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[Redacted]

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Soviet Killing of Own Soldiers to Prevent Them from Becoming Prisoners

1. [Redacted] cites an Afghan insurgent as stating that the Soviet Army in Afghanistan deliberately bombed some of its troops to prevent them from being taken prisoner. This is not the first time we have had information of this nature:

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"the Soviets seek to minimize the number of their troops who are captured by trying to locate them and kill them"; [Redacted] cited the case of a downed Soviet helicopter crew that had been attacked by another Soviet helicopter. (Att. 2)

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-- After interviewing Soviet prisoners in Afghanistan, Freedom House staffer Ludmilla Thorn has stated that "If the Soviet high command hears where there are Soviet prisoners located, it will immediately order the bombing of the place, even give it precedence for bombing". (Att. 3)

-- One of the two Soviet defectors [Redacted]

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[Redacted] stated in a radio interview that the Soviet high command gives top priority to attacking insurgent groups holding Soviet prisoners, the intent being to dissuade insurgent groups from taking prisoners and Soviet soldiers from defecting.

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2.

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[Redacted] For many in the West, accustomed to the American practice of looking after the welfare of US POWs, such Soviet barbarism may be hard to believe. Yet such barbarism has played a major role in keeping the Soviet system going for these many years. There is no reason why the Soviets should shy away from it in Afghanistan.

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