US-Soviet Conflict in the Third World: Afghanistan

1. General Background
   Demise of détente: (1) arms control and (2) the Third World Conflict
   Angola
   Horn of Africa
   Mengistu
   Somalia/Ethiopia
   South Yemen
   Brzezinski’s arc of crisis
2. Soviet Decision to Invade Afghanistan
   (a) Background
   Afghanistan little significance to American strategic interests, turned to Soviets
   1973, Daoud’s coup with the help of PDPA (Khalq: Taraki/Amin, Parcham: Karmal)
   Daoud’s move toward Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Pakistan, China
   April 1978, Daoud killed, left-wing PDPA came to power
   Khalq took over—Taraki, chief of state, but figurehead, real power now in Amin
   Parcham purged; radical revolution
   (b) Radicalization of Afghan Revolution and Opposition
   Herat uprising (March 1979), Soviet Politburo, Andropov’s position: US interests
   awakened: (Feb. Iranian Revolution)—covert support for Afghan rebels
   Soviet attempts to broaden the political base of Afghan government (Safronchuk sent)
   Taraki-Brezhnev meeting (August)
   Shootout at the palace, Taraki arrested and executed (September)
   (c) Soviet Decision for Invasion
   Soviet plan to intervene plotted by Andropov, Ustinov, Gromyko
   Ogarkov’s opposition overruled
   December 12, the Politburo decision
   December 25, Soviet troops crossed the border
   December 27, Operation Storm, Amin killed, and Karmal installed
   Beginning of the 9-year Afghan War (initially 85,000 troops, later 35,000 more sent)
   Why did the Soviets decide to intervene?
3. American Reaction
   (a) Carter
   grain embargo, Olympic boycott, withdrawal of SALT II ratification
   Carter Doctrine, China card, military buildup
   Military aid for mujahedin (CIA coordinated guerrilla warfare, formed anti-Soviet
   coalition: Pakistan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, China, eventually more than $2 billion US
   military aid)
   (b) Reagan
   1985, directive seeking to defeat the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan (cf Carter’s
   policy of harassment)
   1986: decision to deliver Stinger missiles to Afghan rebels.