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RECENT MAJOR INSURGENT ACTIVITY.

- (1) PAKTIA REGION--There has been intense fighting going on here since mid-September 1983, and there has been a marked increase over the last few weeks. It has been so intense that the Soviets have been forced to air-lift supplies to the besieged Soviet/DRA troops. The insurgents have simply closed down the over-land supply routes to Paktia through numerous attacks on supply caravans. The Khowst garrison in Paktia is under extreme insurgent pressure and the fall of this garrison would be the worst government defeat since an Afghan unit was almost destroyed last spring.
- the measures to protect the transport aircraft flying into the besieged Khowst airfield include providing a fighter escort from Kabul and keeping the engines running during unloading to allow for a quick takeoff if the airfield comes under attack. 25X1
- (2) SALANG PASS--This is a major supply route to Kabul. The insurgents have attacked several caravans along the pass over the last few weeks. This problem for the Soviets has been compounded by the snow which often creates a natural barrier along the route.
- (3) JALALABAD--Being a major city, the Soviets have put a great deal of effort into keeping this city under control. The security situation has been described as the worst that it has ever been. Resistance activity has increased greatly including a recent attack on Khad (Afghan Intel Service) Headquarters in downtown Jalalabad. 25X1
- (4) QANDAHAR PROVINCE--According to [redacted] insurgents using SA-7 missiles on 1 December downed two Afghan MI-8 helicopters near Qandahar city, killing eight senior Afghan Army and Air Force officers, possibly including the Qandahar airbase commander. This attack has reportedly caused the Soviets serious concern.
- (5) QANDAHAR CITY--As of this week, the city of Qandahar is almost completely controlled by the insurgency. The U.S. Embassy reported that the insurgents inflicted over 40 casualties during an attack in late December there. The insurgents also reportedly attacked an Afghan corps headquarters in the Qandahar area causing heavy regime casualties, and even established a judicial system that, according to one source of the Embassy, was recognized by the city's mayor.
- (6) HERAT PROVINCE--Special intelligence indicates that 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. Thereafter, the area quieted down until recently when the insurgents regrouped and increased once again the intensity of their attacks.
- (7) TORKHAM BORDER POST-- The insurgents captured a government outpost at Torkham, which is a major transit point for Afghan Government exports outside the Soviet Union. It was reported, however, that the insurgents abandoned the post under pressure from the Pakistanis who were uncomfortable with the post being directly on the border.
- (8) and (9) Mazar-E-Sharif and Baghlan Air bases--These two strategic air bases have been under constant harassment by the insurgents. The Soviet have reportedly been forced to sweep the area surrounding these bases before allowing aircraft to take off.