however, would be a major undertaking because of the inaccessibility of the region:

— We judge the Soviets would need three to five years to construct an airbase in the southwest capable of handling heavy bombers and all of the infrastructure linking the region to the main highway and military bases in Afghanistan.

— An airbase capable of supporting tactical aircraft would require up to 18 months to construct. Any effort by the Soviets would be complicated to some extent by insurgent activity, but they would be able to secure the facility under construction in that terrain.

77. A major new airbase in southwestern Afghanistan, however, would only marginally enhance Soviet military capabilities against the Persian Gulf in the short term. The comparatively short combat mission radius of present Soviet fighters and fighter-bombers would limit the ability of Soviet tactical air forces to attack targets in the Persian Gulf or Strait of Hormuz even from a base in southwestern Afghanistan. Soviet medium and heavy bombers—including Backfires and Badgers—do not require airbases in Afghanistan to attack targets in the Persian Gulf because they can fly missions from secure airbases in the southern USSR.

78. Expected improvements in Soviet tactical aviation by the late 1980s would make an airbase in southwestern Afghanistan more valuable. By then, we expect that the Soviets will have begun deploying new, longer range fighters and fighter-bombers that may be capable of aerial refueling. We also expect them to begin production of a new aerial tanker by the late 1980s. If the Soviets used air-refuelable tactical aircraft together with aerial tankers from airbases in Afghanistan, they could strike targets throughout the Persian Gulf region.

Threat to Iran and the Persian Gulf Countries

79. We do not believe the Soviets would mount a major ground force campaign against Iran and the Gulf from Afghanistan; Soviet forces from Afghanistan, however, would support any such Soviet operations. The advantage that Afghanistan provides by being closer to the Persian Gulf would be significantly offset by the logistic difficulties the Soviets would face in mounting and sustaining a large-scale ground force operation from Afghanistan. In addition, the Soviets probably would view any operation launched from Afghanistan as particularly vulnerable to counterattacks by US naval aircraft in the Arabian Sea. We believe that preparations for an offensive from Afghanistan toward the Strait of Hormuz or the Gulf of Oman would require about six weeks—including moving forces into attack positions in Afghanistan—depending on how much the Soviets improve the logistic infrastructure in the southwest. The Soviets could better support a major campaign through eastern Iran toward the Persian Gulf or the Gulf of Oman from the Turkestan Military District, where they would have the benefit of a larger and more well-developed infrastructure and secure supply lines.

80. Soviet victory in Afghanistan would heighten Saudi concern and might encourage Riyadh to support a greater US military presence in the region—especially if the Soviets began constructing new military bases such as airfields that could be used for power projection into the Persian Gulf.

Threat to Pakistan

81. Major Soviet advances toward consolidation in Afghanistan would probably cause any Pakistani government to review its program of resistance and to consider a political accommodation with Moscow and Kabul:

— In the absence of major domestic turmoil, Zia or a like-minded successor would probably be driven closer to the United States—assuming continued strong US support.

— Even under Zia, however, a Pakistan beset by domestic turmoil might move to cut off aid to the resistance and to seek accommodation with Moscow and Kabul.

82. Over the next five years, Moscow almost certainly would not regard the potential strategic gains of an invasion of Pakistan to be worth the political and military costs and most likely would opt instead for subversion and intimidation—including limited military action—to neutralize Pakistan:

— An invasion of Pakistan—even if limited to seizing Pakistani territory bordering Afghanistan—would be a high-risk option for Moscow because of the US commitment to regional security.

— An offensive aimed at the Arabian Sea or the Indus River would be even more provocative and would bring the Soviets into conflict with India, their most important client state in the region.

— The Soviets would have to anticipate that an invasion of Pakistan would provoke increased military cooperation between the United States and the Persian Gulf Arab states and an enhanced US military presence in the region.

9. ***Afghanistan and Pakistan.*** The Soviets are likely to further increase military pressure on Islamabad as they attribute major improvements in insurgent capabilities to US (and Chinese) assistance funneled through Pakistan. A significant increase in Soviet casualties and equipment losses—particularly aircraft—would provide a strong incentive for Moscow to attack insurgent camps, logistic bases, and supply lines in Pakistan.

10. A Pakistani accommodation with Moscow—although unlikely in the near term—would be a severe blow to the Afghan resistance and would give the Marxist regime in Kabul a legitimacy it otherwise could not attain. It would also deny the resistance secure sanctuaries and supply bases in Pakistan and erode the international consensus against the invasion. Islamabad probably would tighten regulations to restrict the Afghans' freedom of movement in the frontier regions and would severely curtail the activities of Afghan political exiles in Pakistan.

11. However, the withdrawal of Pakistan's backing would not end the resistance in Afghanistan and would leave a large refugee presence in Pakistan. Even without Pakistan's support, many insurgent groups would continue to fight the Soviets and to use Pakistani territory to move arms and supplies into Afghanistan. The Pakistanis could seriously impair the Afghans' ability to move across the border but could not seal the frontier.

12. ***Pakistani Politics.*** The degree of political stability in Pakistan will be a major consideration in a Soviet decision to increase military pressure on the country. The Soviets probably will not view President Zia as vulnerable to increased pressure unless he becomes seriously weakened politically. In the event of a major internal crisis in Pakistan, however, the Soviets would have to be careful to avoid such overt threats to Pakistan's security that they allowed Zia—or another military government—to redefine the crisis as an issue of Pakistan's survival as an independent country. Zia adroitly used the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan to renew military ties to the United States, and the implicit Soviet threat to Pakistan has given him considerable latitude in dealing with domestic problems and the political opposition.

13. Moscow probably calculates that Zia's removal from power would result in a less confrontational approach to Afghanistan by a successor government. If Zia were replaced by another military officer in a time of great political instability in Pakistan, the Soviets may believe that the new leader would seek an accommodation with Moscow and Kabul in order to reduce the pressure from Afghanistan while he concentrated on consolidating the new regime.

14. The Soviets would consider a civilian government dominated by the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) as potentially the most sympathetic to their interests in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the region. The Soviets would be less optimistic about the prospects for reconciliation with a civilian government led by a coalition of moderate and conservative parties, but might view such a government as more vulnerable to intimidation than a military regime.

15. ***Pakistan's Relations With the United States and India.*** An equally important consideration in Soviet policy would be Pakistan's relations with the United States and India:

— Even if Zia faced no important internal crisis, the Soviets might view his regime as vulnerable to increased pressure—including large-scale cross-border operations—if there were major strains in US-Pakistani relations.

— The Soviets might try to exploit tensions between India and Pakistan to pressure Islamabad, although we believe Indo-Soviet collusion is not likely.[3]

16. ***Moscow's Concerns About Indian Reactions.*** India's importance to Soviet interests probably constrains Moscow's policy toward Pakistan. Moscow views India as strategically more important than Pakistan, and the Soviets would not want their actions against Pakistan to result in major strains with India and especially not in closer Indian ties to the United States. Nonetheless, the Soviets might conclude that the potential for altering Islamabad's policies by cross-border attacks was worth the risk of strains in relations with India—particularly if the military situation in Afghanistan got worse.

Constraints on Soviet Policy

17. ***Military.*** At present, the Soviets' capabilities for pressuring Pakistan militarily are limited by the size of their forces, the effectiveness of the Mujahedin, the difficult terrain, and the relatively undeveloped military infrastructure in Afghanistan (see inset on Soviet military threat to Pakistan and Iran). The Soviets currently could increase military pressure on Pakistan with more frequent and severe airstrikes and artillery

[3] Paragraphs 44-48 assess prospects for Soviet-Indian collusion against Pakistan.

69. Despite Pakistan's importance to China's strategic interests, Chinese support for Islamabad in the event of intensified Soviet military pressure or an attack on Pakistan would be limited to strong diplomatic support, accelerated arms deliveries, and possibly some token participation by Chinese troops in Pakistani military exercises near the Chinese border. The Chinese are unlikely to commit troops to Pakistan's defense because of the significant military threat on the Sino-Soviet border. Beijing's principal aim would be to prevent a Pakistani accommodation to broader Soviet strategic objectives in the region.

70. China's military options to support Pakistan in a confrontation with the Soviets are, in any case, extremely limited. The Chinese have no major military units near Pakistan and would require several weeks to move units to the Pakistani border. Instead, the Chinese would expect the United States to provide a firm commitment to defend Pakistan in a confrontation with the Soviets (or India), as well as modern arms, and probably would seek close private consultations on how to respond to a direct military threat to Pakistan. Beijing in the past has indicated it would consider deploying troops to protect its strategic supply lines between China and Pakistan.

71. China views the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as an ominous extension of Moscow's military assertiveness that threatens Beijing's broader strategic interests. China will continue to support Islamabad's role in aiding the insurgents, but has limited potential for helping Pakistan in the face of greater Soviet pressure. The Chinese, however, would not want Pakistani policy to result in successful Soviet efforts to neutralize Pakistan because Islamabad's role as Beijing's key South Asian ally is even more important to China than its role in opposing the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Implications of Soviet Victory in Afghanistan

72. Should the Soviets consolidate their control over Afghanistan, they will enhance their strategic and regional position and place themselves in a stronger position for pursuing other regional objectives at the expense of US interests. Even if Moscow would only gain modest strategic military advantages during the next five years, military or political success toward consolidating their position would place the Soviets in a better position to intimidate Afghanistan's neighbors and to meddle in their affairs. All the regional powers—including India and the Persian Gulf countries—would have to take into consideration the proximity of Soviet power and Moscow's demonstrated willingness to use force to achieve Soviet objectives.

Afghanistan as a Forward Base

73. The Soviets' capability to use Afghanistan as a forward base for strategic power projection elsewhere in the region will require major improvements in air, logistic, and transportation facilities. Such improvements and the deployment of additional forces will be essential for the Soviets to undertake and sustain large-scale operations into Pakistan or Iran. The Afghan Army's current capabilities are extremely limited; major force improvements and training would be required, therefore, to support any large-scale (combined) operation outside Afghanistan. Consolidation of Soviet control could allow Moscow to use Afghanistan as a strategic base, but, even if the resistance does continue at its present level, the Soviets could build the bases for projecting military power—should they decide to pay the price. The insurgents could harass these efforts but could not keep the Soviets from improving the military infrastructure or deploying additional forces into Afghanistan.

74. The current limitations of critical transportation junctures along the Soviet-Afghan border and the in-country road network would restrict major force and logistic movements through Afghanistan. In particular, the absence of any rail network in Afghanistan would require the Soviets to offload all equipment and supplies at transloading points for subsequent movement into Afghanistan by either road or air. Mountainous terrain in the north and east and vast, harsh deserts in the south and west would pose great difficulties for the Soviets in building up their logistic infrastructure and expanding the transportation network in Afghanistan. Such improvements and increased security of in-country supply lines would be required to support any multidivision operations from Afghanistan.

75. Limited improvements in air defenses that the Soviets have already made in Afghanistan strengthen their military position in the country, enhance the security of the southern USSR, and indicate that Moscow is integrating Afghanistan into the Soviet air defense network. The deployment in 1982 and 1983 of long-range radars extended Soviet high-altitude air surveillance coverage all around Afghanistan's borders well into Pakistan and Iran, but have more limited capabilities to detect low-flying aircraft.

76. The construction of a major new airbase in the southwest—significantly closer to the Persian Gulf—would be a significant indication of a Soviet intention to use Afghanistan as a forward base for power projection. Building any airbase in the southwest,

with hard choices on how and where to respond, especially if the Soviets began a concerted effort to attack refugee camps or insurgent bases and supply routes in Pakistan on a regular basis. A decision by any government not to defend Pakistani territory along the border against a ground attack would have severe political consequences by undermining both public and military confidence.

22. Some influential Pakistanis both in and outside government—including some in the Army—believe that Zia's policies risk greater Soviet pressures and ultimately threaten Pakistan's security. They advocate a political accommodation with Moscow and Kabul that recognizes the irreversibility of Soviet gains in Afghanistan and allows for the repatriation of nearly 3 million Afghan refugees before they become a major threat to economic and social stability in Pakistan. Islamabad, in their view, could not count on US support, would be unable to withstand escalating Soviet pressure—particularly if tensions with India were high—and eventually would have to bow to Soviet demands. Many advocates of a more conciliatory policy argue that delaying the inevitable would only reduce Islamabad's bargaining leverage and weaken Pakistan against its principal adversary—India.

23. Many Pakistanis disapprove of the close military relations that Zia has forged with the United States, and US-Pakistani relations could become a very contentious issue if Soviet pressure increases—particularly if US support is less than expected. However, Pakistanis arguing for a more conciliatory policy on Afghanistan do not now have the influence or power base to press Zia to reconsider his policy.

24. ***US-Pakistani Relations.*** US willingness to meet Pakistan's perceived security needs will reinforce Islamabad's policy of supporting the Afghan insurgents. In the event of intensified Soviet military pressure, Islamabad—as it has in the past—is likely to press the United States for new arms deals and accelerated delivery of advanced weapons. Islamabad would expect more direct US military help—including logistic support and possibly a show of force—if the Soviets mounted large-scale operations deep into Pakistani territory.

25. US failure to strengthen Pakistan's military capability in the event of intensified Soviet pressure along the border would undermine the foundation of Zia's policy and cause him to reassess relations with the United States—including support for US strategic interests elsewhere in the region.

26. ***The Refugee Problem.*** Increased socioeconomic tensions caused by a long-term Afghan refugee presence in Pakistan, and a worsening economy, almost certainly would result in greater politicization of the refugee problem, particularly if the refugees lost hope of ever returning to Afghanistan. Many Pakistanis are worried that the 3 million refugees could become a major security problem, and that the Soviets could exploit tensions between the refugees and local population to destabilize Pakistan. If this should happen, any government in Islamabad—including Zia's—would be under greater pressure to reach an agreement with Moscow and Kabul that would facilitate the repatriation of the Afghan refugees. However, an attempt to repatriate the refugees against their will or to prevent insurgent movement across the border almost certainly would increase tensions. Moves by Pakistan to seal the border would produce immediate conflict with the well-armed Afghan Mujahedin and with its own Pushtuns and Baluchis, who would resent the Pakistani Army's required presence in traditional tribal areas where Islamabad's writ has never been strong.

27. ***Relations With India.*** Increased tensions with India could provide a strong incentive for any Pakistani government to try to reduce the potential for confrontation with the Soviets over Afghanistan. Pakistanis believe that New Delhi, at a minimum, wants a weak and subservient Pakistan and that many Indians still are not reconciled to Pakistan's independence. From Pakistan's viewpoint, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, coupled with Moscow's already close ties to New Delhi, raised a threat of Soviet and Indian collaboration to weaken and neutralize Pakistan.[4] Many Pakistanis are concerned that India might try to take advantage of tensions along the Pakistani-Afghan border to intimidate Pakistan or that India might launch a preemptive strike against Pakistani nuclear facilities.

28. ***Domestic Politics.*** President Zia stands a fair chance of remaining in power for the rest of the decade. Zia emerged politically strengthened after National Assembly elections in February. His deft handling of the Sind crisis in 1983 and his success in the recent elections have exposed the division and uncertainty of the opposition, strengthened Army support for his rule, and enabled him to set the tone of political debate in Pakistan.

[4] Paragraphs 44-48 assess prospects for Soviet-Indian collusion against Pakistan.

NIE 11/37-85

THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE REGIONAL POWERS AND THE UNITED STATES

Information available as of 26 March 1985 was used in the preparation of this Estimate, which was approved by the National Foreign Intelligence Board on that date.

— The Soviet threat to Pakistan from Afghanistan provided strong impetus to the resurrection of US-Pakistani security ties that now include closer strategic cooperation and significant US military assistance.

— US military aid for Pakistan has in turn increased India's suspicions of both US and Pakistani intentions, has contributed to greater Indo-Pakistani tensions, and has led to a closer—though still limited—convergence of some Indian and Soviet interests in weakening Pakistan.

— The invasion set back Soviet efforts to improve relations with the Arab states of the Persian Gulf region and with China. Saudi Arabia and China both provide aid to the Afghan insurgents through Pakistan, and the Saudis have increased their assistance to Islamabad.

The very process by which Moscow attempts to further consolidate its power in Afghanistan will have ongoing strategic impact on the region.

Prospects and Implications of Soviet Consolidation

There is a range of opinion within the Intelligence Community about whether the Soviet Union will be able to consolidate its position in Afghanistan beyond the period of this Estimate. If the Soviet Union can further consolidate its position, Moscow's prospects for achieving long-term strategic objectives in the region would increase:

— Firmly establishing Afghanistan within Moscow's "empire" would demonstrate the Soviets' resolve and increase fears among regional states about Soviet expansionism.

— Moscow would be in a stronger geographic position to further expand its political influence in the region, in some cases at the expense of US influence.

Within the time frame of this Estimate, the USSR will steadily improve its military infrastructure in Afghanistan to support its regional defense requirements and ability to project power. Major improvements in air and logistic facilities and the deployment of additional forces would be essential for the Soviets to undertake and sustain large-scale operations from Afghanistan into Pakistan or Iran.

Over the next five years, the Soviets' improvements in the logistic infrastructure in Afghanistan will improve their capabilities against the resistance and could also support Soviet military operations against Iran

and Pakistan. Over the longer term the military significance of Afghanistan as a forward base will grow. However:

— The difficult terrain, rudimentary transportation network, and poor logistic facilities in Afghanistan, together with the range limitations of tactical aircraft currently in the Soviet inventory, limit the strategic military advantages that the Soviets would derive from victory in Afghanistan in the near term.

— Logistic and terrain difficulties would also limit the use of Afghanistan as a forward base for a land invasion of Pakistan and, to a lesser extent, Iran.

— However, beginning in the late 1980s, expected improvements in Soviet tactical aviation—including an air-refueling capability—would allow aircraft launched from Afghanistan to support Soviet military operations in the Persian Gulf region, improving existing capabilities.

Military and Diplomatic Costs to Moscow

So far, however, the invasion has resulted in significant military and diplomatic costs for Moscow that offset potential strategic gains. The regional reaction to the Soviet invasion and subsequent occupation of Afghanistan has been uniformly negative. This has given the United States an opportunity to make some concrete, though still modest, gains in its relations with several of these states. Continued US interest and commitment, appropriate to the variety of states in question, is perceived by the regional states as critical to their continued opposition to the Soviets in Afghanistan.

To date, Moscow's invasion has incurred the following military and diplomatic costs:

— Five years after the invasion, the Soviets and their puppet regime in Kabul still do not control most of Afghanistan, and their combat losses—while still relatively small—are increasing.

— The invasion helped provoke an enhanced US commitment to regional security, complicated Indo-Soviet relations, and has rekindled suspicions about Soviet ambitions in the Arab world.

— US military planning and force structuring for contingencies in the Persian Gulf have been given increased impetus by the invasion.

Projected Soviet Policy in Afghanistan

The judgments in this Estimate are based on our belief that, during the next five years, the Soviets will neither withdraw from Afghanistan,[2]

[2] For a more detailed discussion of short-term Soviet prospects in Afghanistan, see SNIE 11/37-2-85L, *Soviet Problems, Prospects, and Options in Afghanistan in the Next Year*, March 1985.

KEY JUDGMENTS

After nearly 150 years of intermittent competition between Russia and Western powers in Central Asia and Afghanistan, the Soviet Union now occupies Afghanistan with a large army, is strategically positioned between Iran and Pakistan, is the only great power on the ground militarily in the region, and is 300 miles away from the Indian Ocean.[1]

Moscow's efforts to consolidate Soviet control over Afghanistan will increase the potential for regional instability and conflict during the next five years. The Soviets will continue their efforts to move events in the region in their favor and will increase the pressure on regional actors through military and political means as well as intimidation and subversion.

Should the Soviets consolidate their control over Afghanistan, they will enhance their strategic and regional position and place themselves in a stronger position for pursuing other regional objectives at the expense of US interests. Even if Moscow would only gain modest strategic military advantages during the next five years, military or political success toward consolidating their position would place the Soviets in a better position to intimidate Afghanistan's neighbors and to meddle in their affairs. All the regional powers—including India and the Persian Gulf countries—would have to take into consideration the proximity of Soviet power and Moscow's demonstrated willingness to use force to achieve Soviet objectives.

Regional Reaction to Invasion

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan has created a new strategic situation that has already had a major impact on regional politics and on the strategic interests of powers outside Southwest Asia:

— The invasion sparked an Afghan insurgency that has grown in size and effectiveness and which prevents the Soviets from consolidating their control.

— Pakistan, as a result of providing vital sanctuary and support for the Afghan insurgents and supporting US objectives in the region, is now in confrontation with the Soviets.

[1] *The Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State, is in agreement with this Estimate but believes it important to point out that the Soviet efforts to consolidate control in Afganistan will be very difficult during the five-year period of the Estimate and will most likely have negative effects on the Soviet Union's position throughout the region and its ability to enhance its strategic position. Much of this is spelled out in the remainder of the Key Judgments.*

The Soviets would almost certainly condone even an Indian preemptive strike against Pakistan's nuclear facilities in the belief that it served Moscow's interests by weakening Pakistan. However, a preemptive Indian attack on Pakistani nuclear facilities is unlikely in the near term.

Even without Soviet encouragement, India's suspicions of Pakistan and the United States and its dependence on Soviet arms will persist and could even increase as a result of closer US-Pakistani security cooperation. Some in New Delhi believe this cooperation has already acquired a dynamic independent of Afghanistan. Nonetheless, India is likely to become increasingly concerned about long-range Soviet intentions in the region, and could find itself moving toward confrontation with the Soviets if Pakistan were effectively neutralized:

— New Delhi regards Pakistan as a strategic buffer against the USSR and would oppose Moscow's efforts to dominate Pakistan.

— New Delhi and Moscow could find themselves supporting rival factions within Pakistan.

— The Indians would seek to significantly reduce their dependence on Moscow and reorder their strategic relationship with the USSR, the United States, and China if they perceived Soviet ambitions as extending beyond Afghanistan toward the subcontinent.

Iran

Soviet relations with Iran probably will be more determined by bilateral issues other than Afghanistan. Nonetheless:

— Soviet pressure on Iran probably will intensify if Tehran increases its support for the Afghan resistance. Greater Soviet pressure would be unlikely, however, to cause Tehran to change its Afghan policies.

— Iran might increase its aid to the insurgents once its war with Iraq is over, but Iran's support is not nearly as crucial to the resistance as Pakistan's.

— Should Pakistan cease support to the Mujahedin, Iranian support would become critical to the survival of the insurgency but would not begin to replace current supply levels through Pakistan.

— Seek ways to reinvigorate Baluchi, Pushtun, and Sindhi separatist tendencies in order to threaten the unity of Pakistan.

— Foster tensions between India and Pakistan.

Soviet policy choices will be affected by Moscow's view of Pakistan's political stability and weaknesses, US-Pakistani ties, Indo-Soviet relations, and its own limited resources in Pakistan:

— Moscow would view Zia as more vulnerable to pressure if he were to become seriously weakened politically.

— The Soviets would be wary that too tough a policy could strengthen Zia, as well as US-Pakistani security ties, and possibly lead to a confrontation with the United States.

— Further, Moscow would not want its actions against Pakistan to result in major strains in its relations with India, and especially not in closer Indian ties to the United States.

Pakistan's resistance to greater Soviet pressure will depend principally on its perceptions of US support:

— Zia's Afghan policies are predicated on tying the Soviets down in Afghanistan in the interests of Pakistan's own security. His willingness to run the risks of increased tensions with the USSR reflect in part his hope that the United States will reciprocate with a full commitment to his regime—against India as well as against the Soviets.

— The Pakistanis will continue to press for additional arms and would expect more direct US military help—including logistic support and possibly a show of force—if the Soviets conduct cross-border operations.

As long as Zia remains in power and so long as he feels he can rely on US support, Pakistan is unlikely to alter its policy on Afghanistan or reduce its ties to the United States. However, a major internal crisis or an erosion of public support for the Afghan cause might compel Islamabad to alter its policies even if it had US backing:

— Another military regime might be more likely than Zia to adopt a conciliatory policy toward Moscow and Kabul.

— A leftist civilian government—which is least likely to come to power in the next five years—would be most willing to reach agreement with Moscow and Kabul.

Moscow's efforts to bully Pakistan into changing its tough policy on Afghanistan have so far been counterproductive and are likely to face

tighter Iranian control over the refugees and the imposition of severe restrictions on cross-border movements by the Afghan insurgents. The Soviets may also promote clandestine attacks against targets in Iran that can be blamed on Afghan insurgents.

Implications for the Arab World

62. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan resulted in some significant setbacks for Moscow's policy in the Middle East. The Persian Gulf states have opposed the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, however, and have contributed financially to the Mujahedin cause. Most Arab states—particularly Saudi Arabia and Egypt—condemned the invasion as an attack on an Islamic country and claim that Moscow's continuing occupation of Afghanistan is a major impediment to Soviet efforts to improve relations. The example of Afghanistan was one of several factors that encouraged Saudi Arabia and some of the smaller Arab countries on the Persian Gulf to quietly support a regional US military presence "over the horizon." Their willingness to cooperate with the United States depends, however, on their perception of more immediate threats—primarily from Iran—and may well recede if Persian Gulf tensions subside.

63. Of the Arab countries, Saudi Arabia and Oman are the most concerned about the Soviet presence in Afghanistan because of their sense of vulnerability, geographic proximity, and deep ideological antipathy to Communism. Both viewed the invasion as part of a long-term Soviet effort to encircle the Persian Gulf in order to threaten the West's strategic oil supplies, with Saudi Arabia as the main target.

64. Most of the Arab countries outside the Persian Gulf region do not feel threatened by the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Their attitudes toward the invasion reflect their East-West biases and the degree of their dependence on Soviet support—principally military aid.

65. Pakistan benefits directly from Saudi Arabia's strong opposition to the invasion of Afghanistan. Riyadh provides Islamabad with important economic assistance and financial support to help pay for Pakistani arms purchases from the United States, in part because Pakistan is an Islamic state that directly confronts the Soviets in Afghanistan and which provides support and sanctuary for the Afghans. Pakistan's security also is important to Saudi Arabia because of Islamabad's sizable commitment of military personnel to the Kingdom's defense, as well as to the smaller Arab Gulf states.

66. A major shift in Pakistani policy or Soviet domination of Pakistan would alter the regional balance and leave the Persian Gulf states—including Saudi Arabia—more vulnerable and insecure. Saudi Arabia would regard intensified Soviet pressure on Pakistan with great concern and would watch the US response closely. Riyadh probably would increase its own aid to Islamabad and urge greater US support for Pakistan's security—including new arms supplies—to help the Pakistanis withstand greater Soviet pressure. Failure by the United States to support Pakistan would shake the Saudis' confidence in the credibility of US commitments to Persian Gulf security—particularly if it resulted in a military defeat for Pakistan or a radical change in government.

Implications for China

67. The Soviet presence in Afghanistan does not directly threaten China because the mountainous Chinese-Afghan border is small and largely inaccessible. Nonetheless, Beijing views the Soviet invasion as an ominous extension of Moscow's military assertiveness near China's borders that threatens China's broader strategic interests:

- The Chinese believe that the occupation of Afghanistan is part of Moscow's strategy to expand its power to the Persian Gulf in order to be in a position to interdict Western and Japanese oil supplies, thereby potentially weakening Western opposition to the USSR.
- The Chinese are particularly concerned about the direct threat from Afghanistan to Pakistan—a key ally—which they regard as a vital strategic buffer to further Soviet expansion and as a counterweight to India in South Asia.

68. The Chinese play an important role in opposing the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. China provides military assistance through Pakistan to the Afghan resistance—which it regards as essential to prevent Soviet control of Afghanistan—and has supported international moves to pressure the Soviets to withdraw their forces. Beijing also has made Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan one of the major requirements for a rapprochement with Moscow. Soviet concessions on issues of greater strategic concern to Beijing—such as a reduction in forces along the Chinese border or an end to Moscow's support for Vietnam in Kampuchea—might cause the Chinese to reduce their public and covert support for the Afghan insurgents, but such an improvement in Sino-Soviet relations is unlikely in the time frame of this Estimate.

Director of
Central
Intelligence

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The Soviet Presence in Afghanistan: Implications for the Regional Powers and the United States

National Intelligence Estimate

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Arab States

Soviet success in controlling Afghanistan would heighten Arab concerns about Moscow's intentions in the Middle East. However, the potential for US-Arab strategic cooperation—and Arab views of Soviet policies—will be influenced much more by Arab-Israeli and Gulf war issues than by the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states will continue to back Pakistan in its support for the Afghan resistance.

China

Beijing views the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as an ominous extension of Moscow's military assertiveness that threatens China's broader strategic interests. China will continue to support Islamabad's role in aiding the insurgents, but has limited potential for helping Pakistan in the face of greater Soviet pressure. The Chinese, however, would not want Pakistani policy to result in successful Soviet efforts to neutralize Pakistan because Islamabad's role as Beijing's key South Asian ally is even more important to China than its role in opposing the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Implications for the United States

Pakistan is likely to continue to oppose the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan as long as it perceives it has continued strong US support. Even Iran, which may feel compelled to move to improve its relations with the Soviets, will continue to support the withdrawal of Soviet troops from its neighbor. For the new Indian leadership, however, the US-Pakistani security relationship will hamper any reassessment by India of its public position on Afghanistan.

Warning Notice
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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
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DISSEMINATION CONTROL ABBREVIATIONS

NOFORN–	Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals
NOCONTRACT–	Not Releasable to Contractors or Contractor/Consultants
PROPIN–	Caution—Proprietary Information Involved
NFIBONLY–	NFIB Departments Only
ORCON–	Dissemination and Extraction of Information Controlled by Originator
REL . . .–	This Information Has Been Authorized for Release to . . .
FGI–	Foreign Government Information

THIS ESTIMATE IS ISSUED BY THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD CONCURS, EXCEPT AS NOTED IN THE TEXT.

The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of the Estimate:

The Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the intelligence organization of the Department of State.

Also Participating:

The Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army

The Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy

The Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force

The Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps

— The Indians believe Islamabad wants modern US weapons to strengthen its military potential against India; they argue that no feasible supply of arms can enable Pakistan to withstand a major attack from Soviet-occupied Afghanistan; and they see the new sophisticated arms as again emboldening Pakistan's military leaders to attack India.

36. The Soviet invasion also puts India in an awkward position in its relations with both Moscow and the Nonaligned Movement. New Delhi is reluctant to openly oppose the Soviets on Afghanistan because of India's dependence on Soviet arms supplies and strong political and economic links to Moscow. These would be critical in the event of another war with Pakistan—a historical adversary now being rearmed with modern US weapons. On the other hand, most members of the Nonaligned Movement have condemned the Soviet invasion and the Indians are sensitive about the harm to India's nonaligned image in seeming to condone the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.

37. Indian policy assumes the Soviets will not leave Afghanistan except on their own terms, and it aims at minimizing the adverse strategic consequences to India's interests. New Delhi recognizes the Kabul regime and provides limited economic aid, arguing that its relationship with Afghanistan provides a potential alternative to Kabul's exclusive dependence on the USSR.

38. Many Indian officials believe that a Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan would come about only if the United States and Pakistan recognized Moscow's interests in Afghanistan, ended their support for the resistance, and acquiesced in a pro-Soviet government in Kabul. Some Indian officials are concerned that the alternative to a Soviet-backed government in Kabul would be a fundamentalist Muslim regime—a development they especially fear because of their own large Muslim minority.

39. New Delhi also is attempting to neutralize the revived US-Pakistani relationship. Many Indians are concerned that the United States will eventually obtain military bases or access rights to bases in Pakistan as the price for its arms, thereby increasing superpower tensions in the region. Indian opposition to US policies in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region probably will increase if the United States tries to significantly strengthen its ties and military assistance to Pakistan, and as New Delhi tries to expand its influence in the region.

40. Even without Indira Gandhi and with improved Indo-US ties, India's Soviet Afghanistan policies are not likely to change substantially in the years ahead unless the Indians believe the Soviets aim at expansion beyond Afghanistan. India will continue to rely on Moscow for arms and perhaps for diplomatic support. It will continue to avoid confrontation with the Soviets over policies that do not immediately conflict with Indian interests. Rajiv Gandhi has publicly stated his opposition to both the Soviet presence in Afghanistan and the US aid to Afghan insurgents that "gives the excuse for the Soviet troops to be there." A national consensus in India on the need to protect both the Soviet arms supply relationship and Moscow's diplomatic support constrains major changes in policy and moderates New Delhi's criticism of Soviet policy.

41. However, the possibility that India's new Prime Minister may be willing to review his country's policy cannot be ruled out. Rajiv Gandhi may not have his mother's deep-seated distrust of Western "imperialism," he is looking to improve relations with both Pakistan and the United States, and he may be more questioning about the motives and policies of the USSR. Moreover, Soviet influence could decline. The Soviets' worries over Gandhi's intentions have been sharply exacerbated by the recent sensational Indian espionage scandal.

Soviet Perspectives and Constraints in India

42. Moscow views its relations with New Delhi as having great strategic importance in advancing Soviet interests in the region and within the Nonaligned Movement. India's opposition to US interests and policies in the region—particularly to the US naval presence in the Indian Ocean—parallels Soviet interests, and the Soviet media routinely parrot Indian media criticisms of the United States.

43. India's commitment to nonalignment and sensitivity about being perceived as a tacit Soviet ally will limit Moscow's efforts to secure close military cooperation with New Delhi. Even if the Soviets stepped up pressure for access to Indian naval bases and other military cooperation—should the United States gain base rights in Pakistan—New Delhi would remain reluctant to agree to such concessions.

The Indian and Soviet Threats to Pakistan

44. India and the USSR both would like to see Pakistan's role in the region diminished, if not neutralized, but from different perspectives. Both New Delhi and Moscow view the policies of Islamabad as a major

destroy the Islamic revolution, and is angered by Moscow's military and political support of Iraq. Many of the more radical clerics may argue for better relations with Moscow, but they are not sympathetic to Soviet aims and would strongly oppose Soviet policies that harm Iran's interests or are seen as anti-Islamic. High-ranking Iranian clerics—including Ayatollah Montazeri, Khomeini's heir apparent—as well as the Revolutionary Guard have supported Shia insurgent groups in Afghanistan since the Soviet invasion, but Moscow's support for Baghdad in the Iran-Iraq war apparently is a far more contentious issue between the two countries.

Soviet Perspectives

54. Moscow considers Iran the most important geopolitical prize in Southwest Asia and viewed the Shah's fall in February 1979—and the US ouster—as a major strategic gain. The Soviets expended considerable effort after the Shah was overthrown to court the new Iranian leaders, even directing Tudeh—the Iranian Communist party—to support the Islamic regime. The invasion of Afghanistan, however, severely set back whatever prospects existed for improved relations, and the Soviet tilt toward Iraq, Tehran's crackdown on Tudeh, and its expulsion of some Soviet officials from Iran further strained relations.

Soviet Constraints in Iran

55. The Soviets' presence in Afghanistan has increased their leverage against Iran. Nonetheless, even if the Soviets significantly improved the infrastructure in Afghanistan and increased the size of their forces in the western provinces, the principal Soviet military threat to Iran would still be from the northwest.

56. The Soviets' potential for subversion in Iran is only marginally enhanced by their presence in Afghanistan, although they may be infiltrating agents and arms into eastern Iran from Afghanistan. In any case, Moscow's influence with opposition parties and political factions and ability to exploit political, economic, or ethnic grievances in Iran have declined sharply as Soviet-Iranian relations have worsened. Tehran's intensive counterintelligence efforts will be able to constrain Soviet covert activities only as long as the clerics' grip on power is sure.

57. Soviet efforts to use Afghanistan as a base for covert activity against Iranian Baluchistan would have little success in undermining the clerical regime in Tehran, or creating the conditions for the expansion of Moscow's influence toward the Persian Gulf. The apparent lack of Soviet activity in Baluchistan suggests that for now Moscow sees little fertile ground for pro-Soviet subversion.

Afghanistan in Soviet-Iranian Relations

58. Tehran's support for the Afghan resistance has been continuous but selective. The Khomeini regime has provided limited military aid and guerrilla training to pro-Iranian Shia insurgent groups in western and especially central Afghanistan. Unlike Pakistan, Iran refuses to participate officially in the UN-sponsored indirect talks on Afghanistan until Soviet troops are withdrawn and the resistance is represented at the negotiations. Iran is kept informed on the talks by both the United Nations and the Pakistanis. Tehran has indicated it would not block a settlement to which Pakistan could agree. Nonetheless, Afghanistan is a traditional Iranian sphere of influence, and Tehran views the resistance as both a target and a means for exporting its revolution. When the war with Iraq ends, the Iranians may increase further their support of Afghan Shia insurgent groups, hoping eventually to dominate the resistance and set up an Islamic regime in Afghanistan.

59. Afghanistan is not the principal factor affecting Soviet-Iranian ties, but has become an increasing irritant as the relationship has deteriorated. As long as Moscow thought there was potential for better relations, there was little direct Soviet pressure or criticism of Tehran's support for the Afghan resistance. The Soviets became more strident about Afghanistan after concluding in 1982 that there was little hope for improved ties to Iran and they decided to tilt toward Iraq. In the last year, the Soviets have become more vocal in their denunciation of Iran's aid to the insurgents and in their media have linked Tehran's support with that of the United States and Pakistan.

60. Soviet military capabilities to affect Iranian policy toward Afghanistan are limited. If Iranian aid to the resistance increased greatly, the Soviets probably would feel less constrained about mounting cross-border operations against Iran than they would about action against Pakistan, because Tehran is diplomatically isolated. Iran, preoccupied by its war with Iraq, has few forces opposite Afghanistan and could not respond quickly enough to limited Soviet attacks along most of its eastern border.

61. The Soviets and Afghans probably will increase their covert activities in eastern Iran, however, to weaken the resistance groups and erode Iranian support for them. The Soviets are likely to attempt to foment tensions between Afghan Sunni refugees and Iranian Shias in eastern Iran in hopes of encouraging

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— The size of the forces and the logistic effort that would be required for an invasion of Pakistan would severely limit Soviet options and capabilities for any subsequent intervention in Iran—a much more important strategic prize.

Threat to India

83. While India would like to see the conflict in Afghanistan terminated, it would not wish to see a Soviet victory that would turn Afghanistan into a Mongolian-style Soviet client state with either permanent Soviet troops or an effective Marxist-led indigenous armed forces. India would like Pakistani—and American—acquiescence in the Kabul regime in the hope that it would become more nationalist and less dependent on Moscow. India would welcome the withdrawal of Soviet troops as easing East-West tensions in the region. However, New Delhi might not see such a development as necessarily resulting in a diminution of US-Pakistani security ties.

84. Efforts by the Soviets to use Afghanistan to extend their influence into Pakistan almost certainly would draw New Delhi into opposition to Moscow. India is likely to become increasingly concerned about long-range Soviet intentions in the region and could find itself moving toward confrontation with the Soviets if Pakistan were effectively neutralized. India regards Pakistan as a strategic buffer against the Soviets and would view Soviet domination of Pakistan as a serious threat to its security. If the Zia regime were to fall, the Indians might try to prevent Soviet attempts to dominate Pakistan by supporting rival Pakistani political factions. Soviet military moves against an already neutralized Pakistan could even result in military confrontation with India. If Pakistan was disintegrating, New Delhi would probably move forces into Pakistan's Punjab and Sind Provinces to protect its strategic buffer zone.

Implications for the United States

85. A Pakistani accommodation with Moscow would cripple the Afghan resistance, facilitate Soviet efforts to consolidate control in Afghanistan, and remove an important tacit regional ally of the United States as well as a major force for moderation and opposition to Soviet strategic ambitions in Southwest Asia. Pakistan's willingness to resist intensified Soviet pressure will depend largely on its perceptions of the US commitment to its security—principally in meeting its perceived defense needs. Failure to meet Pakistani expectations of US support—especially if tensions with India were high—would undermine the premises of Zia's policies toward Afghanistan and the United States and could cause Islamabad to come to terms with Moscow and Kabul and to distance itself from US regional policies.

86. US security assistance to Pakistan—besides helping to reinforce present Pakistani policy—complicates Soviet planning for even limited operations across the Afghan border. We believe that continued US security assistance to Pakistan could deter Moscow or Kabul from major cross-border operations or would cause the Soviets to make extensive preparations—including increasing the size of their forces—that would provide more warning of an impending attack.

87. In the absence of a direct Soviet or Indian military threat, Islamabad most likely will remain unreceptive to US proposals for closer military cooperation—such as pre-positioning supplies, regular US access to Pakistani bases, or joint training exercises—because of domestic, Islamic, and Nonaligned concerns. Any Pakistani government will have to deal with strong latent anti-US sentiment and lingering doubts—based on historical precedent—about the reliability of the US commitment to Pakistan.

88. Most Pakistanis are convinced that a nuclear capability represents in the long run Pakistan's only credible deterrent to Indian aggression. Accordingly, Pakistan cannot realistically be expected to terminate its program to develop the technology necessary to provide it with a nuclear weapons option.

89. Continued US security assistance to Pakistan will remain an obstacle to closer Indo-US ties. Indian perceptions that the United States was attempting to co-opt Pakistan into regional security cooperation and was willing to tolerate Pakistan's development of a nuclear weapon in order to keep Islamabad as a strategic partner would reinforce New Delhi's view.

90. New Delhi, in time, may be willing to play a role in trying to prod Moscow into withdrawing from Afghanistan—particularly if the Indians come to view Soviet policies in the region as threatening their security interests. India's ambivalence toward the United States, however, probably would set limits on bilateral cooperation even if New Delhi perceived a greater Soviet threat. The Indians value US trade, aid, and technology, and view good relations with Washington as expanding their foreign policy options by diluting India's identification with Soviet policies and underlining its Nonaligned credentials.

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nor succeed in reducing significantly the level of Afghan resistance. The USSR may marginally improve its political military position in Afghanistan and will take whatever steps are necessary to avoid a severe deterioration of its military position in Afghanistan.

Specifically, we believe that:

— The Soviets will not withdraw from Afghanistan because such a move would represent a clear failure of Soviet policy and force of arms both at home and abroad.

— The Soviets will not be willing to make the type of concessions that would permit a political compromise acceptable to the Afghan resistance.

— The Afghan resistance will increase its effectiveness against the Soviets as it becomes better armed and trained.

— Unless the Soviets are faced with a serious deterioration in their military position, we still expect them to make continued incremental increases—of perhaps 10,000 men per year—in their troop strength. Should resistance capabilities improve significantly and the Soviets face a deteriorating military situation, however, they could consider even larger increases in troop strength and stepped-up pressure against Pakistan.

— Nevertheless, we do not believe the Soviets will opt for a massive reinforcement of the approximately 115,000 men now in Afghanistan because of the likely diplomatic, economic, and military costs. To use military force alone to crush the resistance would, in our judgment, require 400,000 to 500,000 troops.

Pakistan

The Soviets will concentrate on political and military efforts to stop the flow of men and supplies across Afghanistan's borders with Pakistan. To accomplish these objectives, the Soviets probably will:

— Increase cross-border air and artillery strikes into Pakistan and probably support limited ground incursions in an attempt to undermine the Pakistani public's support for the Afghan resistance and confidence in President Zia.

— Step up subversion to weaken the Zia regime and try to help a pliable civilian government—which would be more accommodating to Moscow's interests—come to power in Islamabad.

DISCUSSION

Implications for Pakistan

Pakistani Perspectives

1. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 increased Pakistan's sense of vulnerability and led it to reassess its security policy and foreign relations. Islamabad could no longer regard Afghanistan as a weak, nonthreatening buffer state between the USSR and South Asia.

2. The Soviets have publicly and privately warned Islamabad that continued support for the insurgents and increasing ties to the United States—particularly in regional security matters—potentially threaten Pakistan's security and survival. The Pakistanis fear that, if the Soviets consolidate their control over Afghanistan, they eventually will attempt to split Baluchistan from Pakistan or even to collaborate with India in a coordinated invasion to destroy Pakistan as an independent state. However, a number of Pakistanis have come to recognize that India would itself be threatened by Pakistan's collapse while the Soviets remain in Afghanistan.

3. Pakistan's policy since 1980 has attempted to balance its opposition to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan with the need to avoid a military confrontation with the Soviets. This policy is predicated on the belief that the Soviets will not withdraw from Afghanistan and that US support for Pakistan—principally in the supply of modern weapons—is essential to Pakistan's security and survival. Support for the Afghan resistance has allowed Islamabad to develop closer ties to the United States, thereby strengthening its defenses while simultaneously keeping the Soviets from consolidating their hold on Afghanistan.

4. At the same time, however, Pakistan has tried to remain circumspect in its support for the resistance—Islamabad publicly denies it provides a weapons conduit for the insurgents—and has maintained a diplomatic dialogue with Moscow on Afghanistan. Pakistan's participation in the UN-sponsored indirect talks on Afghanistan is intended to keep the door open for a negotiated settlement and to reduce the pressure from Moscow while gaining time to improve its military capability.

5. Islamabad has warned both Moscow and Kabul that it will defend Pakistan's border, but the Pakistanis have so far demonstrated a determination to avoid a border conflict with Soviet forces that could escalate into a larger confrontation. They have not responded with force to the Soviet/Afghan air or ground incursions, which so far have been confined to the frontier region where an effective Pakistani military response is most difficult. Islamabad implicitly has conceded it cannot defend the border region, and the Army and Air Force are held as a reserve force to deter—and, if need be, to combat—deeper penetrations.

Soviet Objectives and Policy Toward Pakistan

6. The war in Afghanistan is currently the principal determinant in Soviet policy toward Pakistan. It is clear from the Soviets' public and private statements that they regard Pakistan's support for the insurgents as a major reason for their failure to control Afghanistan.

7. For the period of this Estimate, Moscow's major policy aims in Pakistan will remain:

- To end Islamabad's support for the Afghan resistance—support that is crucial to denying the Soviets control of Afghanistan.
- To gain Pakistani recognition of the Kabul regime, which would help legitimize the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.
- To limit regional security cooperation between Pakistan and the United States.
- To see a pro-Soviet, or at least anti-US, government come to power in Islamabad.

Factors in Soviet Policy

8. Any policy decision by Moscow to escalate military pressure on Pakistan will be based on several factors: the situation in Afghanistan, Moscow's relations with the United States and its calculations regarding political stability in Pakistan, Islamabad's relations with the United States and India, and the likely US and Indian reactions.

SCOPE NOTE

This Estimate assesses the implications of a continued Soviet military presence in Afghanistan through 1990 for the regional powers—Pakistan, India, Iran, and the Arab world—and for the United States. It addresses the implications of the Soviet invasion in terms of the following questions:

— How has the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan influenced the regional powers' strategic perspectives and threat assessments?

— What impact has the Soviet presence in Afghanistan had on regional rivalries, especially that between India and Pakistan?

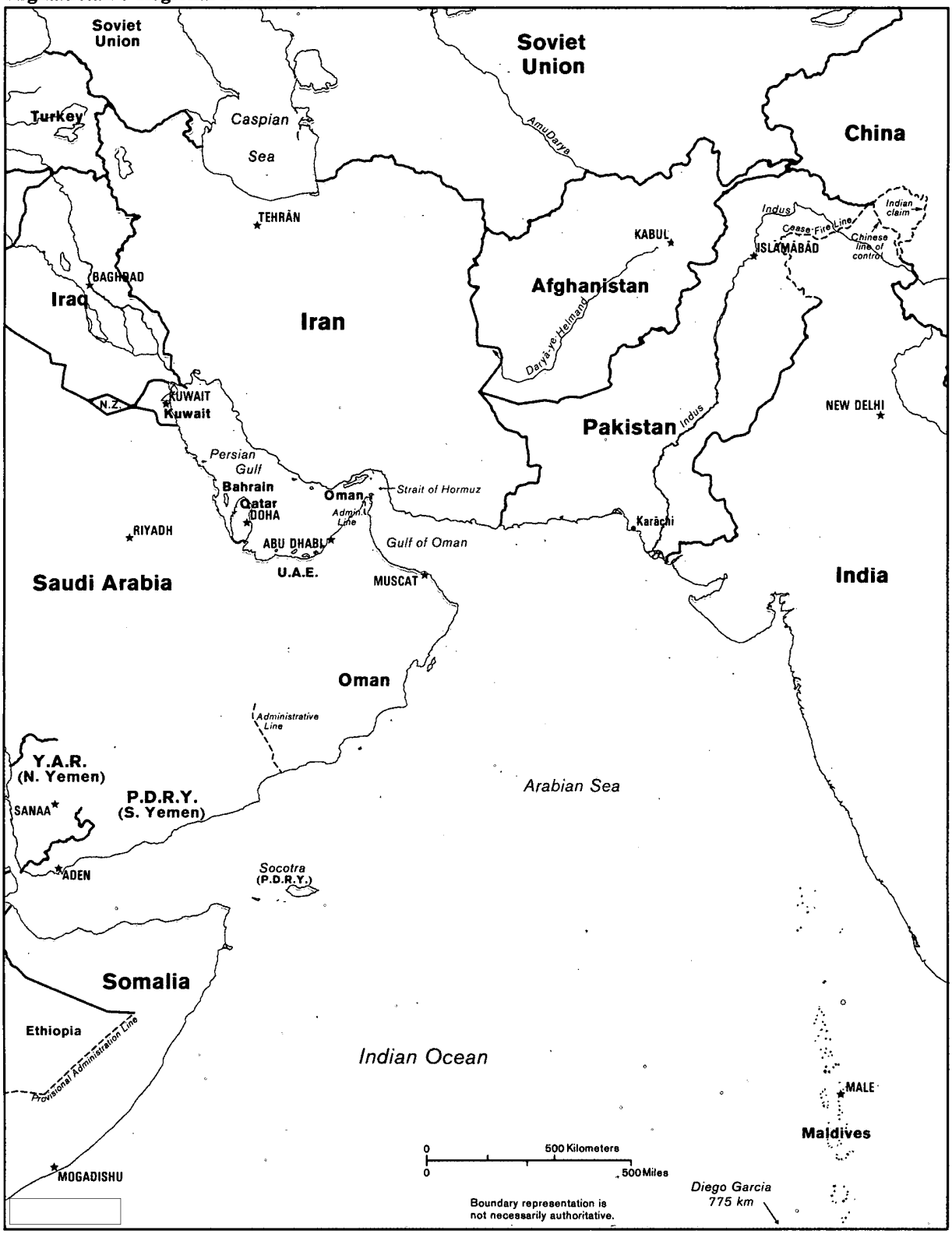
— What options do the Soviets have to manipulate the policies and internal politics of the regional states, and what are Moscow's prospects for success?

— How would domestic instability or changes in government of the regional states affect their policies toward Afghanistan and the Soviets?

— How are US interests affected by the policies of the regional powers, and by Soviet attempts to manipulate the domestic politics and conflicts of these regional powers?

The Estimate examines Moscow's policy options in Afghanistan only as far as they affect regional actors and is not intended to be predictive of all aspects of Soviet regional policies through 1990 or beyond.

Afghanistan's Regional Position



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Afghanistan and Pakistan

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obstacle to their objectives in the region. Both wish to keep Pakistan militarily weak and to prevent US-Pakistani cooperation in regional security matters. However, Moscow's principal concern is Islamabad's support to the Afghan resistance; New Delhi is most worried that the renewed US-Pakistani military supply relationship could eventually threaten India's regional dominance. New Delhi is concerned over any superpower presence—US or, to a lesser degree, Soviet—in what it considers its own region of influence.

45. India would welcome the withdrawal of Pakistani support to the Afghan resistance and an end to the insurgency because it would weaken the rationale for US-Pakistani cooperation. However, Indian leaders may believe that, even with the end of the resistance, US-Pakistani ties may not be altered. They may hold that the United States wants the Pakistanis to play a major role in ensuring security in the Persian Gulf and is angling for base rights in Pakistan. However, New Delhi probably also hopes that, without Afghanistan, the US-Pakistani relationship could founder over nuclear nonproliferation issues.

46. Both India and the Soviet Union believe that a civilian government in Pakistan—preferably one led by the PPP—could be more accommodating to their respective interests. Both Moscow and New Delhi have sought to gain influence with the Pakistani political opposition and to exploit antigovernment movements. Even though India faces some of the same constraints as the Soviets in trying to instigate domestic unrest in Pakistan, the Indians probably would be better able than the Soviets to take advantage of homegrown internal crises in Pakistan because of their closer ties to elements of the riven opposition, and Moscow probably believes it would gain from Indian efforts to subvert the Zia regime. Both India and Pakistan have long been prone to meddling in each other's affairs, but India does not want Pakistan to collapse.

47. Despite this convergence of interests, the prospects for direct Indian and Soviet collaboration to subvert the Pakistani Government are slight. The Indians want to limit superpower involvement in the region and would view significant Soviet influence in an opposition movement or government in Pakistan as a threat to India's own security. Moreover, under Rajiv Gandhi there appears to be new interest in India in improving relations with Pakistan.

48. New Delhi would be even less likely to conspire with Moscow to mount a coordinated attack on Pakistan and would oppose the dismemberment of Pakistan. We believe the Indians would consider a fragmented Pakistan more destabilizing and a greater threat to regional peace than a united Pakistan. India almost certainly could not effectively control either Punjab or Sind in a dismembered Pakistan and would fear that the likely political instability in the rump states would spread across the border into India. New Delhi already fears the potential impact that radical Islamic fundamentalism could have on India's significant Muslim population and would be concerned that a Khomeini-style Islam would prevail in the former Pakistan as a substitute for the dismembered state.

An Indo-Pakistani War and Afghanistan

49. There is no indication that either India or Pakistan is currently contemplating hostilities. A war between the two states, however, could provide the Soviets a new opportunity to strengthen their position in the region. A certain Pakistani defeat in an Indo-Pakistani war would result in a new government in Islamabad and a neutralized Pakistan powerless and disinclined to oppose either Soviet or Indian strategic ambitions. A defeated Pakistan probably would end its support for the Afghan resistance—enabling the Soviets to consolidate their hold on Afghanistan—and would downgrade its relations with the United States.

50. The Soviets probably would gain increased stature in New Delhi by supporting India in a war with Pakistan. The Soviets might also try to act as a mediator to end the fighting, however, and save Pakistan from a major defeat, as they did in the 1965 Indo-Pakistani war. A role as mediator could enhance Moscow's international prestige, increase its influence in both New Delhi and Islamabad, and undermine US diplomatic efforts in the region.

51. The Soviets would almost certainly condone even an Indian preemptive strike against Pakistan's nuclear facilities in the belief that it served Moscow's interests by weakening Pakistan. However, a preemptive Indian attack on Pakistan's nuclear facilities is unlikely in the near term.

Implications for Iran

Iranian Perspectives

52. Tehran initially viewed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as having ominous implications for Iran's security—more for what the invasion implied of Moscow's willingness to use military force against its neighbors to establish a client regime than for any new military advantage in the east that the invasion gave Moscow.

53. The clerical regime in Iran adamantly opposes Communist ideology, believes the Soviets wish to

Soviet Military Threat to Pakistan and Iran

The Soviets at present have the capability to conduct limited cross-border raids into Pakistan and Iran, but so far have not made the logistic and infrastructure improvements that would be necessary to turn Afghanistan into a forward base for major operations against either country:

— Soviet forces in Afghanistan are tied down fighting the insurgents, and their supply lines and many installations remain vulnerable to insurgent attacks. Supply problems probably would multiply if the Soviets were to greatly increase the traffic along narrow and insecure supply lines to support a force in Afghanistan attacking into Iran or Pakistan.

— The Soviets have had difficulty supporting the units already in Afghanistan, and a large increase in troops or aircraft without an accompanying expansion of support facilities would only aggravate their present logistic problems. The Soviets' ability to maintain and repair equipment in Afghanistan is poor, particularly for aircraft.

— The Soviets could mount airstrikes or cross-border raids into Pakistan or Iran without strengthening their forces in Afghanistan and with no warning indicators for the United States.

Improvements being made to the military infrastructure in Afghanistan are aimed at supporting operations against the resistance, but also indicate that the Soviets are establishing a permanent military presence. Since the invasion, the Soviets have:

— Built additional helicopter, transport, and fighter parking hardstands and improved runways at Afghan airbases.

— Constructed new barracks at military garrisons.

— Increased fuel and munitions storage capacities at ground and air force bases and built a petroleum products pipeline from Termez in the USSR to Bagram, and another from Towragundi to Shindand Airbase south of Herat.

— Improved maintenance facilities at many military installations.

— Expanded the Afghan transshipment points at Khairabad and Towraghoudi on the Soviet border.

Some of this construction has been completed and improvements continue to be made.

fire across the border, or with quick heliborne assault raids into Pakistan's border regions. Airstrikes and cross-border raids could temporarily disrupt the security and stability of insurgent supply lines and staging areas in Pakistan, but would not greatly reduce insurgent infiltration or activities in Afghanistan.

18. We believe the Soviets initially would limit their attacks to insurgent camps and supply bases close to the border and would try to avoid clashes with the Pakistani Army that could trigger a larger conflict and provoke sharp international censure. An escalation of military pressure against Pakistan probably would be probing and gradual, with Moscow continually assessing Islamabad's reactions and those of Pakistan's allies—principally the United States—and the internal political strength of the Pakistani regime. Moscow would not greatly escalate military tensions with Pakistan if it believed there were a serious risk of a military confrontation with the United States. A Soviet perception of weakness or indecision in Islamabad, or in the US commitment to Pakistan, would be likely to cause Moscow to conclude that further escalation would have little additional risk. As the Soviets improve their logistic base in Afghanistan, they will have more options for increasing military pressure.

19. Pakistan would have difficulty combating Soviet airstrikes, hot pursuit, or quick heliborne assault raids in the frontier region and could not resist large-scale Soviet cross-border operations without significant US support:

— The Pakistanis have little capability to detect air violations along much of the border with Afghanistan, and their air defenses are still poorly integrated.

— Pakistani forces opposite Afghanistan are weak in mobility and firepower, but the rugged terrain and poor roads there favor the defenders.

20. ***Political and Economic.*** Soviet efforts to influence Pakistani policy with economic or political blandishments have failed because Moscow has little economic and no political leverage in Pakistan. Soviet economic inducements or political assurances that Kabul would accept the disputed Durand Line as the recognized international border has not caused Islamabad to alter its policies. Indeed, any Pakistani government probably would exploit Soviet promises of new aid to obtain additional financial or economic assistance from Islamabad's traditional sources of aid—including Saudi Arabia, China, and the United States—but would run the risk of alienating them if it cut a deal with Moscow or Kabul.

Major Variables in Pakistani Policy

21. An escalation of Soviet and Afghan military pressure along the border would present Islamabad

continuing difficulties. The threat to Pakistan from an alien and "anti-Islamic" Soviet force in Afghanistan has worked to:

— Strengthen national unity by rallying Pakistanis to a government confronting a foreign force—the threat serves to help Zia retain control.

— Strengthen Pakistan's security and economic relationships with the United States, China, and the conservative Persian Gulf Arabs, with visible benefits of economic assistance and improvement in Pakistan's armed forces.

— Complicate Soviet-directed subversive efforts.

— Defuse the Pushtunistan separatist issue.

— Encourage Pakistan to seek better relations with India.

A Pakistani accommodation with Moscow would have major strategic implications for the United States:

— The Afghan resistance would be severely weakened without Pakistan as a sanctuary and supply base.

— A much wider expansion of Soviet control over Afghanistan would be virtually assured, although some level of resistance would continue.

— Pakistan would become less supportive overall of US strategic interests.

India

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi would like both the USSR and the United States to end their involvement in South Asia. At least over the near term, however, the consequences of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan—notably US security assistance to Pakistan—may serve as a basis for the de facto convergence of some Indian and Soviet objectives. India and the Soviet Union both want, for different reasons:

— Weakening of Pakistani security ties to the United States.

— Establishment of a more pliant government in Pakistan.

— An end to the Afghan insurgency.

The Soviets have tried to heighten India's suspicions about Pakistan's intentions and its security relationship with the United States in order to foster Indo-Pakistani tensions and heighten New Delhi's dependence on Moscow. In the Soviet view, conflict between India and Pakistan would work toward solving Moscow's Afghan problem and would give Moscow opportunities to strengthen its position in South Asia.

29. There are, however, potentially explosive economic, political, and regional factors that could quickly undermine Zia's regime—and which could be exploited by the Soviets and India to hasten his removal:

— Despite Zia's skillful management of elections, mismanagement of further transition to civilian rule could result in a backlash against Zia within his most important constituencies in Punjab Province and the Army.

— A decline in the economy or a rapid drop in foreign remittances would lead to growing opposition by important interest groups and the public generally, particularly if internal competition for resources increased.

— Failure to address political and economic grievances in Sind and Baluchistan Provinces could lead to serious ethnic violence with nationwide implications, including the prospect of militant regional separatism.

— The growing number of Afghan refugees in Pakistan could aggravate all of these factors if they become a political constituency in their own right.

Pakistan's Vulnerability to Soviet Subversion

30. The Soviets have little capability by themselves to destabilize Pakistan, but would quickly move to take advantage of domestic unrest to weaken Islamabad. There are many allegations, but our limited information shows little hard evidence of Soviet subversion in Pakistan. At present, Soviet media manipulation and covert activities appear aimed less at subverting Zia than at cultivating political leftists in the PPP and other parties for the longer term. The left is badly divided; however, and never has enjoyed much support in Pakistan.

31. Serious separatist movements have flourished in Baluchistan, Sind, and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) in the past, and ethnic unrest in these provinces can also provide the Soviets opportunities for covert manipulation to try to undermine the Pakistani Government.

32. ***Baluchistan.*** The Soviets probably have the best long-term opportunities to exploit—and help provoke—antigovernment sentiment in Baluchistan. Afghanistan provides the Soviets with a contiguous base and long border for infiltrating aid to Pakistani Baluchi nationalists.

33. ***The North-West Frontier Province.*** Soviet prospects for destabilizing the NWFP have declined substantially since the invasion of Afghanistan. The Pushtun majority in the NWFP adamantly opposed the invasion because most of the Afghan refugees from the fighting are also Pushtun, and there now is little support in the province for an independent or autonomous Pushtunistan—a movement that has received Afghan backing in the past. Zia has strengthened his support in the NWFP by his firm backing of the Afghan resistance and allowing Pushtuns more positions of authority in the provincial government.

34. ***Sind.*** The most serious threat to Pakistan's internal stability in the next five to 10 years is likely to be in Sind Province, but India has much greater capability than the Soviets to affect developments there. The deep resentment of Punjabi domination and significant antigovernment opposition in Sind present both Moscow and New Delhi with opportunities for subversion in Pakistan. The provincewide disturbances in autumn 1983 were the most serious challenge to Zia's rule to date; there was some evidence of Indian involvement, and the Pakistanis claim even the Soviets were involved. One ominous development in the Sind crisis was the growing support among militants for an independent Sindhudesh. Although Zia successfully contained the unrest and even strengthened his political position nationally, his measures have increased Sindhi disaffection.

Implications for India

Indian Perspectives

35. So far, India has not regarded the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as a direct threat to its security. The invasion, however, is seen in New Delhi as posing an indirect threat to Indian interests and policy in South Asia and the Indian Ocean because:

— It brought the superpower competition to a region where India aspires to unchallenged political and military dominance.

— In New Delhi's view, the renewal of military ties between Pakistan and the United States and the permanent US naval presence in the Indian Ocean are a direct result of the war in Afghanistan and a major setback to India's goal of regional hegemony.

91. Soviet success in controlling Afghanistan would heighten Arab concerns about Moscow's intentions in the Middle East. However, the potential for US-Arab strategic cooperation—and Arab views of Soviet policies—will be influenced much more by Arab-Israeli and Gulf war issues than by the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states will continue to back Pakistan in its support for the Afghan resistance.

92. The US military presence and commitment to Persian Gulf security probably work to deter Moscow from military operations in the region.