

## The Peace on The Horizon - 70 Years after The World War 2 in the Middle East (33)

[\(Japanese Version\)](#)

[\(Arabic Version\)](#)

### Chapter 4: War and Peace in The Middle East

#### 4-5(33) The war in Afghanistan: Bitter enemies in the same boat



After brief peace and prosperity in the early 1970s, the Middle East was suddenly rolled in by gun smoke in the latter half of 1970s. In 1978, the Communist regime was born in Afghanistan where was located between Iran and Pakistan. Afghanistan has long been a crossroad of trade in the 19th century. Russian Empire traditionally had a policy of southward expansion aimed for the Indian Ocean from Central Asia. Meanwhile East India Company of British Empire which monopolized trade with Asian

countries tried to secure a trade route from Oman to India. Two empires crashed. It was called "Great Game". The conflicts took place frequently in Afghanistan. In the early 1970s Afghan monarchy was falling down and the Communist party gripped the power with the support of USSR. USSR got a big opportunity to control the region.

There was no stability in Afghanistan. Afghanistan was a traditional tribal society and Islamic religion has been prevailing. Anti-government movement had a strong momentum. Weak central government called for reinforcements to the USSR. USSR began military intervention against international society in 1979. USSR stuck in the mud. Civil war in Afghanistan had been continued for ten years until USSR withdrew its troops from Afghanistan in 1988.

It was the "Mujahidin" that battled in the center stage of civil war against central government. Mujahidin means jihad (holy war) warrior of Islam in local language. Mujahidin of Islam jihad regarded the communism that advocated atheism as the incarnation of evil. They could not accept communism much more than Christianity or Judaism.

Islam is one of the three major monotheism. Muslims believe that God of Christianity and Yahweh of Judaism are the same supreme existence with Allah of Islam. Allah, God and Yahweh are the different name of the supreme existence who is the only one Creator. Muslims believe that prophets written in the Old Testament was the first batch of the prophets. Jesus Christ was a prophet of the second from the last prophet. And Muhammad was the last prophet. Although the Christian believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Muslims understand that God had no child. They believe that Jesus Christ was one of the prophets. Monotheists like Muslim do not admit polytheism which believes plural

supreme. Therefore, they consider the polytheism of ancient Greek is a wrong religion. They might also think that Japanese traditional faith that there are eight million deities in natural world is a religion of barbarian. But monotheists can accept polytheists because polytheists themselves believe the supreme existence. They cannot accept atheism of communist society at all.

Muslims think that atheism is not only unable to understand but also the thought of devil. Mujahidin did fight against the communist government on behalf of Allah. Muslims in the Arab countries sympathized for the Mujahidin. Muslims in the oil-rich Gulf countries prayed at mosque for Afghanistan jihad fighters and then put their money into the Zakat box when leaving mosque. Zakat means the donation and is a religious duty of Muslims. They were willing to donate money. The money to help rebel fighters in the Afghan civil war could not be sent officially. Money laundering was taken place through several banks. But some portion of money transferred into a fund for Islamic extremists in the latter stage of the war. Governments of Middle East and Western countries overlooked or encouraged the money laundering.

In the Afghan war the Arab countries supplied soldiers and money. While the United States supplied modern weapons and intelligent information via Pakistan. The information about missile and army deployment of USSR was sent from US military satellites. Arab countries and the US collaborated each other and annoyed the socialist regime of USSR. Historically, Islam had hostile relations with Christianity. So, the cooperation between Islam and Christianity was the old allegory; "Bitter enemies in the same boat".

The principles of both sides which aimed to overthrow the USSR was completely different from each other. The Arab side had intense antipathy to communist atheism. The USSR was the Devil or Satan. Therefore, it was jihad (holy war) to defeat communism ideology. Arabs are implanted ethnicity and Islam religion. Arabs have no room for ideology. In contrast, the purpose of the United States to defeat the USSR was simple. US aimed to hold the hegemony of the world order. The war was the battle of ideology, so-called Liberalism vs Socialism and Capitalism vs Communism. The United States got initiative in the Western hemisphere through the advanced country Summit (G7) in 1975. It was the same year when the muddy Vietnamese War was ended. For the United States, the USSR was the last enemy. The Afghan war was its forefront.

In the Afghan War, a large number of volunteer soldiers participated from Arab countries. Among them the biggest name was Usama bin Ladin of Saudi Arabia. There is no person who doesn't know his name. Let review briefly his career how he became the terrorist.

Bin Ladin was born in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia in 1957. His father was origin of Yemen and in youngster he moved to Jeddah just near Holy City Makkah. He stepped up from peddler on the street, and then got the favor of Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, first king of Saudi Arabia. When Usama bin Ladin was born in 1957, his father was already the owner of the biggest construction conglomerate in the Kingdom. He got married with many women and Bin Ladin was his 17th son. At the age of 11

Usama lost his father by plane crash, and he inherited 300 million US dollars. He then entered Islamic Seminary (Madrassa) and devoted himself to extreme Islamic fundamentalism. When he was 22 years he went to Afghanistan as a volunteer soldier. Many Islamic seminaries were built in Afghanistan with financial aid by Saudi Arabia, and Mujahideen (jihad fighters) were brainwashed by the Islamic fundamentalist ideology. Usama became to the top of foreign volunteer soldiers swiftly.

The USSR were gradually driven into a corner and finally withdrew from Afghanistan in 1988. The Arab-Muslim countries won the religious war against atheism and the United States won the ideological war against socialism. The Afghan war brought about the collapse of the USSR. In the United States, religious sociologist Professor Francis Fukuyama wrote "The end of History and the Last Man". The era of America First emerged and the illusion has been created as if an eternal world peace would be realized.

However, Afghan War also had a negative aspect. Many problems hidden underwater appeared to the surface. The United States forced Middle East countries to liberalize and democratize politics. It was an enforcement of Western ideology. Evangelicalism of Christianity and Neo-Conservatism have consisted in the background of US politics.

In other Islamic countries, the Iranian revolution has broken out in 1979. Theocracy by Shiite leader Ayatollah Khomeini generated a conflict with the Sunni Arab countries resulting in the Iran-Iraq war. In addition to sectarian conflict between Shiite and Sunni, secularism and fundamentalism crashed inside the Sunni Arab countries. Fundamentalism became the mother of terrorism by extremist. Chaotic confusion had spread in Middle East.

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