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Imagery analysis report

Withdrawal of Soviet Units From Afghanistan (S)

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WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET UNITS FROM AFGHANISTAN (S)

1. (S/D) In late June 1980, the Soviets withdrew at least seven combat units from Afghanistan. These units were an SA-4 brigade, a tank regiment, and a FROG-3/5 battalion from the Kabul/Bagram area and a FROG-3/5 battalion, elements of a tank regiment, elements of an artillery regiment, and a FITTER aircraft squadron from the Shindand area of western Afghanistan. [] three of the units had been identified back in the USSR, all in the Turkestan Military District. These included a tank regiment at Samarkand, an SA-4 brigade at Ashkhabad, and a FROG battalion at Iolotan (Figure 1).

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Kabul Area

2. (S/D) Prior to the withdrawal, one SA-4 battalion from the SA-4 brigade was deployed at Kabul Airfield International [] and two SA-4 battalions, a resupply battalion, and an independent resupply battalion were deployed at Bagram Airfield []. These units had been in Afghanistan since March 1980. All of these units departed their respective bivouac areas [] (Figure 2).

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3. (S/D) The tank regiment bivouacked at Kabul Deployment Area Northwest [] departed Kabul []. The FROG-3/5 battalion, bivouacked at Bagram Airfield since [] departed the bivouac area [].

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4. (S/D) Preparations for the withdrawal were observed along the march route []. On that date, a temporary refueling site comprising of POL trucks connected by hose to individual refueling points was observed 75 nautical miles (nm) north of Kabul at Pol-E Khomri Soviet Deployment Area []. Farther north at Khairabad (Kheyderabad) Transshipment Point [] probable maintenance work was observed on the PPS/PMP bridge that crosses the Amu Darya (river) into the USSR. [] four of the PMP sections had been taken out of the center of the bridge. [] the bridge had been repaired and a convoy containing two tank battalions, an artillery battalion, a FROG-3/5 battalion, and an SA-4 battalion was observed near the PPS/PMP bridge. One tank battalion had already crossed into the USSR, and the remaining units were on the Afghan side (Figure 4).

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5. (S/D) Additional convoys containing elements of the units from the Kabul area were observed between Kheyderabad and the northern end of the Salang Pass. Ninety nm to the south of Kheyderabad, elements of the SA-4 brigade (elements of the SA-4 resupply battalion and an engineer company) were at Pol-E Khomri Soviet Deployment Area (Figure 5). Also, several northbound convoys of trucks were north of the Salang Pass near Dowshi.

6. (S/D) In the USSR, a tank regiment was parked in Samarkand Training Area West-Southwest 1/Tank School []. Since this regiment is equipped comparably to the one which had departed the Kabul area [] it is probably the same unit. This tank regiment was not originally deployed from the Samarkand area to Afghanistan, but was subordinate to the motorized rifle division (MRD) which deployed from the Termez area to Afghanistan in December 1979. This regiment probably did not return to the Termez garrisons because they are now occupied by units subordinate to a new MRD that replaced the one deployed to Afghanistan.

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7. (S/D) On 3 July, elements of the SA-4 brigade were observed returning to Ashkhabad Army Barracks West AL-1/SAM Support [] and had completely returned [] (Figures 7 and 8). This unit was housed at this installation prior to deployment to Afghanistan.

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Shindand Area

8. (S/D) The ground units withdrawn from the Shindand Area had been bivouacked at Shindand Deployment Area []. Elements of the tank regiment (42 tanks) and elements of the artillery regiment (36 122mm D-30 howitzers), probably withdrawn from Afghanistan, departed the bivouac area []. The FROG-3/5 battalion departed the bivouac area []. The FITTER squadron (17 aircraft) deployed at Shindand Airfield [] departed [] and was replaced by a FISHBED squadron from Kandahar (Qandahar) Airfield International [] (Figures 9 and 10).

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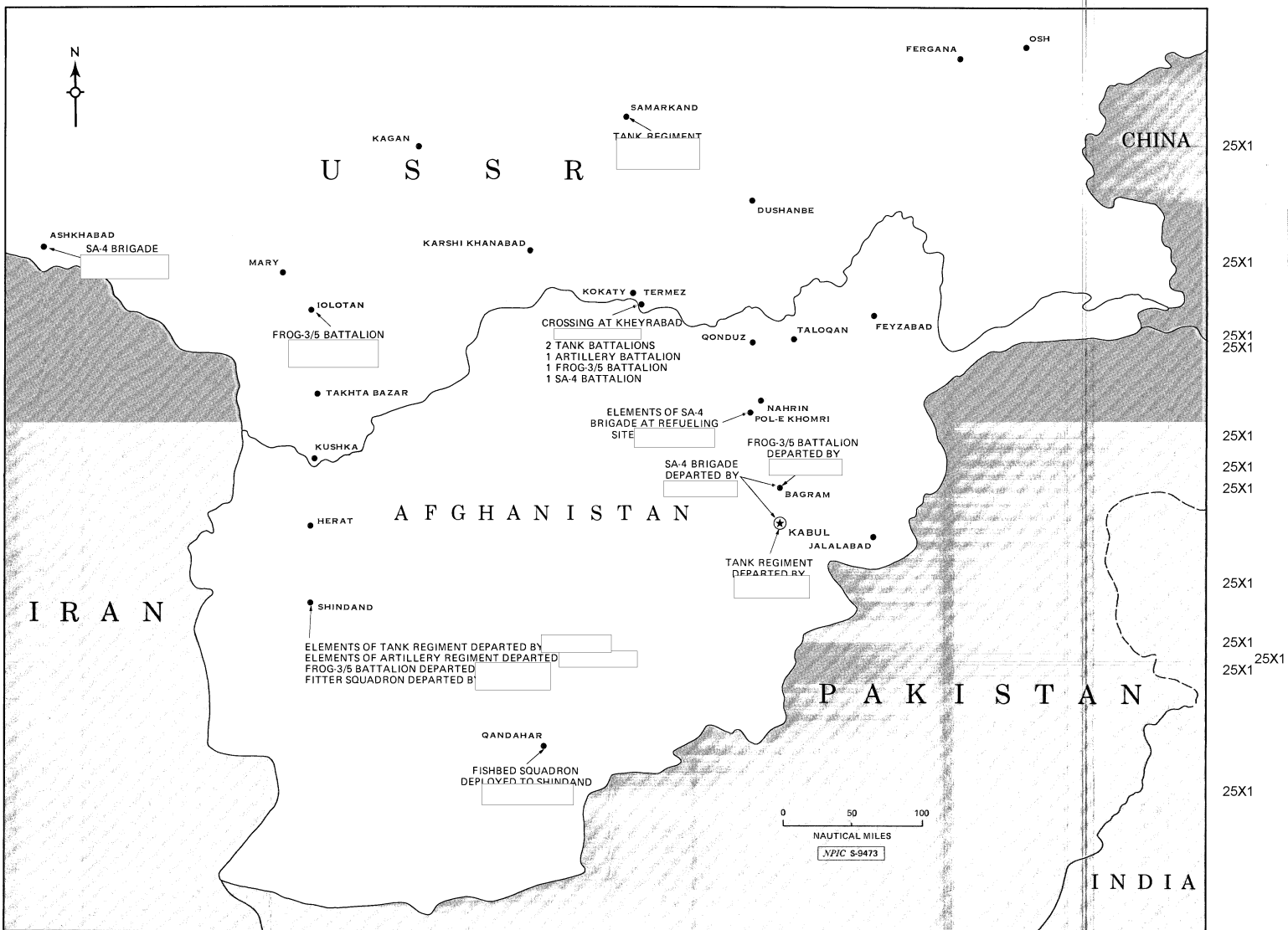


FIGURE 1. WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET UNITS FROM AFGHANISTAN, JUNE 1980

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9. (S/D) [redacted] a FROG-3/5 battalion was arriving in the USSR at Iolotan Army Barracks 25X1
 AL-1 [redacted] Figure 11), which houses elements subordinate to an MRD headquartered at 25X1
 Kushka. The MRD currently at Kushka is a replacement division for the Kushka MRD that was deployed
 to Shindand, Afghanistan, in December 1979. [redacted] a second FROG-3/5 battalion was on flat 25X1
 cars at a rail siding near the Iolotan installation (Figure 12). [redacted] only one FROG-3/5 battalion 25X1
 was in garrison. This is probably the one observed leaving Shindand, Afghanistan. [redacted] The second 25X1
 battalion may have also come from Afghanistan or may have been in transit from an MRD in the USSR to
 the Ashkhabad area where an army-/military district-level artillery and rocket troop exercise was in
 progress.

10. (S/D) It cannot be positively determined to where in the USSR the FITTER squadron returned.
 During the withdrawal time period, movement of FITTER aircraft was observed at five bases near
 Afghanistan, including: Kizyl-Arvat Airfield [redacted] Dallyar Airfield [redacted] Lutsk 25X1
 Airfield North [redacted] Belaya Airfield [redacted] and Kokayty Airfield [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

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