

PROJECT: THE ART OF DIPLOMACY

Foreign policy decisions are often tricky and full of potential pitfalls. Take the Iran-Iraq War, for example. In the years preceding the war, America and Iran had been allies. When the Shah was disposed by Ayatollah Khomeini, the two nations became enemies.

Meanwhile, the U.S. covertly assisted in a coup in Iraq that four years later saw Saddam Hussein become leader. Despite America's hand in this matter, Hussein cuddled up to the Soviet Union, thereby making him an enemy of the U.S.

Then, the Iran-Iraq War happened. The United States looked at the two nations and decided Iran was a bigger threat to security than Iraq. So America began shipping war materials to Iraq including, as it turned out, the materials needed to make biological and chemical weapons.

To confuse matters further, a bit later in the war, the U.S. began shipping war materials to Iran with the ultimate goal of getting back American hostages in Lebanon.

The war ended in a stalemate, and the U.S. tried to establish diplomatic relations with Iraq. It did not work, and America found itself at war with Hussein after his invasion of Kuwait in 1991.

The problem with diplomacy, is that sometimes you have to side with the "lesser of two evils" in order to maintain a sense of stability. This comes with the full realization that you will probably end up being at odds with the country you are helping down the road. This is one way to keep a single nation in a volatile region from becoming too powerful.

Instructions

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability on Odysseyware. You may use the Internet or other research materials to find information about the Taliban and U.S. foreign policy. Helpful link: <https://www.infoplease.com/who-are-taliban>

1. How did helping the Taliban defeat Russia during the Afghanistan War help the Taliban in their efforts to resist United Nations forces today?
2. In your opinion, is helping the "lesser of two evils" a sound foreign policy decision, or should the United States allow warring nations to decide matters for themselves?