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Strategic Warning Staff

Washington, D.C. 20301

14 September 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR : NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICER FOR WARNING
SUBJECT : Evidence of Recent Soviet Troop Movement to Afghanistan

1. The attached memorandum discusses evidence of a recent deployment of Soviet troops to Afghanistan. It was prepared by [redacted] the SWS. Questions and comments should be addressed to these officers on extension [redacted]

DOUGLAS J. MacEACHIN
Director
Strategic Warning Staff

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EVIDENCE OF MOVEMENT OF SOVIET TROOPS TO AFGHANISTAN

1. [redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] has reported that the Soviet government moved 25X1
 3,600 troops into Kabul early this month. [redacted] 25X1
 [redacted] these troops are located in the Soviet communica- 25X1
 tions area across from the American Embassy and at locations
 near and in the USSR Embassy compound. Their mission in
 Kabul is alleged to be the protection of Soviet citizens and
 facilities. [redacted] 25X1

2. We have not yet been able to confirm this report 25X1
 [redacted] 25X1

3. On balance, taking into account the evidence that is
 available to us and particularly the pattern of Soviet ac-
 tivity in recent weeks, we believe that there is a better
 than even chance that the report of Soviet troop movement
 to Afghanistan is accurate. [redacted] 25X1
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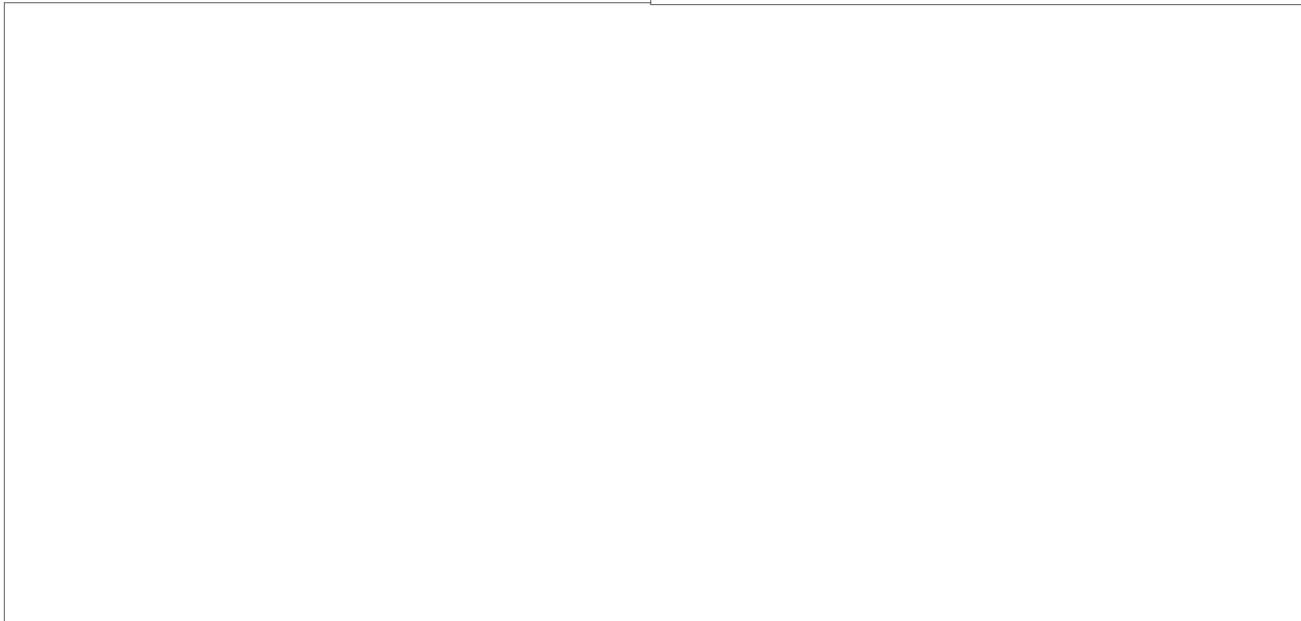
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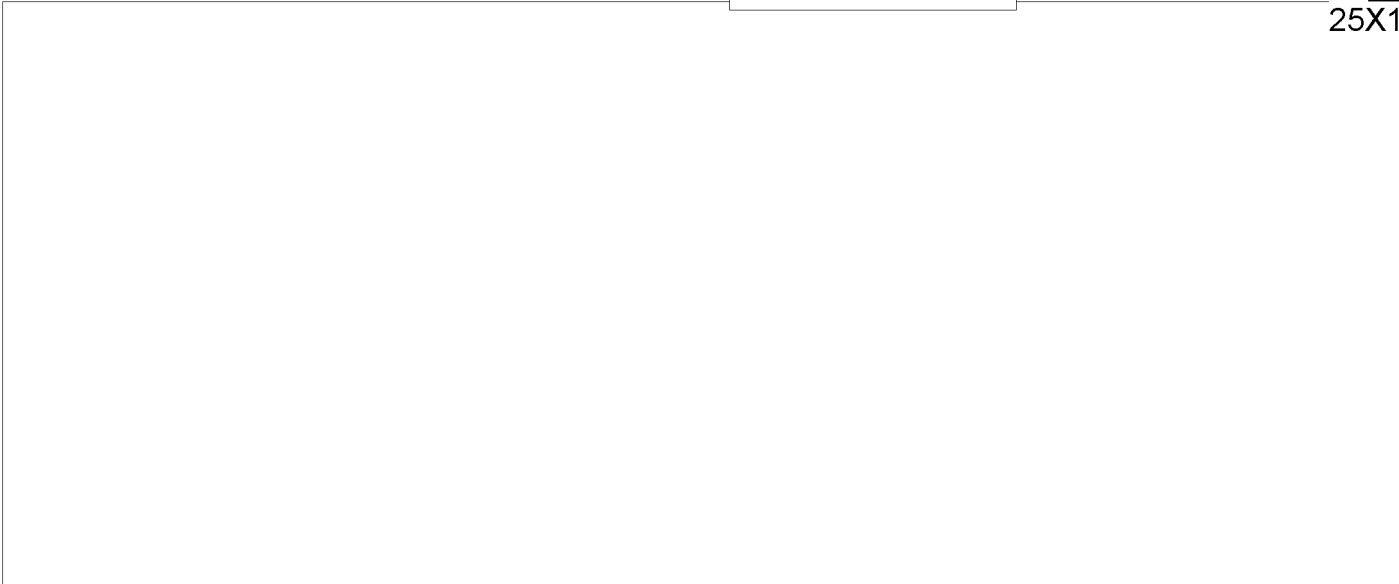
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9. As regards flights to Kabul International Airfield, the major civil airfield in Afghanistan, [redacted] [redacted] the activity there since mid-August reminds them of Tan Son Nhut airbase in the late sixties, with a steady stream of aircraft landing, unloading, and taking off, and cargo being moved about in trucks. [redacted]



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11. Moreover, the airlift to Afghanistan of 3,600 troops, roughly the number of men in two fully manned Soviet airborne regiments, would not necessarily have been accompanied by the airlift of all of the weapons and equipment on the TO/E of two airborne regiments. For example, there would be no need for the anti-aircraft weapons. Much of the other TO/E equipment could be drawn from assets already in the country. Although we have only sketchy information on what Soviet equipment and weapons are in Afghanistan or what has been brought in by the airlift over the past month, there is no doubt that it is substantial.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

The Soviets also would have access to a large number of trucks and logistic equipment already in the country.

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18. If the airlift merely represents implementation of the "more of the same" option, the Pavlovskiy mission may not be directly related to it. He may have been sent to determine if anything further should be done beyond what is already underway. The coincidence in timing, however, indicates that there is at least the strong possibility that Pavlovskiy was sent to oversee implementation of the decision that brought about the large airlift. If so, it seems likely that that decision involves more than simply increasing the number of advisors and the supply of weapons.

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The Pavlovskiy Mission

16. The Pavlovskiy mission has been viewed by most Community analysts as a fact finding venture pursuant to a decision on possible further military steps the Soviets might take in support of the Taraki regime. The possibility remains, however, that Pavlovskiy was sent to Kabul to oversee the implementation of a course already decided upon. If this were true, the stature and military position of Pavlovskiy--CinC of Soviet Ground Forces--would suggest that the decision involved more than simply "more of the same"--i.e. advisors and material. [redacted]

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