

dependence on oil from the Persian Gulf, is not so much economic as it is political in nature. At issue is the simple question: Can the West achieve a measure of energy self-sufficiency before the Soviet Union and its friends gain control of the Persian Gulf?

The answer to that question depends very much on our willingness to exploit our vast coal and nuclear resources. It is, however, precisely against the utilization of these resources—and especially against

the utilization of nuclear energy—that the detritus of the anti-war movement has mounted its determined, well-organized, and lavishly funded campaign. While this assault is conducted under the banner of “environmentalism,” its fundamental animus is directed at American society—its values, its institutions, and, above all, its power (which is why those who oppose nuclear power plants today so often oppose nuclear weapons as well). Anti-nuclear activists have long regarded the U.S. as

the champion of reaction and the citadel of counterrevolution, and the current drive against nuclear energy is merely the latest in a series of efforts aimed at dealing American power a deathblow—this time, via the economic route. It seems scarcely credible that groups like the Clam, Mobe, MUSE, and DONT could accomplish the destruction of America, yet the concatenation of circumstances is such that they just might. Stranger things have happened. □

Kenneth L. Adelman

JIMMY'S GEOGRAPHY LESSON

For the Soviets, there were lots of good reasons to invade Afghanistan, not least of which was that no one was going to stop them.

The surprise of the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan was not so much in degree as in kind. For when the Soviets move militarily, they move massively. This is as true today as it was in 1968 when the Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia. As Soviet and Cuban moves on Angola in 1975 and Ethiopia in 1977 and 1978 have again made clear, Moscow has no patience for such a strategy of gradual escalation as the U.S. practiced militarily in Vietnam and as it is now practicing again, politically and economically, in Iran.

Still, the kind of invasion was shocking. Never before, since the Bolsheviks secured power, have Russian troops been actively and massively engaged outside Eastern Europe in peacetime. Evidently, Afghanistan has fallen under the 1968 Brezhnev Doctrine, which postulated the Soviets' right to intervene in any socialist state—not, in Brezhnev's words, confined to Eastern Europe at all—for the sake of socialist solidarity. In any case, the invasion hardly bodes well for the 1980s, the first decade in history to witness a stretch of Soviet strategic superiority and a new Soviet reliance on oil from the Persian Gulf.

Just what are the Soviets up to? It is hard to say, but any number of theories, of varying merit, have been advanced. Perhaps

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most intriguing is the theory of “aggressive defense” which suggests, in its crudest form, that the Russians invaded Afghanistan for stability. In its most sophisticated form, it holds that the Soviets moved on this Muslim country to prevent religious fanaticism from spilling over into the USSR, where, demographers tell us, the Islamic population is growing inordinately fast. But if you didn't notice Islamic fanaticism in Afghanistan recently, or the KGB's problem in controlling the Muslims within the USSR, it wasn't without reason. There hasn't been any.

More fashionable and enduring is the “encirclement theory.” Here power, not religion, prevails. Russia lashes out for fear of being surrounded by enemies, particularly China, Europe, and Japan in league with America, and this fear is said to be reinforced by a kind of cultural paranoia, the result of having suffered past invasions. But, as Russian scholar Richard Pipes has noted, no state becomes a superpower and a vast empire spanning 11 time zones by enduring repeated invasions. Indeed, Russia has been the rapacious invader as often in history as the victim of invasion.



Not that the Kremlin isn't fearful, especially of the Chinese. It is. And this fear may have entered into the “go” decision on Afghanistan. For the past couple years, Chinese advisors in Pakistan have been helping to train and equip Afghan rebels, who first fought the Afghan Marxists and who are now fighting Soviet forces. By invading, the Soviets hoped to prevent these Chinese-backed forces from “nibbling” them to death (as Soviet-backed forces did to us in Vietnam). So the invasion's timing at least may have been related to Defense Secretary Harold Brown's traveling to China, although it probably had more to do with our diplomats' languishing in Iran. The Iranian crisis provided cover for this move, much as the Suez crisis did for the Soviets' 1956 invasion of Hungary.

The question of why the Soviets invaded Afghanistan is best referred to their designs in the region, which have been clear since the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939-1941, when Stalin's Foreign Minister Molotov demanded that the area “in the general direction of the Persian Gulf [be] recognized as the focal point of the aspirations of the Soviet Union.” Toward this end, the Russians of late have been building airfields and naval bases in South Yemen, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan, positioning equipment in these countries and in Libya, and recruiting soldiers from these three new Marxist allies to supplement their own troops and those from East Germany and Cuba. Moreover, Soviet training maneuvers last summer and operational moves

this winter proved that military capabilities there exist in practice as well as on paper.

The Russians are now in a position to move in speedily during a crisis in the area or to preempt the Americans—who have far greater interests in the Gulf region than the Russians could ever have—from doing so. By invading Afghanistan, they eliminated a buffer between the USSR and Pakistan and Iran, where a crisis is imminent, while placing themselves within easy striking range of the Strait of Hormuz, through which nearly half the West's oil passes. What is more, Afghanistan will now provide a base for clandestine operations, to subvert the Saudi royal family, for instance, or foster a coup in Oman, or help even more the Tudeh Party in Iran. Needless to say, such operations, like the Soviet involvement in the takeover of Mecca's Grand Mosque, are more difficult for us to decipher than outright invasion, but easier for the Russians to effect.

For now, Soviet plans may well turn to "Baluchistan," not a state *per se* but the vision of a state for the five million or so Baluch tribesmen living in western Pakistan, eastern Iran, and southern Afghanistan. Inhabiting territory which stretches for nearly 750 miles along the Persian Gulf, the Baluch have been fighting both Iran and Pakistan for independence since 1947. Not surprisingly, their cause is championed by the Soviets. In 1964, a Soviet scholar wrote a book on the Baluch in which he defined them as a separate nationality deserving of independence. In 1980, the Russian puppet Babrak Karmal carried on about the Baluch's "legitimate aspirations" in his first speech as Afghanistan's President. If it comes to be, a "People's Republic of Baluchistan" might well establish a new capital at Gwadar (now part of Pakistan), an ancient port city with a natural harbor where the Soviets could establish a naval base. The area's untapped oil and gas reserves would be a boon to the Soviets but not nearly so important as their securing a warm-water port, in this case, right on the Persian Gulf.

On New Year's Day, *Izvestia's* crack investigative reporters informed their readers

that the CIA "is directly involved in training Afghan rebels in camps in Pakistan and maintains contacts with counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan itself." Would that it were so! Instead, the CIA allowed administration officials to console senators all fall that nothing much was afoot in Afghanistan. At any rate, with the invasion we can now openly champion Afghan "freedom fighters" by providing weapons (for instance, anti-tank missiles and anti-aircraft missiles of the type Moscow gave African guerrillas to shoot down civilian airliners) which, combined with the harsh land and the rough ways of its people, would push up the Russian costs of invasion tremendously, and might lead some Russian soldiers to heed Kipling's advice in "The Young British Soldier":

When you're wounded and left on the
Afghan plains,
And the women come out to cut up
what remains,
Just roll to your rifle and blow out your brains
An' go to your Gawd like a soldier....

Even then, though, the chances are slight that Afghanistan will become Russia's "Vietnam," as so many American leftists are eager to suggest.* First, even at its best, the U.S. will not provide Afghan resisters with anything approaching the enormous weaponry the Russians poured into Vietnam. Besides, Afghanistan lies right next door to the Soviet Union, making logistics tidier, while Vietnam is halfway around the globe from us. And Afghanistan is a far more strategic territory than Vietnam. Whereas the Russian-backed forces in Vietnam were well-disciplined, organized, and led, the Afghan resisters are not. Finally, as the long counter-insurgency campaigns in Angola (since 1975) and Ethiopia (since 1977) have shown, a totalitarian system can endure protracted conflict. There will be no idealistic Russian youth burning draft cards or carrying placards to convince the Kremlin to "give peace a chance" or to stop the

* Tom Wicker, for instance, in his *New York Times* column of January 4th entitled "A Risky Judgment," wrote that Moscow "may well have a tiger by the tail rather than a plum in its hands."

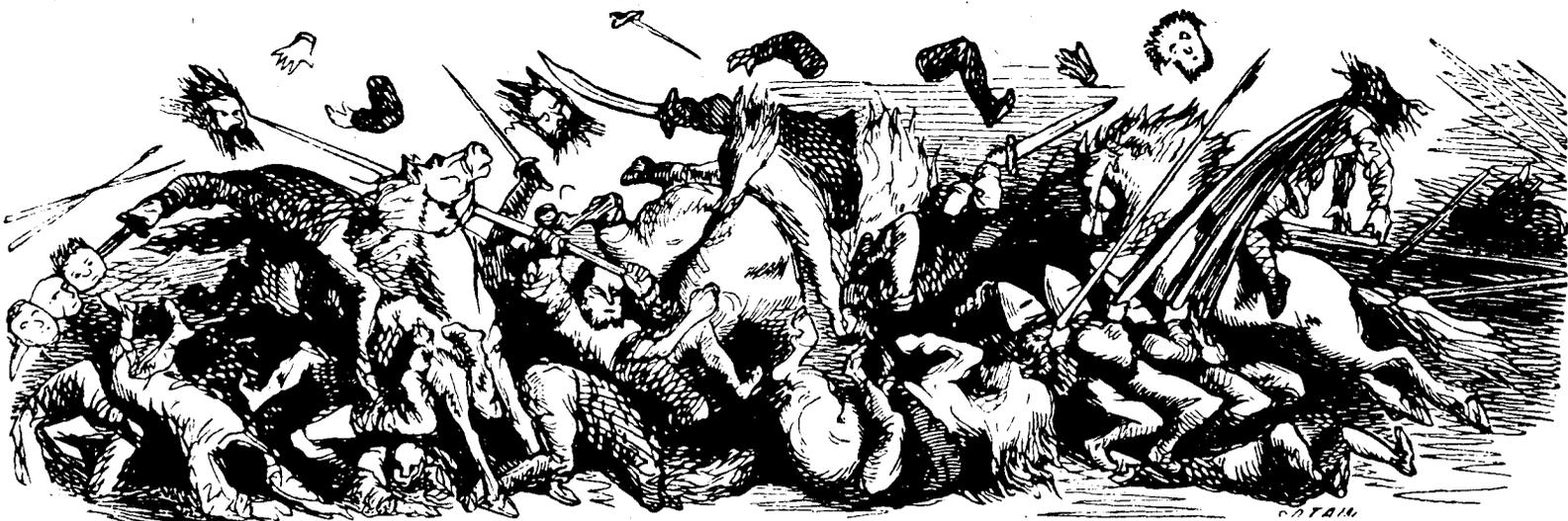
Soviets from napalming villages (now common in Afghanistan) or from lining up hundreds of Afghan political and religious leaders before Russian firing squads or to stop Soviet helicopter gunships from mowing down innocent civilians.†

More appropriate than Vietnam is the analogy—suggested privately by an upper White House official—with Ethiopia and the 1937 Italian invasion there. Both this and Afghanistan were bald, crude examples of big-power aggression against barren little countries, to which outraged governments responded in futility. Sure, the attacks were deplorable, but the victims were far afield, beyond the reaches of Western states or international machinery (then the League, now the UN). Each conflict was eventually considered to be, as Neville Chamberlain said about Czechoslovakia in 1938, "in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing."

And this is one reason, among many, why the Carter administration will talk tough but do little, that is, will not provide the Afghans with the weapons they need, or slap on potent international sanctions, or seriously build up U.S. forces in the area. Not that the President isn't furious—he is. But he is also worried about his political position, and knows that any really strong action would send tremors through the left, and most active, wing of the Democratic Party. For today, at least, he must win primaries and firm inaction has propelled his popularity over the past months.

Nor will the international community take up against the Soviets where Carter leaves off. In due course, the "non-aligned" world is sure to line up against the West, as usual. Many of our European allies, meanwhile, have a greater stake in détente than we do, especially West Germany: Bonn is not only Moscow's leading trading partner, but it also depends upon the Soviets' disposition for what movement

† Such actions in Afghanistan, however, pale in comparison with some in Laos, where Moscow frequently spreads poison gas against the Meo tribesmen and afterwards sends in teams of scientists to gauge the medical effects.



there is between East and West Germany. Similarly, Japan's foreign policy is so bound up with its economy that it will probably succumb to Soviet economic overtures. And many Western leaders are sure to allude to the "real" hawks lurking in the Kremlin, much as President Carter did last year to bolster support for SALT II, and as President Truman did in 1945. "It would be a real catastrophe if Stalin should die at the present time," Truman said that October, when the Soviets and Americans were already on a collision course, for he then considered Stalin a "moderating influence," a sentiment sure to reemerge in regard to Brezhnev later this year.

In the new Age of Normalcy, then, another round of Soviet adventurism will undoubtedly ensue, although probably not another Afghanistan. First of all, so brazen

an attack may not be necessary for the Russians; and second, there is a cost to an invasion like this, not in the hand-slapping at the UN or in the tough-talking at the White House, but in the way it galvanizes what *Pravda* calls the "reactionary elements" within the U.S. In this case, such "elements," parlaying Afghanistan and the Iranian crisis together, are at the front of a new pro-Americanism which will burn as the most important political force in the next several years. They have also helped the American public (if not leaders) to recognize that there is evil loose in the world which succumbs neither to the seduction of American goodness—Carter's government "as kind and good and moral as the American people"—nor, unlike the postwar days, to the fear of American might. Carter may not long remember that Afghanistan changed his ideas about the Soviets' love of peace (ideas of the type which prompted

Cyrus Vance to say that Carter and Brezhnev shared "similar dreams and aspirations" for the world), but the American people *will* remember. They will face the undeniable fact that Mr. Carter fears power and knows not how to use it. They will recognize that the Soviets no longer practice—if they ever did—restraint for the sake of world stability. Through SALT, the 1973 détente accord on superpower cooperation, and the 1979 Vienna summit, the U.S. bestowed the Soviet Union with superpower prestige with the understanding that it would behave responsibly like one. If South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Angola, Ethiopia, and South Yemen—to name only those places where new Marxist regimes have come to power since 1975 with the help of Soviet arms and Cuban or Soviet combat troops—were not evidence enough, let us hope that, with the invasion of Afghanistan, such illusions are dead. □

Aram Bakshian, Jr.

THE IMPERIAL CANDIDACY

John Connally understands power, but who will trust him with it?

Henry Kissinger once declared that power is the greatest aphrodisiac. Personally, I question his judgment. To the small degree that I have ever been exposed to the stuff, I've always found it something between an unpleasant distraction from the really worthwhile things in life and a mild soporific. But then writers are strange anyway. If one does take Kissinger at his word—which not everyone is willing to do these days—John Connally must be the randiest candidate in the race. The man exudes power and is a past master at accruing and wielding it. And Henry Kissinger, whatever his foibles, is a formidable connoisseur of power and ego. Thus his description of John Connally in his recently published memoirs merits consideration as expert testimony:

Highly intelligent, superbly endowed physically, he looked and acted as if he were born to

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lead [Kissinger writes of Connally]. His build was matched by his ego. His amiable manner never obscured the reality that he would not hesitate to overcome any obstacle to his purposes. "You will be measured in this town," he said to me once, "by the enemies you destroy. The bigger they are, the bigger you will be." John Connally was never afraid of his opponents; he relished combat in defense of his convictions. Whatever one might think of his views, he was a leader.

Without differing from Kissinger's view of Connally as a leader, one can find serious reasons for questioning the current wisdom which rates the swaggering Texan as Ronald Reagan's leading challenger. Even the best leader is powerless without followers and, while Connally has managed to assemble a solid campaign command team at the top, and has raked in money from the fat cats, he has yet to prove his ability to attract Republican voters *en masse*. It's the old Benedict Arnold syndrome at work again. In 1780, Arnold, one of the most talented of George Washington's generals, switched sides in the Revolutionary War, abandoning his West Point command and joining the British. His defection caused quite a stir at the time, but the British, leary of trusting a turncoat, were afraid to give his talents full

play, and so Arnold never again commanded a major army.

Two hundred years later, John Connally, who defected from the Democrats in 1973, has applied for the job of 1980 Republican Commander-in-Chief. And so far, most grassroots Republicans seem to be treating him with the same mixture of awe and distrust that the British did Arnold. Yet the undeniable dynamism of the man is such that large segments of the press, the business community, and political professionals think he may be the only man capable of overcoming Ronald Reagan's lead and then beating the Democratic nominee in the general election.

How much of Connally's strength is real, and how much of it is just a product of the masterful Texan's tall talking? My own reading is that Connally is weaker than he looks and that the same bluster that initially won him headlines and big campaign contributions is starting to cost him votes and esteem—especially among cautious, slightly priggish Republican voters who, on top of everything else, find his speech and mannerisms unpleasantly reminiscent of Lyndon Johnson.