bring this crisis back under control. It is time for Carter to drop his affection for that terrorist cult he foolishly terms "Islamic fundamentalism," and to deal with Clark and other virtual traitors who led us into this mess. Put out this fire now, before it runs completely out of anyone's control.

'Euro-strategic war' a miscalculation

Red Star carried the following statement by military commentator, Major-General Simonyan.

(NATO's decision on stationing missiles in Europe) qualitatively changes the strategic situation in Europe and destabilizes the situation in the whole world. It is fully natural that the Soviet Union and her allies could not remain indifferent to this fact and would be forced to take responsive measures. . . .

The calculations of the advocates of a "Euro-strategic war," that it would be possible to keep it within predetermined borders, are without any substance. An aggressor attacks because he wants to destroy the victim of his aggression or force him to his knees. Therefore he is ready to launch every means at his disposal. Under these conditions, the victim of the aggression will not sit idly by. He will defend himself and his allies and give a resolute rebuff to the aggressor. Realistically thinking circles in the West understand this. The magazine Stern warns: "Unlike military spots in Africa, Asia or the Middle East, a limited military conflict in Europe . . . would quickly and automatically be transformed into a world nuclear confrontation, especially if the arms of Western Europe were received from the U.S.A."