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INVOLVEMENT OF PAKISTAN AND SAUDI ARABIA IN THE EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN IN THE LATE 1970s

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Abstract. Introduction. In this article, the author examines the position of the countries of the Middle East region in the late 1970s with regard to the armed conflict in Afghanistan. The emphasis is on the period on the eve of the entry of the Soviet troops to Afghanistan – from the April Revolution of 1978 until December 1979. The author’s focus is on two states: Pakistan directly bordering on Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia, which is a major geopolitical actor in the region. *Methods and materials.* The author relies on documentary sources such as “Department of state bulletin”, documents of secret correspondence of the U.S. foreign policy agencies, documents of the U.S. National Security Archive, and special volumes on Afghanistan and the Middle East in “Foreign Relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers, 1977–1980”. Thanks to these sources, it is possible to prove that the involvement of the states of the region in the Afghan armed conflict and its internationalization began even before the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan. *Analysis.* First, an overview of the objectives pursued by these states in Afghanistan and in the internal Afghan armed conflict is given. Following this, the author consistently reveals the position of these states in relation to the April Revolution of 1978, the ever-increasing Soviet involvement in the Afghan events (1978–1979) and the civil war that started against the Kabul government. *Results.* In conclusion the article reveals the role of these states in the process of internationalization of the Afghan armed conflict, which, according to the author, began before the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan.

Key words: Afghan war, Afghan armed conflict, Cold War, Middle East, Afghan-Pakistani relations, Muslim countries in the late 1970s.

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ПРОЦЕСС ВОВЛЕЧЕНИЯ ПАКИСТАНА И САУДОВСКОЙ АРАВИИ В СОБЫТИЯ В АФГАНИСТАНЕ (КОНЕЦ 1970-х гг.)

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Аннотация. В настоящей статье автор рассматривает процесс вовлечения некоторых стран региона Среднего и Ближнего Востока в конце 1970-х гг. в афганский вооруженный конфликт. Автором для анализа избран период времени накануне ввода советских войск – начиная с Апрельской революции 1978 г. и вплоть до декабря 1979 года. В фокусе внимания находятся два государства: непосредственно граничащий с Афганистаном Пакистан и отдаленная от Афганистана, но являющаяся крупным геополитическим актором в регионе Саудовская Аравия. Причины выбора этих государств раскрываются в статье. В своем исследовании автор опирается преимущественно на документальные источники соответствующего периода. Благодаря последним можно доказать, что вовлечение государств региона в афганский вооруженный конфликт и, следовательно, его интернационализация начались еще на этапе до ввода в Афганистан советских войск. Обоснование этого факта и является целью настоящего исследования. Вначале обозначаются цели, преследуемые этими государствами в

Афганистане и в начавшемся в конце 1970-х внутреннем афганском вооруженном конфликте. Автор кратко касается роли ислама в процессе вовлечения этих государств в афганские внутренние события. Вслед за этим автор раскрывает позицию этих государств в отношении: Апрельской революции 1978 г., советского вовлечения в афганские события в 1978–1979 гг. и начавшейся против официального кабульского правительства гражданской войны. В итоге раскрывается роль этих государств в процессе интернационализации афганского вооруженного конфликта, который, как доказывает автор, начался до ввода советских войск в Афганистан.

Ключевые слова: афганская война, афганский вооруженный конфликт, холодная война, Ближний и Средний Восток, афгано-пакистанские отношения, мусульманские страны в конце 1970-х годов.

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Introduction. The theme of the “Afghan war” 1979–1989 with the direct participation of the USSR remains actual. It is known that initially the conflict in Afghanistan was internal, but since the late 1970s it became a field for the “test of strength” of the superpowers, and the involvement of the USSR and the USA in this conflict (and, accordingly, its internationalization) took place even before the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan. The thesis of the involvement of the superpowers in the Afghan conflict even before the Soviet troops entered the country are now unlikely in doubt. In this article, the author will consider a rather poorly studied topic – the position of some countries of the Middle East region in the late 1970s regarding the events in Afghanistan and the process of their involvement in the Afghan conflict. The author’s task and the main goal of the study is to reveal the motives and goals of some states of the Middle East in relation to Afghanistan and the events in it and to show that the involvement of some states of the region in the Afghan conflict began at the same time as the involvement of the USA and the USSR in this conflict – that is, even before the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan. The issue raised in the article is also significant because local armed conflicts continue to remain an essential element of international relations: an analysis of the processes of internationalization of local military conflicts of the past is useful for predicting and resolving conflicts of the present and future.

Many authors write about “outside intervention” in the Afghan armed conflict as a given, but how and why this intervention took place is extremely poorly described. The author has made an attempt to fill this gap. The novelty of the theme is to show the process of involving

large regional Muslim states in the internal Afghan armed conflict in dynamics, to find out its main causes and goals. The author for the first time carried out an almost step-by-step analysis of the process of involvement, the evolution of the position held and the motives for the involvement of some states in the region of the Middle East in the Afghan conflict.

1978 (starting from the April Revolution) and 1979 were chosen by the author as the chronological framework of the work because this short period is no less significant for the modern history of Afghanistan than, for example, 1917 is for the modern history of Russia – it was during these approximately one and a half years in a number of events took place in Afghanistan that radically influenced its further political, economic, cultural, etc. development. This stage in the history of Afghanistan (from the April Revolution to the introduction of Soviet troops) deserves the most detailed study. The author focuses on two states: Pakistan, directly bordering Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia, which is a large and very influential geopolitical actor in the region. Why did the author choose these particular states? Because they were the most active regional players in the Afghan events, which will be discussed in detail below. Pakistan was of particular interest with regard to Afghanistan – here both ethnic motives, and the unresolved issue of the “Durand Line” took place. For Saudi Arabia, a change in the balance of power in the region could also have negative consequences; therefore this state was also interested in preventing the final victory of the “left” → forces in Afghanistan.

It is well known that the involvement of these states (especially Pakistan – a large number of sources and studies are available on the process

of Pakistani involvement in the Afghan events) began before 1979. The author's hypothesis is as follows: the full involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan armed conflict took place before December 1979, and these states carried out partnership in this regard. In order to find out what events triggered the involvement of each of the mentioned states in the Afghan conflict and contributed to its escalation, we will first analyze the general motives prompting each state to intervene in the Afghan conflict; and then consider the process of involvement in dynamics – from the April Revolution of 1978 to December 1979.

Methods and materials. As the main research method in this article, the author uses the comparative historical analysis, examining in a comparative perspective the positions of these states regarding the situation in Afghanistan in the late 1970s, and comparing their practical actions. The author relies primarily on foreign published documents – for example, “Department of state bulletin” [22; 28]; on documents of secret correspondence of the U.S. foreign policy departments declassified after of the seizure of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran by Iranian students in November 1979 [29]; on documents from the U.S. National Security Archive, and special volumes on Afghanistan and the Middle East, published in 2015 and 2018 in “Foreign Relations of the United States. Diplomatic Papers, 1977–1980” [9; 10]. Thanks to the analysis of the documents, the author proves that the involvement of the states of the region in the Afghan internal political struggle began even before the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan and shows in dynamics how it was happening.

A small number of works directly concern the topic of the article, but one can name an article by the Russian orientalist E.S. Melkumyan “The introduction of Soviet troops in Afghanistan: causes and consequences” [21] and the article “Afghanistan in the policy of the USSR and the USA in 1979: Diplomacy in history” by T.A. Vorobieva and V.T. Yungblyud [35], which are devoted to the analysis of the Afghan events in 1979, and the article by Ye.S. Melkumyan based on materials from Russian archives, which is of particular interest. Also, the Afghan events on the eve of the introduction of the limited contingent of Soviet troops into this country are considered in the following works: in the monograph “Afghan

policy of the USA in 1945–2014” by M.R. Arunova and V.I. Ivanenko [1, pp. 18–34]; in the work “USA and Afghanistan (1978–1989)” by A.S. Ivaschenko [16, pp. 29–57]; in the monograph “People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan in power. The time of Taraki-Amin (1978–1979)” by M.F. Slinkin devoted mainly to internal subjects – but the topic of foreign policy is also touched upon [31]; in the article “U.S. secret strategy in Afghanistan in 1979–1989” by V.M. Toporkov [33]; in the monograph “Persian Gulf: the aggravation of the political and military situation and international relations in the late 20th – early 21st centuries” by U.Z. Sharipov [30, pp. 20–33]; in the fundamental monograph by V.G. Korgun “History of Afghanistan. XX century” [18]; in the monograph by V.S. Boyko “Problems and contradictions of modernization in Afghanistan in the 20th – early 21st centuries. Essays on alternative strategies and practices” [5] – and this is not a complete list of works on the theme. Among foreign authors one can mark: “The Afghanistan wars” by W. Maley [20] and J. Kepel's work “Jihad: the expansion and decline of Islamism” [17, pp. 135–147], – we note that in this work J. Kepel is interested not in the “Afghan war” itself, but in its role in the process of the worldwide spread of the ideology of Islamism.

Now let us touch on the “regional” historiography – so far as this article will examine the position of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia regarding the Afghan conflict in 1978–1979 and the process of their involvement in this conflict, the author will resort to literature dedicated to each of these states separately. Most of all we have literature, which touches upon the question of Pakistan's role in the Afghan events on the eve of the introduction of the limited contingent of Soviet troops into Afghanistan: this is a monograph by V.Ya. Belokrenitsky and V.N. Moskalenko “East in world politics. Asia and Africa in the history of international relations and modern world politics” [3] and the work of V.Ya. Belokrenitsky “The history of Pakistan. 20th century” [4, pp. 336–349], they touch upon the topic raised in this article; monograph by O.V. Pleshov “Islam, Islamism and nominal democracy in Pakistan” [26]; monograph by V.N. Spolnikov “Afghanistan. Islamic opposition: the origins and purposes” [32, pp. 30–41, 83–93], which analyzes the role of Pakistan in the process of forming the structure of the

Afghan armed opposition; dissertation by Yu.N. Panichkin dedicated to Afghan-Pakistani relations [25]; K. Iskandarov's article "Factor of Pakistan in the Afghan conflict", which considers the reasons for Pakistani involvement in the Afghan events [15]; article by A.Z. Hilali "The costs and benefits of the Afghan war for Pakistan" [13], which analyzes the place of the Afghan conflict in Pakistani foreign policy; monograph "Pakistan. Between mosque and military" H. Haqqani [11].

Let's move on to research on the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia. The author would like to point out the work of M.B. Asanbaev "Arabian monarchies: society, authority and the state" [2], which examines the mechanisms of foreign policy of Arabian monarchies, and in particular Saudi Arabia; for the monograph by A.I. Yakovlev "Saudi Arabia and the West" [36]; for the monograph by G.G. Kosach and E.S. Melkumyan "Saudi Arabian foreign policy. Priorities, directions, decision-making process" [19], which examines the doctrinal foundations and mechanisms for the implementation of the foreign policy of this monarchy, and the article by A. Ya. Neymatov "Islamic factor and its influence on Saudi politics" [23]; and also to note the works of foreign researchers – "Jihad in Saudi Arabia. Violence and Pan-Islamism since 1979" by T. Hegghammer [12, pp. 24–30], "Saudi Arabia's jihad in the Middle East and the world" M. Nisan [24], article "Saudi Arabia and the United States, 1931–2002" by J. Pollack [27], work by E. Cordesman "Saudi Arabia and the US: common interests and continuous sources of tension" [8]. It should be noted that the first two foreign works are devoted to the role of Saudi Arabia in the genesis and formation of such a phenomenon as international politicization and radicalization of Islam, and, according to some researchers, the Afghan armed conflict of 1979–1989 and the Islamic states involved in it played an important role in this process. The second two works study the U.S.-Saudi bilateral relations, but the "Afghan" issue is also touched upon in them, because during the 1980s it was significant in the overall spectrum of U.S.-Saudi Arabia relations.

Summing up, the author will note that all the works known to him do not question the point of view according to which the involvement of

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan events began even before the introduction of the limited contingent of Soviet troops into Afghanistan at the end of 1979. But the authors of the works do not usually illustrate this statement by documentary sources. The next part of the article will confirm the thesis about the involvement of the Muslim states of the region in the Afghan armed conflict in 1978–1979 by documents and consider the involvement in dynamics.

Analysis. First, let us touch on the motives behind the involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan events of 1978–1979, as well as the goals pursued by these states in Afghanistan. We will start by looking at Pakistan's motives. Afghan-Pakistani relations were difficult throughout the second half of the 20th century – and the reason for this, not least lies in the unresolved issue of demarcation of the Afghan-Pakistani border [15; 25, pp. 3, 17]. As a result of the Durand Line in 1893, a significant part of the Pashtun tribes that constituted the dominant ethnic group in Afghanistan ended up living in India. After the formation in 1947 of two states – India and Pakistan – the Afghan-Pakistani border also passed along the Durand Line. The Durand Line was not recognized as a state border by any of the Afghan governments. So, despite the fact that the inhabitants of both Pakistan and Afghanistan are predominantly Muslims of the Sunni branch, for Pakistan with regard to Afghanistan and the issue of involvement in the Afghan events, the primary role was played not by Islamic, but by other factors: the issue of the unsettled state border and the issue of influence on the Pashtun tribes, of which, after the Durand Line was carried out, about half ended up on the territory of the British India.

The involvement of Pakistan in the Afghan events began in the mid-1970s – when, after an unsuccessful uprising against the regime of Afghan Prime Minister M. Daoud, the leaders of several Afghan anti-government groups took refuge in Pakistan receiving a rather warm acceptance there. Even then – i.e. a few years before the April 1978 Revolution, the headquarters of anti-government Afghan organizations were established in Pakistan [16, p. 36–37; 32, pp. 23–24, 27]. They were mentioned in particular by V.N. Spolnikov and A.S. Ivaschenko. Later, the first training camps for training militants

appeared [16, p. 43]. In 1977, the political leadership in Pakistan changed, and General M. Zia-ul-Haq has come to power, who began to pursue an even more bold policy towards Afghanistan than his predecessors [34, pp. 84–85].

In addition, it should be pointed out that after the introduction of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, Pakistan found itself as if “surrounded”. On the one hand, the neighborhood with India, with which Pakistan had rather complicated relations from the first years of its existence as an independent state. On the other hand, Soviet troops stationed in Afghanistan and an unfriendly pro-socialist government (which did not want to recognize the Durand line, we recall). In this difficult situation from the point of view of protecting its state interests, Pakistan chose the position of solidarity with the Afghan anti-government forces [7, p. 151]. This decision also gave Pakistan hopes (which were justified) for getting support from the United States – of the Soviet antagonist in the Afghan armed conflict that had begun – despite the fact that in the second half of the 1970s Pakistani-U.S. relations were somewhat tense over the issue of Pakistan’s development of nuclear weapons.

The second major actor in the Afghan events is Saudi Arabia. It is worth pointing out that already in the 1970s Saudi Arabia in the region of the Middle East played the role of leader in the protection and spread of Islam [19], and the religious reason for Saudi Arabia was one of the main for intervening in the Afghan conflict. But at the same time, it cannot be argued that the religious factor was the only one for Saudi Arabia in the issue of providing assistance to Afghan anti-government groups and the involvement in the Afghan armed conflict. There were other reasons for interest in the Afghan events, and they were of a geopolitical nature – for example, one can recall that at the same period of time Saudi Arabia paid close attention to the Arab-Israeli conflict, took an active part in the Yemeni conflict [10, p. 578, 769, 775] and was worried about the new foreign policy concept of Iran, which Iran began to implement soon after the Iranian revolution in 1979 and the establishment of a theocratic regime in the country [14, pp. 428–431]. In general, Saudi Arabia was worried about a possible “turning point” in the status quo in the Middle East region [10, p. 587] and changes in the regional balance

of power, which could have been facilitated, among other things, by Afghanistan after the April 1978 Revolution, whose new government openly proclaimed socialist ideals and tried to pursue a policy of de-Islamization. Any abrupt changes in the geopolitical balance of power in the Greater Middle East region did not suit Saudi Arabia – and it was, as the author sees it, the second reason (after the religious one), why since the late 1970s the Saudi monarchy began to engage in the Afghan armed conflict.

The next stage of work is to highlight the events that became the main triggers for the involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan conflict. Let’s start with the attitude of these states to the April 1978 Revolution. We have the Soviet document “Recording of conversations with the Ambassador of Pakistan A. Arshad and the Ambassador of Iran H. Davudi on May 9, 1978” prepared by the Ambassador of the USSR in Afghanistan A.M. Puzanov. This document gives a positive assessment of Pakistan’s attitude to the events of the April Revolution. The author of the document writes the following: “At a reception at the Czechoslovakian Embassy I had conversations with the ambassadors of Pakistan and Iran.

The Pakistani ambassador said that he visited N.M. Taraki and declared recognition. The conversation with the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, the Prime Minister of the DRA was very interesting, N.M. Taraki made a favorable impression...

I asked if the ambassador noticed that the new government took a different position from the very beginning with respect to the Pashtun issue than M. Daud, when he came to power – the government announced its intention to resolve the issue by peaceful political means...

The ambassador agreed with this and stated that Pakistan will cooperate and maintain friendly relations with Afghanistan” [37].

From the text of the document, we see that Soviet diplomats in Afghanistan were quite optimistic about the prospects for the development after the April 1978 Revolution of Afghanistan’s relations with its closest neighbors – Iran and Pakistan, in contrast to American diplomats and CIA officials, who give in their reports more restrained forecasts.

Thus, in the intelligence memorandum of the U.S. CIA dated May 5, 1978, No. RPM-78-10208,

“The New Afghan Government’s Relations with the USSR”, the following assessments are given to the prospects for the development of Afghan-Pakistani relations: “The chances of a direct confrontation between the USSR and Afghanistan’s anti-Communist neighbors remain low, although they have increased slightly. Both Tehran and Islamabad will use the prospect of such a confrontation as an argument for increased U.S. military and political support” [9, p. 26]. In telegram No. 1148Z received on May 18 1978 from the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan to the Department of State, U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan A. Hummel indicated that Pakistanis are concerned about the recent events in Afghanistan [9, pp. 42–46]. But at the same time, the ambassador emphasized that the Pakistani leadership took a wait-and-see attitude towards Afghanistan [9, p. 44]. In general, we note that in the documents cited, their authors correctly noted that the Afghan events in April 1978 were for Pakistan not only a cause for concern (which was caused by the new Kabul regime and its rapprochement with the USSR), but also a reason to hope to receive from the USA assistance and military-political guarantees of Pakistani security [6, p. 203; 20, p. 52].

Less is known about the reaction to the April Revolution of Saudi Arabia, including because during the period under review the USSR did not have diplomatic relations with this state, but it can be assumed with a significant degree of probability that this state also took the April 1978 events in Afghanistan without much enthusiasm. In the author’s opinion, the April 1978 Revolution itself, as such, was not the main trigger for the involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan armed conflict, since, as we can argue from the evidence of documents, Pakistan (and, most likely, Saudi Arabia) initially took a wait-and-see position on the new Kabul regime. The intervention of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan conflict was facilitated by further events that were growing month after month – the increasing involvement of the USSR, the growth of the anti-government movement, the discontent of the Afghan population, etc. – but there is no doubt that all these events would hardly have taken place without the April Revolution.

Now we consider how events developed in the second half of 1978 and throughout 1979. If the

position of not only the United States, but also Islamabad shortly after the April 1978 Revolution remained rather wait-and-see, then later it began to lean towards making a decision on the involvement in Afghan events. In Afghanistan reforms began, which were generally unpopular among the local population, de-Islamization was carried out at the state level, as a result of these events (and not only them), the outflow of refugees began to neighboring countries, primarily to Pakistan. Since the beginning of 1979, articles have appeared in the Soviet press explaining the aggravation of the situation in Afghanistan by the “outside interference” from Pakistan; the embassies of the USSR in Pakistan and in the United States protested against the support of the Afghan armed opposition forces, respectively, by Pakistan and the United States [9, pp. 117–121, 146–147]. “Outside interference” is one of the main reasons that later served as an official explanation for the Soviet leadership for the introduction of the limited contingent of Soviet troops into Afghanistan. Did Pakistani “outside interference” really take place before the arrival of Soviet troops?

Already in the second half of May 1978, U.S.-Pakistani consultations on the “Afghan question” began. Thus, on May 25, 1978, in New York, during the U.N. special session on disarmament, U.S. Secretary of State S. Vance met with Pakistani Foreign Minister Agha Shahi. He confirmed that the Pakistani leadership was concerned about the recent Afghan events and noted that “The Saudis have promised but are slow... In this situation, Pakistan stands alone” [9, p. 51]. At the same time, in the words of the Agha Shahi in relation to Pakistan, the term “a front line state” sounded and requests for American support were made. On June 9, 1978, U.S. President J. Carter sent a letter to Pakistani President M. Zia-ul-Haq, in which he promised Pakistan U.S. support, including within the framework of cooperation on the “Afghan problem” [9, pp. 53–55].

The assessment of the events in Afghanistan as a threat to the country’s national interests continued further in the circles of the Pakistani leadership. In another document – “Evaluation of events in Afghanistan and American-Afghan Relations”, No. 4356 dated December 1, 1978, sent by the U.S. Secretary of State to the U.S.

Embassy in Kabul, the authors write: “We... will consider a dependent Afghanistan, supported by the Soviets, as a serious threat to peace and stability in this region. We consider that... they are afraid of this... in Pakistan...”

...Pakistan, apparently, strives for us to share its assessments, perhaps to achieve greater U.S. commitments in relation to its security” [29, pp. 23–26].

In 1979, the United States began developing the “Afghan strategy”, which was supposed to involve Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. In the document of the CIA (early 1979) “*Covert action options against Afghanistan*”, we can for the first time get acquainted with the plans to provide American support to Afghan rebel groups in collaboration with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia: “Small amounts of non-lethal material such as medical supplies, rations and low-grade communications equipment, might be furnished unilaterally through Pakistan territory... or possibly by having the Saudis broker the deal with... Pakistan... If significant quantities of aid were involved, this could not be kept secret. The U.S. government probably would be accused of supporting the rebels by the Soviets and the Afghan press, whether or not concrete proof was available” [9, p. 109]. In the next paragraph of the same document, the authors reflect on the possibility of providing assistance to the Afghan rebels with not only medicines, communications equipment and uniforms, but also weapons: “Funds could be provided to the insurgents to purchase lethal military equipment, as in the non-lethal insurgency support option outlined above. Likewise, the Saudis could be asked to front for us on this... Afghan rebel cadres could be brought out of the area and trained in a third country such as Saudi Arabia” [9, pp. 109–110].

Later, in spring 1979, the discussion of the issue of assistance to Afghan anti-government groups from Pakistan and Saudi Arabia was continued [9, pp. 124–130]. In mid-spring 1979, two meetings between representatives of the United States and Pakistan were held in Islamabad, during which initial agreements were reached on helping the Afghan insurgents – for example, the Pakistani side offered the United States to finance the purchases of medicines for the rebel groups in Pakistan and provide them with weapons and ammunition not-produced in the

USA [9, p. 152]. In early July 1979, in the special coordinating committee for Afghanistan in the United States, a discussion was held on cooperation on aid – including financial – to Afghan rebel groups, and the aid was not discussed in general terms (which can be seen even in the spring documents), but specific measures and actions (financial assistance, purchase of medicines, propagandistic activities, etc.) were indicated [9, pp. 206–207]. In the same period, the Pakistani political and military leadership made the first attempts to create a unified party uniting opposition Afghan groups, as reported by reports from the U.S. Consulate in Peshawar on August 16, 1979 [29, pp. 107–108] and from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad on May 14, 1979 [29, pp. 39–41].

At the same time, official Islamabad continued to express concerns about the growing Soviet military presence in Afghanistan, as evidenced, for example, by the message of the Canadian delegation on the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistani-Afghan relations made during the discussion on Afghanistan by political advisers of NATO in August 1979: “Pakistan’s response to the fearsome presence and influence of the Soviets in Afghanistan is difficult to predict, what is a factor potentially contributing to instability in the area. Irrational elements in Pakistani foreign policy, including its ‘Islamic’ claims, also play a role” [29, pp. 90–91]. Official speeches of U.S. officials also show concern about the situation in and around Afghanistan and how the situation in Afghanistan will affect its closest neighbors (meaning Pakistan, Iran and China) – which we can see, for example, in the speech of H. Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs (until January 1981) on September 26, 1979 before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee [28, pp. 53–54].

At the end of summer 1979, we can already talk about the full involvement of Pakistan in the Afghan armed conflict. So, in the report prepared in the CIA on August 22, 1979, “CIA Covert Action Activities in Afghanistan”, it says that “Pakistan liaison has agreed in principle to serve as a channel for CIA aid to the insurgents” [9, p. 173]. Contacts between the Pakistani political leadership and the United States on the issue of

Pakistan's position on providing assistance to the Afghan rebels continued in fall – September 22 [29, pp. 136–137] and October 14, 1979 [29, p. 156], the representatives of Pakistan and the USA had meetings on this issue. At the end of October 1979, the Pakistanis confirmed their agreement “to provide limited supplies of equipment to the Afghan rebels” [29, pp. 164–165]. During the meeting S. Gailani (leader of the Afghan anti-government party “National Front for Islamic Revolution of Afghanistan”) with the head of the Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan for Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey T. Ahmad Khan and the acting secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan R. Pirach an agreement was reached on the transfer of weapons for Afghan rebels by representatives of the Pakistani army in Peshawar.

The facts of Pakistani support for the Afghan insurgents are confirmed by U.S. officials – for example, in the memorandum from Director of Central Intelligence S. Turner “Saudi Arabian and Pakistani Views on the Afghan Insurgency” dated November 5, 1979 addressed to the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs Z. Brzezinski, it is stated: “On 30 October you directed me to take soundings with Pakistani and Saudi intelligence agencies on their intentions for covert action in Afghanistan...”

There is no question that Pakistan – without waiting for us – is already supporting the Afghan tribesmen. The head of Pakistani military intelligence has made it clear that President Zia holds the continuation of the tribal insurgency to be vital to his country's security and that support in the way of weapons, ammunition and explosives is essential to sustain the insurgency” [9, p. 224].

So, the fact of Pakistan's involvement in the Afghan armed conflict can be said with certainty already at the end of summer 1979. But in 1978, Pakistan was still taking a wait-and-see attitude towards Afghanistan. Now let's move on to the issue of Saudi Arabia's involvement in the Afghan conflict.

At the turn of the 1970s – 1980s cooperation between the United States and Saudi Arabia has increased – not least because of the joint assistance to Afghan rebels. However, T. Hegghammer notes that even in the early 1980s Saudi Arabia in relation to Afghan rebel groups was limited only to “diplomatic, political and

humanitarian” support [12, p. 25]. However, there is evidence from foreign authors who note the facts of Saudi Arabia providing assistance to Afghanistan and some other states with “pro-communist” governments since the late 1970s: “Formerly a recipient of U.S. aid, Saudi Arabia began to send its own money abroad in the mid-1970s, including collaborations with the Americans in sponsoring anti-communist rebel movements in Angola, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan” [27, p. 80].

Let us consider how the process of Saudi Arabia's involvement in the Afghan conflict developed in the second half of 1978 and throughout 1979. Saudi Arabia, like Pakistan, was concerned about the possible spread of Soviet influence in the Middle East region and the ever-increasing lurch of Afghanistan into side of the USSR after the April 1978 Revolution. In the memorandum “U.S. Policy in the Middle East”, sent by the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense to the U.S. President on November 9, 1978, it was stated: “I also found grave concern in... Saudi Arabia and about the threat from the Soviet Union. Each leader saw himself and his country on the front lines of opposition to Soviet encroachment and domination... the scope and speed of Soviet arms supply demonstrated in Ethiopia, and the Soviet propensity for subversion and political intervention accomplished in Afghanistan. Each thought we seriously underestimated the weight of the Soviet threat to the region” [10, p. 27]. Telegram 0500Z “Saudi Arabia and Regional Security” from the U.S. Embassy in Saudi Arabia to the U.S. Department of State on January 23, 1979 confirms the Arabian dynasty's concerns: “The Saudis are more convinced than ever that the Soviets are embarked on a policy of encirclement to gain control of the Arabian Peninsula and its oil resources... The events in Afghanistan, the Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa, and stepped-up Soviet activity in South Yemen only serve to confirm their hypothesis about Soviet intentions” [10, p. 579].

Saudi Arabia, like Pakistan, became involved in the Afghan armed conflict in 1979, and this process was gradual. Earlier, the author mentioned the CIA document “*Covert action options against Afghanistan*”, the authors of which talk about the possibility of involving Saudi Arabia and Pakistan in covert U.S. operations in Afghanistan – and in this document we first

meet the mention of Saudi Arabia as a possible ally in helping Afghan insurgents together with the United States [9, pp. 109–110]. Another CIA's document dated March 27, 1979 and titled "Saudi Arabian Aid to the Afghanistan National Liberation Front and Possible Saudi Approach to United States Government with Regard to Aid to the Liberation Front" states that the Saudi government is "impressed" by the recent successes of the "Afghan rebel forces" but despite solidarity with anti-government groups, "The Saudis... continue to withhold any real financial support to the Afghan National Liberation Front" and Saudi Arabia is currently in preliminary contacts with the Pakistani government on support for Afghan insurgents. At the same time, the position of Islamabad remained wait-and-see – "In mid-March Zia informed Crown Prince Fahd that he believed that any kind of Pakistani aid to the Afghan National Liberation Front would cause him problems with the Soviet Union, which, at the moment, he perceives to be almost insurmountable" [9, p. 115].

Besides, the document of the CIA dated April 12, 1979 "Afghanistan: Prospects for the Insurgents" already contains evidence that Saudi Arabia is providing "some support" to Afghan insurgent groups in Pakistan [9, p. 149]. Other evidence of such assistance comes from the text of telegram No. 0710Z "Call by Afghan Rebel Leader" dated August 16, 1979 transmitted from the U.S. Consulate in Lahore to the U.S. Embassies in Afghanistan and Pakistan, which states that the U.S. Consul in Lahore Fuller on August 15 held a meeting with S. Gailani, who during the meeting "asked for U.S. support but only indirectly, to encourage Saudi Arabia to provide material assistance" [9, p. 169]. During the conversation, Gailani also drew attention to the fact that Saudi Arabia is already providing support to the Afghan rebels in Pakistan, but this goes primarily to radical groups.

In the late summer of 1979, Prince Turki bin Faysal, Director of the Saudi Arabian General Intelligence Service, told U.S. officials that "his government was providing limited support to the insurgents" [9, pp. 210–211]. Evidence of aid to Afghan anti-government groups from Saudi Arabia can be obtained from other documents: for example, from the report of the U.S. Embassy

in Pakistan to the U.S. Department of State on October 14, 1979 [29, p. 156]. And from the report of the U.S. Embassy in Jidda to the U.S. Department of State, it is known that on September 23, 1979, the embassy officials had a conversation with the head of the Saudi Arabian Foreign Ministry Department for Arab Affairs Ismail Al-Shura about the situation in Afghanistan and the state of Soviet-Afghan relations [29, p. 155]. In the conversation, I. Al-Shura expressed the opinion that "it is necessary to help the rebels, even if they do not unite, although it is possible that the Saudi Arabian government will continue its efforts to unite them... the goal of the Saudi Arabian government is to continue to muddy the waters and prevent the weakening Khalqi regime to change the balance in its favor". I. Al-Shura characterized the volumes of Saudi aid to Afghan rebels as "very modest" and noted that the Saudi Arabian government is interested in cooperation with the United States about this question.

For the United States, organizing cooperation with Saudi Arabia in helping Afghan groups was also beneficial because, as the U.S. representatives note:

"a. It would reassure the Saudis of the USG's interest in resisting the spread of communism in the Middle East.

b. It could develop a precedent for using the Saudis as an intermediary, concealing U.S. involvement, to support friendly political elements or other covert assets elsewhere in the area." [9, p. 211].

In the previously mentioned memorandum Director of the CIA S. Turner "Saudi Arabian and Pakistani Views on the Afghan Insurgency" dated November 5, 1979, it is stated regarding Saudi Arabia: "The Saudi chief of intelligence states that his government is committed to assisting the Afghan insurgents... On three separate occasions the intelligence chief said that his government would react positively to secret CIA proposals on support to the insurgents" [9, pp. 224–225]. In the same document S. Turner proposes to conclude an agreement with Saudi Arabia on specific amounts that the United States and Saudi Arabia could provide for the rebels.

So, the documentary materials allow us to conclude that the involvement of Saudi Arabia

in the Afghan conflict began even before the Soviet troops entered Afghanistan and was gradually implemented during 1979 (initially, the position of Saudi Arabia was wait-and-see, like the position of Pakistan), and partly within the framework of cooperation with Pakistan and the United States. Saudi support for Afghan anti-government forces began a little earlier than Pakistani – the first evidence of it was in April 1979, while the first evidence of Pakistani support for Afghan rebels dates back to the end of the summer of that year.

Results. The author will present the results of the research in the form of listing them in the descending order of significance:

1. The involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan armed conflict began even before the introduction of the limited contingent of Soviet troops into Afghanistan and took place during 1979, from April for Saudi Arabia and from the end of summer for Pakistan. Note that the involvement was carried out gradually, as evidenced by the documents available and cited in the article.

2. The April 1978 Revolution became a kind of initial trigger for the involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan conflict, since without it there would have been no further events contributing to the escalation of the conflict in Afghanistan.

3. Just about in the first six months after the April 1978 Revolution, the tactics of the states of the region were wait-and-see, although both states under consideration perceived the revolution as a threat either to their national interests (Pakistan) or as a threat to the status quo in the region (Saudi Arabia).

4. Despite the fact of cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in helping the Afghan rebels, their motives for involvement were different. Thus, in the process of its involvement in the Afghan armed conflict for Pakistan, an important role was played by the issue of protecting its interests and ensuring national security, as well as counting on improving relations with the United States. For Saudi Arabia, geopolitical motives (maintaining the regional balance of power) and, to a certain extent, religious (protecting the interests of Islam) were significant.

5. The involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the Afghan armed conflict was

expressed primarily in the organization and implementation of support for Afghan rebel groups.

So, by the date of the introduction of the limited contingent of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, the Afghan armed conflict had already been internationalized, and even if we do not take into account the participation of the USSR and the United States, this happened within the region as a result of the involvement of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in this conflict.

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