

The Afghanistan War and the breakdown of the Soviet Union

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Introduction

The Soviet-Afghanistan war was a conflict that lasted from 1979 to 1989, in which the Soviet Union (USSR) intervened militarily in Afghanistan to support the communist government there. The intervention was in response to a rebellion by Islamic fundamentalists known as the Mujahideen, who were opposed to the communist government.

The Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan was initially successful in establishing control over the major cities and infrastructure of the country. However, the Mujahideen fought back and gradually gained control over the countryside. The conflict was brutal and protracted, with both sides committing atrocities against each other and the civilian population.

The United States and other Western countries provided military and financial support to the Mujahideen, seeing the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan as a threat to their interests in the region. The Mujahideen were able to use this support to acquire modern weapons and technology, which they used to devastating effect against Soviet forces.

The Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan was a major drain on its economy and military resources. The war cost the Soviet Union an estimated \$8 billion per year, and it resulted in the loss of an estimated 15,000 Soviet soldiers. The war also had a significant impact on Soviet society and politics, contributing to a sense of disillusionment and frustration among the Soviet people.

In 1985, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev began to withdraw Soviet troops from Afghanistan as part of his broader policy of reform and opening up. The withdrawal was completed in 1989, and it was seen as a major defeat for the Soviet Union. The conflict had weakened the Soviet military and contributed to the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

The Soviet-Afghanistan war had significant consequences for Afghanistan and the wider region. It led to the rise of the Taliban, who eventually took control of the country in the 1990s. The conflict also had a destabilizing effect on the region, contributing to the rise of militant Islamic groups and the emergence of Al-Qaeda, which would later become significant global threats.

Literature Review

The Afghanistan war and the breakdown of the Soviet Union are two interconnected events in modern history. The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979 to support the communist government there, which was facing a rebellion by Islamic fundamentalists known as the Mujahideen. The Soviet Union viewed the rebellion as a threat to its interests in the region and decided to intervene militarily.

According to the [Soviet-Afghan war book](#), the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan turned out to be a costly and protracted war. The Mujahideen were supported by the United States and other Western powers, who provided them with weapons and financial aid. The war dragged on for a decade, and the Soviet Union was unable to achieve a decisive victory. The war drained the Soviet economy and military, and it became a major political issue in the Soviet Union.

The war also had significant geopolitical consequences. It worsened the already strained relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States, which were engaged in a Cold War. The United States saw the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan as an aggressive act, and it responded by supporting the Mujahideen. The conflict also destabilized the region, with the rise of the Taliban and the emergence of Al-Qaeda, which would later become significant global threats.

The Afghanistan war, combined with other factors such as economic stagnation and political repression, contributed to the Soviet Union's eventual collapse in 1991. The war had put a significant strain on the Soviet economy, and the Soviet Union was unable to sustain its military presence in Afghanistan indefinitely. The war also contributed to a sense of disillusionment and frustration among the Soviet people, who were tired of the ongoing conflict and the government's inability to resolve it.

The role of Mujahadeen in Soviet-Afghan war

The Mujahideen played a critical role in the Soviet-Afghan War, which lasted from 1979 to 1989. The Mujahideen, which translates to "those who engage in jihad," were a group of Afghan rebels who fought against the Soviet Union and the Afghan communist government. The Mujahideen were largely made up of Islamic fundamentalists and tribal fighters who opposed the communist government's secular policies and the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan.

The Mujahideen were initially poorly equipped and poorly trained, but they were able to gain support from the United States and other Western countries. The United States provided the Mujahideen with military and financial assistance, including modern weapons and technology, which allowed them to inflict significant casualties on Soviet forces. The Mujahideen also received support from Pakistan, which provided a safe haven and training facilities for the rebels as reported by [Obscure Military News](#).

The Mujahideen employed guerrilla tactics and fought a protracted war against the Soviet Union and the Afghan government. They were able to gain control of much of the countryside, while the Soviet Union and the Afghan government maintained control over the major cities and infrastructure. The Mujahideen used hit-and-run attacks, ambushes, and booby traps to inflict casualties on Soviet forces and disrupt their supply lines.

The Mujahideen were also successful in gaining support from the local population, who were often caught in the crossfire between the rebels and Soviet forces. The Mujahideen provided protection and support to local communities, which helped to win their trust and loyalty. The Mujahideen also used propaganda to highlight the atrocities committed by Soviet forces, which helped to turn public opinion against the Soviet Union and the Afghan government.

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The Mujahideen played a critical role in the Soviet-Afghan War. They were able to gain support from the United States and other Western countries, which provided them with the military and financial resources they needed to fight a protracted war against the Soviet Union and the Afghan government. The Mujahideen's use of guerrilla tactics, hit-and-run attacks, and propaganda were instrumental in their success against Soviet forces. The war had a significant impact on Afghanistan and the wider region, leading to the rise of militant Islamic groups and the eventual emergence of the Taliban.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Afghanistan war and the breakdown of the Soviet Union are two interconnected events in modern history. The war had significant geopolitical consequences and contributed to the Soviet Union's eventual collapse. The war also had long-lasting effects on the region, including the rise of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.