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By Editor

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The crime against Afghanistan

It's the longest U.S. war ever. And no one in the ruling U.S. imperialist establishment can explain why it continues.

Before Trump recently claimed he was for withdrawing at least some of the thousands of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, similar promises were made by previous U.S. presidents, Democrats and Republicans. But the U.S. occupation never ended.

Nearly 4,500 U.S. youth have died and thousands have been grievously wounded there. Some survivors are starting to ask questions about why they were sent to Afghanistan in the first place.

Many, many more Afghans have suffered even worse fates in this unequal war, including babies, small children, wedding parties and farmers working in their fields. Land mines are everywhere. Drones overhead in Afghanistan – unable to tell the difference between a wedding party and a gathering of fighters – are called in for murderous air strikes from bases from the U.S. West to Afghanistan itself.

The war has cost U.S. taxpayers over a trillion dollars. Its cost to the Afghan people is incalculable.

Why did it start? Because the U.S. ruling class couldn't stand the fact that in 1978 – more than 40 years ago! – a revolution succeeded in Afghanistan, led by a progressive party that was friendly with the Soviet Union.

The revolution was precipitated by the fact that Nur Muhammad Taraki, leader of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, had been thrown in jail by a reactionary government backed by the U.S. In response to Taraki's arrest, rank-and-file soldiers and workers broke down the jail doors and freed him – which began the end of the government favored by Washington.

Then a revolutionary government headed by the PDPA lasted a little over a decade. But in that short time, it abolished the debt of peasants to rich landlords, distributed land to the peasants and set up collective farms, established schools for both girls and boys, eliminated the “bride price” and declared equal rights for women, among other reforms.

At that time the Cold War with the Soviet Union was the priority for Washington. So within a year of the progressive Afghan revolution, the U.S. was scheming for its overthrow. The CIA secretly armed and financed an attempted counterrevolution led by dispossessed landlords. This drew the USSR, an ally of the Taraki government, into the conflict.

That was the origin of the U.S. war in Afghanistan, which continues to this day, even though the USSR is long gone.

Washington today claims to be for women's rights in Afghanistan, and must stay there to protect the people against reactionary Islamist forces. That's sheer hypocrisy! It was the U.S. that empowered such forces in the first place, in order to use them against the USSR.

Equally monstrous is the track record of the powerful U.S. capitalist media, which continue to suppress knowledge of Washington's real role in Afghanistan and instead present the Pentagon and all its highly paid contractors as an instrument for progress.

It's time to reveal the truth – and to end 40 years of the U.S. war on Afghanistan.

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