



Photo by Bobbie Lo

Mohammed Said, from Pishawer University in Pakistan, spoke on campus Friday about the war in Afghanistan.

## No end in sight for struggle in Afghanistan, speaker says

By **Tonnie Dakin**  
Of the Emerald

On Dec. 25, 1979, a day when the rest of the world was celebrating Christmas, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan with 80,000 troops, said Mohammed Said, Ph.D., to a crowd of about 70 people Friday.

"Since then there has been bombing every day, and fighting every day, and killing every day," he said. "Not a day has passed without killing."

Said is the Dean of Liberal Arts at Pishawer University in Pakistan, which is located on the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Although the war has been going on for almost seven years, the conditions that led to the fighting date back much further, Said said.

Afghanistan, a landlocked country about the size of Texas, is surrounded by Pakistan, Iran, China and the Soviet Union.

"Afghanistan has the drawback of having a very bad neighbor... the Soviet Union," Said said.

The larger country has the reputation of swallowing weak neighbors, which was a constant threat to Afghanistan, he said.

During the 1950s, the United States government refused to give military assistance to Afghanistan when the country wanted to build up its army, he said.

"The U.S.S.R. was ready," Said said. "She not only promised to give arms, but to give instruction on how to use arms."

Soon after, the Soviet Union began to encourage communism in the smaller country, and a group of freedom fighters, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, was formed, he said.

Internal unrest upset the country as a succession of important political figures were overthrown, Said said.

"They (the Afghan people) knew who was pulling the strings... they protested against the interference of the U.S.S.R. in their affairs," he said.

The war of resistance taking place within the country affects people from all walks of life, Said said. In every refugee camp, every family can speak of

at least one family member lost to the war, he said.

"It's a people's war... in every sense of the word," Said said.

Because of the strong resistance, the Soviets have begun to worry, he said. Afghanistan is slowly destroying the Soviets' image of indestructibility, he said.

"They have underestimated the will and the faith of the Afghan people," Said said. "The tough resistance has come to them as a big surprise."

The Soviets have retaliated by destroying Afghan resources and indiscriminately bombing the country, he said.

"Their (strategy) is one of the total destruction of Afghanistan and a complete genocide of the Afghan people," Said said.

The country's industrial units and transmission lines have long since shut down, miles of asphalt highways have been destroyed, tourism is non-existent, and economic development is at a standstill, he said.

"It will take many, many years, perhaps decades, to bring the economy back to the 1979 level," Said said.

Although the exact number of dead are not known, there are as many as 5 million internal refugees, 10 million uprooted citizens, and thousands of homeless men, women and children, he said.

"Perhaps when the dust falls, perhaps when the notes are compared, we will know how many were killed," Said said.

Currently, the Afghan army is still showing signs of resistance, and the situation may start to improve soon, he said. The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan is slowly starting to divide, and there has been a large-scale defection to the Afghan army, he said.

But despite all of these successes, the end of the war does not seem to be in sight, Said said. The Soviets will not withdraw easily because their losses are insignificant when compared to their total strength. In addition, no tangible help has come from outside sources, he said.

Said said that he chose his topic for several reasons, one of them being that few Americans are informed about the situation

in Afghanistan. This is because of the complete ban on independent foreign journalists in the country, he said.

"Whatever news comes out is views rather than news," Said said.

More importantly, Said hopes to do service to the Afghan resistance by sharing the condition of the country with others, he said.

"There, almost every day I listen to the thundering noise of the Russian artillery," Said said.

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