

G. The Making of a New Enemy

1. The final piece of the puzzle in the making of the modern world police power is the fall of communism and rise of Islamism.
2. Russia abandoned communism in 1991. This signaled the success of America's mission to protect Europe, and made possible the rise of the European Union.
3. Up to that point events in the Islamic world had been seen as less important, but a new strain of anti-Americanism had been growing there that would soon grab the headlines.
4. First, because of America's focus on anti-communism, a new enemy arose in Iran.
 - a) During the Cold War, the United States had supported the monarch of Iran (the "Shah") because of his anti-communism.
 - b) The people of Iran, however, had gravitated toward a charismatic elected official, prime minister Mohamed Mossadegh, who promised to *nationalize* the oil resources of the country that had been developed by British and American companies.
 - c) America's leaders worked with the Shah to remove Mossadegh from power. He was arrested and imprisoned, and America gave the Shah more money and weapons to stay in power.
 - d) After that the Iranians believed the only person in their society who could make them independent was the religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini.
 - e) In **1979** mass protests broke out against the Shah and in support of Khomeini, and the Shah decided he could no longer hold onto power and he escaped the country.
 - f) As part of this **Iranian Revolution**, terrorists stormed the American embassy and took it staff hostage.
 - g) For 444 days, Americans were paraded on global television in blindfolds. The United States was humiliated, and president Jimmy Carter refused to take action against Iran.
 - h) The result was the birth of a modern cultural trend called **Islamism**. (Islamism says that only a strong religious belief in Islam can make the Islamic world strong enough to defeat America by means of "jihad," i.e. holy war.)
 - i) America's inaction against Iran in **1979** and since has made the religious government of Iran the leading champion of Islamism in the world.
5. The United States also made the mistake of fostering the rise of Islamism while fighting the spread of communism in Iran's neighbor Afghanistan.
 - a) In **1979**, precisely when the United States was struggling to handle the situation in Iran, Russia invaded Afghanistan, where a new communist government was struggling to retain control of the country.
 - b) The United States did not want to fight Russia directly, so it opted to send money and weapons (again, via the CIA) to train the "mujahideen" fighters of Afghanistan. (President Ronald Reagan touted the mujahideen as "freedom fighters," but the word literally means "jihadist" or "holy warrior of Islam.")
 - c) Countless terrorists from around the Islamic world went to Afghanistan and received money and military training thanks to the United States, which believed they were focused on fighting communism.

- d) One of these jihadists was Osama Bin Laden. Long after Russia limped home from its defeat in Afghanistan in **1989**, the jihadists trained and supplied in Afghanistan would become the infamous faces of Islamic terrorism. Osama Bin Laden himself was the organizer of the terrorist organization *Al Qaeda*, which was responsible for the 9-11 attacks against the United States.
- 6. By focusing only on anti-communism, and not thinking of the bigger picture, the United States created its own next enemy: Islamism.