

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS
ARE ATTACHED:

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NIC	00239	88
ER	0463X	88
ER	0741X	88
DDI	00520	88
ER	0849X	88
ER	1330X	88
ER	1466X	88
ER	4360X	88

SUBJECT:

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14 November 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Bob Blackwell, NIO for the USSR

SUBJECT: ~~Interpreting Moscow's Recent Moves in Afghanistan~~

1. ~~This morning I convened a meeting of Soviet and Afghanistan specialists from the National Intelligence Council, the Directorate of Intelligence, and the Directorate of Operations to discuss Moscow's recent moves to step up its firepower in Afghanistan. The meeting was prompted in part by the memorandum from the NIO for Warning over the weekend suggesting that Moscow may be preparing to reinsert some combat troops into Afghanistan in order to stabilize the situation. This memo summarizes that discussion.~~

2. ~~The meeting made clear that there are differences of view between the office of the NIO for Warning, on the one hand, and the rest of CIA's experts on the subject on the other. While there are numerous areas of minor disagreement, the critical difference is over whether recent events indicate Moscow has reconsidered its commitment to withdraw all its troops on or about 15 February and is now prepared to stay well beyond that date if necessary to secure a political settlement and a dignified exit.~~

3. The View of the NIO for Warning. ~~The NIO for Warning believes there is a significant chance (at least 30-40%) that, in light of the deteriorating situation they now face in Afghanistan (in the wake of the withdrawal of about half of Soviet troops in country by 15 August), Moscow has had second thoughts about withdrawing unconditionally. In this view:~~

-- The Soviets will not allow the resistance to force them out militarily. They will insist that the resistance agree to some kind of meaningful political dialogue with Moscow designed to produce a political settlement before they withdraw from Afghanistan.

-- The shift in Soviet strategy is evident in the decision to send First Deputy Foreign Minister Vorontsov to Kabul as ambassador, in the stepped up use of Soviet airpower, in the introduction of SCUD missiles, and in the increased level of activity by Soviet ground troops in Afghanistan over the last month.

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-- Moscow is prepared to keep its forces in the country well past 15 February and indeed for as long as it takes to establish the conditions for withdrawal with dignity.

-- The Soviets may be prepared to reinsert up to four additional regiments in an effort to slow resistance gains and convince them that they cannot push the Soviets out by force of arms.

-- Moscow appears to believe that these goals are achievable, even though Western experts agree that they are not.

4. The Majority View. ~~There was essentially no support from other participants in the meeting for the view that the Soviets have reconsidered their decision to withdraw and are prepared to stick it out until the insurgents agree to talk.~~ The majority view:

-- Agrees that recent Soviet initiatives are designed to pressure the resistance into opening a meaningful dialogue on a successor government in Kabul and allowing the Soviets the semblance of a dignified exit.

-- Believes the Soviets could reintroduce some troops if necessary to secure a safe withdrawal but sees no evidence of plans for large-scale reinforcements.

-- Sees no sign that the Soviets are prepared to make completion of withdrawal dependent on a political settlement, noting that Moscow continues to reassure the domestic audience that Soviet troops are leaving.

-- Believes that a decision to stay on indefinitely would be seen in Moscow as both militarily and politically untenable (but does not rule out some slight delay beyond 15 February).

5. In the wake of this morning's meeting, all parties better understand each other's positions and are closely watching the military and political indicators of Moscow's withdrawal intentions. We plan to convene an intelligence community meeting in the next few days to discuss recent Soviet moves in Afghanistan. I will use that meeting to get a wider range of views on the thesis that the Soviets may have reconsidered their decision to withdraw by 15 February. In the meantime, the DDI has ordered up a PDB article laying out the respective views on this issue.

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Executive Secretariat

4/13/88

ER:

For the record -

- This paper was LOX'd
last night to DDI.

Ops Ctr gave dissem noted
on receipt.

- Mr. Gates has opposed
this state tasking. I
think we should file it
under Afghanistan for

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WASHFAX RECEIPT DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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'88 APR 12 P: 00

MESSAGE NO. 026249 CLASSIFICATION SECRET No. Pages 2
FROM: Richard Clarke INR 72402 6535
(Officer name) (Office symbol) (Extension) (Room number)
MESSAGE DESCRIPTION Working Group on Monitoring a Soviet
Withdrawal from Afghanistan

TO: (Agency)	DELIVER TO:	Extension	Room No.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CIA/DDI	<u>Richard Kerr</u>		<u>7E44</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DIA/VP	<u>NO. Horton DDI</u>	<u>373-4855</u>	<u>87956</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NSA	<u>RADM Clarke</u>	<u>688-8733</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> D/NPIC	<u>Mr. Frank Ruocco</u>	<u>863-3371</u>	<u>6N100</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NSC	<u>Ambassador Oakley</u>	<u>325-6900</u>	<u>351</u>

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FOR: CLEARANCE INFORMATION PER REQUEST COMMENT

REMARKS:

S/S Officer: [Signature]

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DDCI
EX SEC
D/SOVA CRES
D/OEA D/CRAS
D/OCI



C-305A-11
Afghanistan



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

April 12, 1988

SECRET

To: Mr. Richard Kerr, CIA/DDI
 MG. Horton, DIA/VP
 RADM. Clark, NSA/DDO
 Mr. Frank Ruocco, D/NPIC

From: INR - Richard Clarke *RAC*

Subject: Working Group on Monitoring a Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan

As the President announced today, Secretary Schultz will sign the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan on April 14. The US will be a guarantor of these Accords. The Accords call for a Soviet troop withdrawal to begin on May 15 and to be completed within nine months, with 50 percent of the Soviet forces to be withdrawn within the first three months. A small UN monitoring force will be in place in Afghanistan to help monitor this withdrawal.

The US will monitor the withdrawal through its own resources, including National Technical Means and HUMINT. Both COMIREX and the SIGINT Committee have begun work on monitoring strategies. A recent NIO/NESA memo, prepared at our request, also addressed the issue.

As the withdrawal proceeds, the IC and the State Department will be asked to comment on it to the President, the Congress, friendly governments, and publicly. We need a mechanism to coordinate these activities and form a bridge from the IC to the policy community. I am therefore forming a Working Group to deal with this subject. This Working Group will include representatives from the Intelligence Community and appropriately cleared policy officers in the State Department. This Group will serve several purposes.

- It will ensure that views and interpretations of all intelligence agencies are considered and carefully analyzed.
- It will therefore allow the Intelligence Community to issue coordinated reports on the withdrawal.
- It will facilitate quick interaction between the intelligence and policy sides, so that intelligence agencies are aware of policy needs and policy makers are quickly informed of relevant intelligence analysis.

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The Group may also wish to consider procedures by which evidence of violations discovered through intelligence resources can be cleared for disclosure to UN and foreign government officials as necessary.

I would appreciate it if you would designate a representative from your agency to attend an initial meeting of this Group which I will host at the State Department; 21 April at 1430 in the INR Conference Room. SI/TR/G clearances should be passed to INR Security Branch at 647-8501. The INR point of contact is South Asia Division Chief Jeffrey Lunstead at 647-8574 (open) and 5411 (secure KY).

Drafted: INR/NESA:JLunstead
4/12/88 x78574

CC: P - Amb. Helman, Mr. Ross
NEA - DAS Peck, Mr. Flaten
IO - Mr. Kirby
NSC - Amb. Oakley

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICER
FOR USSR

National Intelligence Council

23 February 1988

NOTE TO: DCI
DDCI
FROM: Bob Blackwell

The attached paper was requested by Ambassador John Negroponte during a conversation with Dave Gries. I sent it to him on Monday and will provide it to others at State and NSC.

Bob
Bob Blackwell

A/NIO/USSR
22 February 1988

AFGHANISTAN: IS MOSCOW'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW IRREVERSIBLE?

In short, I believe the Soviet leadership has made a firm decision to withdraw and they are not going to let the issues that remain to be negotiated ultimately stand in the way. The sea change in the Soviet position has already occurred--they have severed withdrawal from any guarantees about the fate of the Kabul regime. The diplomatic issues that remain, while not insignificant, are of lesser import by comparison.

GORBACHEV'S OFFER IS SERIOUS. The intelligence community is in agreement that Gorbachev meant what he said in his 8 February statement. If he can achieve agreement in Geneva along the lines he set out, or close to them, Soviet forces will depart. They will probably be out by the end of the year. Is this decision reversible? State and CIA think not; DIA, on the other hand, gives this possibility some credence.

--Given the expectations that have already been raised at home and abroad, the leadership would pay a severe price for reversing course.

--Despite the potential costs (some at home will oppose it and Soviet clients in the Third World will be troubled), on balance the decision will be popular at home and abroad.

--We have already begun to see evidence--from domestic media commentaries explaining the reasons for withdrawal to indications of preliminary planning for it--to suggest that Gorbachev means business.

--The course of events in Kabul as they depart is not likely to affect the withdrawal. They may well hope that the regime in Kabul will survive at least for a decent interval, but I believe they made the decision to go fully aware that they can't count on it.

--DIA, while concurring in the view that Gorbachev's offer is serious, warns that the Soviets could find cause (legitimate or otherwise) along the way to halt withdrawal or even reverse it. While chaos in the country, or a bloodbath for its former friends, would clearly test Moscow's resolve, I do not believe the leadership would be likely to change course. In light of the costs of reversing course, the only development I can see that could lead Moscow to reconsider would be an effort by the United States to establish a significant presence in post-war Afghanistan--an eventuality most observers seem to agree is very unlikely.

AND THE REMAINING OBSTACLES ARE NEGOTIABLE. While there is general agreement that Gorbachev is prepared to follow through if he can get the terms he proposed, there is disagreement among the community's analysts on what happens if he can't. Some (especially at State) believe that Moscow is determined to be out by the end of the year and thus that they will do what is necessary to complete the Geneva accords sooner rather than later--even to the

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point of caving to Pakistan's insistence that Track 2 be complete before signing and to the additional U.S. concerns that Secretary Shultz planned to raise in Moscow. Other analysts at CIA and DIA believe that Moscow is likely to stick with its current position for at least a while if necessary, even at the risk of delaying agreement.

--I don't believe the Soviet leadership has yet faced these decisions--getting agreement to such concessions will certainly require Gorbachev to go back to the Politburo. Agreeing to halt military assistance to the Kabul government at the beginning of the withdrawal period, for instance, would complicate the effort to withdraw Soviet troops. At a minimum, Moscow will want to turn over some material to the Afghans (supplies and ammunition for equipment they use in common) rather than take it back home.

--Achieving a formal agreement in the proximity talks remains critical for Moscow. The accords provide the "fig leaf"--an official end to outside support for the resistance--that Moscow probably needs to exit Afghanistan without incurring excessive loss of face abroad and unacceptable recriminations at home.

While I believe Moscow will insist that these concerns be addressed, they will be willing to look for ways to meet us half-way. I suspect that they are reasonably confident that Pakistan and the United States are sufficiently eager to have them out of the country that they will also be prepared to strike a deal.

BEYOND WITHDRAWAL. While we believe the Soviets will leave, we are less certain about what will follow. The Soviets will work hard to influence the development of a new regime and develop a relationship with it that protects Soviet interests. Despite their weakened position, the situation may give them some hope the damage can be limited:

--Divisions between Pakistan and the resistance--and frictions within the resistance--could become more important and limit their ability to capitalize on the Soviet withdrawal.

--The resistance lacks the strength and organization to move quickly against Kabul, and the city--the symbol of Afghan government--could remain in the hands of Moscow's clients for some months after the Soviets have left, unless factionalism caused the regime to unravel quickly.

The intelligence community has long assumed that the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul could not long survive a Soviet withdrawal. While this judgment probably remains correct, we do not know enough about how various factions within the Kabul regime or the resistance will react to confidently predict what the next government will look like or what opportunities the Soviets and some of their former clients might have for influencing it. We are now reviewing our earlier assumptions, taking a closer look at the likely aftermath of withdrawal, and examining the possible alternative scenarios.

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DDI- 00520-88

24 FEB 1988

NOTE TO: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan

1. You asked for comment on the range of views within the Agency and the Intelligence Community on the likelihood of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. (See excerpt, Attachment A, from your notes of last week's State lunch.) As [redacted] memo (Attachment B) indicates, your description of our Soviet analysts' views is generally accurate. In short, Moscow appears intent on withdrawing, but Gorbachev probably has not yet achieved a consensus within the Soviet leadership to offer any more lenient terms for a withdrawal agreement than he already offered in his statement of 8 February. [redacted]

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2. [redacted] memo reflects the views of Afghanistan-watchers throughout the DI. There is no significant disagreement on this question right now between NESAs and SOVA analysts. There is, however, a spectrum of views within the Community. At one end of the spectrum, DIA suspects the Soviet decision to withdraw may yet be reversed. At the other end, State/INR thinks the Soviets will not be adamant about the terms and might even withdraw in the absence of an agreement in Geneva. [redacted]

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Richard J. Kerr

Deputy Director for Intelligence

Attachments:

A. Excerpt

B. [redacted] Memo

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There then was a further discussion of Soviet withdrawal with the State representatives presenting their position of the likelihood of Soviet withdrawal according to the timetable. I said that it was my impression that views within CIA and perhaps within the Intelligence Community are split on the timing of Soviet withdrawal. I said that all had seemed to agree that the Soviets have made the decision to get out. But, generalizing, whereas our Middle East analysts tend to believe this would happen sooner rather than later and perhaps according to the timetable in negotiations, our Soviet analysts generally tend to believe that precipitate withdrawal could cause Gorbachev some difficult political problems at home. Accordingly, while he is committed to getting out, they believe he is in greater need of a negotiated settlement that gives a "decent interval" to the Najibullah government. While the withdrawal still could take place within the time frame suggested -- ten months -- it might not start on May 15. (DDI: Is my generalization broadly correct?)

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23 February 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDI

FROM: [REDACTED] Chief/SOVA/RPD/NESA

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SUBJECT: DDCI's Query on SOVA's View of Soviet Withdrawal From Afghanistan

1. The DDCI's characterization of SOVA's position is a fair one. We would just add one point of clarification. SOVA believes that it is not the timing, but the conditions, of a withdrawal that is the central issue for Moscow right now. If the Soviets can obtain the conditions laid out in Gorbachev's 8 February statement during the next Geneva round, we believe they will indeed begin pulling out on 15 May and complete the withdrawal according to schedule (ten months or less). [REDACTED]

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2. The key question is: How firmly will the Kremlin hold to the conditions? We think rather firm--at least through the next Geneva round. We believe that Moscow considers the most important of these conditions to be US/Pak guarantees of a cutoff of military aid to the mujahideen at the beginning of a Soviet withdrawal and not making signature of the Geneva accords contingent upon prior arrangement of a coalition government. Without the cutoff of aid, the prospects for the Kabul regime surviving after Soviet troops pull out would be reduced almost to nil, and Moscow could not claim that it had achieved its professed goal when intervening in 1979--ending "outside interference." Refusing to negotiate the demise of the Najibullah regime would give the Soviets the fig leaf of having done all they could to protect the PDPA regime. They are also likely to resist US calls for a cutoff of Soviet military aid to Kabul by the time withdrawal begins for the same reasons, as well as because such a cutoff would complicate the safe withdrawal of Soviet troops. [REDACTED]

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3. This is not to say that we believe the Soviet position is set in concrete. Although Gorbachev, in our view, will insist at least for the next month or so on a cutoff of military aid to the rebels, he may give some at the margins on other issues. He is unlikely to fall off his core demands completely so soon after publicly staking out his position. And even if he came to believe it was necessary, he would need time to convince the rest of the leadership. We think he had to battle hard to get Politburo agreement to the 8 February terms and would have a difficult time selling new terms that did little to save Soviet face. [REDACTED]

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4. Thus, if Moscow cannot obtain most of its 8 February conditions, a Geneva accord is likely to be delayed. Delayed by how much is difficult to answer at this point. We believe, however, that the Soviets have set in motion a process that over time will place them under tremendous pressure--both international and domestic--to quit Afghanistan whether or not a Geneva agreement is signed. [REDACTED]

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

DI Reporting on Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan

FROM:

Chief, Product Evaluation Staff

EXTENSION

NO.

ER 0463X 88

DATE

12 February 1988

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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DDCI

17 FEB 1988

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~~DDCI~~

22 Feb.

1 to 2+3
I asked our evaluation staff to look at DI analysis of Afghanistan over the past year. Attached is their line critique. Bottom line is that while we concluded the Soviets were looking for a way out, we did not think they were prepared to abandon the Marxist regime in Kabul. Oh well, we did our best.
Dick K

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DI Reporting on Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan

This chronology summarizes the most significant DI products concerning Soviet plans for withdrawal from Afghanistan. We sought specifically to determine:

- What has the DI said about Moscow's intentions on withdrawal from Afghanistan?
- How has our analysis changed, if at all?

We reviewed virtually all DI publications on Afghanistan produced since 1 January 1987. A few representative "talking points" have also been chosen.

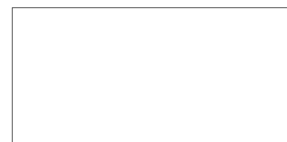
The Judgments

The DI, as early as April, in various publications concluded that the Soviets had determined that the war was not winnable in the near-term and were looking for a way out. Over the past year, several typescripts and articles looked closely at Moscow's diplomatic maneuvering on Afghanistan.

In our view, the DI analyses left the clear impression before 9 February 1988 that the Soviets were not prepared to abandon the Marxist government in Kabul and withdraw from Afghanistan. This consistent theme of our analysis was supported by evidence and flowed naturally from judgments reached by the different DI components which follow the war.

--The Afghan government could not survive without the Soviets. Factionalism was the bane of the government itself and the Afghan Army was, in general, understrength, poorly led, and ill-trained. If the Soviets left, the Communists would be defeated and more than likely a blood bath would follow.

--The insurgent capabilities were improving. Modern weapons, particularly Stingers, were helping them to hold their own against even the Soviets. Because the insurgents concluded that they were doing well, they were not about to offer concessions for a negotiated peace.



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- Even if outside suppliers of the insurgency stopped providing it with arms in conjunction with a Soviet withdrawal, the insurgents would still win since they had stockpiled weapons and could always take more from the Afghan Army.
- The burden of the war on the Soviets was not intolerable both in terms of manpower and of money. And that national pride dictated that the Soviets could not cut and run.
- Most Soviet efforts at the negotiating table appeared to be designed to split the opposition or score international points rather than achieve a real settlement.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DCI

Per your request for Bob Blackwell's views on recent Soviet statements regarding a troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, attached is a short paper by Bob, Afghanistan: Light at the End of the Tunnel. You may recall that this paper was included with your material for the Shultz luncheon last week.


16 February 1988

*Thanks
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NIO/USSR
10 February 1988

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Afghanistan: Light at the End of the Tunnel

1. The Soviet leadership statement issued under Gorbachev's name puts the USSR clearly on the road out of Afghanistan. By setting a tentative withdrawal date the Soviets have given the initiative to the US and Pakistan and made it politically difficult to reverse course. While the approach is designed to save some face and play on US/Pakistani differences, Gorbachev and his colleagues almost certainly understand that their clients will have a very difficult time holding on and that the unprecedented withdrawal will be widely viewed as a Soviet defeat. Gorbachev probably convinced his colleagues that over the longer run the pluses would offset this debacle, but it is a risky course and could come back to haunt him. At the same time the decision confronts the US and Pakistan with some thorny political problems that could, if not handled effectively, give Gorbachev a propaganda windfall and make us appear to be blocking a settlement.

2. The Statement. All analysts now agree that Soviet rhetoric has at last gone beyond statements of intent and put the USSR on the road to leaving Afghanistan. Formally, withdrawal is now subject only to formal signing of the Geneva Accords (admittedly this will still be a difficult process). He has dropped (at least for now) any effort to negotiate a coalition government which was certain to be a lengthy process.

--This puts the ball squarely in US/Pakistani court and gives us the power to call the shots.

--If we sign, Gorbachev could not retreat from his commitment without sacrificing the foreign policy credibility and image he has worked so hard to create, taking the pressure off the West to help solve the problem, and giving us a strong hand from which to up the ante.

--While Gorbachev knows US and Pakistani concerns might prevent signing, he would not count on such behavior from his foreign adversaries.

3. Soviet Calculations. The Soviet approach gives Gorbachev a fig leaf to cover the retreat.

--With the signing of the accords "outside interference", the stated (but false) reason for the Soviet invasion in the first place, will end and, thus, the "need" for Soviet troops disappears.

--The agreement would be signed by the government the Soviets came in to help; it would be in charge in Kabul during the withdrawal and the Soviet hand would not be involved directly in negotiating or orchestrating the demise of a communist government and party.

--Short of staying forever, the Soviets probably believe this combination (the resistance would be on its own, the Soviets could supply aid, and the regime might gain greater international support) would give its clients in Kabul the best possible chance of survival.

4. Even so, there is good reason to believe that the Soviets know that such optimistic judgments are problematic at best.

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--Reporting as well as private statements to US officials have made clear their lack of respect for their clients.

--The Soviets know even better than we that the Kabul army is militarily ineffective without Soviet combat troops, logistical help and advisors and would surely question its staying power when these are withdrawn.

--The Intelligence Community -- to judge from my sounding and what has been written -- believes the puppet regime's survival prospects run between "slim and none". There is even a reasonable prospect that it will unravel as the Soviets pull back from the provinces, leaving them to take their clients in Kabul with them on the last plane out.

5. Gorbachev's Domestic Political Calculus. Given the above, Gorbachev's ability to get agreement on this course is impressive. At a minimum, some in the leadership must be uncomfortable with it. The military to judge from what reporting we have will not like it. And among the public at large the image of a Soviet defeat will not sit well (although many would be relieved at not having to send their boys to Afghanistan). Overcoming these obstacles required great skill and daring and clearly belies the notion that the resistance he has and will continue to encounter has him on the run.

6. How then did he pull it off? And how much risk is he running? The short answer is, "we don't know"! More speculatively, however,

--It appears that he did get agreement on finding a way out through political means last year when Shevardnadze and other Soviet officials started to push the line that this was the Soviet intention.

--Since then the Soviet debate has centered on how to do this and still preserve as much Soviet equity (the neutral if not PDPA dominated regime in Kabul) as possible. The national reconciliation campaign and offers of positions in a coalition government still dominated by communists along with a diplomatic offensive to pressure the West and stepped up Soviet military pressure on the resistance were designed to "let them get out and keep their clients in."

--Increasingly, however, it was evident in Moscow and elsewhere that these tactics were not working and indeed both the military and political situations in Afghanistan were getting worse.

--Thus, Soviet options narrowed to getting out as best they can whether or not the client regime survives or remaining committed to a protracted war that could not be won without a substantial increase in Soviet military commitment over a long period and would continue to undermine broader Soviet foreign policy goals.

7. Recently, faced with these unfavorable options, Gorbachev's associates have agreed to terminate Soviet involvement with minimal face saving.

--The anticipated boon to broader Soviet foreign policy objectives in the Middle East, Europe, China, and the US have made the "bitter pill" palatable.

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--The Soviets may also believe that over the longer run they will be able to play in the political and military struggles that will go on in the resistance after the Soviets and their clients have left, allowing them to reestablish some of the influence they had before the 1978 "revolution" and subsequent Soviet invasion.

--The consensus on this course, however, is probably thin even if broad and Gorbachev will have to maneuver carefully to keep it together through the likely diplomatic and military vicissitudes of getting out.

8. Gorbachev, thus, will likely hang tough for some months on signing the Geneva Accords and resist efforts to be drawn into removing his "fig leaf" by directly pulling the plug on his clients as Pakistan wants or agreeing that the "outside assistance" can continue, as the President and some in Congress favor.

--He will not want to ask the Politburo to approve more concessions, although eventually he and they are not likely to let even this prevent them from cutting the knot and leaving.

9. Pitfalls for the US. Gorbachev's dramatic move has some dangers for us and Pakistan.

--We and the Paks are not now marching to the same tune on the issue of getting agreement on a new interim government before signing the Geneva Accords. Pakistan is afraid that signing with the Present Kabul regime will strengthen it and make the three million refugees unwilling to return to Afghanistan. The US, on the other hand, wants to put Soviet withdrawal to the test as soon as possible and is concerned that negotiations over a new government would be drawn out and delay resolution.

--This difference now magnifies the international pressure on Pakistan and runs the risk of making Pakistan look like the obstacle to settlement.

--Similarly, the Soviets are likely to play our insistence on continuing to aid the resistance while the Soviet pull out as indicating bad faith in the Geneva negotiations, use it to seize the diplomatic highground, and attempt to undermine international support for the resistance.

10. None of this, of course, alters the real hand the Soviets now have in Afghanistan. If the Community is right in its judgment that the Kabul clients will collapse as the Soviets leave, there is little risk in signing. If the Soviets subsequently renege, little has really been lost and Soviet credibility is destroyed. On the other hand, while we will pay some short term price for hanging up an agreement, it is likely in my view that the Soviets will eventually concede even on our new terms -- a cutoff of Soviet aid to the Kabul regime. A weakening in Gorbachev's political position not to mention his removal could and in the latter case would alter this prognosis, but I think this is not likely to be a problem.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DCI

Attached are Bob Blackwell's (NIO/USSR) thoughts on the implications of Gorbachev's recent troop withdrawal proposal. You may find some of his ideas useful for discussion at your luncheon today with Secretary Shultz. I have highlighted the most salient aspects of his memo. In general, it agrees with the analysis provided by the DI analysts in your briefing book. You should note, however, that Blackwell emphasizes Gorbachev has already gone out on a limb with regard to his proposal and will not want to ask the Politburo for further concessions.


11 February 1988

Date

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

NIC-00239/88
21 January 1988

National Intelligence Council

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director Central Intelligence
Deputy Director Central Intelligence

FROM: Robert Blackwell
National Intelligence Officer for USSR

WCB SUBJECT: Some Thoughts on Soviet Intentions in Afghanistan and
US Policy

1. The evidence regarding Soviet intentions about Afghanistan since the summit remains ambiguous. Recent Soviet words and deeds could represent either yet another attempt to reduce the international costs of Afghanistan or a genuine effort to signal their intent to find a way out of Afghanistan even if it means that their clients leave with them.

2. While logic and some evidence can be presented to support these two interpretations (a better case can be made that they will stay), we can't say with confidence which view is correct. Current Soviet activity could lead them toward either objective and, indeed, probably is intended to do just that, giving the leadership the flexibility to get the maximum political leverage possible from its rather weak cards and putting the onus on Pakistan and the US for brokering a solution.

3. This strategy has caused some disarray in US policy. The US has sent mixed signals about its assistance to the resistance and seemingly backed away from pushing the Soviets on formation of a new government to rule in Kabul. The Soviets have, moreover, been able to avoid making any unambiguous commitments to leave--getting mileage out of their stated intentions without taking any irreversible actions.

4. The policy implications of this for the US seem to be pretty straightforward. We don't have to do anything until we know for sure.

5. Soviet Seriousness?

A range of opinions exist within the Intelligence Community on this issue. State/INR is more inclined to see recent Soviet statements as indicating that the Soviets have decided to get out even if it means

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sacrificing the Afghan Communists; the only arguments at State are over whether they will do so unconditionally or whether they will try to get a deal that permits the USSR and its clients some role in a post-withdrawal regime. DIA and CIA/SOVA believe that there has been some movement in the Soviet position but aren't sure that the Soviets have made an irrevocable decision to get out. (See Attachment 1 for a brief discussion our most recent Community meeting on the subject and Attachment 2 for the Warning Report of our 1 December special meeting on Afghanistan.)

6. I lean more to the DIA and CIA view. Recent Soviet rhetoric on withdrawal has been stunning and is hard to dismiss out-of-hand. (See Attachment 3 for illustrative sample.) Yet, impressive as much of it is, the Soviet position is not logically consistent with my reading of Soviet interests. Withdrawal has been linked only to halting foreign assistance to the resistance; the composition of the new Afghanistan government, to judge from its absence in Soviet statements, is not a precondition for settlement. In fact, a Soviet Foreign Ministry official told Embassy officers in Moscow that the PDPA and the opposition would negotiate establishment of a new government after the Geneva Accords were signed.

--However benign one's assumptions about Soviet policy and "new thinking", such a position does not reflect real Soviet interests and hence is not credible. Moscow cannot be agnostic on or uninterested in the composition of the Afghan government and its policy inclinations toward the Soviet Union.

--If the Soviets have really decided to sacrifice the Afghan Communists, Gorbachev will still want to know who he will be dealing with and get some commitments from them (and guarantees from Pakistan and the US) about maintaining friendly (diplomatic and economic) relations with the USSR.

--Without this, Moscow would run the risk of the "bloodbath" and "chaos" it says cannot be permitted and more importantly open up Soviet policy to the vicissitudes of the unknown--something no Soviet leader would do! Gorbachev and others can only calculate that the positives outweigh the negatives if they have a handle on how bad things could get.

7. Moscow's seeming lack of concern with this possibility suggests that the Soviet leadership is assuming that a Communist-dominated coalition (possibly including elements of the resistance) will be around for sometime yet and that Soviet policy remains in fact more smoke than fire. Acceptance of such a regime within or outside of Afghanistan is not in the cards.

--It does not accord with political or military realities inside Afghanistan;

--Such a solution would not produce what Pakistan requires above all--return home of the some 3 million refugees now living in Pakistan.

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8. Only when it is evident the Soviets will accept less than this outcome will their rhetoric about withdrawal have substance.

--The Pakistanis, in my view, are right in judging that the best test of Soviet intentions is whether or not Vorontsov travels to Islamabad to "talk turkey" about alternative regimes in Kabul. The Soviet Embassy officer cited above said that this visit would in fact occur.

--If he does not go, or if he does and that is not an important item on his agenda, we can conclude that the Soviets have not yet made the hard decisions to get out.

--It will be almost impossible to put together any resistance-dominated coalition to govern and keep order in Kabul without Pakistan's assistance.

9. Background on Shifting US Position.

Until the last few months, it had been privately understood by all parties in the dispute that the US and Pakistan would not sign the Geneva accords until there was a new resistance-dominated regime in Kabul to rule during the period of Soviet troop withdrawals. Several months ago, however, we unilaterally changed our position, delinking Soviet troop withdrawal from the issue of who is in charge in Kabul.

--The change was motivated in part by a State Department judgment that Pakistan cannot create an alternative Afghan regime. (This judgment is arguable; the Pakistanis, who are much closer to the situation than we are, think they have to.)

--There was also concern that the Soviets would only use negotiations about an alternative regime to prolong its presence in Afghanistan or alternatively to try to win in negotiations what it had been unable to win on the battlefield. (These are, of course, legitimate concerns, if you assume Moscow is not serious about getting out.)

--The policy rests on an assumption (most in the community would accept) that the PDPA regime would inevitably unravel as soon as any serious withdrawals began whatever the formal commitments given about assistance to the resistance.

10. Our "new thinking", however, appears to have created more problems for us than it solved. Specifically,

--If we get the kind of a settlement we are asking for, the current Kabul regime would remain in place to preside over at least the beginning of Soviet troop withdrawals, even if aid cutoff and the withdrawal commenced at the same time. (We need to be alert to the possibility that the Soviets may calculate that their clients could hold their own when Soviet troops withdraw at least for a "decent interval" if outside aid was, in fact, cut off.)

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--Such an agreement, moreover, could trigger provisions for providing for a substantial flow of money for development and relief to the Soviet clients in Kabul by the UN and other relief agencies (this would be politically impossible to sell in the US) and would not provide any impetus for the Afghan refugees in Pakistan to go home.

--It has placed us at odds with Pakistan which wants to get whatever hold it can on a new Afghan government to ensure that its interests (particularly concerning the refugees) will be protected. Zia told Armacost bluntly that he is not going to sign the Geneva accords without an agreement on an alternative regime for Kabul. This suggests that there isn't going to be any meeting in Geneva in February or, if there is, it won't be the final meeting.

--The Soviets have taken advantage of the situation to make it appear that the US rather than the USSR is now the main obstacle to getting a settlement and ending the war. While this is not a new tactic, it seems to have more resonance now and, thus, could if not challenged effectively strain the Western consensus on Afghanistan.

11. Conclusion. Our task should be to get on the same note and avoid doing the Soviets' work for them. At present they are still able to "have their cake and eat it too"--talk withdrawal and keep their clients in charge. Only as they are forced to deal politically with those who have fought them to a standstill on the battlefield will the contradictions in their policy become evident and the hard choices (stay and fight for a long time or get out) unavoidable. If they have to assume the political costs of setting a date and negotiating over what is to follow the PDPA, they will not have many clients left to protect and the momentum for withdrawal will be irresistible. If, on the other hand, the rhetoric is all smoke, the failure to engage their opponents will be evidence enough, and it won't be hard for us to put the onus for lack of movement back where it belongs.

Robert Blackwell
Robert Blackwell

Attachments As Stated

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NIC-00239/88
21 January 1988

SUBJECT: Some Thoughts on Soviet Intentions in Afghanistan and
US Policy

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Attachment 1Excerpts from NIO/USSR January 1988 Warning Report

Afghanistan: There has been a further evolution in the thinking of at least some elements of the community since our special warning meeting on this subject in early December. Then, all agreed that while the Soviet position appeared to be evolving, we had no unambiguous indications that they had made the hard decision to settle for less and get out. Now State/INR believes, primarily as a result of what Foreign Minister Shevardnadze said publicly during his recent trip to Kabul, that the Soviets have made the decision to get out. They still disagree among themselves about whether the decision to do so is conditional or not: some believe that they will still insist on at least some role for themselves and their clients in an alternate regime, while others maintain that they will not. The rest of the community agrees that there appears to have been a further evolution in Soviet thinking since the summit, but continues to be skeptical that the Soviets are really intent on getting out. They read the significance of Shevardnadze's remarks in Kabul differently than State and cite developments like the Khowst offensive and Soviet efforts to establish new economic links to Afghanistan's provinces as evidence that the Soviets are still intent on consolidating Communist rule.

Warning and Collection. All agree that the best indicator of Soviet intentions will be whether or not First Deputy Foreign Minister Vorontsov travels to Islamabad to talk seriously about an alternative regime in Kabul. Pakistan will almost certainly brief us on the results of any such trip,

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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

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NIC-04994/87
7 December 1987

National Intelligence Council

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Robert Blackwell
National Intelligence Officer for USSR

SUBJECT: Special Warning and Forecast Report on Afghanistan

1. The Intelligence Community's Sovietologists met on 1 December to discuss whether recent statements by Soviet officials signify a serious intent to abandon the Afghanistan Communists and will so signify at the upcoming summit. The community was virtually unanimous that there will be no major surprises in Washington because, rhetoric aside, Moscow has not made any decision to get out (some think they never will). Most analysts, nonetheless, are now more inclined than in the past to conclude that Soviet policy is evolving and a minority project that Moscow will eventually settle for less than a Communist dominated regime when it leaves. NIO/USSR leans more toward the latter view and believes there is a fair chance that Gorbachev will communicate a further evolution in Soviet thinking on Afghanistan during the visit.

2. BACKGROUND: Recent statements by high-ranking Soviet officials about Afghanistan--specifically, about Moscow's desire to be out of Afghanistan by the end of 1988, its alleged interest in an Austrian-type treaty to guarantee Afghan neutrality, its professed willingness to have former King Zahir Shah convene a Loya Jirga in order to create and lead an interim coalition government to rule during a year-long phased withdrawal of Soviet troops--have already created considerable interest in the policy community about Soviet intentions. Are the Soviets seriously looking for a way to end their military involvement, even if it means scaling back Soviet objectives there? And, how will they play this issue during summit discussions next week? In order to get some sense of where the intelligence community stands on this issue, NIO/NESA put the topic on the agenda for his regular November warning meeting and I convened a special meeting on 1 December. NIO/NESA will be reporting separately on the views held by the intelligence community's South Asian analysts. What follows in this report represents primarily the views of the intelligence community's Sovietologists.

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3. The intelligence community has addressed this issue before, when some senior policymakers concluded not long after the Geneva summit that the USSR wanted out of Afghanistan. In SNIE 11/37-86, Soviet Tactics on a "Political Solution" in Afghanistan, published in January 1986, the community judged unanimously that Soviet moves at that time were not authentic indications of increased interest in a settlement, but rather part of an effort to divide the coalition of countries and forces opposing them. While this is still the prevailing view, the community now seems more uncertain and divided in its views.

4. DISCUSSION: Most of the community's Sovietologists agreed with CIA/SOVA's assessment that the Soviets have not yet made the hard decisions necessary to leave Afghanistan. In the view of the clear majority, the Soviets are still trying to have their cake and eat it too--i. e., get out, but in a way that leaves a communist-dominated regime still in power. They think recent Soviet statements stem mainly from Moscow's desire to minimize the impact of its latest defeat at the UN and to create a better atmosphere for the forthcoming summit and subsequent INF ratification process. They do not anticipate any major surprises at the Soviet-US summit because they think Moscow will want to see how Afghan President Najib's efforts to forge a leaner, meaner Peoples Democratic Party (PDPA) fare and await the outcome of planned US-Soviet and Soviet-Pakistani consultations as well as the US-Pakistani controversy on the nuclear issue before undertaking any major policy reassessments. These analysts also stress the political risks at home for Gorbachev if he really pushes to get out, arguing that for any Soviet leader, the risks of getting out will never outweigh the costs of staying until the job is done.

5. At the same time, however, many community analysts believe that Moscow's position has evolved in the last 12 months and project that it could change further, to the point where the Soviets might eventually conclude that a Communist-dominated government is not essential to securing Soviet interests. In fact, all analysts agree that they will have to sacrifice the PDPA if they are ever to get any kind of viable political settlement, because the resistance will not agree to a settlement which gives the Communists any real power, even in an interim coalition regime. These analysts believe that the Soviets are not at this point yet, but in their view Soviet assessments of the problem are becoming more realistic and their pressure on their clients in Kabul to pursue "national reconciliation" is--whatever the intention--undermining the PDPA regime.

6. INDICATORS: How will we know? If the Soviets really want out, the community judges that the Soviets would do more of what they are already doing, but at a stepped-up pace. They might indicate in a more authoritative way that they could accept a neutral interim coalition in Afghanistan to rule during a period of Soviet troop withdrawals and begin negotiations toward that end. Alternatively, they could engage in open negotiations with the Peshawar seven, departing from the current practice of occasional secret contacts with

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individual party representatives. Or they could announce and implement real, albeit, small troop withdrawals (as opposed to the sham withdrawal conducted last year). Finally, they could raise publicly their interest in an Austrian-style arrangement that would ensure the neutrality of a post-PDPA Afghanistan. Such moves would put the Soviets on the road to "going home" and make a reversal in course much more difficult.

7. OUTLOOK: Whether, in fact, Soviet policy will move in this direction is unknown to us--and perhaps to them. NIO/USSR believes the Soviets are working their way through the problem of looking for a way out without knowing when, if, or how they might actually do it. The costs--political or most importantly military--are not so great that they have to leave. Their military position is far from weak, although increased difficulties have been encountered during the past year. The Soviets are in no danger of being driven out or under the gun to make a rash or risky political decision to leave.

8. Odds are the Soviets assess the situation this way as well. But NIO/USSR, however, would not be as categorical as the community view in judging that the Soviets have not decided to go home and signal this at the summit. Their statements (to Ambassador Kamplman last June and Under Secretary Armacost more recently) and to some extent actions increasingly have the smell of putting the Soviets politically on the slippery slope of withdrawal, even if originally intended only as a tactical gambit. Continuing to play around with such gestures could leave the Soviets with no clients to protect and very little political position to defend. If their real intention is to stay until their ally can stand on its own feet (however improbable that might seem to us), it is poor tactics and strategy to be offering up--however hedged--a 12-month timetable, most of the government ministries, and even more forthcoming hints that will be hard to take back politically and propogandistically.

9. Either way, Gorbachev by design or omission will probably use the summit to signal more clearly Soviet intentions. Even if a decision to get out and sacrifice the Afghan Communists (heretofore a cardinal Soviet interest) has been made, Moscow is not going to pull out precipitately, without some guarantees that its other (and possibly now more important) fundamental interest--an Afghanistan that cannot be used by the US for actions inimical to the USSR--will be preserved. The Soviets almost certainly would want to negotiate this with us directly. They would also want US support for any effort to negotiate a deal with the Pakistanis and the resistance, something they will in the end have to do if they want to create a semblance of order, in Kabul at least, after they leave and allow for some form of state relations with a post-PDPA regime. If, on the other hand, Soviet statements continue to be tantalizing but ambiguous, I would agree that the skeptics are right, and that we are seeing nothing more than a more sophisticated game of smoke and mirrors.

Robert Blackwell
Robert Blackwell

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Some Thoughts on Soviet Intentions in Afghanistan and US Policy

FROM:

Robert Blackwell
NIO/USSR

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NO.

NIC-00239/88

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21 January 1988

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21 Jan '88

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3. *HS* Executive Registry

22 JAN 1988

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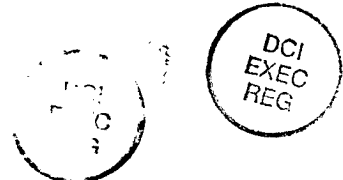
11. NIO/USSR
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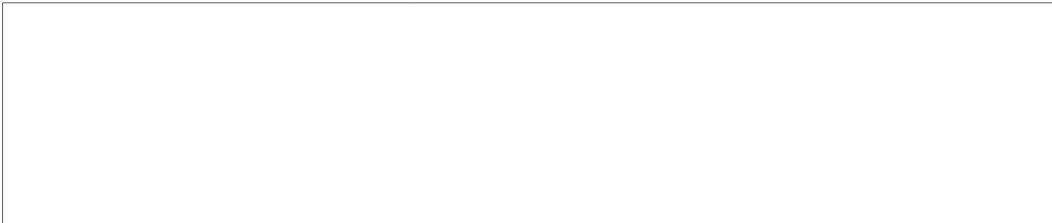
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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 00843

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL US UR AF
SUBJECT: SOVIET EXPERT DISCUSSES AFGHANISTAN'S
- PAST AND FUTURE

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

SUMMARY

2. EMOFF MET JANUARY 13 WITH ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
AFGHANISTAN EXPERT YURIY GANKOVSKIY WHO
WARNED OF THE DANGERS OF "LEBANIZATION"
OF AFGHANISTAN AND NECESSITY FOR BOTH
U.S. AND SOVIET UNION TO TAKE STEPS TO
PREVENT A BLOODBATH AFTER SOVIET TROOP
WITHDRAWAL. GANKOVSKIY NOTED THAT:

- SOVIET INTERVENTION HAD COME
ABOUT BECAUSE "LEFT EXTREMISTS"
HAD COME TO POWER IN AFGHANISTAN,
BUT NOW THERE WAS A THREAT THAT
"RIGHT EXTREMISTS" LIKE GULBUDDIN
HIKMATYAR MIGHT SEIZE POWER;
- THE U.S. HAD BEEN "RIGHT" TO CON-
CENTRATE ATTENTION ON SOVIET
TROOP WITHDRAWAL, BUT THAT "IN
CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES" URGENT
ATTENTION NEEDED TO BE DEVOTED
TO THE PROBLEM OF REABSORBING
UNPRECEDENTED NUMBERS OF REFUGEES
AND CREATING A MECHANISM TO LIMIT
"SETTLING OF SCORES";
- THE BREAKUP OF AFGHANISTAN INTO
FIEFDOMS WAS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY,
WHICH WOULD LEAVE THE U.S. AND
SOVIET UNION WITH "TEN PROBLEMS
INSTEAD OF ONE."

END SUMMARY.

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AFGHANISTAN'S PAST: THE LEGACY OF THE "LEFT
- EXTREMISTS."

3. EMBOFF MET JANUARY 13 WITH INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL STUDIES, AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN DEPARTMENT HEAD, YURIY GANKOVSKIY. THE MEETING WAS PROPITIOUS, GANKOVSKIY SAID, BECAUSE AN AFGHANISTAN SETTLEMENT SEEMED INCREASINGLY POSSIBLE. GANKOVSKIY, HOWEVER, WAS CONCERNED THAT THE TRAGEDY OF AFGHANISTAN'S PEOPLE WOULD CONTINUE. HE OFFERED SOME REFLECTIONS ON AFGHANISTAN'S RECENT HISTORY IN ORDER TO PUT THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE. AFTER THE APRIL 1978 REVOLUTION "LEFT EX-EXTREMISTS" HAD SEIZED POWER. THESE PEOPLE HAD PLUNGED AFGHANISTAN INTO TRAGEDY. HE HIMSELF HAD HEARD HAFIZULLAH AMIN PROCLAIM IN PRIVATE MEETINGS THAT THE AFGHAN PEOPLE OFFERED POOR HUMAN MATERIAL FOR THE MODERNIZATION OF THE COUNTRY. THEY WERE POOR, ILLITERATE, AND BADLY EDUCATED. AMIN HAD SAID "WE ONLY NEED FOUR MILLION (OUT OF A POPULATION OF SIXTEEN MILLION) AFGHANS TO CONSTRUCT SOCIALISM." GANKOVSKIY NOTED THAT UNDER THE TARAKI-AMIN REGIME PEOPLE HAD BEEN ARRESTED AND EVEN EXECUTED FOR REFUSING TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM CENSUS-TAKERS. MEMBERS OF SEBGHATULLAH MOJADEDDI AND SAYID AHMED GAILANI'S FAMILIES HAD BEEN MURDERED. IT WAS NO WONDER THEY HAD ENTERED THE OPPOSITION AND WERE NOW IN PESHAWAR. GANKOVSKIY SAID THAT THE "CRAZY POLICY" OF THAT ERA HAD SOUGHT TO "LIQUIDATE ILLITERACY BY LIQUIDATING THE ILLITERATES." IT WAS THIS INCIPIENT GENOCIDAL SITUATION THAT PRECIPITATED SOVIET INTERVENTION.

At time any Sov ever offered this explanation

4. UNFORTUNATELY, "COMRADE BREZHNEV DID NOT THINK THROUGH THE FULL IMPLICATIONS OF SOVIET INTERVENTION." THE SOVIETS HAD A SIMPLISTIC NOTION THAT BABRAK KARMAL, A BETTER EDUCATED AND MORE POLISHED FIGURE WITH LEGITIMATE POLITICAL CREDENTIALS,
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COULD BE GIVEN A CHANGE TO SUCCEED. GANKOVSKIY SAID THAT THE POINT OF HIS REVIEW OF AFGHAN HISTORY WAS TO NOTE THAT THERE WERE GREAT DANGERS AHEAD FOR BOTH THE U.S. AND THE SOVIETS ONCE TROOP WITHDRAWAL BEGAN. THE SOVIETS HAD SOUGHT TO LIMIT THE NUMBERS OF TROOPS COMMITTED TO AFGHANISTAN AND THIS HAD BEEN ABLE TO DO LITTLE MORE THAN HOLD SOME CITIES AND ROADS. WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS THERE WAS A GREAT DANGER OF A BLOODBATH AND THE "LEBANIZATION" OF AFGHANISTAN.

AFGHANISTAN'S FUTURE: THE THREAT OF "RIGHT
- EXTREMISM"

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5. WITH THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS, THERE WERE TWO POSSIBLE SCENARIOS. THERE WAS THE DISTINCT THREAT OF A "RIGHT EXTREMIST LIKE HIKMATYAR" TAKING POWER. THIS WOULD UNLEASH A BLOODLETTING ON THE SCALE OF TARAKI AND AMIN. THERE WAS ALSO THE POSSIBILITY OF IRANIAN EFFORTS TO "EXPORT" THE ISLAMIC REVOLUTION TO AFGHANISTAN. (COMMENT: GANKOVSKIY DID NOT DWELL ON THIS AND SEEMED TO GIVE IT LITTLE CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING. END COMMENT) ULTIMATELY, AFGHANISTAN MIGHT BREAK DOWN INTO A SERIES OF FIEFDOMS. SOME OF THE WARLORDS WOULD TURN TO THE CHINESE, SOME TO PAKISTAN, SOME TO THE U.S. AND SOME TO THE SOVIET UNION. THIS WOULD BE DISASTROUS. "IN THAT CASE WE WOULD BE FACING TEN PROBLEMS INSTEAD OF ONE." GANKOVSKIY OBSERVED THAT BRITISH POLICY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, WHICH HAD DEFENDED THE NATIONAL INTEGRITY OF AFGHANISTAN AS A BUFFER BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE EMPIRE, HAD BEEN VERY WISE. BOTH THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION HAD SOMETHING TO LEARN FROM THIS.

REFUGEES AND ETHNIC POLITICS

6. GANKOVSKIY NOTED THAT THE PROBLEMS POSED BY AN AFGHAN SETTLEMENT WERE IMMENSE. THE U.S., HE SAID, HAD BEEN RIGHT TO KEEP ATTENTION FOCUSED SQUARELY ON THE QUESTION OF SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL. NOW, HOWEVER, IT APPEARED REALIZATION OF THAT GOAL WAS IMMINENT. IT WAS URGENT THAT BOTH THE SOVIET AND U.S. SIDES BEGIN THINKING ABOUT WHAT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PROMOTE STABILITY AND PEACE AFTERWARDS. IN THAT REGARD, HE NOTED THAT AN UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER OF REFUGEES WOULD BE RETURNING TO AFGHANISTAN. "TO WHAT WILL THEY RETURN?" THE MECHANICS OF TRANSPORTING AND REABSORBING THESE REFUGEES REPRESENTED AN ENORMOUS UNDERTAKING. THE SOVIETS COULD PROVIDE A GOOD DEAL OF AID AND ASSISTANCE, BUT THIS WOULD INEVITABLY RAISE CONCERNS IN THE WEST ABOUT THE "SOVIET PRESENCE." THERE WOULD BE A NEED FOR OTHER COUNTRIES AND THE UNITED NATIONS TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION.

7. PART OF THE RECIPE FOR AVOIDING A BLOODBATH, ACCORDING TO GANKOVSKIY, WAS TO RECOGNIZE THAT AFGHANISTAN WAS A "MULTIETHNIC" SOCIETY. UNFORTUNATELY, RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ETHNIC COMMUNITIES WERE BAD. THE LAST TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF AFGHAN HISTORY HAD BEEN DOMINATED BY PASHTOONS. IN PARTICULAR, THE DURRANI TRIBE. (BIO NOTE: GANKOVSKIY IS AN EXPERT ON THE DURRANI AND HAS WRITTEN ABOUT THEM. END BIO NOTE.) DURRANI PRE-EMINENCE HAD BEEN SHATTERED BY THE RISE TO POWER OF THE PDPA. GANKOVSKIY SAID THAT IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME SCORE SETTLING BETWEEN AFGHANS. IN ORDER TO HELP PUT A BRAKE ON THE PROCESS, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO TAKE

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THE "ETHNIC AS WELL AS THE POLITICAL MAP INTO CONSIDERATION." GANKOVSKIY OFFERED NO FURTHER SPECIFICS, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A RANGE OF PERSONAL CONTACTS, FAMILY TIES AND TRIBAL CONNECTIONS, AS WELL AS SIMPLE WAR-WEARINESS MIGHT ALSO SERVE TO LIMIT THE VIOLENCE AFTER THE SOVIETS HAD LEFT.

COMMENT

8. AS IN OTHER RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH SOVIET INTERLOCUTORS, GANKOVSKIY OPERATED FROM THE ASSUMPTION THAT SOVIET TROOP WITHDRAWAL WOULD BE UNDERTAKEN AND LARGELY ACCOMPLISHED THIS YEAR. HIS FOCUS WAS MAINLY ON QUESTIONS WHICH HE FEARED WOULD THREATEN THE PROCESS OR CREATE DANGEROUS INSTABILITY AFTER THE FACT. THE POSSIBLE DANGER OF IRANIAN ACTIVITY AND MORE SERIOUSLY THE THREAT OF "LEBANIZATION" MAY BE THEMES THAT WILL INCREASINGLY FIGURE IN SOVIET PRESENTATIONS ON AFGHANISTAN. IT DOVETAILS WITH SHEVARDNADZE'S REMARKS THAT ALL SIDES WILL HAVE TO PLAY A PART IN PROMOTING AN ALL-AFGHAN POLITICAL DIALOGUE AFTER SOVIET WITHDRAWAL.

or alternately - on questions that must be dealt with before Sovs withdraw

9. KABUL MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.
MATLOCK

END OF MESSAGE

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