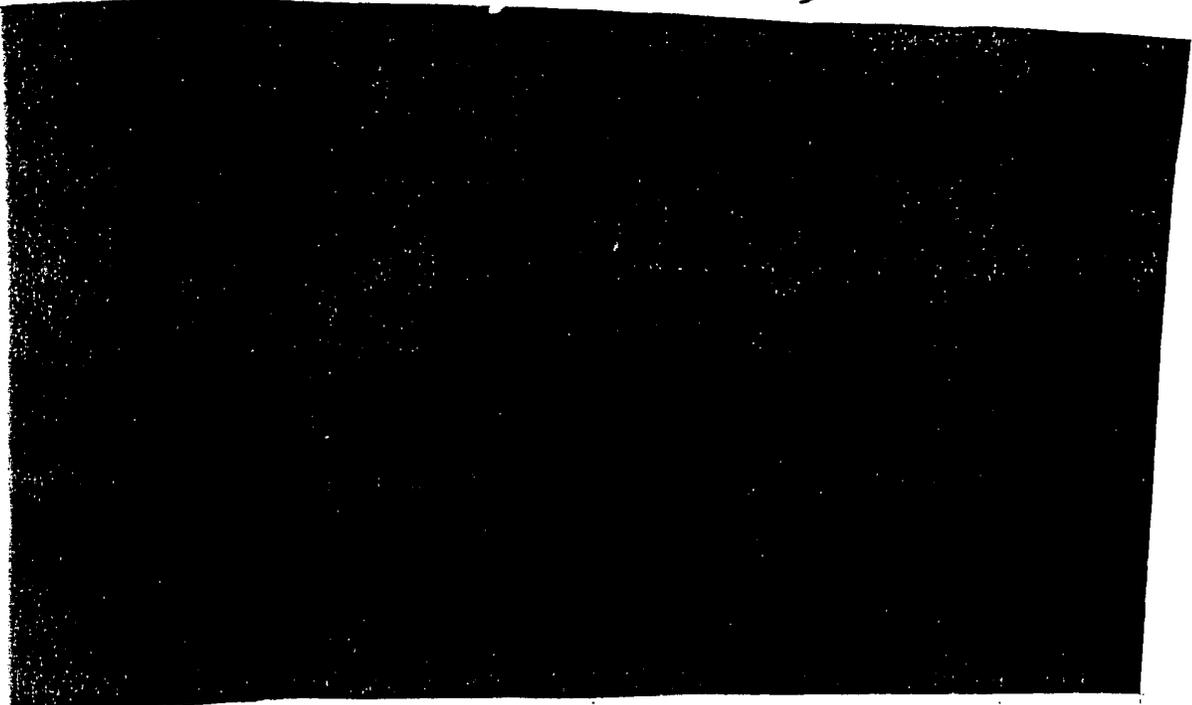


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USSR: Hints of Prolonged Stay in Afghanistan

Komsomolskaya Pravda acknowledged on Saturday that three Soviet soldiers have been killed in Afghanistan. On Sunday *Red Star* carried an article comparing the Afghan insurgents to Nazis, claiming that they have killed thousands of Afghans in their efforts to overthrow the regime. Last week Soviet lecturers told a domestic audience that the development of support for the Afghan Government is going to be a slow and difficult process but that the USSR will persevere because its national interests are at stake. [REDACTED]

Comment: Only a dozen articles over the last three years have acknowledged the problems the Soviets face in Afghanistan or have indirectly hinted at their participation in combat. The two new articles came soon after a recent conference of propagandists in Moscow. They suggest that the more open handling of Soviet internal affairs in the media also will apply to treatment of Afghanistan. The comparison of Afghan insurgents to Nazis and the invocation of a threat to Soviet security interests are intended to appeal to Soviet patriotism. [REDACTED]

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