

## The New Yalta and the holocaust in Afghanistan

by Konstantin George

The simultaneous arrivals on Jan. 4 of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Kabul, and of U.S. Undersecretary of State Michael Armacost in Pakistan, have given rise to a flurry of "optimistic" reports in the Western press that a so-called "political solution" to the eight-year-old genocidal war by the Russians in Afghanistan may be at hand.

The speculation has been fueled by the fact that Shevardnadze's visit was not previously announced, and his talks with Afghan puppet ruler Najib have been shrouded in secrecy.

Then came the Shevardnadze declaration of Jan. 6, carried by TASS, forming headline news all over the world, where he proclaimed that a deal on Afghanistan had been struck with the United States: "In accordance with the prepared documents, the guarantors of this obligation will be the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. I stress that the American side agreed to be a guarantor and accordingly to cease helping the anti-government armed groups."

Questioned by a Soviet TV reporter, Shevardnadze added that he and Najib had reached agreement on a Soviet troop withdrawal, "There are not many questions left to be resolved."

Many in the West have remarkably short memories. It was exactly one year ago, on Jan. 5, 1987, during Shevardnadze's first visit to Afghanistan, that we witnessed a similar wave of "pre-settlement" euphoria. At that time Shevardnadze had declared that "we are closer than ever before to a settlement."

The Western media's "optimism" is falsely grounded, because they overlook a fundamental reality principle. Moscow will never pull its troops out of Afghanistan, except

under conditions of a total United States and Pakistani capitulation, expressed concretely through a total stoppage of military and all other forms of assistance, including territorial sanctuaries in Pakistan, for the Afghan Resistance. This precondition for a Soviet troop pull-out has been made by the Soviet leadership, and has appeared daily in the Soviet media since the start of the year.

This position was reiterated by Shevardnadze to Soviet television on Jan. 6, when he stressed that a Soviet troop withdrawal could begin only "after the implementation of a U.S. guarantee" to stop aiding the resistance.

### Military realities

The "pre-settlement" euphoria also ignores the fundamental military realities of the present situation. First, the Russians' puppet Afghan Army narrowly escaped an Afghan "Dien Bien Phu" at Khost, where 8,000 Afghan troops in the surrounded garrison were on the verge of a humiliating surrender to the forces of the resistance.

Second, the combined Russian/Afghan offensive with 50,000 troops to relieve the Khost garrison was mauled by guerrilla attacks from well-protected mountain positions overlooking the road from Gardez to Khost, used by the Red Army and Afghan columns. The guerrillas skillfully exploited the inherent Russian inability to adapt flexibly to a new battle situation, while the Russians stuck to their preconceived idea of an "all-costs" advance via the road to Khost. The result was very heavy losses for the Russians and the Afghan troops.

Third, and by no means least, the battle for Khost is not over by a long shot. Some Russian relief convoys have gotten

through to the garrison, but others have been unable to do so. The heaviest fighting of the Afghan War is now under way, in continuing large-scale battles not only along the road, but in the mountains to the north and to the south of the road, where some 10,000 Russian airborne troops are battling the guerrillas.

At the year's end, already some 10,000 guerrillas were engaged in the fighting, and after the New Year, according to an announcement made by the resistance in Peshawar, Pakistan, an additional 5,000 armed guerrillas had crossed into Afghanistan to join the fighting. Guerrilla attacks have also picked up steam in other parts of the country in the first week of January. No words by Shevardnadze or anyone else can wish these facts away.

Thus, nothing short of President Reagan capitulating to the "New Yalta" lobby inside his administration to accept Soviet demands would permit Moscow to withdraw its army and end the murderous war in Afghanistan. This brings us to another reality principle concerning Afghanistan, where one must ask how so-called superpower guarantees can enforce a settlement that would somehow go around the fact that the Afghan population (which is armed) would settle for anything less than placing the resistance in power.

The eight years of murder and devastation by the Soviets have lawfully created a situation where the Afghan people quite understandably will never accept any government except a government by the resistance. Without the Soviet army of occupation, the Kabul puppet regime would last maybe 24 hours. The population's hatred of the Najib quisling government is all but unanimous, the hatred extending even into Najib's family, as the recent defection of his own brother showed.

### **1979-88: holocaust in Afghanistan**

The level of moral degeneration of Western governments and political leaders is perhaps best illustrated by the sickening curtain of silence, indeed the toleration, of the genocide committed by Moscow against the population of Afghanistan.

In eight years, the Soviet occupation forces have exceeded the rates of brutality and mass murder committed by the Nazis in the occupied countries of Europe during the war. The population of Afghanistan is estimated at 14 million. Under the Soviet Nazis, the toll of these eight long years runs as follows:

- 1,200,000 have been killed, mostly civilians, through endless Russian bombing and shelling of cities, towns, and villages. To this, we must add, the dozens (the exact number may never be known) of Afghan "Lidices," or "Oradours," where the entire civilian population, old people, women, and children, of a village was rounded up and executed.

- In addition to the dead, there are the upwards of 500,000 maimed, crippled, those, including a few hundred thousand children, missing one or both arms or legs, the results of

Soviet bombs, shells, and above all, the deliberate mining of the mountain paths used by the refugee streams fleeing into Pakistan.

- To this toll, one must add the refugees, totaling some 5,500,000, including more than 3,500,000 in Pakistan alone. Their home villages no longer exist, bombed to dust by the Russians. But the 5,500,000 refugees are the external refugees, those who have fled from war-devastated regions out of Afghanistan. To this figure must be added some 2,000,000 internal refugees, who were forced to abandon ruined villages and seek refuge in the cities of Afghanistan.

- Villagers are farmers and herdsman, and in addition to the villages destroyed, the Russians applied the scorched earth policy to the fields, orchards, and forests in most of Afghanistan, while most of the cattle were butchered. Through this Russian policy of bringing death and forced expulsions, most of rural Afghanistan, especially south of the Hindu Kush Mountains, has been depopulated.

- Besides the villages, the cities of Afghanistan have not been spared by the Russian Air Force and Army. Afghanistan's second and third largest cities, Kandahar in the south and Herat in the west, have suffered very heavy physical damage from repeated air raids, and tens of thousands of civilian casualties.

Thus, in a total population of 14 million, we have a toll of some 9 million casualties, including dead, gravely wounded, or crippled, and refugees, both abroad and internally.

Dec. 27 marked the eighth anniversary of the Russian invasion, and also exhibited the moral bankruptcy of Western political forces seeking a "New Yalta" with Moscow. The West German example best illustrates this. The Hamburg-based *Afghanistanblätter*, an Afghan Resistance publication, had requested interviews with leading West German political figures, whom the publication's chief editor, A. Rahman Nadjafi, had hoped would at least issue pro forma denunciations of the Soviet invasion and occupation.

Nothing of the sort occurred. West Germany's appeasement-loving foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, flatly declared, according to Nadjafi, that he chose at the present time not to make any statement on Afghanistan. The Bonn government's labor minister, Norbert Blüm, who had recently posed as a "champion" of human rights concerning Chile and South Africa, pleaded that he didn't even have half an hour's time to make a statement on Afghanistan.

The other political leader who pleaded "no time" for a statement on Afghanistan was Bavarian minister-president and CSU leader, Franz Josef Strauss.

Strauss was too busy leading the post-INF sell-out crowd, propelled by the Liberal Establishment and the Bush crowd to make submission pilgrimages to Moscow. Strauss's sell-out is covered elsewhere in this publication (see Report from Bonn, page 49). For here, we ought to note the importance of the date that Moscow chose for him to arrive in Moscow: Dec. 27, the eighth anniversary of the Russian invasion.