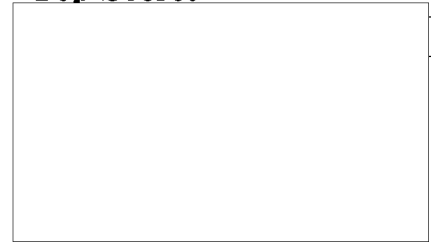




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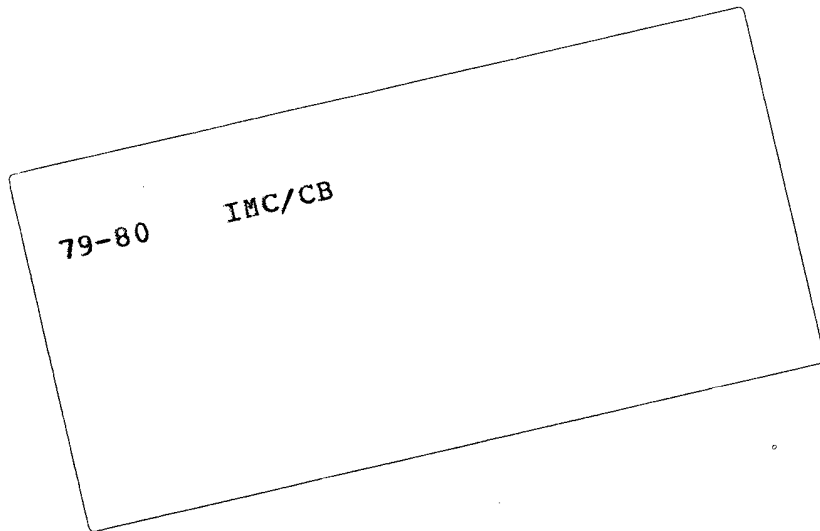
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# Afghanistan Situation Report



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23 December 1986



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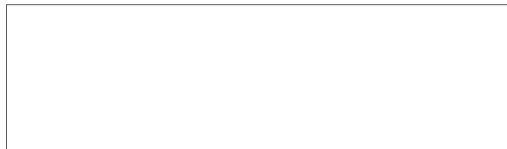
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**AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT**



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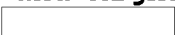

**CONTENTS**

**MULTIPLE OPERATIONS UNDERWAY**



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Soviet and Afghan combat operations were under way near Herat,  and on the Shomali Plain last week in an effort to curb continuing high levels of guerrilla activity. 

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**RABBANI'S AFRICAN TRIP**



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Jamiat-i-Islami leader Rabbani visited Gabon, Niger, and Senegal in early December to solicit support for the Afghan resistance. The trip was arranged with the assistance of French officials. 


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**ITALIAN LIBERAL PARTY OFFICIAL'S VIEW OF THE WAR**



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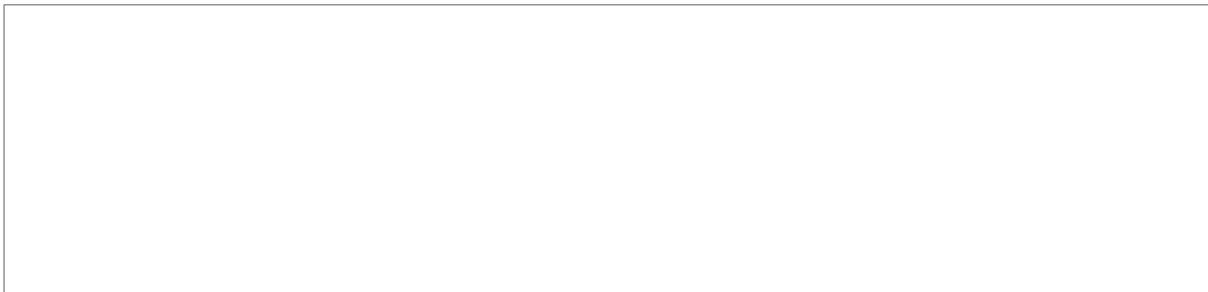
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Italian Liberal Party Secretary Altissimo, who visited the Konar Valley in September, believes that intensified efforts are needed to make the Soviets pay a high price in negative international opinion for the continued occupation of Afghanistan. 

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**IN BRIEF**

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**MULTIPLE OPERATIONS UNDERWAY**

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Heavy fighting continued last week in Herat.

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[Redacted] a combined Soviet-Afghan combat operation continued in the Shomali Plain around Bagram airfield. Comprising elements of an Afghan infantry division and a Soviet airborne regiment, the task force may be responding to an insurgent ambush on 16 or 17 December of a Soviet convoy heading from Kabul to Bagram.

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**RABBANI'S AFRICAN TRIP**

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Jamiat-i-Islami leader Rabbani visited Gabon, Niger, and Senegal in early December to gain support for the resistance. Accompanied by Homayoum Tondar, the party's Paris representative, he met with Presidents Bongo, Kountche, and Diouf. Rabbani spoke of Soviet deprivations in Afghanistan and pledged free elections and Afghanistan's return to non-alignment after the Soviets withdraw. US officials believe Rabbani also lobbied each head of state for support at the coming OIC Conference in Kuwait.

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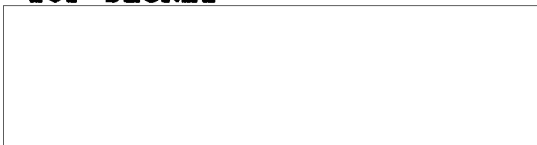
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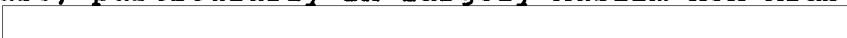
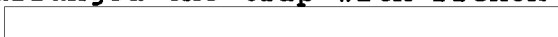

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COMMENT: Rabbani's visit to Francophone west Africa had been scheduled for last spring, during his tenure as alliance spokesman, but was cancelled when the parties failed to concur on the trip's purpose. Although the just-concluded trip was not endorsed by the alliance, it was treated by the media as if it were. The favorable coverage Rabbani attracted may increase support in the alliance for such quasi-diplomatic activities. 

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Rabbani's successful trip stems from Tondar's longstanding recommendation that the Jamiat--and the resistance generally--aggressively seek international media exposure, particularly in largely Muslim non-Arab countries.  Tondar arranged the trip with French logistic help. In return,  Tondar apparently persuaded Rabbani to ask Senegalese President Diouf to allow several insurgents to enroll in the university at Dakar. Paris reportedly believes Afghan students could cultivate antipathy toward the Soviets among the student body and counterbalance efforts of radical Senegalese Muslims. 


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**ITALIAN LIBERAL PARTY LEADER'S VIEW OF THE WAR** 

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Italian Liberal Party Secretary Renato Altissimo, who visited the Konar Valley in mid-September, said that while he found the insurgents eager to attack the Soviets, their spirits were flagging. Shortages of arms, medicine, clothing, and food were a factor in lowered morale, as were unsatisfactory living conditions in the refugee camps in Pakistan. Altissimo asserted that the Soviets eventually will win unless Western public opinion is focused on the war and increased military and humanitarian aid is sent to the insurgents. 

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Altissimo said that he has launched an initiative to raise West European public interest in the war. He also said that party currently is urging Prime Minister Craxi's government to provide substantial humanitarian aid for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and trying to

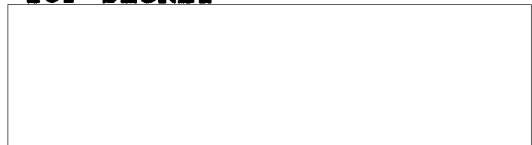


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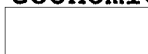


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persuade Craxi to sponsor the resistance alliance's membership in the United Nations. 


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In Altissimo's opinion, cooperative efforts among the European Community, the United States, and pro-Afghan Arab states are needed to rivet Western media's attention on the war and force the Soviets to pay a high price in negative international opinion. More important, Altissimo claimed that this sort of united action is the only way in which significant aid could be procured from West European governments. Without a multilateral "umbrella organization," according to Altissimo, West Europeans will remain aloof from the war for fear of offending Moscow and endangering economic ties with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.



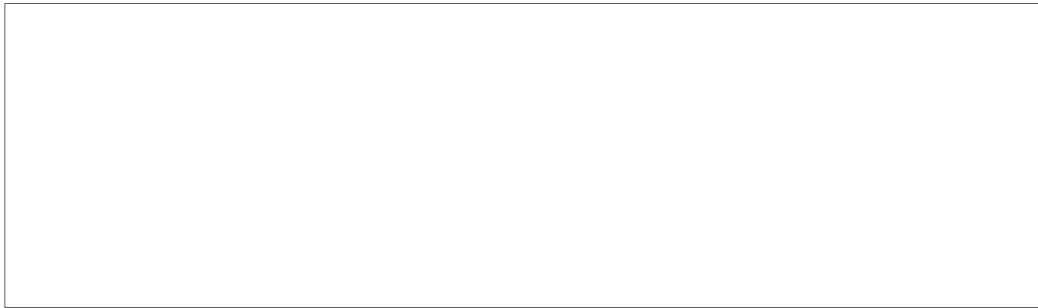
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**IN BRIEF**

-- The PDPA Politburo publicly criticized the party's provincial committee in Nangarhar on 18 December for failing to execute fully decisions of the 19th and 20th party plenums. Specifically, the Nangarhar group was admonished for failing to meet conscription goals, broaden the party's base, and consolidate control. Coming on the heels of Najib's visit to Moscow, the rebuke almost certainly is meant to impress Moscow with the PDPA's determination to remedy the regime's failings. 

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-- Ireland has decided to participate in the McCollum patient airlift program. According




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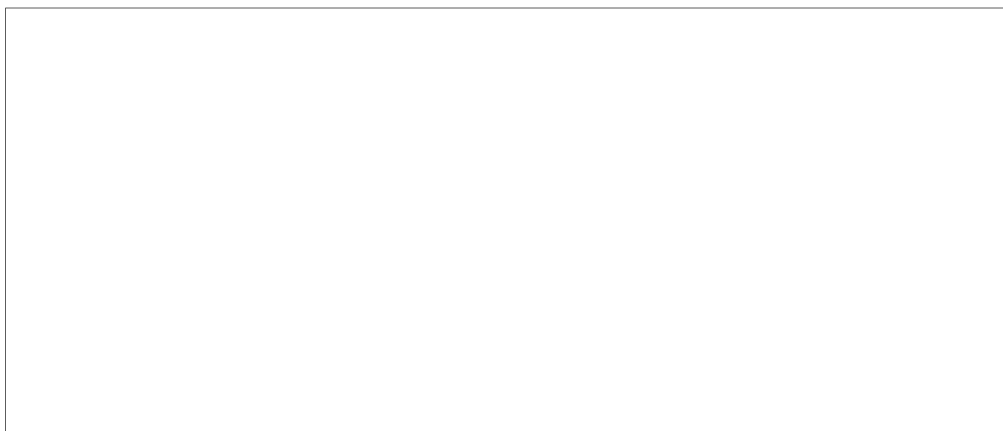
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to the US Embassy in Dublin, the Government of Ireland has agreed to accept two Afghan patients for treatment on a trial basis in 1987. This is the first instance of unilateral Irish humanitarian aid to the Afghan resistance, although Dublin has supported the resistance position in international fora. 


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- The Government of Sweden plans to increase aid to the Afghan resistance by 33 percent. According to press reports, the bulk of the 20 million kronor--approximately \$2.9 million--will be channeled through the Swedish Afghanistan Committee, a private organization, to purchase medicines and medical equipment. Swedish humanitarian organizations are one of the main sources of medical aid for the insurgents. 

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- On 14 December the Kabul regime signed a contract with the Soviet Union for reconstruction of the Kabul-to-Jeyretan highway, according to press reports. Under the agreement, Moscow will deliver construction equipment worth approximately \$7.25 million to Afghanistan over the next 36 months. Repair of the highway--which was begun two years ago--is being financed jointly by Afghanistan and the USSR. 

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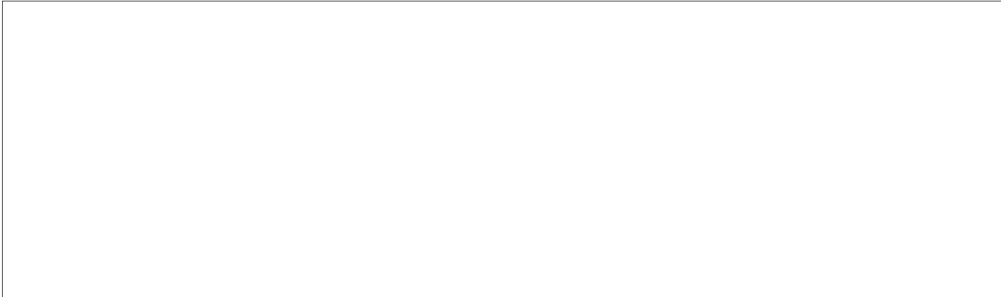
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-- The European Parliament's resolution on Afghanistan on 11 December condemned the Soviet occupation, demanded immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops, and urged Moscow to let the Red Cross have access to political prisoners in Kabul. Simultaneously, the European Commission earmarked cereals to support Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The strong actions probably owe much to the UK's efforts while EC president to keep up criticism of Soviet actions in Afghanistan.



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-- According to a Soviet foreign ministry official, PDPA General Secretary Najib's recent visit to Moscow was routine and contributed nothing toward a settlement of the war. The official also cautioned that public Soviet and Afghan optimism about the next round of Geneva talks only mirrors UN-negotiator Cordovez's views.



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