



Intelligence

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Afghanistan Situation Report

[Redacted]

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25 October 1983

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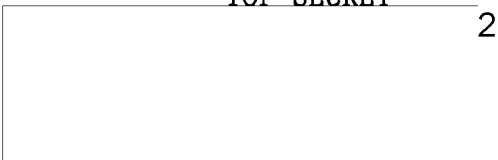
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[Redacted]
25 October 1983

25X1

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

CONTENTS

INSURGENTS ATTACK AIRBASES 1

Insurgent mortar attacks in mid-October damaged a Soviet transport at Khowst Airfield and forced Soviet units to return to guard Bost Airfield.

25X1

MASOOD CONTINUES TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CEASE-FIRE 1

The Panjsher Valley resistance leader concluded a peace treaty with a rival band and was preparing to attack Afghan forces at the northern end of the valley in late September.

25X1

FIERCE FIGHTING IN HERAT PROVINCE 2

Soviet, Afghan, and insurgent forces have suffered heavy casualties in fighting since August, and the Afghan Government has taken new measures to cut infiltration from Iran.

25X1

IN BRIEF 2

PERSPECTIVE

PARTY FACTIONALISM AND FRATRICIDE 4

The rift in the Afghan Communist Party has seriously impeded the Soviet and Afghan military efforts, and although Moscow will have to solve the problem of factionalism to achieve full control of Afghanistan, there are no indications the split will end in the next few years.

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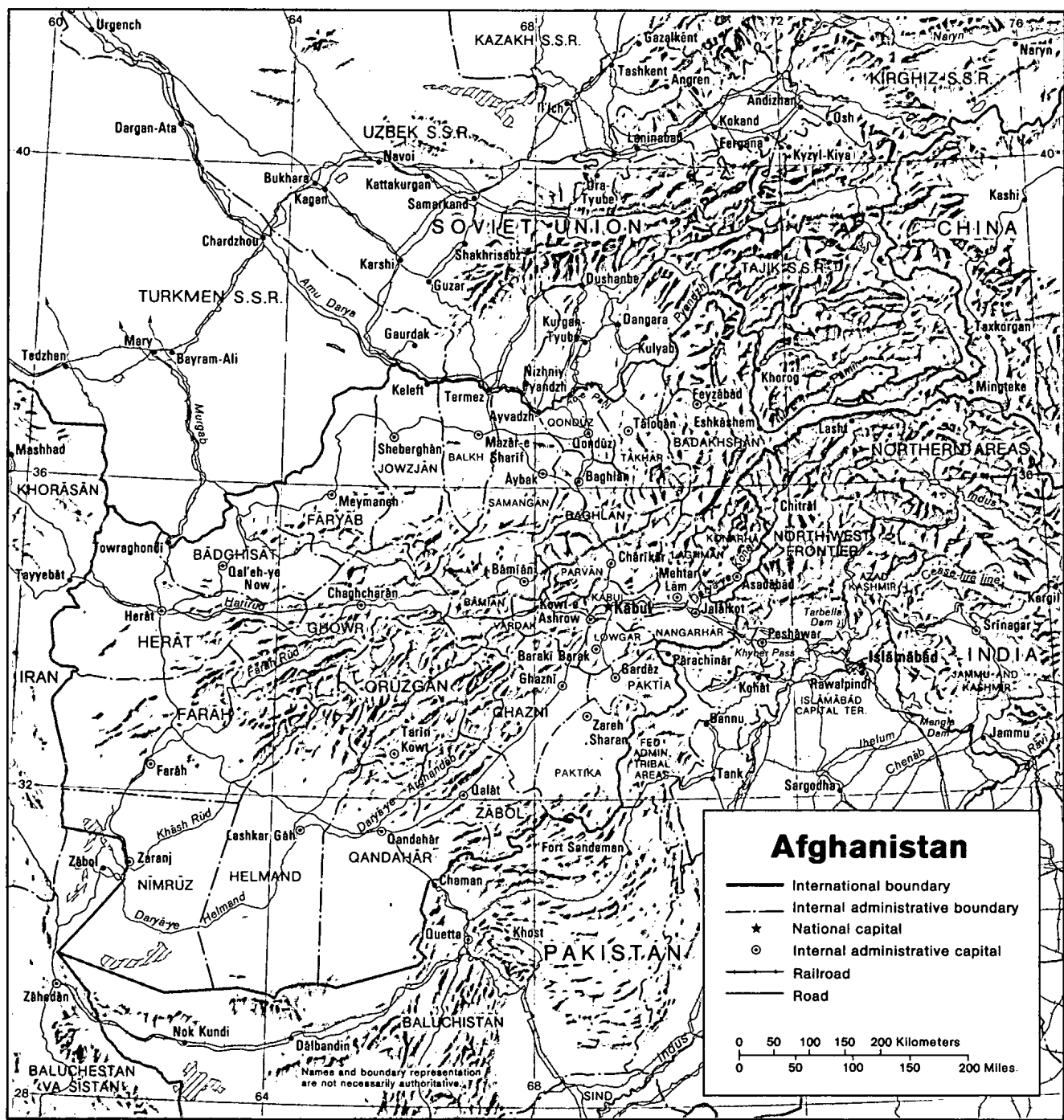
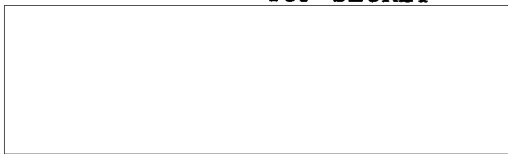
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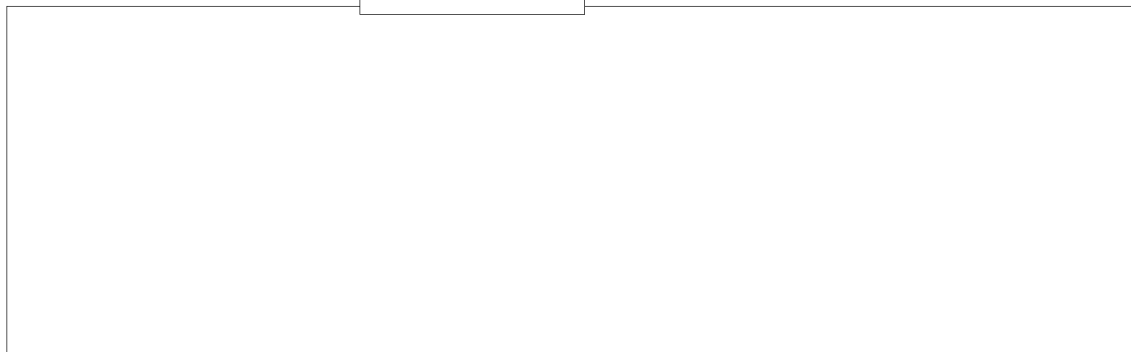


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INSURGENTS ATTACK AIRBASES

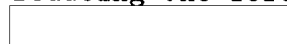


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Comment: Over the past few months guerrilla mortar fire appears to have become more accurate, raising Soviet casualties and material losses, especially during attacks on airfields. The insurgents appear to strike quickly, firing only a few rounds before retreating to avoid Soviet or Afghan counterattacks. By continuing such raids, the guerrillas will force the Soviets to devote more of their troops to security duty, reducing the forces available for operations in the countryside.




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MASOOD CONTINUES TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CEASE-FIRE



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 in late September the leader of the Panjsher Valley resistance stated that he had concluded a peace treaty with a rival Hizbi group to secure Panjsheri supply lines through the Bagram area. Masood claimed he was preparing to launch a major offensive against an Afghan base at Koran Munjan at the northern end of the Panjsher. He also stated that Soviet and Afghan troops had not launched any attacks since the truce expired in July.



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Comment: Despite many reports that Masood has continued attacks outside the Panjsher and has increased his control in the northeastern provinces, the Soviets apparently have decided against launching a major attack on the Valley this year. An




25 October 1983
NESA M 83-10275CX
SOVA M 83-10189CX

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attack on the small Afghan garrison at Koran Munjan, however, might be too great a violation of the spirit of the cease-fire for the Soviets to ignore. Although bad winter weather will make a major ground operation more difficult, the Soviets could use intensive air attacks to "punish" the insurgents and civilians in the Panjsher. 

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FIERCE FIGHTING IN HERAT PROVINCE 

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 Afghan, Soviet, and insurgent casualties were heavy in operations and clashes around Herat City over the last three months. The Afghan Army reportedly transferred two armored divisions and a reinforced regiment to Herat Province in early September. Kabul has deployed more Army units along the roads to improve security, reinforced border guard posts, and recently constructed two new security posts along the main road from the Iranian border to Herat City to reduce insurgent infiltration from Iran. 

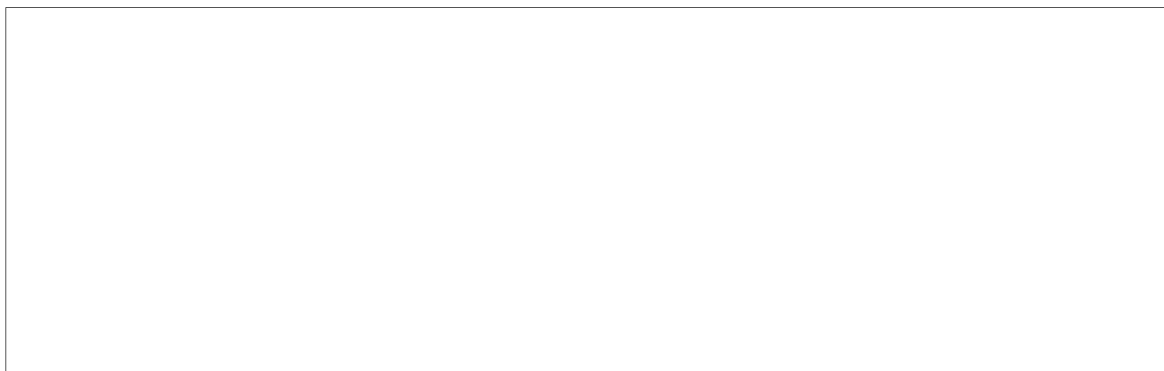
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Comment: Tighter border and road security combined with government clearing operations will increase pressure on the insurgents in Herat Province and reduce their access to supplies from Iran. Although Afghan units are understrength and troop morale is low, additional manpower and armor could improve the Afghan Army's effectiveness in the province. 

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IN BRIEF



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-- At a recent academic conference on Afghanistan, the head of Medicins Sans Frontieres said that none of the 160 physicians his organization had sent to Afghanistan since May 1980 had treated anyone they thought was a victim of lethal chemical munitions. He added this was in contrast to their experience in Laos and Kampuchea where there had been some suspicious cases. 

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-- At the same conference, an American journalist who has made several trips into Afghanistan with the insurgents expressed his view that not much outside arms aid is reaching the insurgents: he believes many arms intended for the insurgents are being stored in Pakistan. 

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25 October 1983
NESA M 83-10275CX
SOVA M 83-10189CX

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PERSPECTIVE

PARTY FACTIONALISM AND FRATRICIDE

[REDACTED]

The rift in the Afghan Communist Party has seriously impeded the Soviet and Afghan military effort, hampered the functioning of the government, and generated an aura of instability that clouds the regime's claim to legitimacy. Moscow will ultimately have to resolve the problem of factionalism to consolidate its control over Afghanistan, but there are no indications that the split will end soon. [REDACTED]

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Background

Political observers agree that the rift between the dominant Parcham (Banner) faction and the larger Khalq (Masses) faction of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) has been wide since the late 1970s. We estimate that there are about 25,000 party members, though the regime publicly claims 90,000. Of those 25,000, we estimate that about 40 percent are Parchamis and about 60 percent Khalqis. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the Parchamis control most influential government posts, but the Khalqis predominate in the military, particularly in the junior ranks. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] differences over tactics may have been one cause of the schism, with the early Khalqis favoring revolutionary extremism and the Parchamis favoring moderate means, the basic difference is social. Parchamis tend to come from urban and middle or upper class backgrounds, and Khalqis from rural, lower class ones. Nearly all Khalqis are Pushtun, while nearly all Parchamis are from other ethnic groups. Continuing differences have arisen from personality clashes, political vendettas, tribalism, and personal ambition. Subfactions also provoke intrafactional fighting at times, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] In public both factions lavishly praise the Soviets, though in private many Khalqis reportedly express resentment of Soviet domination. [REDACTED]

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The schism today is as deep as ever. President Babrak Karmal, who heads the Parcham faction, has been generally successful in surrounding himself with Parcham loyalists in the high levels of government. Among

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25 October 1983
 NESAM 83-10275CX
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powerful figures closely allied with Babrak are Prime Minister Kestmand, intelligence service (KHAD) director Najibullah, and Defense Minister Qader, though he is not officially a Parchami. The most influential leader of the Khalqis was once Asadullah Sarwari, but he has lost influence since his exile as the regime's ambassador to Mongolia. In his absence, Interior Minister Gulabzoi heads the faction. [redacted]

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Undermining Security

In our view, factionalism contributes substantially to the ineffectiveness of the Afghan military. [redacted] in Qandahar and Jalalabad factionalism has played a large part in the Afghan military's low morale, desertions, and collaboration with the insurgents. [redacted] KHAD has accused Khalqis in general of refusing to fight against the insurgents and of selling or giving the insurgents weapons, ammunition, and equipment. [redacted] in June 1983 plans for a coup by Khalqi junior officers resulted in fighting in several garrisons in Kabul, and in one garrison 10 Khalqis were killed. [redacted]

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[redacted] an insurgent group consisting solely of former Khalqi members has been established in Pakistan and has begun to carry out limited antigovernment operations in southeastern Afghanistan with the aim of toppling Babrak. Other insurgent groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan are said to distrust the Khalqi group. [redacted]

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We believe factionalism is also heavily responsible for undermining security in several cities, especially Kabul. Regime leaders have described as "frightening" the number of Parchamis assassinated in Kabul, [redacted]

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[redacted] In the winter of 1983, [redacted] Parchamis' eagerness to recruit members to their faction resulted in allowing fundamentalist insurgents to infiltrate their ranks and thereby carry out assassinations and the bombing of a government building. The same eagerness has also permitted the Khalqis to infiltrate and develop an extensive intelligence network in the Parchami faction [redacted] (Khalqi

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25 October 1983
NESA M 83-10275CX
SOVA M 83-10189CX

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Pushtun ethnicity has prevented similar infiltration by Parchamis.) In June 1983, KHAD arrested a group of Afghan military officers, presumably Khalqis, for assassinating several Parchamis, [redacted]

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Impeding Government Functioning

We believe factionalism forms a serious impediment to the carrying out of the government's daily functions. Problems arise from the conflict between the Khalqi-dominated Interior Ministry and other offices, particularly the Defense Ministry and KHAD. [redacted]

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[redacted] recurrent attempts by the Parchami faction to dilute Khalqi influence and reduce Khalqi presence in the Politburo, the Central Committee, the Interior Ministry, KHAD, and the military through appointments and promotions of Parchamis and through purges and transfer of Khalqis. The Soviet ambassador and Soviet advisers reportedly have had to intervene at times to resolve disputes. [redacted]

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[redacted] a particular problem that frustrates Soviet officials has been the refusal of the factions in various offices to share information. Interior Ministry officials have tried unsuccessfully to arrange information sharing with the Kabul City police. The Parchami-dominated city police, in conjunction with KHAD, are reportedly fearful that Khalqi Interior Ministry officials would use information on security incidents to discredit Parchami officials politically. [redacted]

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Parchami propaganda has also angered Khalqis, especially in the lower party ranks, [redacted] Staged defections, for which the Parchamis have taken credit, have involved "confessions" by alleged insurgent leaders placing blame on the former Khalqi regimes of Taraki and Amin for creating conditions that fostered "counterrevolutionary" activities. [redacted]

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Soviet Measures

Moscow continues to support both factions of the PDPA. While permitting Babrak to surround himself with Parchami loyalists, the Soviets have provided similar support to Interior Minister Gulabzoi and other important Khalqis such as Politburo member Zerai and Communications Minister Watanjar. In the winter of 1983, [redacted]

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[redacted] Gulabzoi signed agreements with the Soviets to guarantee delivery of weapons and supplies directly to his ministry's logistics office, apparently to prevent Parchamis from diverting the shipments. [redacted]

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[redacted] several Soviet military advisers consider the Khalqis more effective and loyal militarily than the Parchamis. These advisers reportedly consider the split irreconcilable and accept gifts from members of both factions, who hope thereby to improve their standing and consolidate their positions. [redacted]

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Other evidence of an evenhanded Soviet approach has been their removal of the most partisan factional leaders from the Afghan scene for long periods--through assignments to ambassadorships or "training" in the USSR. Moscow is trying to ensure through training that new, young party members place party allegiance ahead of factional loyalty. The PDPA already has a large youthful element. We estimate that at least 80 percent of party members are under age 30. [redacted]

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[redacted] in September 1983, some 6,000 Afghans aged 12 to 16 were sent to the Soviet Union for training and political indoctrination. Assembled by KHAD, most of the youths were selected from isolated villges in the northern and northeastern provinces, presumably because youths from outlying areas are less likely to have been influenced by the factional atmosphere in Kabul. [redacted] the

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Soviets also maintain party training schools in Kabul, and political indoctrination dominates the curriculum in the public schools. [redacted]

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Outlook

The aura of regime instability created by factionalism has become such that nearly every time a high-level Afghan official visits Moscow, the US Embassy in Kabul reports widespread rumors that the official or other personnel are about to be dumped. We believe that such

25X1

25 October 1983

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perceptions of instability will continue to diminish the government's capacity to function and contribute to low morale, insecurity, and opportunism. [REDACTED]

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Because PDPA factionalism is so widespread and intense, we believe that it will remain a problem for the regime and the Soviet Union over the next several years. Although the Parchamis will probably continue to augment their authority at the expense of the Khalqis over the short term, Khalqi power in the provincial police and in the military will remain substantial and will prevent the Babrak regime from risking a full-scale purge. [REDACTED]

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Moscow would face the same risk as the regime by permitting a purge of Khalqis. Soviet abandonment of Interior Minister Gulzbzoi would cause alienation of other influential Khalqis, who would have even greater cause to support the insurgency. Continued Soviet backing for Gulabzoi indicates that Moscow will, for the short term at least, continue to support both factions. Along with the Soviets' need to hold influence over Khalqis in the military, Moscow may also wish to continue to maintain that faction should the need arise to play it off against the Parchamis, particularly should the Soviets decide to replace Babrak Karmal. Meanwhile, Moscow will probably continue attempts to indoctrinate the next generation of party members, with the aim of eliminating factionalism. [REDACTED]

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