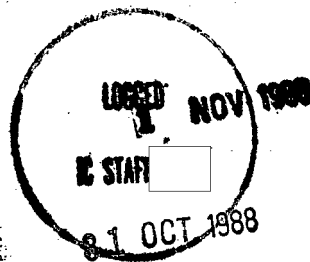


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The Director of Central Intelligence  
Washington, D.C. 20505

*Tia 2-SR*

NIC 03233-88

30 October 1988

National Intelligence Council

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

FROM: Charles E. Allen  
National Intelligence Officer for Warning

SUBJECT: Afghanistan/USSR: Major Soviet Move in Offing?

1. Attached is a Special Warning Brief on what appears to be new Soviet military and political initiatives in Afghanistan. Recent statements by Moscow's Ambassador Vorontsov and Soviet military deployments suggest that Moscow is likely to press hard for an end to Pakistani and US assistance to the Mujahidin. Moscow may also be prepared soon to announce a moratorium on further troop withdrawals unless it perceives a decrease in Mujahidin pressures on Afghan Government forces. Moreover, in order to demonstrate that it is serious, Moscow appears prepared to conduct intensive air attacks to break sieges around major population centers, such as Quandahar.

2. This warning brief reflects the views of the National Intelligence Officer for Warning and has not been coordinated formally within the National Intelligence Council.

*Charles E. Allen*  
Charles E. Allen

Attachment:  
As stated

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SPECIAL WARNING BRIEF

Afghanistan/USSR: Major Soviet Move in Offing?

The National Intelligence Officer for Warning believes that the Soviets, in a major shift in tactics, are preparing to launch new military and political initiatives in the near future. Faced with a steadily deteriorating situation in Afghanistan, Gorbachev apparently has ended five months of temporizing and now seems ready to press hard for an end to Pakistani and US aid to the mujahidin and for a general ceasefire as the essential precondition for a political solution.

On the military front, the deployment of two squadrons of MIG-27 ground attack aircraft to Shindand airbase and the movement of a regiment of Backfire bombers [redacted] foreshadow intensified and sustained air and ground attacks to break mujahidin sieges of Kabul, Qandahar, and other major population centers. Moscow's new ambassador to Kabul, Vorontsov, [redacted] warned that the Soviets will retaliate in full force if the mujahidin and Pakistan press for a military solution. He threatened missile attacks on targets in Pakistan as well as on mujahidin positions and said the Soviets may also introduce reinforcements.

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Political initiatives apparently will center on renewed pressure for full compliance with the Geneva Agreements by Pakistan and the United States. The speech by Afghan Government leader Najibullah on 29 October in which he called for "an international conference under the aegis of the United Nations" apparently is part of this Soviet pressure campaign. The Soviets may intend to use anticipated rejection of their demands as a pretext for declaring a moratorium on further troop withdrawals. They may also insist that the mujahidin accept an open-ended ceasefire, ostensibly to facilitate a political settlement. Ambassador Vorontsov told [redacted] there will be no further troop withdrawals unless there is a ceasefire throughout the country.

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