

THE AK-47

A Communist bestseller





Birth of the gun:

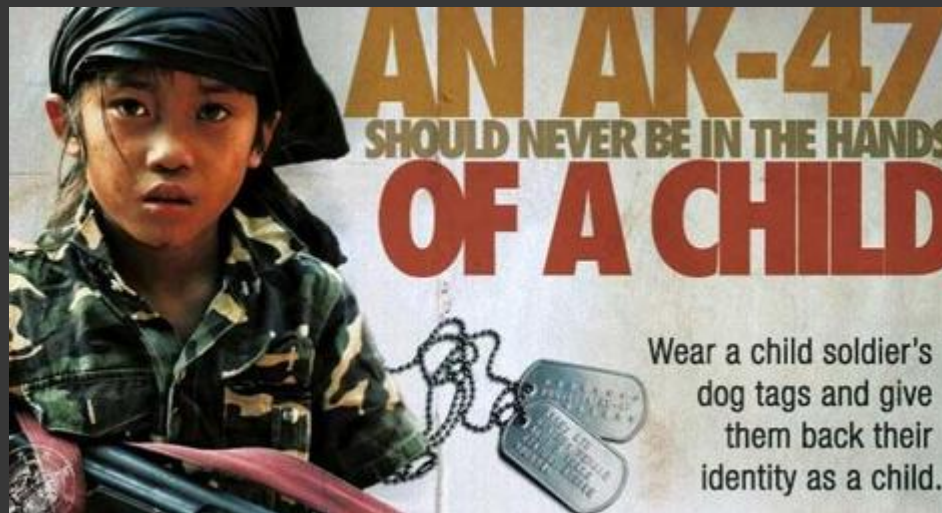
- WW2 @ Stalingrad the Soviet troops used the PPSH machine gun effectively in urban warfare
- World War Two the Soviets wanted a new weapon and the **Avtomat Kalashnikova (AK)-47** was born
- Soviets thought the next war would see massive troop movements through western Europe
- **Innovation doesn't just come from the market:**
- T-34 also in service around the world until the 1970s
- Soviet Mi helicopters developed for Afghanistan still used today

- ⦿ Licenses to produce it were granted to Warsaw Pact countries (eg. East Germany), and also to other countries seen as leaning to the USSR, such as Egypt and Iraq
- ⦿ Chinese made AK 47s in great numbers & supplied them to NVA and VC in the **Vietnam War**
- ⦿ While Soviet soldiers carried AK 47s in their ten year war in Afghanistan the *mujahideen* fighting them also carried AK-47s made in China and shipped to them by the CIA

- AK 47s used in wars of liberation eg. Angola and Mozambique:



- AK-47 reliable (less jamming, stoppages)
- Easy to maintain
- Easy to carry
- Easy to fire (suitable for jungle or urban warfare)
- Cheap (100 million have been made often without license)



- AK 47 has become a brand name due to its use by standing armies, revolutionaries, national liberation movements, organised criminals
- It appeared on posters in the 1960s
- On TV regularly in the 1970s
- In music and films in the 1980s and 1990s
- Currently Mexico's drugs wars have seen the rise of *narcocorridos*
- Kalshnikov recently announced an increase in production to 300,000 a year