Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Directorate of Intelligence

~~Top Secret~~

79-80 IMC/CB

25X1

25X1

Afghanistan Situation Report

FILE 80
DATE 11/26/80
DOC NO NESA M 86-20170CX SOVA M 86-20116CX
OIR 1 (79)
P & PD 0

25 November 1986

~~Top Secret~~

NESA M 86-20170CX
SOVA M 86-20116CX

25X1

25 November 1986

Copy 080

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1
Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Page Denied

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

TOP SECRET

[redacted]

AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT [redacted] 25X1

CONTENTS 25X1

[redacted]

25 November 1986
NESA M 86-20170CX
SOVA M 86-20116CX

25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

Soviet domination. At the same time, these factors help to create numerous obstacles to developing a cohesive resistance.

25X1

This document was prepared by the Office of Near Eastern and South Asian Analysis and the Office of Soviet Analysis. Questions or comments on the issues raised in the publication should be directed to

25X1

25X1

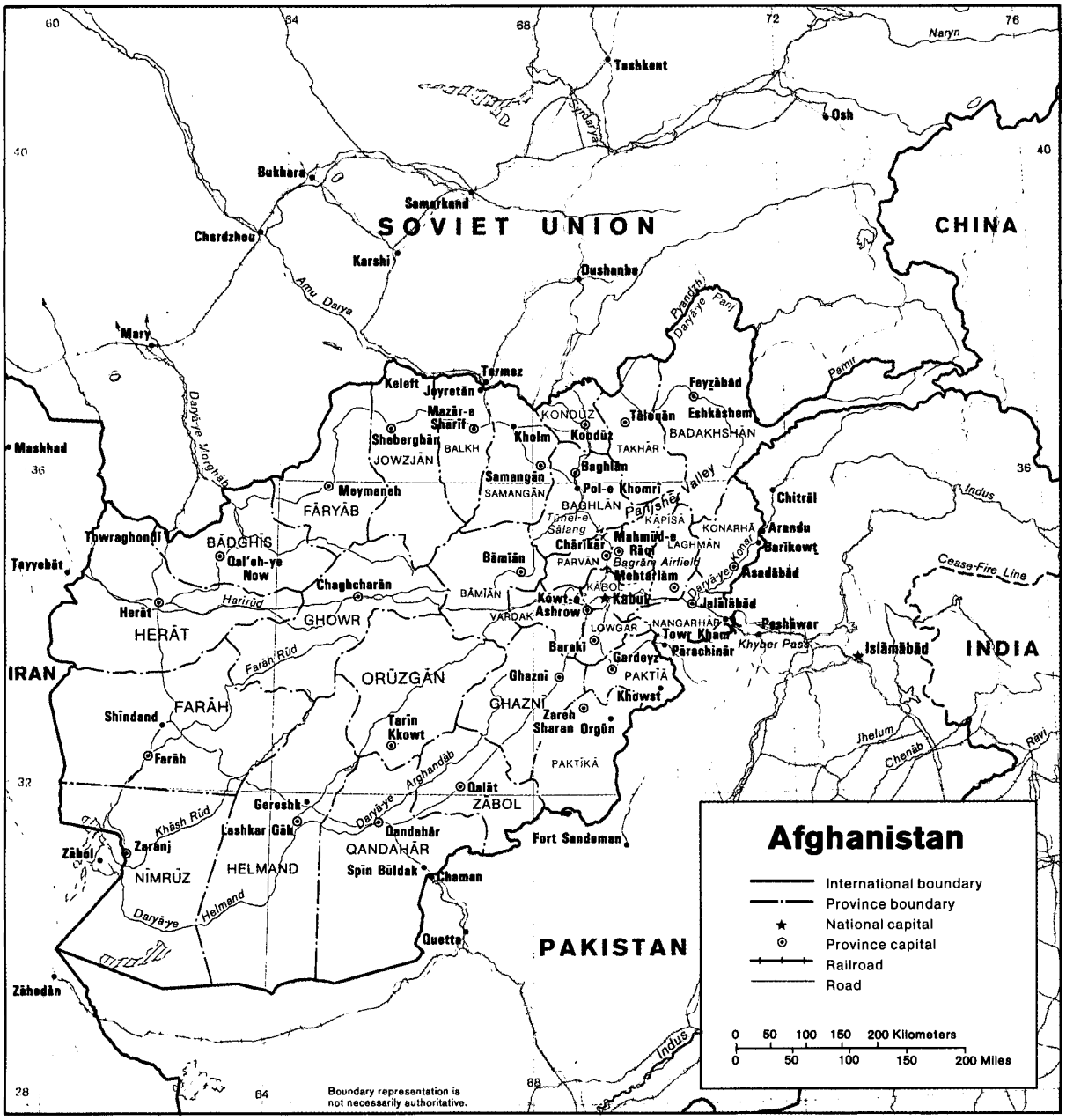
25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

TOP SECRET



25 November 1986
NESA M 86-20170CX
SOVA M 86-20116CX

25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1
Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Page Denied

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Denied

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

LEADERSHIP SHAKEUP

25X1

Afghan party chief Najib removed Barak Karmal from his major positions yesterday, apparently convincing Moscow--after weeks of intensified party infighting--that it had to choose between the two rival leaders of the ruling party. The 20th Plenum of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan's Central Committee met last week in Kabul and accepted Babrak Karmal's "resignation" from the Politburo and as President, according to regime media accounts. The move came less than two weeks after the Central Committee warned Babrak Karmal to cease his alleged antigovernment activities or face the consequences. At the same time, Interior Minister Gulabzoi, leader of the Khalqi faction, was elevated to the Politburo, as was Farid Ahmed Mazduk, a leader in the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan.

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

East European diplomats in Kabul said Moscow had been urging restraint on Najib because of substantial support for Babrak in the party. According to the US Embassy in Kabul, major government decisions--such as promulgating a new constitution, selecting a new legislature and convening the National Fatherland Front Congress--had been bogged down in feuding between the party factions over power-sharing arrangements.

25X1

Prime Minister Keshtmand told diplomats in Kabul Saturday that Haji Mohammad Chamkani will function as head of state in lieu of Babrak until the regime holds the traditional assembly that legitimizes a government. The assembly, called a "loya jirga," will

25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

approve a new constitution, after which a presidential election will be held. Chamkani, one of the few nonmembers of the ruling party to be appointed to a high government post, became vice-chairman of the Revolutionary Council in January. 25X1

Comment: Moscow's efforts to engineer compromises between the two squabbling wings of the ruling party's Parchami faction apparently failed. The Soviets probably believe that the programs they designed for improving the effectiveness and popularity of the Kabul regime were becoming casualties of the party disputes. Babrak's dismissal, however, could set off a new, more serious period of instability in the regime that would allow the Khalqi faction--which has been relatively quiet during the infighting--to exploit the disarray. Offering Gulabzoi a Politburo seat was intended to forestall such a development. 25X1

Moreover, party chairman Najib has apparently failed to neutralize Babrak Karmal, who retains his membership on the Central Committee and the Revolutionary Council and whose key supporters on the Politburo survived the Central Committee plenum last week. 25X1

Babrak's continued presence in party circles will make him a rallying point for anti-Najib sentiment, despite Moscow's apparent decision to continue support for Najib in the power struggle that has plagued the party since May. The explosion of a bomb Saturday near where Najib was scheduled to hold a press conference may have been the work of disgruntled Babrak supporters. 25X1

NEW SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO KABUL 25X1

Pavel Mozhayev, the new Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan who was appointed in August 1986, had been an official in the Leningrad Communist Party apparatus for two decades, most recently as second secretary of the oblast party committee (from 1983 to 1985). A candidate member of the Communist Party Central Committee since March 1986, Mozhayev is lower in party rank than his predecessor. 25X1

COMMENT: Mozhayev's appointment conforms with the practice of sending party officials rather than career diplomats as ambassadors to socialist nations. But

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

because of his low party rank, other elements of the Soviet establishment in Kabul may be able to encroach on his authority, and decisionmaking on Afghan policy may shift toward Moscow.

25X1

US Embassy officials in Moscow see Mozhayev's assignment to so important and sensitive a post as a promotion and anticipate his attainment of full Central Committee membership before the next party congress. Other analysts, however, see his departure from the most powerful oblast party committee in the Soviet Union to Kabul as a "diplomatic exile."

25X1

IN BRIEF

-- Sources of the US Embassy in Kabul claim the Afghan regime has made little progress in providing health care to children in areas under its control, despite substantial international assistance. Afghan Government programs apparently favor children of party members, while virutally ignoring children of refugees and nomads. International medical experts in Kabul report still high infant mortality, an increase in war-related wounds, widespread malnutrition, and other health problems among children there.

25X1

-- West German press reports claim unknown assailants attempted to assassinate General Secretary Najib on 23 November. According to the report, Najib was uninjured, but four members of his entourage were either killed or wounded. The US Embassy in Kabul has received a report of shooting that day in the area where Najib maintains a residence. Police and military units erected roadblocks in the area.

25X1

-- Canadian officials claim that Canada's decision to reestablish cultural, scientific, and academic exchanges with the Soviet Union does not represent a change in Canadian foreign policy, according to the US Embassy in Ottawa. Last week, press reports asserted that Canada was dropping sanctions it imposed on the Soviet Union following the invasion of Afghanistan in

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

1979. In fact, some sanctions--including a limited grain embargo and the prohibition of high-level visits--lapsed in 1981, and the reestablishment of cultural exchanges had been under negotiation since 1982. Bans on the export of high technology and military exchanges are still in effect, however. [redacted] 25X1

25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

25X1

PERSPECTIVE

AFGHANISTAN: CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE INSURGENCY--MIXED BLESSINGS

Ethnic, cultural, and religious factors generally strengthen the Afghan resistance's ability to resist Soviet domination. Deep commitments to defending family and religion sustain the will of the fighters, while the fragmented nature of Afghan society tends to hamper regime policies aimed at coopting the population. At the same time, however, deepley rooted hatreds among ethnic groups and tribes, xenophobic attitudes, opportunism, and individuality slow the transition of fighters or even groups of fighters into a strong insurgency.

25X1

25X1

Traditional Local Social Organizations

The tightly knit Afghan family, tribal and village structures provide strong barriers to Soviet penetration. Traditional tribal structures have long provided a basis for organizing opposition to outside invaders, but the tribal leaders are fickle and quick to shift their loyalties in return for bribes or to stay on the winning side.

25X1

The Family

The primary allegiance of Afghans is to the family. In rural areas, the most common form is the extended family consisting of brothers and their families sharing the same household.

25X1

To an Afghan, family and extended kinship ties determine to a great extent who he is, who he can become, where he can go, and how he should fight the war. Afghans do not take actions independently, but rather in kinship units.

25X1

Scholars of Afghanistan have pointed out that although a family may experience competition and feuds, it presents a united front to the outside world and is quite impermeable to outside influence. In part, the Soviet movement of thousands of Afghan youths for education in the USSR away from their families reflects a recognition by Moscow of the difficulties in changing attitudes within the traditional family units.

25X1

25 November 1986
NESA M 86-20170CX
SOVA M 86-20116CX

25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

Providing for the family comes before fighting. Historically this has meant that military campaigns lasted for limited periods of time so that men could return for farming or herding to provide for their families. This is still largely the case with the Afghan guerrillas, even in the areas where there has been an attempt to build a professional paid army. 25X1

Many men with families in Pakistan go back and forth between Pakistan and the battlefronts in Afghanistan. Many Afghan guerrilla commanders have a rotation system, with the men spending two weeks in Afghanistan and two weeks with their families in Pakistan. For the groups fighting farther inside Afghanistan, the rotation period is longer. 25X1

Afghans also owe allegiance to larger social units. There are essentially two types of such units: tribal structures--found mostly among the Pashtuns--and village structures, found among the Hazaras, Uzbeks, Nuristanis, and Tajiks. 25X1

Tribes. The tribal areas of Afghanistan are in the east, primarily among the Pashtuns near the Pakistani border. The tribes include the Mohmand, Jaji, Jadran, Mangul, Tani, Shinwari and Waziri in Paktia, Nangarhar and Konarha Provinces. Tribal structures characteristically divide into subtribes, lineages, clans, and extended families. 25X1

In Afghanistan, as in other traditional societies, tribal leaders often can quickly mobilize thousands of men at a moment's notice for a battle. The Pashtun tribes are particularly bellicose. Fighting over pasture land, tribal honor or tribal autonomy against neighboring tribes, national governments or invading armies has long been a way of life. Acquiring war booty is also a motivating factor. 25X1

Pashtun tribal groups under traditional leaders have fought against the regime and the Soviets in many areas for several years, but their capacity to increase pressure on the regime is limited. They usually participate in the fighting only if it suits their own tribal objectives and tend not to fight in areas outside their tribal region. They resist being organized into units led by nontribal members and

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

generally resist military training from nontribal people. Tribal leaders often are allied with Gailani or Mojadedi--the so-called "traditionalist" insurgent leaders--partly because these groups are very loosely organized and present no challenge to established tribal authorities. 25X1

The tribes most often fight on the side of the resistance but owe little allegiance to it. They strike deals with Kabul when it suits their interest. Several tribes cooperate to some degree with Kabul, including part of the Mohmand, the Jaji and the Shinwari. They will quickly abandon Kabul if they feel their interests rest elsewhere. 25X1

Village Structure. In the areas where the village-based system predominates, allegiance beyond the family traditionally goes primarily to the local landlords, called khans in most areas. The khans, often natural and capable leaders, control the distribution of farmlands and products and most aspects of village life. They are also, in some cases, quite despotic. 25X1

Since the beginning of the war, however, the influence of landlords has been challenged by young men, often of humble origin, who have gained prestige as successful guerrilla leaders, and by some religious leaders. Many of the landlords have been killed or have fled to Pakistan or Kabul. 25X1

Antilandlord activity is a stated policy of the Islamist groups--Jamiat-i-Islami, both factions of Hizbi Islami, and Sayyaf's Islamic Union--and the groups fighting out of Iran. These groups espouse the development of a more egalitarian society based on Islamic principles. Leaders of the "traditionalist" political groups, including Gailani, Nabi and Mojadedi, are themselves largely from the landlord class and thus often support traditional village structures. 25X1

The collapse of the khans as traditional leaders in the villages in some areas, such as in the Panjsher, has allowed development of a regional front uniting various villages and groups. In other areas, the ousting of the khans has had a negative effect, leaving many villages without good leadership. 25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Religious leaders, who generally did not play a large role in village leadership before 1978, have become more important, but in some areas the local population is led by an often ineffective local mullah. 25X1

Afghan Codes of Honor and Manhood

The Afghans, especially the tribal Pashtuns, have a strong code of behavior that emphasizes bravery, honor and revenge. Pushtunwali, the code of behavior, is an elaborate but indefinite set of rules that describes the duties of manhood. The rules specify everything from how to entertain a guest to how to fight. Among nontribal people of Afghanistan, these codes have been largely replaced by religious codes of honor. Among Tajik and other Persian-speakers, the concept of bravery and honor is called jarvin maroi. 25X1

Codes of honor sometimes enhance the ability of the Afghans to fight the war. They account for the incredible bravery and tenaciousness of the Afghan fighters. The emphasis on the ability to withstand privation and difficult surroundings without complaint accounts for the ability of the Afghan insurgents to wage war in very bleak circumstances. 25X1

Still, the codes often work against the development of good guerrilla fighters and account for many of the problems that the Afghans have in accepting training and in using appropriate military tactics. The emphasis on bravery and on individual action leads Afghans in many areas not to bother with normal precautions in planning and executing military operations. Insurgents often seem to believe that only courage is required to succeed; training, intelligence and other preparations are often neglected. 25X1

Many Afghans are unnecessarily wounded or killed because they believe that taking precautions would show cowardice and violate the codes of honor in front of fellow Afghans. Moreover, the individual approach to fighting makes it difficult to develop cooperation in fighting. 25X1

Martyrdom and Fatalism. Martyrdom and fatalism are closely related to the codes of honor and manhood and have much the same effect on the fighting. A martyr in Islam, shaheed in Arabic, is one who dies fighting in

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

the sacred Islamic war, the jihad. Like the codes of honor, the Islamic notion of martyrdom encourages the Islamic insurgents in Afghanistan to take large risks without regard to danger, facilitating guerrilla attacks. 25X1

Although strong belief in a just cause and the ultimate trust in God helps sustain morale, in a guerrilla war this fatalism also works against developing strategy and tactics and against the acceptance of proper training. Many Afghans believe that faith is enough to drive out the Soviets, and they need only to put themselves in God's hands to win the war. 25X1

Afghan Attitudes Toward Other Nationalities

Afghans, very proud people who have defended themselves against the outside world for centuries, have built up prejudices towards other nationalities. These attitudes affect Afghan relations with these people and also the fighting when the other nations are involved. 25X1

Pakistanis. An Afghan, generally speaking, views Pakistanis and other peoples of the Indian subcontinent with contempt. This can be observed in several ways, including the naming of their major mountain range the Hindu Kush--the killer of Hindus--and the jokes they tell of the people from that area. Afghans openly mock the speech of the subcontinent and consider the Pakistanis to be inferior. This dislike is strongest towards the Punjabis and perhaps the least noticeable toward the Pakistani Pushtuns, who share a similar cultural heritage with the Afghans. 25X1

As a result, Afghans find it difficult to be under Pakistani supervision. This bias accounts, in part, for the refusal of some Afghans to be trained by the Pakistan Army. Even though many of the guerrilla commanders admit that the Pakistani Army is good and could probably help them, they cannot accept the idea of working under an officer who most likely is a Punjabi. 25X1

The Afghans suspect the Pakistanis of cheating them and resent having to plead with Pakistani (Punjabi) officials for arms and ammunition they feel are rightfully theirs. Distrust of the Pakistanis also

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8
25X1

accounts in some part for the stockpiling of military supplies by the Afghan insurgents in the border region of Afghanistan, even though these arms depots are not defensible. 25X1

Iranians. The Afghans have a bit of an inferiority complex toward the Iranians. Parts of Afghan culture are closer to Iranian culture than to Pakistani culture; Persian is the most widely spoken language in Afghanistan, and Iran is looked to by many Afghans, though not all, as the cultural heartland. Many Afghans, Sunnis and Shias, go to Iran to study. Before 1978, it was considered desirable among the upper class in Kabul to speak Persian with an Iranian accent. At the same time, the Afghans rightly feel that the Iranians look down on them. Afghans who have gone to Iran report being treated rudely by the Iranians. 25X1

Other Nationalities. The Afghans hold varying attitudes toward other foreigners, shaped by recent history.

-- Muslim Arabs are not well liked because the Afghans find them overly puritanical, preachy, arrogant, and a bit effete.

-- The Soviets are disliked, in part because they are atheists, but largely because of the events of the last eight years. Still, the Soviets are also grudgingly respected for their brutality and staying power. Comments heard earlier in the war about inept Soviet soldiers are heard less as the Soviets have improved their fighting capability. 25X1

In Sum...

The Afghans have proven to be brave, tough and skilled fighters. Their ability to fight an effective guerrilla war has been heightened by the characteristics of traditional Afghan culture and social structure. Paradoxically, this traditional culture has also held the Afghan guerrillas back in many ways and had a negative effective on efforts to develop a more sophisticated well-organized fighting force. 25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

Cultural Factors: A Case History

The following account of 1985 insurgent attack on a regime post near Jegdalek in Kabol Province was written by an experienced military observer. It provides a useful account of the strengths and weaknesses provided by Afghan cultural traits.

25X1

Elementary principles of warfare were violated. Although there was no time pressure, reconnaissance of the terrain was insufficient. No one knew the exact location of the minefields. Fire support from infantry weapons was, at a distance of 800 to 900 meters, much too far away from the enemy positions for it to have a serious neutralizing effect on the target. The insurgents were not divided up into groups until 30 minutes before the attack. Thus, good coordination between the combatants was impossible from the outset. There was no contact between the two assault groups and the fire support teams. No one thought about the care of possibly injured troops; even bandage sets had been left behind in the base camp, 10 hours away by foot.

25X1

One impressive aspect was the calmness with which the guerrillas from Jegdalek prepared for battle. Full of confidence, they believed that they would capture weapons and hoped for deserters from the enemy camp. Enthusiasm in battle was correspondingly high at the outset. After the disastrous explosion of a land mine, the troops fell into retreat. But during this phase as well, there was no discernible panic or despair. The insurgents were able to come to terms amazingly well with the demise of one of their comrades. After three days, they set out, unflustered, on a new attack. They impressed me as being amazingly carefree and somehow fatalistic, because they did not draw any kind of basic conclusions from their most recent defeat.

The guerrillas in the Jegdalek apparently do not know the idea or even the meaning of a cost-benefit analysis. This vexing phenomenon is probably explained more or less as follows:

-- Because many Afghans from the rural population scarcely have any higher education, their imagination remains basically supported by and

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

limited to their everday surroundings; it is only with difficulty that they can distance themselves from their romantic concept of war, anchored in tradition.

-- Many Afghans are still bound to the idea that the outcome of a war depends primarily on the courage and boldness of the individual combatant.

Only a few of them have realized that in a modern war the quality of the armaments, the level of military training and the application of appropriate tactics have become additional factors in determining success. Even fewer are capable of drawing useful conclusions from the above-mentioned realizations.

In Jegdalek, I got the impression that the fighters scarcely make a direct association between their hopes for victory and the successes or failures of an individual campaign. The catastrophic consequences of the war and the unimaginable strains of permanent combat have thus far been endured by an amazingly large number of Afghans without resignation. The convinction that they are fighting for a just cause appears to be invincible. Certainly, religion plays a significant role in this context, found in the idea of the "holy war" against the "godless Communists." However, one should be careful not to see purely religious fanatics among in the Afghan guerrillas. Their strength of resistance is fed from other sources as well:

-- The close connection to their home and their deeply rooted demand for self-determination, which would never permit the assimilation of any imposed societal forms, are other elements of their combat morale.

-- Many Afghans would also have sufficient motivation to maintain their almost axiomatic will for resistance even without strong religious convictions. An enormous number of Afghans have already lost everything except their own lives; they are driven by one objective: to win back their country and their

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

[redacted]

independence.

[redacted] 25X1

[redacted]

25 November 1986
NESA M 86-20170CX
SOVA M 86-20116CX

25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8

25X1

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release 2011/11/23 : CIA-RDP86T01017R000303240001-8