



Intelligence

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Afghanistan Situation Report

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1 November 1983

Top Secret

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

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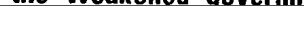
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Large-scale insurgent casualties have been infrequent and have been offset by volunteers, although resistance groups have serious problems replacing weapons lost in battle. 

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ARREST OF AFGHAN OFFICERS

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Officers caught outside their posts in Kabul reportedly are being sent to reinforce the weakened government garrison at Khowst in Paktia Province. 

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IN BRIEF

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PERSPECTIVE

AFGHAN ARMY: TRAINING

4

Soviet and Afghan efforts to increase the efficiency of the Afghan Army through training have been largely unsuccessful and the rebuilding process will continue to be long and difficult. 

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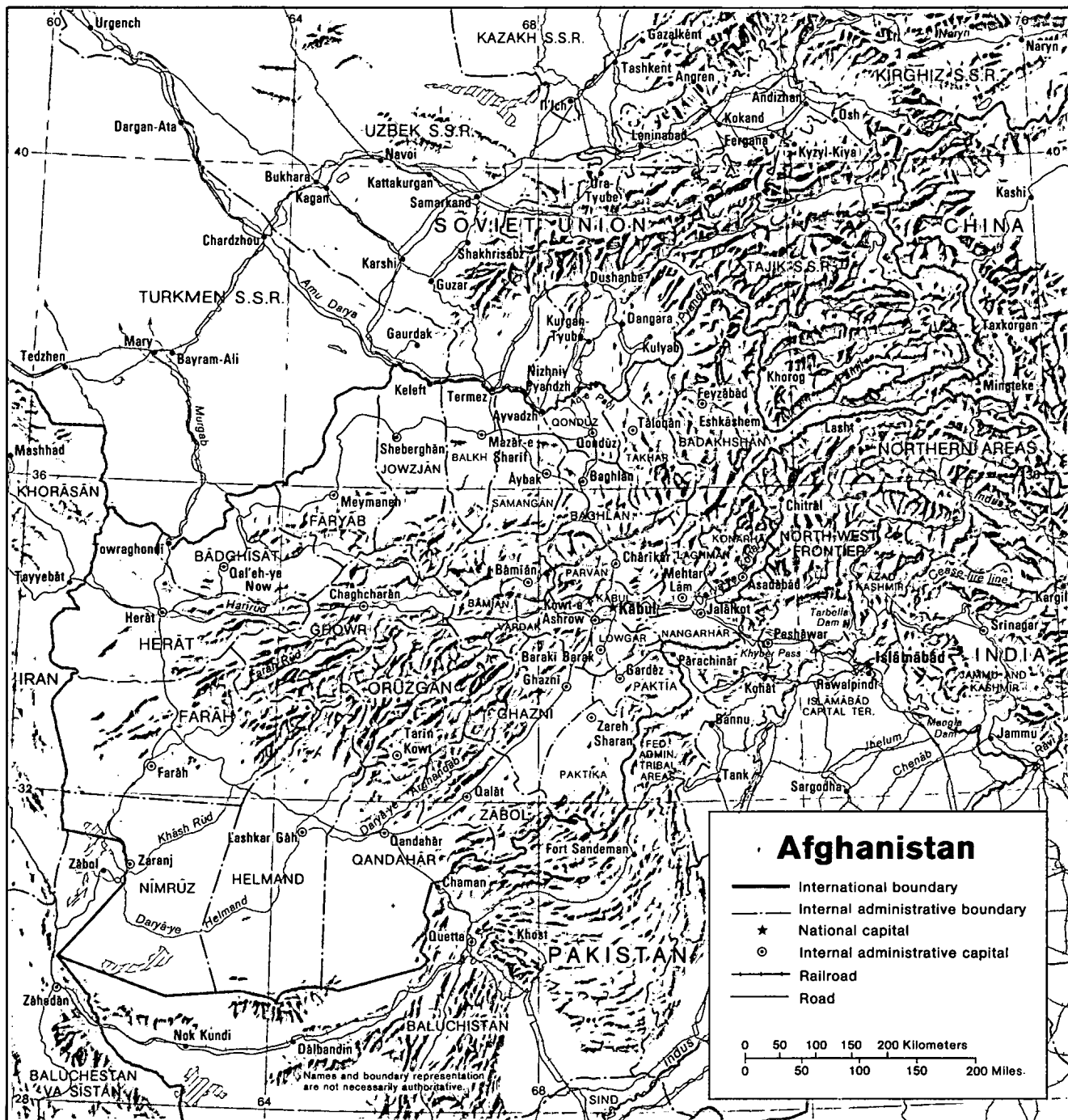
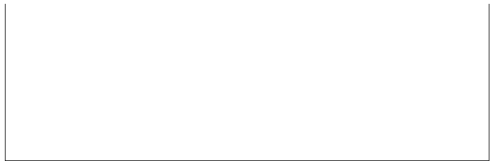
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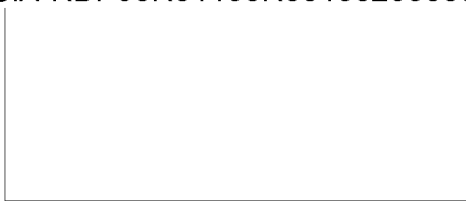




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INSURGENTS CLAIM THEIR LOSSES HAVE BEEN LOW [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

overall resistance losses have been equal to or less than Soviet and Afghan casualties. Casualties have not yet caused serious insurgent morale problems or affected the guerrillas' ability to expand operations. [redacted] large-scale insurgent 25X1

losses have been infrequent and cited the example of a group of 3,000 to 4,000 guerrillas that has suffered only 100 killed in the last year despite being very active in the Kabul area. Although guerrilla groups have no problems replacing casualties because of a large number of volunteers, they have serious difficulties replacing weapons lost in combat. [redacted] 25X1

Comment:

[redacted] insurgent casualties have 25X1
been relatively low over the past four years, even in areas of intense combat such as the Panjsher Valley. This suggests that the resistance could continue the war at the present level of activity for many years without manpower constraints. The vast majority of casualties in the war, however, appear to be among civilians. Continued high non-combatant losses or emigration from rural areas because of combat operations eventually could undercut support for the resistance. [redacted] 25X1

ARREST OF AFGHAN OFFICERS [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] in late September the 25X1
Afghan Ministry of Defense ordered the arrest of officers in Kabul who were outside their place of work during business hours. These officers were then flown under guard to Paktia Province to reinforce the government garrison at Khowst which has been weakened by casualties, desertions, and defections in the last two months. [redacted] 25X1




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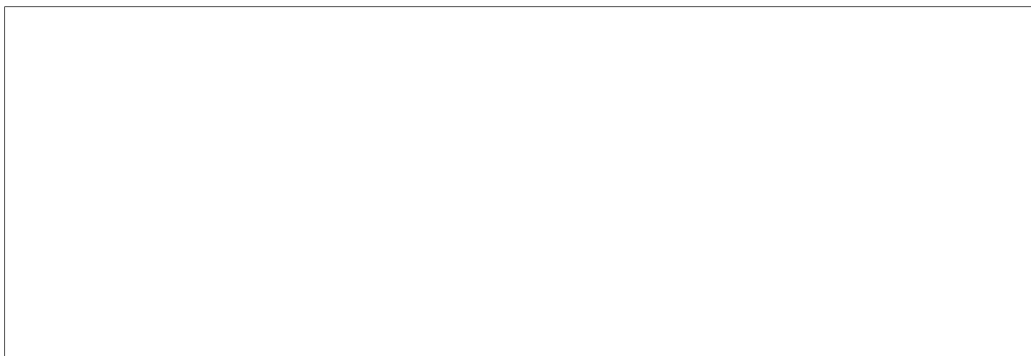


Comment:



Reinforcing understrength units in Paktia Province with officers who have been arrested is unlikely to improve Afghan Army effectiveness and could increase defections to the insurgents. The arrest of officers also will worsen deteriorating morale in the Afghan officer corps, particularly in the Kabul area. 

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IN BRIEF



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--  the insurgents have begun to disguise themselves as Afghan soldiers to minimize casualties when attacking government posts and isolated detachments. On 25 September insurgents used this tactic to raid an Afghan border post in Qonduz Province, capturing or wounding almost 40 enemy soldiers. 

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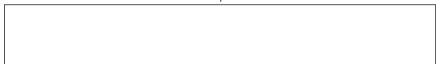
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 insurgents captured the brother of regime Interior Minister Gulobzoi, a Soviet adviser, and 51 other government personnel near Meymaneh in Faryab Province on 20 August. Government representatives have been in touch with the guerrillas to try to negotiate the release of the prisoners. 

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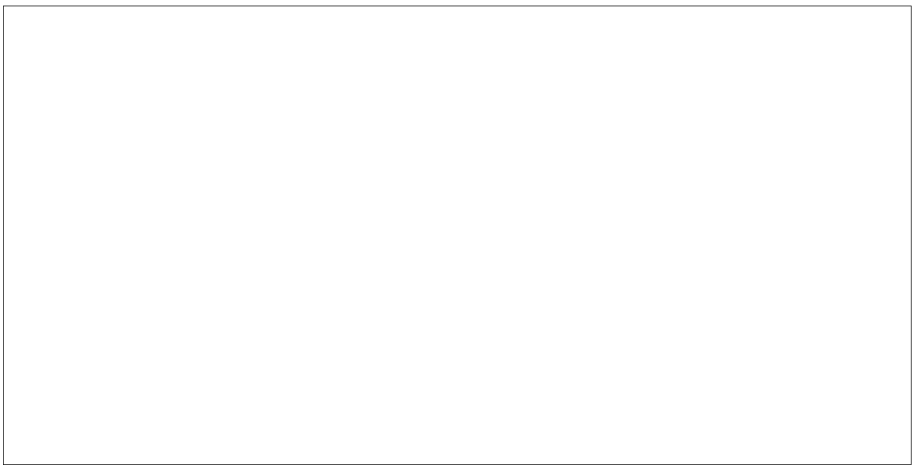
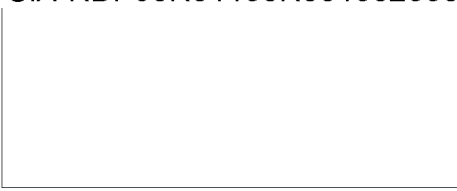
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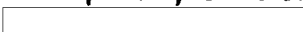


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--  the
insurgents killed, wounded, or captured 1,316 Afghan Army
soldiers in September. The insurgents reportedly suffered 1,195
casualties during the same month. 

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PERSPECTIVE

AFGHAN ARMY: TRAINING [redacted]

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[redacted] **NESA**

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Soviet and Afghan efforts to increase the efficiency and reliability of the Afghan Army through combat and political training have been largely unsuccessful. The Soviets currently are training a large number of Afghan military personnel in the Soviet Union and hope that political indoctrination will result in a dependable Army cadre. Moscow eventually may be able to build a more reliable and capable Afghan armed forces through political and military instruction. We believe, however, that this process will be long and difficult because of the poor quality of the training that has resulted so far in only limited effectiveness even in elite Afghan units. [redacted]

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Training in Afghanistan

In our judgment, current Afghan Army training, which was rudimentary at the time of the invasion in 1979, is still poor and has not increased military effectiveness appreciably. [redacted]

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[redacted] the Soviets are becoming more reluctant to join in operations with unreliable, young, and untrained Afghan troops who often desert in combat. [redacted] Afghan officers now consider every new soldier a potential deserter, and troops often do not receive adequate training because instructors fear conscripts will take their weapons and defect to the insurgents. [redacted]

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The Soviets have provided Afghan units with improved weaponry, but we believe many Afghan soldiers are poorly trained in small and heavy arms because the Soviets and the regime hesitate to give weapons instruction to unreliable soldiers. [redacted] the Army sometimes issues weapons to conscripts only after the men have been in the service two or three months or when senior officers are confident the soldiers will not desert and give their weapons to insurgents. Soldiers who are not party members often are not issued weapons during training. [redacted]

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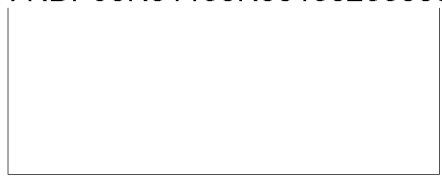
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We believe the Soviets, rather than heavily stressing counter guerrilla tactics, generally have been trying to improve the

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Army's performance through more basic training in standard tactics. [redacted] however, [redacted] the regime did conduct "special" week-long courses on foreign weapons, mines and explosives, mountain tactics, and counterinsurgency warfare this summer for some Soviet and Afghan combat groups. [redacted]

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To compensate for severe manpower shortages, Kabul has reduced training time, and, in our judgment, thereby has lowered the competence of officers and conscripts. [redacted] Afghan officers now train conscripts for as little as ten days with instruction sometimes being interrupted because the new troops are needed for combat operations. [redacted] actual military training for some conscripts consists only of firing about a dozen rifle rounds or watching officers demonstrate equipment. The military academy and high school in Kabul have enlarged their enrollments and shortened their curricula. [redacted]

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[redacted] in 1979 only 50 percent of the military academy students graduated, but, by lowering standards, about 80 percent of the students graduated in 1982. [redacted] Kabul initiated a short two-month officer training course in 1980 to increase the number of officers, but the quality of graduating officers is so low that they cannot adequately train their subordinates. [redacted]

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We believe regime and Soviet attempts to emphasize party membership and political education also have detracted from Army effectiveness by reducing the time available for practical military training. [redacted] Kabul has tried to replace nonparty military instructors at the academy and military high school with incompetent civilian party members. Officer classes must begin with a five-minute political presentation. [redacted] many troops are illiterate and do not understand or are not interested in political education, but every soldier is required to attend at least four hours of political indoctrination each week. [redacted]

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Training in the USSR

We believe most training conducted in the Soviet Union is also of poor quality. [redacted] courses on Soviet military operations given in Moscow are not well prepared; attendees are mismatched in military experience; courses are sometimes adapted to slow

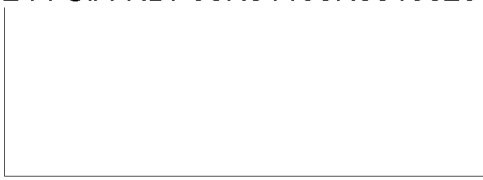
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learners, boring other students; and a large amount of time is wasted in translation. [redacted]

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The Soviets probably train at least 2,000 Afghan officers and soldiers in the Soviet Union each year. [redacted]

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[redacted] because the Soviets believe many high-ranking Afghan officers are barely competent, Moscow is retraining a number of senior Afghan military officers in the USSR. [redacted]

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[redacted] long-term political and military training in the Soviet Union for junior officers and cadets often lasts from three to seven years. Short courses usually last for a few months to two years, are conducted for officers of field grade or above, and may cover subjects such as tactics, command and staff procedures, operations, and special staff operations. [redacted]

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[redacted] Moscow also trains special Afghan combat units in the Soviet Union, probably in counter guerrilla tactics.

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[redacted] the Soviets hope that with time and proper training, these units will make the Afghan Army more effective. The elite troops of the 38th Commando Brigade, which the insurgents nearly destroyed in May in Paktia Province, were all trained in the Soviet Union. Senior officials in the Afghan Ministry of Defense described the loss of this unit as the worst military defeat of the war, and the Soviets were particularly angry at its poor performance. [redacted]

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Training in the Soviet Union heavily emphasizes political indoctrination. [redacted]

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students must receive a passing grade in Communist ideology to graduate, regardless of performance or technical proficiencies in other areas. Moscow does not require students studying in the USSR to be party members, but Soviet advisers who sit on selection committees allow few nonparty members to be chosen for training in the USSR. [redacted]

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[redacted] some Afghan military students--even party members--return from the USSR with anti-Soviet attitudes in spite of Moscow's political indoctrination. [redacted]

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[redacted] many returning students, regardless of rank, have become antagonistic toward their Soviet sponsors for what the Afghans consider to be "poor treatment" in the USSR. Students

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continually complain of unsatisfactory living conditions, low stipends, daily fights between Khalq and Parcham students, and constant harassment by the local populace, [redacted]



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Prospects

Better training would marginally improve the Afghan Army's performance, relieve some of the pressure on the Soviet Army, and reduce Soviet losses. We believe, however, that the Soviets realize that additional training alone will not immediately enable the Afghan Army to defeat the insurgents without continuing substantial Soviet support. Serious manpower, leadership, morale, and equipment problems will continue to undermine the Army's performance. Many conscripts are not loyal to the Babrak regime when inducted into the military and, in our view, existing training programs are not quickly building a loyal Communist cadre that would be a foundation for a loyal and effective armed forces. [redacted]

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Moscow appears to be attempting to use political indoctrination to create a reliable Afghan Army cadre, which then can be trained in basic and advanced tactics to take over a larger share of the military burden from the Soviets. The Soviets are unlikely to provide the Afghan Army with substantially increased military training and weaponry until Moscow believes the Army has become more dependable and troops will not turn against Soviet forces. In our view, Moscow recognizes that it will take a generation or more to instill the will to fight for Communism in large numbers of Afghan troops. In the short term, the currently ineffective political indoctrination efforts are producing few loyal Afghan officers and even fewer reliable soldiers. [redacted]

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