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# Rebels lose strength, Hatch says

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Resistance forces fighting Soviet troops in Afghanistan continue to lose strength as the Soviet Union increases its control over the country, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee said yesterday.

Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, Utah Republican, told a Senate task force that disunity and weapons shortages have prevented rebel attacks against major targets in Afghanistan, such as a large land bridge leading into the Soviet Union and a natural gas pipeline.

"The situation continues to deteriorate this summer," said Mr. Hatch, who met with rebel leaders while on Intelligence Committee fact-finding tours in 1985 and earlier this year.

The United States, along with Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iran, has supplied Afghan rebels with military weapons and other covert aid since Soviet forces invaded the country in December 1979.

The hearing on the military effectiveness of the Afghan resistance was sponsored by the Congressional Task Force on Afghanistan.

Mr. Hatch said Western news accounts of the Afghan war have not revealed the extent of Soviet control. He said Soviet troops, more than 100,000 strong, have secured Afghan cities and major supply lines from

the Soviet Union to the capital of Kabul, which is so safe that Soviet military officers stationed there are permitted to bring their families.

Diplomatic sources in Pakistan, however, reported Tuesday Afghan rebels launched rocket attacks against the Soviet and Polish embassies in Kabul. It was the fourth straight week of rebel raids on the capital, according to those sources.

Most fighting in Afghanistan has taken place in rural areas outside Afghanistan's major cities, the sources said.

Mr. Hatch said: "The next time you hear about the so-called stalemate in Afghanistan, perhaps you ought to be thinking instead about those Soviet military wives and children shopping happily in the Kabul bazaars and that massive natural gas pipeline fueling Soviet industry in Central Asia."

The most recent battles in the Afghan war are Soviet initiatives directed at closing rebel supply lines near the Pakistan border, Mr. Hatch said.

Edward N. Luttwak, a military analyst at Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Affairs, said the Afghan rebels must "inflict grievous bodily harm" on Soviet occupation forces to be effective.