

SPECIAL ANALYSIS

PAKISTAN: The USSR and the Afghan Insurgents

[REDACTED]

*Soviet incursions into Pakistan seem unlikely in the near term, but increasingly likely if the Soviet engagement of the rebels spreads in the months ahead.* [REDACTED]

Access to Pakistan across the poorly marked and weakly controlled border has been useful but not essential to the Afghan insurgents. Tribal areas in Pakistan provide safehaven for rebel dependents, supply bases, and training areas, but most insurgent operations are launched from and conducted within Afghanistan, and most rebel arms and supplies have been obtained--through desertions or capture--from the Afghan military. [REDACTED]

Despite Soviet and Afghan charges, our evidence suggests that Afghan refugees in Pakistan, who may soon number half a million, have played only a marginal role in the insurgency. Most are the very young or old, unfit for fighting. Only a few have joined the rebel ranks. Very few are under Pakistani control in government camps; most live with fellow tribesmen in Pakistan or in unofficial encampments. The refugees would probably resist any Pakistani efforts to repatriate them forcibly, and Pakistan's fellow Pathan tribesmen would also object. [REDACTED]

Even if it wanted to, Islamabad could not easily control private arms sales to the insurgents and access across the border. Enforcement of arms control has always been spotty, and deployment of military units to control the border would probably lead to clashes with the insurgents and to criticism from other Islamic countries. [REDACTED]

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