

A New Memoir Reveals How Brzezinski's Chessboard Led to U.S. Checkmate in Afghanistan

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Nearly as suspenseful as the Taliban's meteoric return to power after the final withdrawal of American armed forces from Afghanistan is the uncertainty over what will come next amid the fallout. Many have predicted that Russia and China will step in to fill the power vacuum and convince the facelift Taliban to negotiate a power-sharing agreement in exchange for political and economic support, while others fear a descent into civil war is inevitable.

Although Moscow and Beijing potentially stand to gain from the humiliating U.S. retreat by pushing for an inclusive government in Kabul, the rebranded Pashtun-based group must first be removed as a designated terrorist organization. Neither wants to see Afghanistan worsen as a hotbed of jihad, as Islamist separatism already previously plagued Russia in the Caucasus and China is still in the midst of an ongoing ethnic conflict in [Xinjiang](#) with Uyghur Muslim secessionists and the Al Qaeda-linked Turkestan Islamic Party.

At this point everyone recognizes the more serious extremist threat lies not with the Taliban but the emergence of ISIS Khorasan or ISIS-K, the Islamic State affiliate blamed for several recent terror attacks including the August 26th bombings at Hamid Karzai International Airport in the Afghan capital which killed 13 American service members and more than a

100 Afghans during the U.S. drawdown.

Three days later, American commanders ordered a retaliatory drone strike targeting a vehicle which they claimed was en route to detonate a suicide bomb at the same Kabul airport. For several days, the Pentagon falsely maintained that the aerial assault successfully took out two ISIS-K militants and a servile corporate media parroted these assertions unquestioningly, including concocting a totally fictitious report that the blast consisted of “secondary explosions” from devices already inside the car intended for use in an act of terror. Two weeks later, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) was forced to apologize and admit the strike was indeed a “tragic mistake” which errantly killed ten innocent civilians—all of whom were members of a single family including seven children—while no Daesh members were among the dead. This distortion circulated in collusion between the endless war machine and the media is perhaps only eclipsed by the alleged Russian-Taliban bounty program story in its deceitfulness.



If any Americans were aware of ISIS-K prior to the botched Kabul airstrike, they likely recall when former U.S. **President Donald Trump** authorized the unprecedented use of a Massive Ordnance Air Blast bomb, informally referred to as the “Mother Of All Bombs”, on Islamic State militants in Nangarhar Province back in 2017.

Reportedly, Biden’s predecessor had to be [shown photos](#) from the 1970s of Afghan girls wearing miniskirts by his National Security Advisor, **H.R. McMaster**, to renege on his campaign pledge of ending the longest war in U.S. history. As it happens, the ISIS Khorasan fighters extinguished by the MOAB were sheltered at an underground tunnel complex near the Pakistani border that was [built by the C.I.A.](#) back in the 1980s during the Afghan-Soviet war. Alas, the irony of this detail was completely lost on mainstream media whose proclivity to treat Pentagon newspeak as gospel has been characteristic of not only the last twenty years of U.S. occupation but four decades of American involvement in Afghanistan since Operation Cyclone, the covert Central Intelligence Agency plan to arm and fund the mujahideen, was launched in 1979.

Frank Wisner, the C.I.A. official who established Operation Mockingbird, the agency’s extensive clandestine program to infiltrate the news media for propaganda purposes during the the Cold War, referred to the press as it’s [“Mighty Wurlitzer”](#), or a musical instrument

played to manipulate public opinion. Langley's recruitment of assets within the fourth estate was one of many illicit activities by the national security apparatus divulged in the limited hangout of the Church Committee during the 1970s, along with C.I.A. complicity in coups, assassinations, illegal surveillance, and drug-induced brainwashing of unwitting citizens.

At bottom, it wasn't just the minds of human guinea pigs that 'The Company' sought to control but the news coverage consumed by Americans as well. In his testimony before a congressional select committee, Director of Central Intelligence **William Colby** openly acknowledged the use of spooks in journalism, as seen in the award-winning documentary [Inside the C.I.A.: On Company Business](#) (1980). Unfortunately, the breadth of the secret project and its vetting of journalists wasn't fully revealed until an [article](#) by Carl Bernstein of Watergate fame appeared in Rolling Stone magazine, whereas the series of official investigations only ended up salvaging the deep state by presenting such wrongdoings as rogue "abuses" rather than an intrinsic part of espionage in carrying out U.S. foreign policy.

The corrupt institution of Western media also punishes anyone within its ranks who dares to swim against the current. The husband and wife duo of **Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould**, authors of a [new memoir](#) which illuminates the real story of Afghanistan, were two such journalists who learned just how the sausage is made in the nation's capital with the connivance of the yellow press.

Both veterans of the peace movement, Paul and Liz were initially among those who naively believed that America's humiliation in Vietnam and the well-publicized hearings which discredited the intelligence community might lead to a sea change in Washington with the election of Jimmy Carter in 1976. In hindsight, there was actually good reason for optimism regarding the prospect for world peace in light of the arms reduction treaties and talks between the U.S. and Moscow during the Nixon and Ford administrations, a silver lining to Henry Kissinger's 'realist' doctrine of statecraft. However, any glimmer of hope in easing strained relations between the West and the Soviet Union was short-lived, as the few voices of reason inside the Beltway presuming good faith on the part of Moscow toward détente and nuclear proliferation were soon challenged by a new bellicose faction of D.C. think tank ghouls who argued that diplomacy jeopardized America's strategic position and that the USSR sought global dominion.

Since intelligence assessments inconveniently contradicted the claims of Soviet aspirations for strategic superiority, C.I.A. Director **George H.W. Bush** consulted the purported expertise of a competitive group of intellectual warmongers known as 'Team B' which featured many of the same names later synonymous with the neoconservative movement, including **Richard Pipes, Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle**. Bush, Sr. had replaced the aforementioned Bill Colby following the notorious "Halloween Massacre" firings in the Gerald Ford White House, a political shakeup which also included Kissinger's ouster as National Security Advisor and the promotion of a young Donald Rumsfeld to Secretary of Defense with his pupil, one **Richard B. Cheney**, named Chief of Staff. This proto-neocon soft coup allowed Team B and its manipulated estimates of the Soviet nuclear arsenal to undermine the ongoing Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) between Washington and the Kremlin until Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev finally signed a second comprehensive non-proliferation treaty in June 1979.

The behind-the-scenes split within the foreign policy establishment over which dogma would set external policymaking continued wrestling for power before the unipolarity of Team B

prevailed thanks to the machinations of Carter's National Security Advisor, **Zbigniew Brzezinski**. If intel appraisals of Moscow's intentions and military capabilities didn't match the Team B thesis, the Polish-American strategist devised a scheme to lure the USSR into a trap in Afghanistan to give the appearance of Soviet expansionism in order to convince Carter to withdraw from SALT II the following year and sabotage rapprochement. By the time it surfaced that the C.I.A. was supplying weapons to Islamist insurgents in the Central Asian country, the official narrative dispensed by Washington was that it was aiding the Afghan people fight back against an "invasion" by the Red Army. Ironically, this was the justification for a proxy conflict which resulted in the deaths of at least 2 million civilians and eventually collapsed the socialist government in Kabul, setting off a bloody civil war and the emergence of the Taliban.

Even so, it was the media which helped manage the perception that the C.I.A.'s covert war began only after the Soviets had intervened. Meanwhile, the few honest reporters who tried to unveil the truth about what was happening were silenced and relegated to the periphery. Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould were the first two American journalists permitted entry into the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in 1981 by the Moscow-friendly government since Western correspondents had been barred from the country. What they witnessed firsthand on the ground could not have contrasted more sharply from the accepted tale of freedom fighters resisting a communist "occupation" disseminated by propaganda rags. Instead, what they discovered was an army of feudal tribesman and fanatical jihadists who blew up schools and doused women with acid as they waged a holy war against an autonomous, albeit flawed, progressive government in Kabul enacting land reforms and providing education for girls. In addition, they learned the Soviet military presence was being deliberately exaggerated by major outlets who either outright censored or selectively edited their exclusive accounts, beginning with CBS Evening News and later ABC's Nightline.

Not long after the Taliban established an Islamic emirate for the first time in the late 1990s, Brzezinski himself would shamelessly boast that Operation Cyclone had actually started in mid-1979 nearly six months prior to the deployment of Soviet troops later that year. Fresh off the publication of his book *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, the Russophobic Warsaw-native [told](#) the French newspaper *Le Nouvel Observateur* in 1998:

"Question: The former director of the CIA, Robert Gates, stated in his memoirs that the American intelligence services began to aid the Mujaheddin in Afghanistan six months before the Soviet intervention. Is this period, you were the National Security Advisor to President Carter. You therefore played a key role in this affair. Is this correct?"

Brzezinski: Yes. According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujaheddin began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan on December 24, 1979. But the reality, closely guarded until now, is completely otherwise: Indeed, it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention.

Q: Despite this risk, you were an advocate of this covert action. But perhaps you yourself desired this Soviet entry into the war and looked for a way to provoke it?

B: It wasn't quite like that. We didn't push the Russians to intervene, but we knowingly increased the probability that they would.

Q : When the Soviets justified their intervention by asserting that they intended to fight against secret US involvement in Afghanistan , nobody believed them . However, there was an element of truth in this. You don't regret any of this today?

B: Regret what? That secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Russians into the Afghan trap and you want me to regret it? The day that the Soviets officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter, essentially: "We now have the opportunity of giving to the USSR its Vietnam war." Indeed, for almost 10 years, Moscow had to carry on a war that was unsustainable for the regime , a conflict that bought about the demoralization and finally the breakup of the Soviet empire.

Q: And neither do you regret having supported Islamic fundamentalism, which has given arms and advice to future terrorists?

B : What is more important in world history? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some agitated Muslims or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the Cold War?"

If this stunning admission straight from the horse's mouth is too candid to believe, Fitzgerald and Gould obtain [confirmation](#) of Brzezinski's Machiavellian confession from one of their own skeptics. Never mind that Moscow's help had been requested by the legitimate Afghan government to defend itself against the U.S. dirty war, a harbinger of the Syrian conflict more than three decades later when Damascus appealed to Russia in 2015 for military aid to combat Western-backed "rebel" groups. Paul and Liz also uncover C.I.A. fingerprints all over the suspicious February 1979 [assassination](#) of Adolph Dubs, the American Ambassador to Afghanistan, whose negotiation attempts may have inadvertently thrown a wrench into Brzezinski's ploy to draw the USSR into a quagmire. Spurring Carter to give his foreign policy tutor the green light to finance the Islamist proxies, the timely kidnapping and murder of the U.S. diplomat at a Kabul hotel would be pinned on the KGB and the rest was history. The journo couple even go as far as to imply the branch of Western intelligence likely responsible for his murder was an agent from the Safari Club, an unofficial network between the security services of a select group of European and Middle Eastern countries which carried out covert operations during the Cold War across several continents with ties to the worldwide drug trade and Brzezinski.

Although he was considered to be of the 'realist' school of international relations like Kissinger, Brzezinski's plot to engineer a Russian equivalent of Vietnam in Afghanistan increased the clout of neoconservatism in Washington, a persuasion that would later reach its peak of influence in the George W. Bush administration. In retrospect, the need for a massive military buildup to achieve Pax Americana promoted by the war hawks in Team B was a precursor to the influential "Rebuilding America's Defenses" manifesto by the Project for the New American Century cabal preceding 9/11 and the ensuing U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Fitzgerald and Gould also historically trace the ideological roots of neoconservatism to its intellectual foundations in the American Trotskyist movement during the 1930s. If a deviated branch of Marxism seems like an unlikely origin source for the right-

wing interventionist foreign policy of the Bush administration, its basis is not as unexpected as it may appear. In fact, one of the main reasons behind the division between the Fourth International and the Comintern was over the national question, since Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution" called for expansion to impose global revolution unlike Stalin's "socialism in one country" position which respected the sovereignty and self-determination of nation states while still giving support to national liberation movements.

The authors conclude by highlighting how the military overhaul successfully championed by the neoconservatives marked the beginning of the end for U.S. infrastructure maintenance as well. With public attention currently focused on the pending Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to repair decaying industry at home just as the disastrous Afghan pullout has put President Joe Biden's favorability at an all-time low, Fitzgerald and Gould truly connect all the dots between the decline of America as a superpower with Brzezinski and Team B. Even recent statements by Jimmy Carter himself were tantamount when he [spoke with Trump](#) about China's economic success which he attributed to Beijing's lack of wasteful spending on military adventures, an incredible irony given the groundwork for the defense budget escalation begun under Ronald Reagan was laid by Carter's own foreign policy. Looking back, the spousal team note that the ex-Georgia governor did not need much coaxing after all to betray his promises as a candidate, considering his rise to the presidency was facilitated by his membership alongside Brzezinski in the [Trilateral Commission](#), an elite Rockefeller-funded think tank. What is certain is that Paul and Liz have written an indispensable book that gives a level of insight into the Afghan story only attainable from their four decades of scholarly work on the subject. *The Valediction: Three Nights of Desmond* is now available from Trine Day Press and the timing of its release could not offer better context to recent world events.

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