

The United States and Afghanistan 1970 – 2010: Friendships and Foes in Times of War

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Overview

Afghanistan is a landlocked country in Asia that has a history steeped in war and conflict. Twentieth century history has proven a continuation of that history. Throughout Afghanistan's history various outside groups have tried to influence the political and social history. Among the leading influences are Pakistan, the former Soviet Union and the United States. These influences played themselves out in the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. This curriculum unit is an overview of the war that involved many years of conflict and cooperation. This unit will also address the role of the United States Government in conflicts outside of the United States. Students will have the opportunity to explore the geography, culture and politics of Afghanistan.

Rationale

Students in the Philadelphia public school system are offered the opportunity to take Advanced Placement (AP) Courses throughout their high school careers. AP United States Government and Politics is an intensive study of the formal and informal structures of government and the processes of the American political system, with an emphasis on policy-making and implementation. The course is designed to prepare students for the AP Exam. This college level course will give the students an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States. The course includes both a study of general concepts used to interpret U.S. politics and the analysis of specific examples. It also develops familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs and ideas that constitute U.S. politics and acquaints the student with theoretical perspectives and explanations for various behaviors and outcomes.

Each thematic unit in the course involves both the study of general concepts and analysis of specific case studies. The student will develop a more sophisticated understanding of majority-rule democracy, constitutionalism, and civil liberties as well as the relationship and distinctions in and among the institutions and the public policies of those who govern.

Since October 7, 2001, Americans have constantly heard of the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Through this unit, students will gain a historical perspective of United States foreign relations with Afghanistan, the historical role of congressional appropriations in the region, and an overview of how United States tax dollars can be spent to further causes abroad. Additionally, this unit will examine the role of the United States in the Afghan-Soviet War.

Historical Context

Even before Alexander the Great conquered the area that is now Afghanistan, an urban civilization existed in this region. Plagued by conquests by Arab Muslims and then the Mongol forces of Genghis Khan, then the Mughals of northern India, then the British and the Soviets, Afghanistan has managed to develop a unique culture that reflects its tribal heritage. However, it is this tribal heritage that has made them the target of other countries like the former Soviet Union, India and Pakistan.

Geography and Demographics

“Afghanistan is located in Central Asia, north and west of Pakistan, east of Iran, and south of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.” (Library of Congress, August 2008) A small portion of the country called the Wakhan Corridor extends from the northeast to meet with China. Afghanistan is slightly smaller than Texas in size and is landlocked. The terrain of Afghanistan is predominately mountainous but there are some plains, which are located in the north-central and southwestern regions of the country. Afghanistan has about seven main ethnic groups, some of which live a nomadic lifestyle. Afghans speak more than thirty languages. The official languages are Dari and Pashtu. Islam is the religion of the solid majority of Afghans. “Between eighty and eighty-five percent of Muslims are Sunni and fifteen to nineteen percent are Shia. Small numbers of Hindu and Sikhs live in urban center.” (Library of Congress, August 2008) A large portion of the population is under the age of fifteen.

Foreign Policy

Throughout its long history Afghanistan has had issues with foreign entities invading and trying to control the resources of the country. However, in the early 1970's there were accusations of corruption against the royal family and poor economic conditions as a result of a severe drought. These conditions left an opportunity for the former Prime Minister Sadar Mohammad Daoud, who was prime minister from 1953-1963, to seize power by way of a military coup. As a result, he abolished the monarchy, abrogated the 1964 constitution, and declared Afghanistan a republic with himself as its first president and prime minister. (Afghanistan Review, 2010)

With little success Daoud attempted to enact many reforms. These reforms led to a nationwide insurgency in 1978. As a result of this, the former Soviet Union moved to take advantage of this situation by signing a bilateral treaty of friendship and cooperation with Afghanistan. With this, the Soviet military assistance program increased. However, by late 1979 relations between the Afghanistan and the Soviet Union were tense. These

tensions ultimately led to Soviet forces invading Kabul from the air and ground forces invading from the north. When the Soviets invaded, they installed Babrak Karmal as prime minister. Babrak Karmal's government was unable to establish authority outside of Kabul.

Many Afghans were against the communist rule. At this point Afghan "freedom fighters" also known as "mujahidin" made it difficult for systems of local government to exist beyond the major cities. "In 1984, the "mujahidin" began receiving substantial assistance in the form of weapons and training from the United States and other outside powers." (Afghanistan Review, 2010) In 1985 an alliance was formed among the guerilla organizations in Afghanistan to coordinate their operations against the Soviets. Due to this massive resistance and the support of the United States, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan the Soviets were forced in 1988 to negotiate a withdrawal. This negotiation resulted in what is known as the Geneva Accords, which contained five major documents. According to the Afghanistan Review 2010, "the accords called for U.S. and Soviet non-interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan and Afghanistan; the right of refugees to return to Afghanistan without the fear of persecution or harassment; and most importantly, a timetable that ensured full Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan by February 15, 1989."

It is challenging to discuss the Afghan-Soviet War without discussing the contributing role of Pakistan in weakening the power structure of Afghanistan. In the journal article "Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban", from the International Journal on World Peace December 2008, Nasreen Akhtar describes the relationship between each of these entities and their role in creating the environment we observe in that region today. This article also outlines the role Pakistan played during the Afghan-Soviet War. As noted before, Pakistan and Afghanistan are neighbors in South Asia. According to Akhtar, Pakistan is the country that is blamed for harboring enemies of Afghanistan during the Afghan-Soviet War. This led to tension between the two countries.

Objectives

The goal of this unit is to answer the essential questions: 1. What was the Afghan-Soviet War? 2. What role did the United States have in financing the war and providing aid to the Mujahedeen? 3. What role does the United States Congress play in creating foreign policy?

Strategies

In order to accomplish this unit, the teacher will use various strategies. The majority of lessons are designed for cooperative groups within a classroom. The lessons require that the students use graphic organizers, critical thinking skills and creative and analytical writing skills. Unless otherwise noted, each lesson is designed for a fifty-minute class period. I teach in a technology based classroom and have been trained as a Classrooms for the Future (CFF) Teacher, therefore many of the lessons will employ the use of Promethean Boards and student laptops. Students will also use a selected set of strategies taken from the School District of Philadelphia's High School Plan for Content Area Literacy to help them understand, remember and apply key information and concepts. These strategies include: 1. Preview Vocabulary 2. Preview/Analyze/Connect 3.

Reciprocal Teaching 4.Summarize and Synthesize Through Writing 5.Comprehension Constructors and 6.Structured Notes.

Classroom Activities

All of the activities in this unit are connected, however, they can be used as stand alone lessons. As a class, students will create a wiki using wikispaces.com and a blog using blogger.com to post and analyze their work. As the teacher I will monitor all material posted to both websites.

Lesson 1: Where in the World is Afghanistan?

Objectives: Students will:

1. Examine the geography of Afghanistan for its absolute and relative locations.
2. Discuss reasons this region is important to western nations and the world.

Materials: Textbook: American Government, Ninth Edition Wilson and Dilulio; Houghton Mifflin Company; Magruder's American Government 2006, William A. McClenaghan; Pearson Prentice Hall; Government Alive! Power, Politics, and You; Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI) Student Laptops or Computer Lab with projection and Internet capabilities;

Activity:

Before starting the lesson have students use a K-W-L Chart to identify what they know about Afghanistan and what they want to know about Afghanistan. (See Appendix for KWL Chart.)

To introduce the lesson the teacher will do a virtual "fly in" using Google Earth. As you do the fly in the teacher can point out various points of interest in Afghanistan. (You must have all of the layers checked in order to view various pictures and articles from National Geographic and The New York Times.) As you complete the fly over, have students write down a minimum of three things they learned from this introduction.

Next, have students use the Internet www.googlemaps.com to locate Afghanistan on their own. Students should answer the following questions:

1. What countries border Afghanistan?
2. What are the major rivers or bodies of water in Afghanistan?
3. What are the major resources found in Afghanistan?
4. What is the absolute location of Afghanistan?

Lesson 2: Afghan History

Objectives: Students will:

1. Conduct research about the history of Afghanistan by using the Internet.
2. Analyze the information they researched to create a sequence chain as a note-taking tool.
3. Write a blog entry detailing their research

Materials: Textbook: American Government, Ninth Edition Wilson and Dilulio; Houghton Mifflin Company; Magruder's American Government 2006, William A. McClenaghan; Pearson Prentice Hall; Government Alive! Power, Politics, and You; Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI) Student Laptops or Computer Lab with projection and Internet capabilities.

Activity: Students will research the history of the Afghanistan. Students will then complete a sequence chain to map the events that led to U.S. involvement in Afghanistan in the early 1970's. (See Appendix for Sequence Chain)

Procedure:

1. Assign students to groups of four.
2. Assign students a period in the history of Afghanistan to research. In Groups students will analyze each historical period for significant people and events. Have student identify the characteristics that make this period significant.
3. Have each student complete the sequence chain working with the others in their group.
4. Have students write a blog entry about what they learned as a result of the activity. For more information on how to create blogs for your classroom, access www.student-voices.org. Go to Teacher Resources. At the bottom of the Teacher Resource page there will be a link for a pdf file "Teacher Handbook- Tips and Hints" page 11. Class blogs can be created for free at www.blogger.com and edublogs.org.

Lesson 3: United States Foreign Policy

Objectives: Students will:

1. Examine the role of the Executive branch and the United States Congress in the development of foreign policy.
2. Assess the United States foreign policy by investigating laws.

Materials: Textbook: American Government, Ninth Edition Wilson and Dilulio; Houghton Mifflin Company; Magruder's American Government 2006, William A. McClenaghan; Pearson Prentice Hall; Government Alive! Power, Politics, and You; Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI) Student Laptops or Computer Lab with projection and Internet capabilities; Chart paper, markers

Activity: Give each student a copy of the Foreign Policy scenario from Government Alive! Power, Politics and You, Chapter 17 Creating American Foreign Policy p. 323. Have students read the scenario. (See appendix for text) After the students read the scenario, have the students conduct a “Think-Pair-Share” activity in which they first “think” about what they have read, then have each student “pair” with a classmate and “share” their thoughts about the scenario. In their pairs have students write the pros and cons of the “Trading with the Enemy Act”. After students have conducted the “Think-Pair-Share” have a full class discussion of the scenario. On a piece of chart paper or a Promethean Board if you have one available, create a t-chart with “Pros” on one side and “Cons” on the other. As the discussion progresses elicit responses that the pairs wrote to share with the class. Foreign Policy scenario from Government Alive! Power, Politics and You, Chapter 17 Creating American Foreign Policy p. 323.

As an “Exit Ticket”, each student will answer the following question: If you were the couple in the scenario would you have told the U.S. border authorities you had been to Cuba? In your opinion, do you think the United States should change its foreign policy relating to Cuba? Why or why not? Explain your answers in detail.

Lesson 4: Afghanistan and the United States

Objectives: Students will:

1. Create a newsletter using a word processing program like Microsoft Word or Apple’s Pages to discuss and describe their U.S. Congressperson’s roles and responsibilities and their position on the War in Afghanistan.

Materials: Textbook: American Government, Ninth Edition Wilson and Dilulio; Houghton Mifflin Company; Magruder’s American Government 2006, William A. McClenaghan; Pearson Prentice Hall; Government Alive! Power, Politics, and You; Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI) Student Laptops or Computer Lab with projection and Internet capabilities;

Activity:

After analyzing the information from the previous lessons, each student will become the reporter and create a newsletter about their congressmen and their positions on issues relating to Afghanistan. They must research and then write one article about each member of congress (Two Senators and one U.S. Representative total of three). The articles must include a short biography of the member of congress, the committees that the members of congress belong to and their position on the current war in Afghanistan. The articles will then be posted to a class wiki.

Extension Activity:

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the United States involvement in the Afghan-Soviet War, students will read the novel and watch the movie Charlie Wilson’s War. An additional resource is the documentary: The True Story of Charlie Wilson from the History Channel. (All of these resources can be purchased on Amazon.com for less than forty dollars or can be obtained at most local libraries.)

Lesson 5: Charlie Wilson's War

Objectives: Students will be able to:

1. Analyze text for information in order to compare and contrast the novel Charlie Wilson's War to the movie version Charlie Wilson's War.

Materials: Novel: Charlie Wilson's War Video: Charlie Wilson's War Movie and The True Story of Charlie Wilson Documentary Textbook: American Government, Ninth Edition Wilson and Dilulio; Houghton Mifflin Company; Magruder's American Government 2006, William A. McClenaghan; Pearson Prentice Hall; Government Alive! Power, Politics, and You; Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI) Student Laptops or Computer Lab with projection and Internet capabilities;

Activity: Note: Parts of this activity can be assigned as homework, be done in class or be done as a combination. Teachers will have to assess how much time they can devote to this activity in class and adjust it accordingly. Due to the novel having thirty-four chapters and approximately five hundred twenty-three pages the lesson will be written as an in class and at home activity.

Have students begin reading the novel as an in-class assignment. Students will read along with the audio book available for purchase on iTunes. Have student's read the Author's Notes and the Introduction in class. Discuss with the students the goal of the author in writing this book. Have the students answer each of the following questions:

1. What is the main idea of the text?
2. What are the "big ideas" in the text?
3. What is most interesting?
4. What did you find confusing?
5. Did you learn anything new?
6. Did you learn anything that surprised or concerned you?
7. What do you already know about this topic?
8. How does the text connect to topics or concepts you are learning in class?
9. What new questions do you have about this topic?
10. What current events connect to this topic?

As students work through the text have the students answer each of these questions for each chapter. As a suggestion, read one chapter in class with the students and then have the students read two chapters and answer the questions at home each night.

After students have completed the novel have students view either the movie or the documentary and compare and contrast them to what they read in the novel. Having the students write a two to four page essay comparing and contrasting each can do this.

Annotated Bibliography for Teachers and Students

Books

Crile, George; *Charlie Wilson's War*, Grove Press New York, 2003 This is the story of how Congressman Charlie Wilson and CIA agent Gust Avrakotos funneled billions of dollars of aid to the mujahedeen making it possible for the Afghans to defeat the Soviet forces.

Dilulio, John J; Melchior, Mary Beth; Wilson James Q. *Instructor's Resource Manual American Government Tenth Edition*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006
This is a textbook that is designed for use in an Advanced Placement Government course. It focuses on the major components of American Government. This book has teaching resources for use in the course.

Dilulio, John J; Wilson James Q.; *American Government Tenth Edition*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006 This is a textbook that is designed for use in an Advanced Placement Government course. It focuses on the major components of American Government.

Dugan, Christine; Kartchner Clark, Sarah; Moretine, Teresa; Overend Prior, Jennifer; Ray, Jan; Rosenburg, Mary; Trischitta, Andrea; *Successful Strategies for Reading in the Content Areas*, Shell Educational Publishing, 2004 This is a book of reading strategies for teachers to use in the content areas.

TCI: Teachers' Curriculum Institute *Government Alive! Power, Politics and You*, Chapter 17 Creating American Foreign Policy p. 323-324. Teachers' Curriculum Institute, 2009
Government Alive! Power, Politics and You, is a collaboration between TCI and the National Constitution Center. This textbook is a part of an entire interactive and experiential curriculum that explores various aspects of American Government.

Journal Articles

Akhtar, Nasreen, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban, *International Journal on World Peace* Volume XXV Number 4 December 2008 p.49-73 This article discusses the relationship between Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Taliban in creating the current conditions in the region. It gives a political and historical overview of domestic and foreign policies and events.

Afghanistan Country Review p.6-13, Country Watch, Incorporated, 2010 This article gives a Political Overview of Afghanistan including a historical perspective of the country.

Country Profile: Afghanistan p. 1-24, Library of Congress-Federal Research Division, August 2008 This article gives a complete overview of Afghanistan including a historical background, information about the society, the geography, the economy, transportation and telecommunications, government and politics, and national security.

Websites for Teachers and Students

Annenberg Classroom

AnnenbergClassroom.org is an online gateway to a wide array of award-winning print, web and multimedia resources. www.annenbergclassroom.org

FactCheck.org

FactCheck.org is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, "consumer advocate" for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics. They monitor the factual

accuracy of what is said by major U.S. political players in the form of TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews and news releases. www.factcheck.org

FactCheckEd.org

FactCheckEd.org is an educational resource for high school teachers and students. It's designed to help students learn to cut through the fog of misinformation and deception that surrounds the many messages they're bombarded with every day.

www.factchecked.org

Pearson Prentice Hall

This is the website for the textbook company Prentice Hall. It contains resources for teaching Advanced Placement United States Government.

www.Phschool.com

Student Voices

www.student-voices.org

Student Voices is a civic education program sponsored by the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania. It is designed to provide teachers and student materials and resources to learn about and become civically engaged. Student Voices provides curriculum materials for use in the classroom.

United States Congress – House of Representatives

The website for the United States House of Representative which provides information about the history of the House and links to every U.S. Representative's website, House committees and constituent services.

www.house.gov

United States Congress – United States Senate

The website for the United States Senate which provides information about the history of the House and links to every U.S. Senator's website, Senate committees and constituent services.

www.senate.gov

Videos

The True Story of Charlie Wilson, The History Channel A&E Television Networks 2007
This documentary chronicles the activities of Congressman Charlie Wilson and CIA agent Gust Avrakotos in their efforts to assist the Afghan "freedom fighters" in their fight against the Soviet Union.

Charlie Wilson's War, Universal Studios 2007
This is the Hollywood version of Congressman Charlie Wilson's story starring Tom Hanks as Congressman Charlie Wilson, Julia Roberts as Houston socialite Joanne Herring and Phillip Seymour Hoffman as Gust Avrakotos. This movie has a rating of "R". Some material may be mature for younger students.

Appendix/Standards

Glossary of Key Terms from Government Alive! Power Politics and You Chapter 9 and Chapter 17

Foreign Policy: A course of action developed by a country's leaders to pursue their nation's vital interests in its dealings with other countries.

Globalization: the trend toward more open and free travel, trade and communication among nations and their peoples.

Diplomacy: The art and practice of managing communication and relationships between nations.

Ambassador: A diplomatic official of the highest rank sent by one country as its long-term representative to another country or to an international organization.

Diplomatic immunity: international law that protects diplomats and their families from being arrested or tried in countries other than their own.

Diplomatic recognition: official acceptance of a regime as the legitimate government of its country.

Summit: A gathering of heads of state or other high-ranking officials to discuss matters of great importance to their countries.

Sanction: A measure taken by one or more nations to pressure another country into changing its policies or complying with international law.

Public opinion: the sum of many individual opinions, beliefs or attitudes about a public person or issue.

Political Socialization: The process by which people form their political values and attitudes. This process starts in childhood and continues through adulthood.

Opinion poll: A method of measuring public opinion. This is done by asking questions of a random sample of people and using their answers to represent the views of the broader population.

Margin of error: A measure of the accuracy of an opinion poll. The smaller the margin of error, the more confidence one can have in the results of the poll. The margin of error usually decreases as the number of people surveyed increases.

Mass media: Means of communication that reach a large audience. Today the mass media includes, newspapers, magazines, radio, television and the Internet.

Spin: The deliberate shading of information about a person or event in an attempt to influence public opinion.

Media bias: Real or imagined prejudice that is thought to affect what stories journalists cover and how they report those stories.

Pennsylvania Academic Standards:

This unit corresponds with **Pennsylvania History Standards** 8.1,2,3 A, 8.1,2,3 B, 8.1,2,3 C, and 8.1,2,3 D. and **Pennsylvania Civics and Government Standards** 5.3.12J however it will focus primarily on the standards listed here specifically.

The standards for 8.1.9 Academic Standard: History: Historical Analysis and Skills Development: Pennsylvania's public schools shall teach, challenge and support every student realize his or her maximum potential and to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to analyze cultural, economic, geographic, political and social relations to:

5.3.12.J – How Government Works: Evaluate the role of media in political life in the United States and explain the role of the media in setting the public agenda.

8.1.9A – Analyze Chronological Thinking: Difference between past, present, and future; Sequential order of historical narrative; Data presented in timelines; Continuity and Change; Context for events.

8.1.9B – Historical Comprehension: Literal meaning of historical passages; Data in historical and contemporary maps, graphs and tables; Different historical perspectives; Data from maps, graphs and tables; Visual data presented in historical evidence.

8.1.9C – Historical Interpretation: Fact versus opinion; Reasons/causes for multiple points of view; Illustrations in historical documents and stories; Causes and results; Author or source used to develop historical narratives; Central issue.

8.1.9D – Historical Research: Historical event (time and place); Facts, folklore and fiction; Historical questions; Primary sources; Secondary sources; Conclusions

The standards for 8.2 Pennsylvania History and 8.3 United States History:

A – Contributions of Individual Groups

B – Documents, Artifacts, and Historical Places

C – Influences of Continuity and Change

D – Conflict and Cooperation Among Groups

Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening

1.6. Speaking and Listening

1.6.11. GRADE 11

1.6.11A. Listen to others.

- Ask clarifying questions.
- Synthesize information, ideas and opinions to determine relevancy.
- Take notes.

1.6.11B. Listen to selections of literature (fiction and/or nonfiction).

- Relate them to previous knowledge.
- Predict solutions to identified problems.
- Summarize and reflect on what has been heard.
- Identify and define new words and concepts.
- Analyze and synthesize the selections relating them to other selections heard or read.

1.6.11C. Speak using skills appropriate to formal speech situations.

- Use a variety of sentence structures to add interest to a presentation.
- Pace the presentation according to audience and purpose.
- Adjust stress, volume and inflection to provide emphasis to ideas or to influence the audience.

1.6.11D. Contribute to discussions.

- Ask relevant, clarifying questions.
- Respond with relevant information or to influence the audience.

1.6.11D. Contribute to discussions.

- Ask relevant, clarifying questions.
- Respond with relevant information or opinions to questions asked.

- Listen to and acknowledge the contributions of others.
- Adjust tone and involvement to encourage equitable participation.
- Facilitate total group participation.
- Introduce relevant, facilitating information, ideas and opinions to enrich the discussion.
- Paraphrase and summarize as needed.

1.6.11E. Participate in small and large group discussions and presentations.

- Initiate everyday conversation.
- Select and present an oral reading on an assigned topic.
- Conduct interviews.
- Participate in a formal interview (e.g., for a job, college).
- Organize and participate in informal debate around a specific topic.
- Use evaluation guides (e.g., National Issues Forum, Toastmasters) to evaluate group discussion (e.g., of peers, on television).

1.6.11F. Use media for learning purposes.

- Use various forms of media to elicit information, to make a student presentation and to complete class assignments and projects.
- Evaluate the role of media in focusing attention and forming opinions.
- Create a multi-media (e.g., film, music, computer-graphic) presentation for display or transmission that demonstrates an understanding of a specific topic or issue or teaches others about it.

1.8. Research

1.8.11A. Select and refine a topic for research.

1.8.11B. Locate information using appropriate sources and strategies.

- Determine valid resources for researching the topic, including primary and secondary sources.
- Evaluate the importance and quality of the sources.
- Select sources appropriate to the breadth and depth of the research (e.g., dictionaries, thesauruses, other reference materials, interviews, observations, computer databases).
- Use tables of contents, indices, key words, cross-references and appendices.
- Use traditional and electronic search tools.

1.8.11C. Organize, summarize and present the main ideas from research.

- Take notes relevant to the research topic.
- Develop a thesis statement based on research.
- Anticipate readers' problems or misunderstandings.
- Give precise, formal credit for others' ideas, images or information using a standard method of documentation.
- Use formatting techniques (e.g., headings, graphics) to aid reader understanding.

The complete standards are available online at:

www.pde.state.pa.us/stateboard_ed/lib/statebord_ed/E.HISTORY-web03.pdf

Teacher Resources

See bibliography for a list of books and websites used in this unit.

Sequence Chain and KWL Plus are adapted from the book *Successful Strategies for Reading in the Content Areas* Shell Educational Publishing 2004

Foreign Policy Scenario

Foreign Policy scenario from - *Government Alive! Power, Politics and You*, Chapter 17 Creating American Foreign Policy p. 323.

“Michael and Ande McCarthy are health care workers living in Michigan. Motivated by their religious convictions, they flew to Cuba in 2001 to deliver medical supplies to a Catholic charity group. Because federal law bans travel to Cuba from the United States, they flew in and out of Toronto, Canada.

When the couple drove back to Michigan from Canada, U.S. border authorities asked where they had been. Instead of saying Toronto, the couple answered, “Cuba.” A few weeks later, they received a letter saying they had violated the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 by spending about \$750 for a Cuba vacation package and buying some souvenirs while in Cuba. The letter ordered them to appear before a federal judge and to pay a fine of \$7500 each.”

Background Information:

The Trading with the Enemy Act is an element of United States foreign policy. The U.S. government has not always viewed Cuba as an enemy. Lying ninety miles off the coast of Florida, Cuba is one of our closest neighbors. In the early 1900’s the United States and Cuba developed close economic and political ties. For the next half-century, Americans invested heavily in Cuba, buying up most of the country’s best farmland for sugar plantations. In addition, American tourists vacationed on Cuba’s beaches.

U.S. Cuban relations changed abruptly after communist revolutionaries, led by Fidel Castro, seized control of the island in 1959. A year later, Castro nationalized most of Cuba’s private property. Nationalization is the transfer of private property to government ownership. Both Americans and Cubans who owned property in Cuba lost everything when the Cuban government seized their land and businesses.

The United States responded by placing an embargo, or ban, on most U.S. trade with Cuba. When Castro signed trade deals with the Soviet Union to make up for the loss of U.S. trade, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba. After the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, President John F. Kennedy imposed restrictions on travel to Cuba. As of 2007, regulations do not make travel to Cuba illegal. However, it is illegal for Americans to spend money in Cuba.

TCI: Teachers’ Curriculum Institute *Government Alive! Power, Politics and You*, Chapter 17 Creating American Foreign Policy p. 323-324. Teachers’ Curriculum Institute, 2009

Afghanistan - Sequence Chain

Directions: Trace the events that led up to the formation of modern day Afghanistan described in the text. Start with the 1970's and ending with today.



