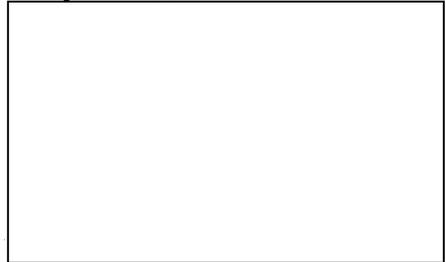


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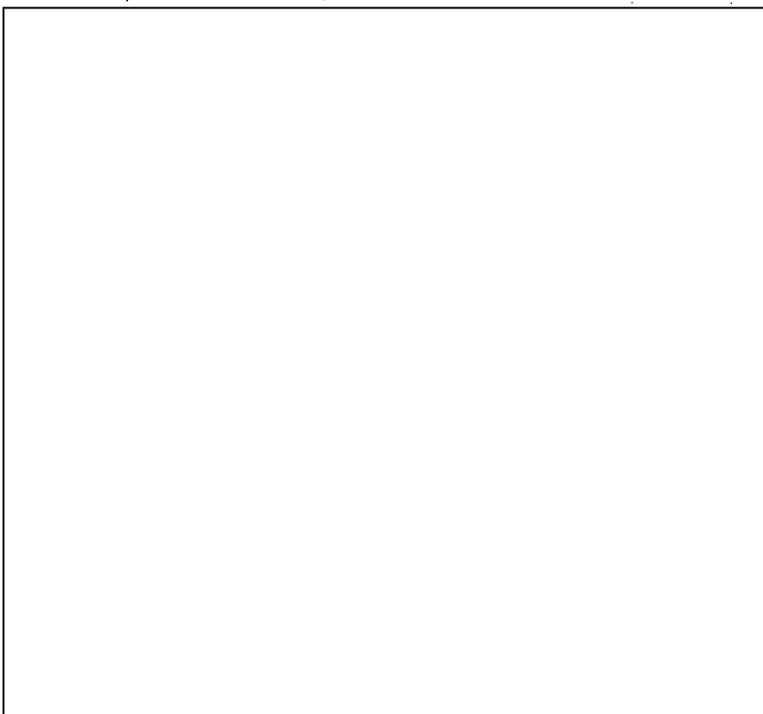
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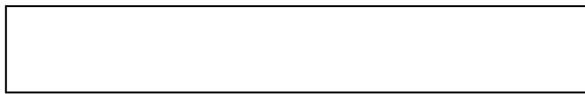
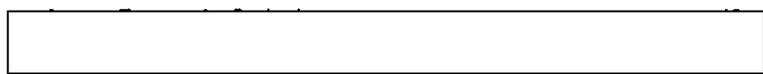


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Special Analysis

**USSR-
AFGHANISTAN:**

What Soviets Want From Summit

General Secretary Gorbachev is likely to claim that Kabul's announcement this week of a 12-month timetable for withdrawing Soviet troops would demonstrate Moscow's flexibility and seriousness. He will probably press the US to reciprocate by reducing aid to the Afghan resistance and by taking a more active role in devising a settlement. More far-reaching concessions are unlikely because of Gorbachev's recent political setbacks in Moscow and because the situation in Afghanistan does not appear so bleak as to have engendered a need for a face-saving solution.

The Soviets probably hope that inducing Washington to take a more active role in a settlement would create a rift between the US and Pakistan, provoke accusations of betrayal from the resistance, and prompt world public opinion to view Afghanistan as primarily an East-West issue.

Hanging Tough

Although the Soviets, over the past year, have had Kabul offer to share power with the resistance in a coalition government, they do not seem ready to accept a regime in which the Afghan Communists play a minority role. The Soviets continue to build up their political and military forces in Afghanistan and can sustain or increase their current level of operations at any time. Despite Moscow's recent embarrassment over the vote on the UN resolution on Afghanistan, neither the international cost of Soviet involvement nor the difficulty of grinding out a military stalemate is enough to make the Kremlin abandon hope for a solution that would leave its clients in a dominant position once Soviet troops were withdrawn.

A Soviet decision to settle for less is particularly unlikely now. Moscow probably wants time to assess Najibullah's latest moves to eliminate party factionalism, its own bilateral discussions with the US and Pakistan, and whether Islamabad's nuclear controversy with the

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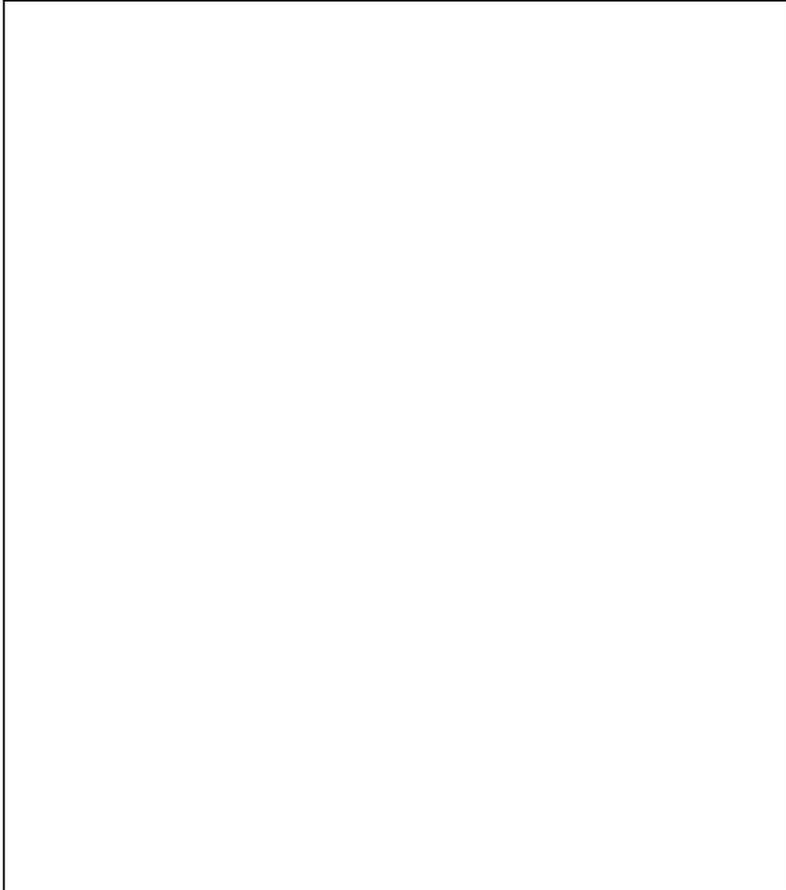
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US might yet work to Soviet advantage. Moreover, unless a leadership consensus to seek a face-saving settlement has emerged—which seems unlikely—the “loss” of Afghanistan would pose a major risk to Gorbachev, who has spent considerable political capital trying to push his domestic program past conservative opponents.



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