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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  
March 27, 1985

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NLRR 107-062 #1

BY KML NARA DATE 4/22/10

National Security Decision  
Directive Number 166

U.S. POLICY, PROGRAMS AND STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

The Soviet war in Afghanistan is now well into its sixth year. The two principal elements in our Afghanistan strategy are a program of covert action support to the Afghan resistance, and our diplomatic/political strategy to pressure the Soviet Union to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan and to increase international support for the Afghan resistance forces. This directive establishes the goals and objectives to be served by these programs. ~~(S)~~

1. Policy Goals and Major U.S. Interests

The ultimate goal of our policy is the removal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan and the restoration of its independent status. In the mid term (1985-1990), the U.S. will pursue interim objectives which will, if achieved, bring us closer to our ultimate goal. Achieving these interim objectives will be in the U.S. national interest, regardless of the ultimate outcome of the struggle in Afghanistan. These interim objectives are:

- Demonstrate to the Soviet Union that its long-term strategy for subjugating Afghanistan is not working. If the war in Afghanistan grows steadily worse, from the Soviet perspective, the Soviet leadership can have little confidence that it will finally achieve its purposes, no matter how long term the Soviet perspective. Achieving this objective is the best way to build pressure on the Soviet Union to adjust its policies in ways favorable to us and to the Afghan people. ~~(S)~~
- Deny Afghanistan to the Soviets as a base: Our covert program will deny Afghanistan to the Soviets as a secure base from which to project power and influence in the region. Were the Soviets to consolidate their position in Afghanistan, they would be better able to exploit possible post-Khomeini turmoil in Iran and to create difficulties for the Government of Pakistan. ~~(S)~~
- Promote Soviet isolation in the Third and Islamic worlds on the Afghanistan issue. The Soviets have paid a price in the Third World for their continuing occupation of Afghanistan.

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We must not let their activities disappear from the agenda of Third World and Islamic countries. We should make every effort to increase the condemnation of the Soviets on this issue. (TS/V)

- Prevent the defeat of an indigenous movement which is resisting Soviet aggression. The continuation of the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan demonstrates to countries in the Third World, many of which had earlier been predisposed to regard the Soviets as "natural" allies, that the Soviet Union is an imperialist power which will subjugate Third World states militarily when it suits its interest to do so. It is vital that such indigenous resistance movements not be defeated by Soviet counterinsurgency efforts. (TS/V)
- Show firmness of purpose in deterring Soviet aggression in the Third World. Our support of the Afghanistan resistance demonstrates our commitment to resisting Soviet aggression. Withdrawal of that support for the Afghan resistance would send a signal to the Soviets and to anti-Soviet insurgencies in Central America, Africa, and Asia that our purpose in standing up to Soviet imperialism was not firm. Our support demonstrates to the Soviets that we will continue to resist low-level Soviet aggression while pursuing arms control. With the resumption of arms control talks in Geneva, it is important to signal to the Soviets that we will continue to oppose unacceptable Soviet behavior in other fields. (TS/V)
- To the extent possible, bring news of the war home to the Soviet people to reduce their confidence in the Soviet military and Soviet external policies. (TS/V)

#### II. Reaching Our Policy Objectives

In order to reach the objectives discussed above, heads of responsible departments and agencies of the U.S. government will:

- Improve the intelligence support to our covert action program. Detailed and timely information on the course of the war will enable us to determine whether we are defeating the Soviet long-term strategy, and adjust our program to increase its effectiveness. (TS/V)
- Utilize intelligence to focus increased effort on the systematic exploitation of Soviet sensitivities and vulnerabilities arising from their occupation of Afghanistan. (TS/V)
- Improve the military effectiveness of the Afghan resistance in order to keep the trends in the war unfavorable to the Soviet Union. This will include setting performance goals and measures of effectiveness. (TS/V)

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- Bound the problem of corruption or its appearance by continuing to improve the management of the flow of supplies into Afghanistan, by tracking these supplies enroute, and by confirming that resistance groups in Afghanistan are receiving increased supplies and are using them in combat. ~~(S)~~
- Maintain good working relations with Pakistan. In the absence of alternative routes of supply into Afghanistan, such relations are essential to the program. This will include responding to Pakistani security requirements arising from their support to the resistance. ~~(S)~~
- Encourage the development of resistance-run social services inside Afghanistan for humanitarian reasons, to reduce the refugee problem in Pakistan, and to maintain the civilian logistical support for the resistance in Afghanistan. ~~(S)~~
- Increase international political pressure on the Soviets through public diplomacy, bilateral efforts, and support for U.N.-led negotiations calling for complete Soviet withdrawal. ~~(S)~~
- Where possible, encourage greater political coordination among the Afghan resistance groups. While it is unrealistic to expect a unified resistance movement which will champion the resistance cause internationally, agreement among the various Mujahidin parties to establish structures which can speak for the resistance internationally will add to the pressure on the Soviets and increase the political and diplomatic effectiveness of the resistance. ~~(S)~~

*Ronald Reagan*

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