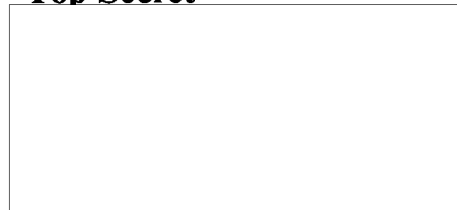




Directorate of Intelligence

~~Top Secret~~

SOVA Reg



23

25X1

Developments in Afghanistan

Developments in Afghanistan



25X1

10 January 1986

~~Top Secret~~

NESA DA 86-001CX
SOV DA 86-001CX

10 January 1986

Copy 145

25X1

Page Denied

Top Secret



25X1

Developments in Afghanistan

25X1

10 January 1986

1 Perspective—Afghanistan: More Leadership Changes Looming?
 25X1
25X1

Recent leadership changes in the Afghan regime strengthen the Parchami faction, but may presage more far-reaching changes, including the replacement of Babrak Karmal. 25X1

5 Briefs

11 Najibullah: An Heir Apparent?
 25X1
25X1

The Soviets appear to be grooming former intelligence chief Najibullah to succeed Babrak Karmal—a move we believe would reinforce the regime’s image as a narrowly based, Soviet-controlled police state. 25X1

15 Afghanistan: A Good 1985 Grain Harvest
 25X1
25X1

We estimate that Afghan farmers produced 2.9 million metric tons of wheat this year—up from last year’s 2.7 million tons. Food supplies should be adequate, although localized shortages will probably still occur because of transportation problems and disruptions caused by the war. 25X1

23 Divide and Rule: Soviet Regional Policy in Afghanistan
 25X1
25X1

Soviet operations in Afghanistan are evolving in a way that suggests a regionally differentiated strategy that demographic trends reinforce. Moscow may believe that a regional approach offers it the best prospect of controlling strategically important parts of the country in the medium term, while long-run trends in the region work to their advantage. 25X1
25X1

27 Afghanistan: A Selected Political Chronology, October-December 1985

This document is published monthly by the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Executive Editor,
 25X1



Top Secret



25X1
25X1

Top Secret



Developments in Afghanistan 

25X1

10 January 1986

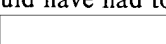
Perspective

Afghanistan: More Leadership Changes Looming? 

25X1

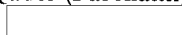
High-level shifts in the Afghan party leadership in November have strengthened the dominant Parchami faction. Although factional rivalry contributed to the leadership shifts, we strongly suspect that they were motivated by other factors:

- They are part of a larger, Soviet-instigated strategy—including the addition to the Cabinet of several nonparty members in December—to improve the image of the Afghan regime and press Pakistan to deal with Kabul directly.
- They may also presage Soviet intentions to replace Babrak with former KHAD head Najibullah, who was elevated to the Central Committee Secretariat in the recent leadership moves.


Whatever the reason, the Soviets, in our view, would have had to approve changes of this magnitude and most likely initiated them. 

25X1


The Party Shuffle

Party leadership changes made at the 16th plenum of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan included the following: Najibullah (Parchami), head of KHAD and already a member of the Politburo, became a secretary of the party Central Committee. Defense Minister Nazar Mohammad (Khalqi) and Minister of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs Solayman Laeq (Parchami) were named candidate members of the Politburo, and Gholam Faruq Yaqubi (Parchami), KHAD First Deputy, was promoted from candidate member of the Central Committee to full member and was subsequently named head of KHAD. Removed from the Politburo were former Minister of Mines and current Ambassador to Libya Esmail Danesh (Khalqi), former Defense Minister Qader (Parchami), and Writers' Union head Gholam Dastagir Panjsheri (Khalqi). 

25X1

The changes, the most extensive in the party leadership since 1983, have strengthened the Parchami faction. Of the eight full members of the Politburo, only two are Khalqi and only one of the four alternate members is Khalqi—for a net loss of one Khalqi member. The total number of Parchamis on the Politburo is nine. 

25X1

Although permitting Babrak to surround himself with Parchami loyalists, the Soviets in the past have supported Interior Minister Gulabzoi and other important Khalqis, and the Khalqi Minister of Defense, Nazar Mohammad, was elevated in the recent round of changes. Substantial Khalqi power in the provincial police and in the military will prevent the Babrak regime from risking a full-scale purge, but not from continuing to engineer shifts in the party leadership. 

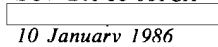
25X1

The moves will also give the Defense Ministry and KHAD, the intelligence service, more power within the party. Former KHAD head Najibullah, considered a possible successor to Babrak, was promoted to Central Committee secretary. In



Top Secret

NESA DA 86-001CX
SOV DA 86-001CX


10 January 1986

25X1

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

this post, he will supervise KHAD and the Interior and Defense Ministries. Defense Minister Nazar Mohammad was elevated to candidate member of the Politburo. [Redacted]

25X1

A Pretext of Broadening the Government Base

Although factionalism in the PDPA periodically produces shakeups in the leadership, the recent changes appear to be more than that. In our view, the shakeup was the first in a series of leadership moves designed to give the regime a face-lift and strengthen the credibility of the Babrak regime prior to the March round of indirect peace talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan at Geneva. The party shifts were followed by Cabinet-level government changes in late December, when 14 new Cabinet and subcabinet appointments were announced. The majority of these were nonparty members, and they represent a broad spectrum of tribes and ethnic groups. According to the US Embassy in Kabul, the regime also went out of its way to point out that two of three newly appointed provincial governors are not party members. [Redacted]

25X1

The changes do not represent a true broadening of the regime. Almost all of the new appointees—even the nonparty members—have been loyal regime supporters and none have ties to the resistance. Creating the appearance of a more representative regime in Afghanistan, however, will allow Moscow and Kabul to claim that Islamabad, by refusing to deal directly with the Babrak government, is obstructing the peace process. [Redacted]

25X1

A Prelude to Increasing Pressure on Pakistan?

Kabul could then maintain the appearance of broader based rule and, at the same time, increase its potential to threaten Pakistani control in the North-West Frontier Province. Such a move would be in keeping with Kabul's recent efforts to stir up unrest by arming tribes in the Pakistani border area and encouraging them to hamper insurgent infiltration through the eastern provinces. [Redacted]

25X1

The strengthening of KHAD influence in the party by promotion of Najibullah and Yaqubi would be in accord with a plan to pressure Pakistan. KHAD has been involved in efforts to subvert Pashtun tribesmen since 1983, and any personal relationships that KHAD leaders may have built with tribal leaders would have been enhanced by the recent party leadership changes. Despite Yaqubi's having been named to replace Najibullah as head of KHAD, Najibullah will continue to be de facto head of the intelligence service. Also significant is the elevation of the Minister of Tribes and Nationalities, whose ministry has cooperated closely with KHAD to develop tribal support. [Redacted]

25X1

Looking Beyond Babrak

The Soviets may also be considering replacing Babrak. Moscow is almost certainly disappointed in the failure of the PDPA to win broadly based popular support and recognizes that its commitment to defend Afghanistan could drag on for years if the insurgents are not neutralized, either militarily, politically, or diplomatically. [Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Najibullah, known as an ambitious man, has long had strong ties to Moscow, and [Redacted] the Soviets consider him capable, energetic, and dedicated. His new position as Central Committee secretary will present Najibullah with a rare opportunity to expand his power base in the Interior and Defense Ministries. Should Moscow decide to replace Babrak [Redacted] Najibullah would be a prime candidate. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Outlook

At best, only marginal improvement in the running of the Afghan Government would result from replacing Babrak. The odds are against anyone—even Najibullah [Redacted] In the short term, moreover, replacing Babrak would increase factional strife. [Redacted]

25X6

25X6

25X1

[Redacted] the prospect of having a Kabul government that combined a threat to Pakistan's stability with a new, and arguably more legitimate face might be sufficiently enticing to cause Moscow to reshuffle the Afghan leadership. [Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Page Denied

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Denied

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Afghanistan-USSR-Pakistan: Geneva Talks Produce No Breakthrough

[Redacted]

25X1

The recently completed sixth round of the UN-brokered talks on Afghanistan did not break the stalemate over the issue of direct talks between Islamabad and the Kabul regime, but both sides reportedly agreed to examine ways to skirt the problem in future talks. According to the US Mission in Geneva, the Afghan Government came to the talks with a timetable for withdrawal but refused to reveal it until Islamabad agreed to direct talks. Both UN Special Representative Cordovez and the Pakistanis are expressing optimism that new proposals to avoid the impasse on format will permit progress on a troop withdrawal agreement during the next round of discussions scheduled for late February or early March.

[Redacted]

25X1

Moscow has offered no evidence that it is willing to negotiate a troop withdrawal. Cordovez has consistently oversold the prospects for movement in the talks, and the optimism from the Pakistanis—who do not want to be blamed for obstructing a settlement—probably is largely for diplomatic show. Islamabad almost certainly will not agree to direct talks without solid assurances from Kabul that the Soviets have agreed to a timetable for withdrawal.

[Redacted]

25X1

Afghanistan: Estimated Soviet Aircraft Losses

[Redacted]

25X1

We estimate that Soviet combat-related aircraft losses increased slightly to 140 in 1985, compared to 1984 when some 125 fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft were shot down.

[Redacted]

25X1
25X1

The increase in Soviet and regime losses is due both to more effective insurgent air defense and to more aggressive and frequent Soviet use of airpower:

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Page Denied

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Denied

Top Secret
[redacted]

25X1

Najibullah: An Heir Apparent? [redacted]

25X1

The Soviets appear to be grooming former intelligence chief Najibullah to succeed Babrak Karmal. Najibullah would bring vigor and decisiveness to the Afghan regime's leadership but, unless handled carefully, his elevation could mean more headaches for Moscow. Najibullah's further advancement, moreover, would imply that Moscow placed little faith in the prospects for a negotiated, compromise solution on Afghanistan. [redacted]

New Opportunities

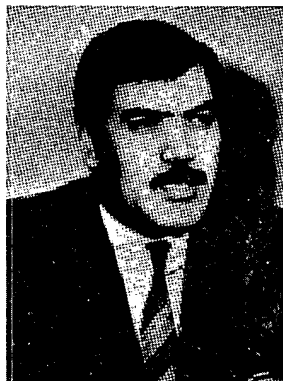
Najibullah's appointment in November as a Secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) Central Committee appears designed to give him a much broader role in the regime and to expand his already considerable power. Diplomatic sources of the US Embassy in Kabul report that he will oversee the Ministries of Defense and Interior, as well as the Afghan intelligence service, KHAD—giving him the chance to consolidate control of all of the regime's security forces. [redacted]

In addition, Najibullah's new position should give him broader experience in party affairs, and increase his public visibility, already considerable for a secret police head. Moscow may see such expanded horizons as essential preparation for assuming the top post in the regime. A Soviet diplomat in Kabul has acknowledged the similarity between Najibullah's rise and Yuri Andropov's movement from KGB chief to party secretary to General Secretary. (Karmal is currently PDPA General Secretary, as well as President of the Revolutionary Council). [redacted]

The Man from KHAD

The new Secretary brings numerous professional, party, and personal assets to his position. As President of KHAD since the Soviet invasion, Najibullah presided over the growth of the secret police into a powerful and feared organization, which has at times overshadowed the party itself. [redacted]

Najibullah the Man



25X1

An Ahmadzai Pashtun . . . probably born in Kabul . . . graduated Kabul's Habibia High School in 1964 . . . longtime medical student at Kabul University . . . uses title "Doctor," but unknown if he graduated . . . known for running spies and informers as a student . . . imprisoned briefly in 1970 for leading demonstrations against visit by US Vice President Agnew . . . briefly in military, civil service . . . briefly Deputy Minister of Interior after April 1978 coup . . . exiled as Ambassador to Iran by Khalqis . . . accused of plotting to kill Khalqi leader Taraki . . . fled to Eastern Europe, joining Karmal and other Parchamis . . . [redacted]

25X1

[redacted] organized KHAD in wake of 1979 Soviet invasion . . . elected full Politburo member June 1981 . . . holds rank of Lieutenant General. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

[redacted] . . . likes expensive cars, clothes . . . [redacted] speaks Urdu, some Russian, English, French, German . . . married, at least one child . . . about 38 years old. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Top Secret
NESA DA 86-001CX
SOV DA 86-001CX
[redacted]
10 January 1986

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

[Large Redacted Area]

25X1

:

:

[Redacted]

power base he has built there. Lt. Gen. Ghulam Faruq Yaqubi, the new secret police head, has been a key lieutenant of Najibullah's since 1980, as well as his friend and confidant.

[Redacted]

25X1

25X1

Najibullah adroitly balanced his own bid for domestic power with total acquiescence to Soviet control of his organization.

[Redacted]

A fervent Communist, he has impressed those around him as fanatically pro-Soviet in outlook.

[Redacted]

Parchamis and Other Strangers

Links to others in the PDPA hierarchy could ease Najibullah's rise to power. As an early party activist—he was a student organizer for Karmal in the late 1960s—Najibullah has longstanding ties to most high-ranking members of the Parchami faction. His relations with Karmal, while not always smooth, have traditionally been close.

[Redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

Najibullah, while no longer formally in charge at KHAD, should have little difficulty maintaining the

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

[Redacted]

Najibullah's links to other Parchami luminaries also go well back in the PDPA's turbulent history. Along with Nur Ahmad Nur, Anahita Ratebzad, Mahmud Baryalai, and Babrak Karmal, Najibullah was sent into ambassadorial exile by the Khalqis in 1978.

is expected to supervise the Interior Ministry, which Gulabzoi heads and has maintained as a Khalqi stronghold, and the heavily Khalqi armed forces. In order to invigorate the security forces, Najibullah will have to win at least the acquiescence of many rank-and-file Khalqis—something his past behavior will make difficult.

25X1

25X1

25X1

[Redacted]

As the regime's chief emissary to Pashtun tribal leaders, Najibullah has also worked closely with Solayman Laeq, the Minister of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs.

In his efforts to mold the PDPA into a more effective governing body, Najibullah may also encounter resistance from the party's old guard. While the PDPA Politburo is hardly a Kremlin-style gerontocracy, seven of the 12 full and candidate members are a full decade older than the new Secretary and may resent his rapid advancement. Even the mutual loyalty Najibullah enjoys with Karmal may not stand the strains of power.

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

His impressive personality should also assist Najibullah in his new position.

"some competition" has arisen between the two as a result of Najibullah's advancement.

25X1

25X1

[Redacted]

Outlook

The Soviets appear to be grooming Najibullah for PDPA leadership, probably because they deem him most capable of molding Afghan security forces and the PDPA into a more effective, cohesive unit. The Soviets probably hope such a new, improved regime would prove capable of shouldering a greater share of what they expect to be a long, grinding struggle—permitting, in effect, an "Afghanization" of the war.

25X1

25X1

Problems Ahead?

Despite his many assets, Najibullah will have to overcome his reputation as violently anti-Khalqi to become the successful, effective leader the Soviets apparently want.

[Redacted]

25X1

[Redacted]

Najibullah will probably be given a long period—possibly from six months to two years—to grow into his new Secretariat position, a time during which he will presumably work to bring Interior and Defense under his control and improve the overall efficiency and performance of the Armed Forces. If he succeeds, the Soviets may gradually expand his sphere of authority, possibly making him party General Secretary while retaining Karmal as figurehead President. Finally, if the Soviets feel he is fully prepared, they could allow him to replace Karmal. The further elevation of Yaqubi or other KHAD proteges of Najibullah to high party and government

25X1

We believe that a Soviet diplomat's recent assurance to the US Embassy in Kabul that Najibullah enjoys widespread support among Khalqis contains a large dose of wishful thinking. In his new post, Najibullah

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

posts would be important indicators of Najibullah's progress. [Redacted]

25X1

The elevation of a former secret police head, in our view, would reinforce the regime's image as a Soviet-controlled, narrowly based police state, however. KHAD will almost certainly continue to grow in power as its longtime head advances in the regime. If Najibullah is pushed into the top spot too quickly—perhaps in the event of Babrak's death or his refusal to cooperate in his own gradual obsolescence—we would expect to see more purges of Khalqis, further desertions and disaffection in the military, and a regime that, while perhaps more cohesive and vigorous, would be even more narrowly based than the present one. [Redacted]

25X1

In any event, a regime led by Najibullah would almost certainly complicate Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan and might even ensure the collapse of diplomatic efforts to reach a compromise solution to the war. Efforts to destabilize Pakistan can also be expected to continue with Najibullah's rise to power.

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret
[redacted]

25X1

**Afghanistan: A Good 1985
Grain Harvest** [redacted]

25X1

Afghan farmers have harvested a good 1985 grain crop. We estimate that 2.9 million metric tons of wheat—the staple of the Afghan diet and historically about 60 percent of annual grain output—were harvested. Food supplies should be better than last year when, by our estimates, the Afghans produced 2.7 million metric tons of wheat. Localized shortages could still occur, however, as the result of military action or transportation problems. [redacted]

We identified very few incidents of intentional crop destruction this year, and our analysis continues to indicate that the amount of destruction, whether intentional or incidental to military combat, is insignificant compared to total production. Abandonment of agricultural land continues in combat areas, but we estimate that at most it does not exceed 5 percent of total cropland, and it could be considerably less. Furthermore, some limited evidence suggests that the loss of production due to abandonment is being offset by shifting agricultural production from cash to food crops and by bringing new land under civilization. [redacted]

The Wheat Estimate

Afghanistan's 1985 wheat crop is estimated at 2.9 million metric tons, bringing production back to the level attained prior to the 1984 drought.¹ This assessment is based primarily on analysis of Landsat [redacted] supplemented by meteorological data. [redacted]

[redacted] At least one-half of the entire agricultural area of the country was

¹ Our estimate is consistent with that of the Afghan Government, which has reported that over 2.85 million tons of wheat was produced in 1985. Favorable reporting on harvest and procurement activities in neighboring countries, which are generally affected by the same weather patterns as Afghanistan, also supports our assessment of above-average Afghan crop prospects. The size of the grain harvest in south Uzbek, SSR—which adjoins the Afghan dryland area on the north—was above plan in late June, according to Moscow Domestic Radio. Unclassified reporting from Pakistan—to the east of Afghanistan—indicates that domestic grain procurements for the May-July period ran about 10 percent higher this year than last. [redacted]

Afghanistan's Agriculture at a Glance

Afghanistan is mostly unsuitable for agriculture, with mountains, desert, and forest extending across the country. The poorly structured soils, limited water availability, severe climate, and primitive farming practices all limit Afghanistan's agricultural production. The soils are alkaline, high in calcium, and low in organic matter. Precipitation can fluctuate considerably from year to year, with most of the country unable to support dryland farming. Agriculture depends heavily on irrigation from the rivers and streams formed by snowmelt in the mountains. The arid continental climate is comprised of hot, dry summers and wet, usually harsh winters. Agriculture is largely of a subsistence nature.

25X1

Arable land 8 million hectares
Irrigated land 3.3 million hectares, of which three-fourths is planted each year

25X1

Irrigated crops Approximately 85 percent of total agricultural production

Dryland crops Approximately 15 percent of total agricultural production

25X1

Crops 25X1
Food Wheat (60 percent) 25X1

Corn, rice, barley, and mil (30 percent) 25X1

Fruits and vegetables (6 percent)

Industrial Cotton, sugar beets, oilseeds, and poppies (4 percent)

25X1

25X1

Top Secret
NES A DA 86-001CX
SOV DA 86-001CX
[redacted]
10 January 1986

25X1

Top Secret

[redacted]

25X1

also imaged with the unclassified multispectral Landsat system. [redacted]

25X1

The number of targets and the amount of land imaged were sufficient to provide a statistically valid sample of crop yield conditions countrywide. The imagery included coverage of part of every province, although coverage was limited in a few areas at harvest time, when yields can be estimated directly from imagery. [redacted]

25X1

Agricultural output was good in most areas of the country, except where lengthy and intense combat had occurred and forced farmers to abandon the land. Our analysis indicates that in a few provinces—Parvan, Kabol, and Baghlan—yields were excellent. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

Food Distribution and Imports

Afghanistan must import grain each year to feed its rapidly growing urban centers. Based on past import figures, we estimate grain imports, mostly wheat, will amount to about 400,000 tons this year.

Approximately 225,000 tons arrives from the Soviet Union, of which 100,000 tons is purchased and approximately 125,000 tons is provided as grant aid. [redacted]

25X1

[redacted] Since the Soviet occupation, Kabul has nearly doubled its imports of grain to alleviate food shortages in urban areas. The tremendous population increase in Kabul, combined with disruptions in areas traditionally supplying food to Kabul, is the major cause for increased imports. [redacted]

25X1
25X1

A Regional View of Yields

Eastern Valleys and Provinces. The 11 provinces surrounding Kabul contain approximately 30 percent of the country's agricultural land and some of its most fertile and high-yielding valleys. It is, however, also the area most affected by the Soviet occupation. At least three of these valleys (Panjsher, Konar, and Nangarhar) have been the sites of heavy military operations. [redacted]

The Panjsher Valley is one of the few locations where deliberate burning of grainfields was identified in 1984. Because of the continued military presence this

year, farmers have almost totally abandoned the valley, and crops are not being cultivated. However, this abandonment does not have a significant impact on Afghanistan's total grain production because this long, narrow valley is only a minor grain producer. [redacted]

The Charikar Basin, a fertile valley at the base of the Panjsher Valley, traditionally produces surplus grain for the Kabul region. Harvest occurred on schedule in June this year, and yields across the basin were excellent. With the exception of some fields that had been burned near the entrance to the Panjsher Valley, the only destruction observed in the area was caused by armored vehicles crossing some fields; the minor destruction observed will have no significant effect on total grain production for this valley. [redacted]

In the Nangarhar Valley surrounding Jalalabad and in the adjacent Konar Valley, harvest occurred on schedule in May. Yields were good to excellent in the Nangarhar area and were fair to good in the Konar Valley, despite the effects of continued military activity. Some destruction, caused by vehicles driving through fields and the burning of crops, was observed in both the Nangarhar and Konar Valleys. Some of the burned fields in the Konar Valley appeared to have been intentionally destroyed. [redacted]

The factor most affecting agricultural production in these valleys is the steady decline in population and abandonment of land since the Soviet invasion in 1979. In the Konar Valley, the abandonment stems mostly from frequent military operations, but in the Nangarhar area it is also due to efforts by the regime to secure large defensive zones around military installations. For example, a large agricultural area adjacent to Jalalabad Airfield is almost totally uncultivated this year. [redacted]

Grain yields were good in both Paktia and Paktika Provinces this year. Military activity continues in this area adjacent to the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. However, only minor damage from vehicle tracks through agricultural fields was observed in Paktia Province. Although its population was never large,

25X1
25X1

25X1

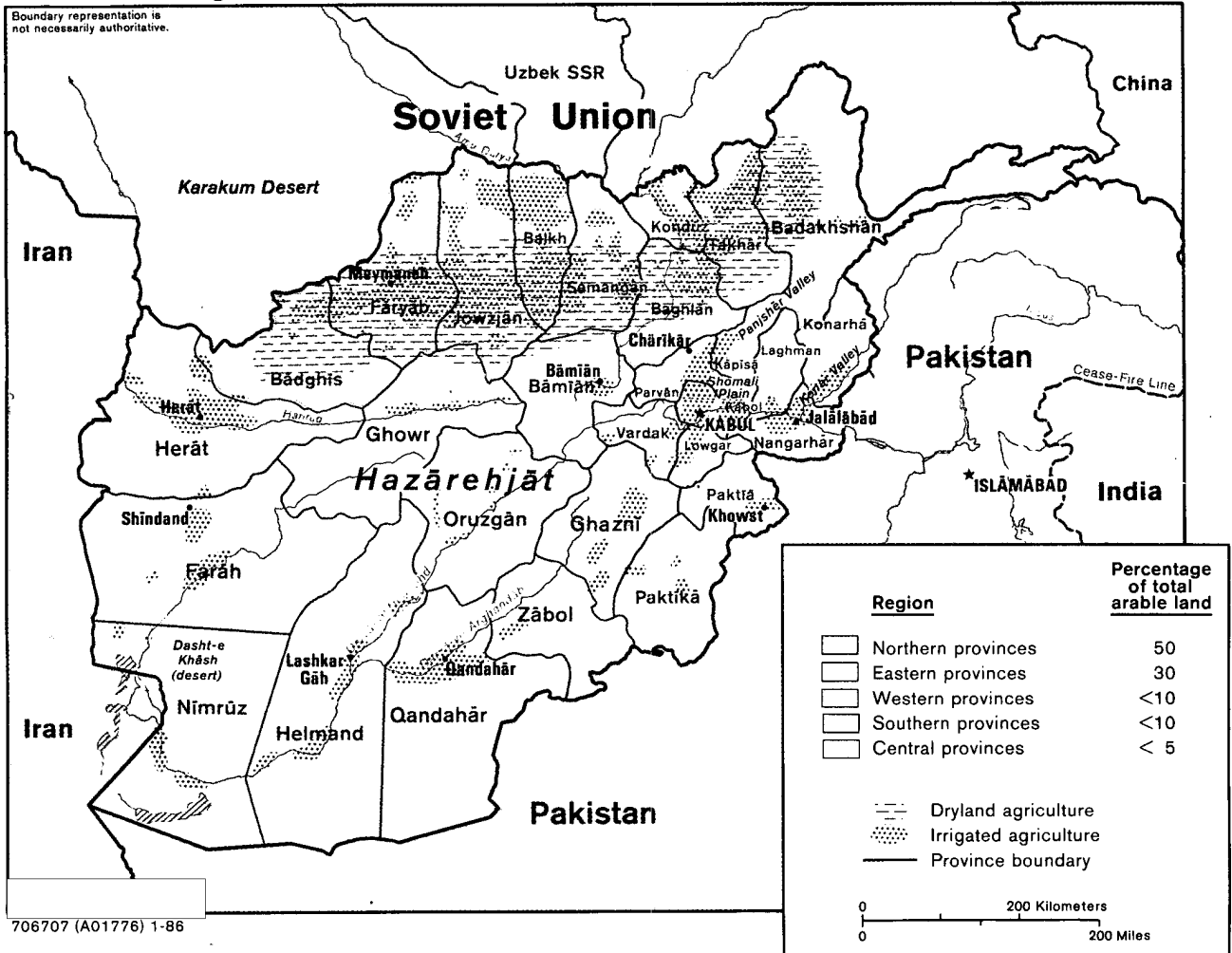
25X1

Top Secret

[redacted]

25X1

Arable Land in Afghanistan



25X1

abandonment in the Khowst Valley in Paktia is the greatest we have seen in Afghanistan. Total production in Paktia as a whole is probably slowly decreasing as abandonment of cropland continues.

25X1

Elsewhere in the region, crop yields were generally good:

- Crop yields in Ghazni Province this year looked good with lodging—a condition that occurs when the weight of the mature head cannot be supported by the stalk—observed in many of the fields.

- The Kabul (Shomali Plain) region, located around Kabul City, had good-to-excellent yields this year with heavy lodging in many of the fields. The irrigation canals were flowing, and there was very little abandonment in this region.

25X1

Page Denied

Top Secret
[Redacted]

25X1

- Although crop yields in Lowgar Province historically have been lower than in the provinces to the north, yields were good this year. [Redacted]

Northern Provinces. The nine northern provinces bordering the Soviet Union include all of Afghanistan's northern plains. This region contains irrigated crops in the river basins and almost all of Afghanistan's dryland crops in the foothills. Referred to as the "bread basket" of Afghanistan, it is of major agricultural importance and accounts for approximately 50 percent of the country's agricultural land. Within the region, geographic features and agricultural practices are similar, but climatic conditions and soils vary. These variations produce differences in both irrigated and dryland crop yields. [Redacted]

The provinces in the central area—consisting of Balkh, Samangan, Konduz, and Baghlan—have the highest yields and show little change between years. This year, harvest occurred on schedule in mid-June and July, and yields were as good as, or slightly better than, in 1984. Dryland and irrigated crop yields in the two eastern provinces of Takhar and Badakhshan were also good. The summer crops in Baghlan Province were observed in October; yields were excellent. [Redacted]

The western provinces of Badghis, Faryab, and Jowzjan, adjacent to the Karakum Desert, are hot and arid and the soils appear poor. The lowest yields in dryland and irrigated crops are traditionally found in these three provinces, but yields for the irrigated and dryland crops this year were better than in 1984. [Redacted]

Central Mountain Provinces. The steep mountainous area known as the Hazarehjat region contains less than 5 percent of Afghanistan's agricultural land in some small narrow valleys. [Redacted]

[Redacted] Bamian Valley, which had good yields in mid-August. [Redacted]

Western Border Provinces. The three western provinces bordering Iran contain only about 10 percent of Afghanistan's agricultural land. The most

productive area in this region is along the Harirud (river) in Herat. Harvest was on schedule in this area in late May and most of June, with good yields evident. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

There was no evidence of military operations designed to destroy or disrupt the fragile irrigation system in this area, and intense military activity around Herat in 1985 had little impact on agricultural production. Bombing of some areas in Herat destroyed a few fields and others were burned, but it is difficult to determine if the fields were burned intentionally or caught fire as a result of military activity. In either case, most of the fields had been harvested prior to the surge in military activity in late June and July. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

[Redacted] Around Shindand, significant military activity was evident, but the fragile underground water tunnels appeared to be unaffected. Harvest was on schedule in June with good yields evident. Abandonment in this area appears to increase each year, although its impact on total production is still minor. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

Southern Provinces. Agriculture in Helmand, Qandahar, and Zabol Provinces consists mostly of irrigated crops along branches of the Darya-ye Helmand (Helmand River) and Darya-ye Arghandab (Arghandab River) rivers. Approximately 10 percent of Afghanistan's total cultivated land is in this vast, mostly desert area, and its poor sandy soils cause crop yields to be consistently less than for most other irrigated areas, such as Herat and Kabul. Harvest occurred on schedule in late May and early June and yields were good. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

Military activity was extensive around Qandahar City and in the valleys around Lashkar Gah in Helmand Province. Numerous villages surrounding Qandahar City were bombed this year. Although it appears the villages were the major targets, some irrigation ditches were also hit, probably inadvertently. Some fields were burned around Qandahar near bombed villages and in numerous locations near Lashkar Gah.

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Top Secret
[Redacted]

25X1

Page Denied

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Some of the burned fields may have been the result of intense military activity, but armored vehicle tracks leading into a few fields suggest that others were burned intentionally. [Redacted]

near Herat, which was previously untilled, has been placed in production. UN data also suggest that land is being taken out of cotton and sugar beet production, for example, and used for food production. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

There is a noticeable increase in the amount of abandonment around the bombed villages near Qandahar. However, despite all this heavy military activity, a large majority of agricultural activity continues. [Redacted]

Outlook

Assuming that our estimate of 1985 wheat imports—400,000 tons—is correct, food supplies should be better than last year, when we estimated Afghanistan produced 2.7 million tons of wheat and imported 300,000 to 360,000 tons. Nevertheless, the entire Afghan food supply chain—from the farm to the marketplace—remains fragile. Any escalation in the fighting or a Soviet effort to disrupt the food distribution network could easily upset the tenuous balance and lead to shortages, particularly in the cities. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Impact of the War

[Redacted] analysis does not indicate that direct military action against Afghanistan's agriculture occurs regularly. Most often, when damage to crops and irrigation systems was observed, it appears to have been incidental to military operations. Furthermore, the occurrence of crop destruction in Afghanistan, both intentional and nonintentional, is so limited that we believe it has no significant impact on total agricultural production. [Redacted]

[Redacted]

25X1

Abandonment of agricultural land is a more important problem in Afghanistan than crop destruction. We are uncertain of its long-term impact on production levels because thus far we have not measured the amount of land abandoned, the amount of new land being brought under cultivation, nor the extent to which land formerly devoted to cash crops has been shifted into food production. At worst, however, we believe that less than 5 percent of the land in production prior to the Soviet invasion has been abandoned. [Redacted]

25X1

- There is very little, if any, abandonment, for example, in the northern provinces, which contain about 50 percent of the agricultural land.
- As much as 25 percent of agricultural land is left fallow each year; thus not all abandoned land would have been productive in the current year. [Redacted]

25X1

Based on historical Foreign Agriculture Service estimates of the current year [Redacted] we believe the total area sown to wheat in Afghanistan is 2.6 million hectares. If 5 percent of the land has been abandoned, the total sown area would be reduced from 2.6 million to 2.5 million hectares. Other new fields may exist outside the area we have sampled, however. For example, [Redacted] one area

25X1

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

25X1

Divide and Rule: Soviet Regional Policy in Afghanistan ¹

25X1

Soviet operations in Afghanistan are evolving in a way that suggests a regionally differentiated strategy that demographic trends reinforce. Such a strategy appears to entail: pacifying, assimilating, and economically exploiting the region north of the Hindu Kush; fomenting tribal divisions in the east; neutralizing and bypassing the central Hazarehjat region; and depopulating the southwest to deny it to the resistance. The Soviets may believe that a regional approach to the war offers them the best prospect of controlling strategically important parts of the country in the medium term, while long-run trends in the region work to their advantage. Their ability to control northern Afghanistan will be essential to the success of this strategy.

The Demographic Backdrop

Population flows in Afghanistan are stabilizing after five years of massive, war-engendered shifts. Over half the prewar population of Afghanistan has probably relocated since the war began. We estimate that between 25 and 33 percent of the preinvasion population has been driven out of the country, and another 25 percent have moved to cities to seek refuge. Internal redistribution of the population also seems to have slowed, as cities and refugee camps have become less attractive for resettlement. The massive 75-percent growth in urban population between 1979 and 1985, for example, seems to have peaked.

These shifts are probably enabling Moscow to plan a regional strategy with some degree of certainty. Conceptually, the Soviets probably divide the country into four regions, based both on their perceived strategic importance and their ethnic makeup:

- *Northern Afghanistan.* The nine northern provinces bordering the Soviet Union have the greatest ethnic

¹ This article was prepared by a contractor [redacted] [redacted] It was not coordinated within this Agency. The views expressed are those of the author. [redacted]

Soviet Economic Projects in Northern Afghanistan

Key projects that reflect the magnitude of the Soviet commitment to integrating the northern economy into that of Soviet Central Asia include:

- Extensive ongoing exploitation of natural gas reserves in northern Afghanistan. The Soviets developed the gasfields in the 1970s and built a gasline to carry the reserves to Soviet Central Asia.
- An electric grid tied into the USSR. According to Kabul press reports, the first stage of the transfer of 220 kilowatts of electricity from the Soviet border to Kabul was completed in June 1985. Another 110 kilowatt substation on the Mazar-e Sharif line was inaugurated.
- A large cement factory. Kabul sources report that a Soviet-financed cement plant in Baghlan Province is operating "beyond expectations"; another plant is to begin construction in 1985 with Czechoslovak assistance. The Soviets reportedly "trade" their inferior cement for the superior Afghan.
- A large fertilizer plant in Mazar-e Sharif.
- Bridges across the Amu Darya. The Soviets completed a bridge at Termez prior to invading the country. These could be used to better transport northern minerals, such as coal and iron, to the Soviet Union.
- A large dam. A 40-megawatt dam is under construction north of Herat that should irrigate 73,000 hectares; its current status is unknown.

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1
25X1
25X1

Top Secret

NESA DA 86-001CX
SOV DA 86-001CX

10 January 1986

25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

affinity with Soviet Central Asia. It is also the region where the Soviets have the greatest economic interests and where they are best poised to project military power.

- *The Hazarehjat.* This region of Afghanistan is characterized by its predominantly Shia population, its isolation, and its lack of strategic importance.
- *Southeastern Afghanistan.* This mountainous territory is critical to the resistance because of its proximity to Pakistan, and to Moscow because it contains the politically important capital, Kabul. The largely Pashtun society is tribally based.
- *Southwestern Afghanistan.* The mountainous, desert region bordering Iran and Pakistan's Baluchistan are inhabited by the Baluch and Pashtun tribes, which have historically resisted foreign domination. The region is of enormous geopolitical significance because of its relative closeness to the Persian Gulf.

These features provide incentives for the Soviets to tailor their strategy in Afghanistan to local geographic, ethnographic, and demographic characteristics. [Redacted]

Assimilating Northern Afghanistan

Soviet regional strategy depends on assimilating—but not formally annexing—northern Afghanistan into Central Asia. With an eye toward subduing the population, Moscow is pursuing a relatively less aggressive military policy here. According to media and resistance sources, the Soviets do not appear to be undertaking military operations against the civilian population or the agricultural infrastructure. The flat, open terrain, moreover, inhibits guerrilla activity and allows Soviet forces to cross the border rapidly to conduct counterinsurgency operations. [Redacted]

The Soviets are investing heavily in northern Afghanistan and appear to be integrating it economically. Their economic investment here—which is largely in minerals and industry—is much

¹ This article was prepared by a contractor [Redacted] It was not coordinated within this Agency. The views expressed are those of the author. [Redacted]

greater than in any other region. The high level of Soviet economic activity serves to tie the northern economy and its labor force to the Soviet economy, and suggests that Moscow will continue to moderate its military activity in the region to protect its investment. The degree of economic integration, moreover, belies Soviet claims of seeking an independent, albeit friendly, Afghanistan ruled from Kabul. [Redacted]

Politically, the Soviets seem to be banking on appealing to the ethnic minorities in the region and their affinity to Soviet Central Asians. Propaganda, printed in local languages, promotes Central Asian figures and history. The Afghan Ministry of Nationalities and Tribal Affairs, under KHAD's direction, oversees the effort. The Afghan official in charge of the northern zone—a Central Committee member—was recently praised publicly by Babrak Karmal for his effectiveness in pacifying the north. The pacification of Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Turkmens also has historic precedents, in contrast to tribal areas south of the Hindu Kush. [Redacted]

The Soviets are also relying on coercive measures in the north. These include intimidation, economic coercion, infiltration, and military reprisals against uncooperative villages. The coercive apparatus in the north reportedly differs markedly from other areas of the country. The police and militia outnumber regular Afghan forces by almost three to one, an extremely high ratio. The locally recruited police and militia probably serve as a specialized force for local control. This arrangement may prove more acceptable to the local population, who have traditionally resented control by Pashtuns. [Redacted]

Isolating Central Afghanistan

The Soviets appear to have assigned low priority to the Hazarehjat region. The hands-off policy appears to be encouraging conflicts among rival groups in the region that make it a less effective resistance stronghold. Pro-Iranian groups, actively supported by Tehran, are contesting for influence among Hazaras with older traditional leaders. [Redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1
25X1
25X1

Top Secret

[Redacted]

25X1

Top Secret
[redacted]

25X1

Fostering Tribal Warfare in the East

The Soviet strategy in eastern Afghanistan appears to be designed to defeat the enemy by depriving it of a local base of support. Military operations have been concentrated in the vicinity of Kabul, between Kabul and Jalalabad, in the Panjsher Valley, and in Paktia, Lowgar, and Vardak Provinces. These areas have suffered high levels of destruction, civilian deaths, and depopulation. [redacted]

and as much as 50 percent of Qandahar, according to press reports. Resistance sources report that most of the towns from Herat west to the Iranian border have been obliterated. [redacted]

25X1

Prospects

Although a regionally differentiated strategy may offer the Soviets the best chance of achieving their medium-term objectives in Afghanistan, it does not guarantee success. Kabul and Moscow may fail to pacify the northern population—the key to the success of this strategy. Many northerners remember Soviet harshness in suppressing the basmachi uprisings against Soviet domination of Central Asia in the 1920s and 1930s. In addition, pacification is a more delicate operation than depopulation or exacerbating tribal enmities. The northern population, moreover, continues to lend support to the resistance effort, particularly the fundamentalist Jamiat groups. A failure to subdue the north would increase the pressure on Moscow either to seek a negotiated settlement or to up the military ante. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1
25X1

The current strategy to drive out or kill civilians, however, has peaked, as suggested by the drop in the rate of rural migration. Tribes and families inclined to migrate have done so for the most part. Those remaining are hardened to war conditions, have learned to adapt, and are determined to stay. [redacted]

Soviet strategy probably has already shifted from one of killing numerous civilians to one of negotiating local settlements with individual tribes. There is considerable evidence of local truces with some tribes and a major effort by KHAD to co-opt tribal militias. [redacted]

Kabul has had some success with transborder tribes—Afridis, Shinwaris, Mohmands, Waziris—that benefit from trade or heroin production, or that have scores to settle with Pakistan. Moscow might even revive the Pashtunistan issue—particularly if it assimilates the north—in an effort to compensate Pashtuns for the loss of influence north of the Hindu Kush and increase long-term pressure on Pakistan. [redacted]

The Soviets will probably not, however, seek to annex northern Afghanistan. Annexation would raise an international outcry, give credence to charges of Soviet expansionism, and draw attention to a war that the Soviets would prefer the world to forget. More important, annexation would expand the size of the Soviet Central Asian population—a development the Soviets would probably seek to avoid both for reasons of ideological control and demography. Annexation would also have an adverse impact on Soviet efforts to build an effective regime in Kabul, as no regime there would accept such a move. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

25X1

Destroying Southwestern Afghanistan

The dramatic population drop in southwestern Afghanistan is indicative of a concerted effort by the Soviets to deny this region to the resistance, rather than to control it. The brutality of the military campaign here, the lack of natural resources, and the regime's failure to break the will of the resistance further support this view. Unlike cities in the northern sector and the east, cities in the southwest have not swelled with in-migrants and have lost substantial portions—perhaps 30 percent—of their population. High-altitude bombing has destroyed much of Herat

¹ This article was prepared by a contractor [redacted]. It was not coordinated within this Agency. The views expressed are those of the author. [redacted]

25X1
25X1
25X1

Top Secret
[redacted]

25X1

Top Secret

25X1

Afghanistan: Selected Political Chronology**October-December 1985**

25X1

- 2 October** Radio-Free Afghanistan began broadcasting into Afghanistan from Munich.
- 19 October–
1 November** The Afghan resistance alliance's delegation to the UN General Assembly arrived in New York to lobby UN missions.
- 19 October** The Soviet military newspaper, *Red Star*, began a new feature—an entire page devoted to “heroic acts” by Soviet troops in Afghanistan.
- Mid-to-late October** The US Embassy in Kabul reported that Afghan soldiers beat up the Saudi Charge this week in a probable attempt to intimidate unfriendly foreign missions.
- 31 October–
4 November** A Soviet soldier seeking refuge bolted into the US Embassy but departed on 4 November with the Soviet Ambassador. The US Embassy in Kabul remained under siege during his stay.
- 11-13 November** UN General Assembly debate on Afghanistan. Its vote on a resolution calling for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan passed by its widest margin ever, 122 to 19.
- 21 November** Babrak Karmal chaired the 16th Plenum of the PDPA Central Committee during which he reiterated pledges to broaden the regime and announced leadership changes.
- Late November/
Early December** Pakistan created the Pakistan Welfare International, a clearinghouse for crossborder aid into Afghanistan.
- 12 December** Resistance Alliance Spokesman Gulbuddin Hekmatyar announced the formation of a resistance council, or shoora, that will oversee political, information, cultural, health, education, and refugee affairs committees.
- 16-20 December** The sixth round of UN-sponsored proximity talks were held in Geneva.
- 26 December** The Kabul regime announced the appointment of nonparty members to cabinet and sub-cabinet posts.
- 27 December** The Australian couple kidnaped by Pakistani tribesmen last May and held in Kabul were released.

25X1

25X1

25X1

Top Secret

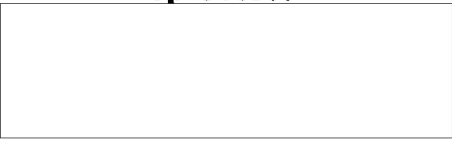
NESA DA 86-001CX
SOV DA 86-001CX

10 January 1986

25X1

Top Secret

25X1



Top Secret