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Taliban Warns US to Learn From Soviet Defeat

By Jason Ditz

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It was 23 years ago today that the Soviet occupation forces finally gave up on a bloody decade-long war in Afghanistan, limping out of the country with their own economy in tatters, and the Soviet-backed Afghan government on the brink of collapse.



If that sounds familiar, it should, according to the Taliban's latest statement. A decade into their own bloody occupation of Afghanistan, NATO and the United States are in a bad way, and the Taliban is predicting the "same future the Russian invaders faced in the past."

The Taliban statement urged the US to learn a lesson from the Soviet defeat and to stop fighting a "meaningless battle," instead withdrawing as soon as possible. They also presented the US agreement on talks as evidence of their eventual victory.

The lesson could well have been learned long ago, but despite Taliban confidence there is little sign NATO is "getting it" in Afghanistan, as US officials negotiate to keep troops in the nation through 2024 even as they present limited power transfers to the war-weary voting public.