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KABUL SITREP , 19-25 AUGUST 1986

SUMMARY (NOT FOR PRESS)

1. ARMY AND INDEPENDENCE DAY (19 AUGUST) CELEBRATED. ALL WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES SENT MILITARY DELEGATIONS. POLITBURO MEETING HELD ON 21 AUGUST: 2 MIDDLE RANKING PARTY OFFICIALS SACKED: COMMERCE MINISTRY CRITICISED- AGAIN.
2. LOWER LEVEL OF MUJAHEDDEEN ACTIVITY IN KABUL THAN IN RECENT WEEKS. DRA/SOVIET OPERATIONS TO SOUTH OF KABUL APPEAR TO BE CONTINUING BUT NOT AT SUCH HIGH LEVEL AS REPORTED TWO WEEKS AGO. PROGRAMME OF DRAFTING TO THE ARMY STILL BEING PURSUED VIGOROUSLY.

SECURITY

3. KABUL: STILL CONSIDERABLE CONVOY AND SOME AIR MOVEMENT TO SOUTH OF KABUL-PROBABLY CENTRED ON LOGAR. MUJAHEDDIN NOT AS ACTIVE ROUND KABUL AS IN RECENT WEEKS. ATTACKS, HOWEVER, DID OCCUR ON THE DARULAMAN AND KHAIR KHANA SOVIET COMPLEXES.
4. ON 17 AUGUST 2 ROCKETS WERE FIRED INTO DARULAMAN AND ANOTHER AT DRA ARMY BASE AT QARGHA. ON 18 AUGUST AT 10.45 2 EXPLOSIONS FOLLOWED BY COLUMNS OF SMOKE SEEN NORTH OF TAPEI MARANJAN IN THE EAST OF THE CITY. 4 MI 24'S INVESTIGATED SCENE. AT MIDNIGHT ON 18 AUGUST THERE WAS A LARGE EXPLOSION IN THE CITY (U/L). ON 19 AUGUST AT 22.00 THERE WAS HEAVY OUTGOING ARTILLERY FROM DARULAMAN TO LOGAR. THIS WAS REPEATED ON 20 AUGUST. AT 2345 ON 20 AUGUST 5 ROCKETS LANDED IN THE SOVIET CAMP AT DARULAMAN. THERE WAS THEN HALF AN HOUR OF OUTGOING ARTILLERY TOWARDS PASHMAN, THE LIKELY LAUNCH SITE FOR THE ROCKETS. ON 21 AUGUST AT 0305 THERE WAS A VERY LARGE EXPLOSION IN KARTE PARWAN (NFD). ON 24 AUGUST AT 0100 4 ROCKETS FIRED INTO CITY, 3 LANDED NEAR/ON THE SOVIET CAMP AT KHAIR KHANA AND ONE IN THE SHAHSHAHID DISTRICT.
5. NORTH: TWO WEEKS AGO THERE WAS HEAVY FIGHTING IN GORBUND

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(PARWAN) AND DAR E SUL (SAMANGAN). HEAVY CASUALTIES WERE SUFFERED BY BOTH SIDES. FIGHTING CONTINUES ROUND CHARIKAR (PARWAN). THERE ARE UNCONFIRMED REPORTS THAT A HELICOPTER CRASHED INTO THE BAZAAR IN ISTALEF (KABUL) RECENTLY WHICH MAY BE CONNECTED WITH THE REPORTED DOWNING BY THE MUJAHEDDIN OF AN AIRCRAFT IN THE QARABAGH AREA. (QARABAGH AND ISTALEF ARE ONLY A FEW KILOMETRES FROM EACH OTHER).

6. SOUTH: THROUGHOUT THE WEEK THERE HAVE BEEN DAILY MOVEMENTS OF MAINLY SOVIET CONVOYS OF ARMoured VEHICLES OUT OF KABUL ON THE LOGAR ROAD. ONE CONVOY WAS SEEN TO LEAVE TOWN AT 0300 ON 24 AUGUST AND RETURNED THROUGH THE TOWN AT 1300 THE SAME DAY. IT MAY WELL BE THAT THE OPERATIONS IMMEDIATELY TO THE SOUTH OF KABUL ARE BEING CARRIED OUT BY SOVIET TROOPS ON A DAY BY DAY BASIS WITH UNITS RETURNING TO BARRACKS IN KABUL AT NIGHT. MOST CONVOYS SET OFF IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING. DETAILS OF THE FIGHTING IN THE AREA ARE SCARCE. AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT HAS IT THAT ON 13 AUGUST 16 ARMoured VEHICLES WERE DESTROYED BY MINES AND IN THE ENSUING AIR ATTACK UP TO 10 AIRCRAFT (MIX OF HELICOPTERS AND FIXED WING) WERE SHOT DOWN BY MUJAHEDDIN. REFUGEES, MAINLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, HAVE BEEN FILTERING INTO KABUL FROM LOGAR.

7. ON 14 AUGUST MUJAHEDDIN ATTACKED A DRA MILITARY CONVOY IN THE QARABAGH DISTRICT OF GHAZNI PROVINCE: 2 ARMoured VEHICLES WERE DESTROYED. FIGHTING IS ALSO GOING ON IN MAYDAN CHAR (WARDAK). ON 17 AUGUST 3/4 PEOPLE WERE KILLED FOLLOWING MUJAHEDDIN ATTACKS ON HOUSES OF THOSE SUSPECTED OF BEING COLLABORATORS. DUE TO HEAVY FIGHTING ROUND ORGUN (PAKTIA) IN THE FIRST HALF OF AUGUST, MUJAHEDDIN ARE SAID TO HAVE LOST 20% OF THEIR TOTAL STRENGTH IN THE AREA.

8. EAST: ON 11 AUGUST AT 0800 A SUITCASE BOMB EXPLODED AT JALAL-ABAD AIRPORT. 16 PEOPLE WERE KILLED.

9. REGIME CLAIMS: ON 19 AUGUST MIR AHMAN (GULBUDDIN) WHO OPERATED IN THE GHULMIN AREA OF GHOR PROVINCE WAS ARRESTED TOGETHER WITH 21 OF HIS GROUP. LARGE QUANTITIES OF RIFLES, ROCKET SHELLS AND US MINES WERE CAPTURED. IN BALKH A 70 MAN GROUP HEADED BY SHOKRUDDIN PAHLWAN SURRENDERED WITH ALL ITS WEAPONS. SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS WERE ALSO CLAIMED FOR KADUL (7 MUJAHEDDIN CAPTURED), HERAT AND ZABUL (SEVERAL KILLED, EQUIPMENT CAPTURED).

10. IN JAUZJAN PROVINCE IN THE CURRENT AFGHAN YEAR 3,300 MEN HAVE JOINED THE ARMY, OF THESE 629 WERE SUPPOSED TO BE YOUTHS VOLUNTEERING HAVING REACHED THE AGE OF 18. 151 DESERTERS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE AVAILED THEMSELVES OF THE RC AMNESTY AND RETURNED TO THEIR UNITS.

POLITICS

11. INTERNAL: POLITEURO MET ON 21 AUGUST. IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE 2ND CONGRESS OF THE NATIONAL FATHERLAND FRONT WOULD MEET DURING THE SECOND HALF OF THIS AFGHAN YEAR (IE BEFORE MARCH 21 1997).

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COMMERCE MINISTRY SINGLED OUT FOR SHARP CRITICISM, BUT NO MENTION OF JALALAR. ANNOUNCED THAT THE PLANNING SYSTEM IN THE PROVINCES WAS TO BE STRENGTHENED TO HELP OVERALL ECONOMIC GROWTH. ABDUL RAHIM PEBAU, PROVINCIAL PARTY COMMITTEE SECRETARY OF JAUZJAN AND AZIZ AHMED, SECRETARY OF THE PROVINCIAL PARTY COMMITTEE OF KABUL, BOTH RELIEVED OF THEIR JOBS.

12. ARMY AND INDEPENDENCE DAY (19 AUGUST) WAS CELEBRATED AT A RELATIVELY LOW PITCH. DELEGATIONS FROM ALL WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES ATTENDED. THERE WAS NO PARADE BUT INSTEAD A SHOW WAS PUT ON IN THE SPORTS STADIUM. SPORTS, SPEECHES AND DEMONSTRATIONS OF MILITARY SKILLS (EG UNARMED COMBAT) WERE THE ORDER OF THE DAY. LINE UP ON REVIEW STAND WAS (FROM LEFT) KESHTMAND, NAJIB, KARMAL, NOOR. KESHTMAND AND NAJIB SEEMED TO BE CONVERSING IN FRIENDLY FASHION, KARMAL SAT STOICALLY THROUGH MOST OF THE PROCEEDINGS AND NOOR LOOKED ALOOF AND CONFIDENT. EARLY IN THE DAY WREATHS WERE LAID AT A NEWLY ERECTED MONUMENT TO THE MARTYRS OF THE REVOLUTION OUTSIDE THE HQ OF THE PDPA CC. AFTER THE RALLY SOME OF THE MILITARY DELEGATIONS VISITED THE NEW ARMY MUSEUM.

13. DURING THE LATTER HALF OF THE WEEK IT WAS NOTICEABLE THAT THE DRAFTING OF KABULIS TO THE ARMY HAD MOVED UP A NOTCH FROM THE PREVIOUS PEAK OF ACTIVITY FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NEW DRAFT REGULATIONS ON 15 JUNE. MANY TRUCKS WERE SEEN WITH NEWLY IMPRESSED CIVILIANS IN THE BACK.

14. ON 23 AUGUST NAJIB IS REPORTED TO HAVE RECEIVED ELDERS AND CHIEFS OF NANGAHAR PROVINCE AS WELL AS ORDINARY CITIZENS AND TO HAVE LISTENED TO THEIR REQUESTS AND SUGGESTIONS. ELECTIONS BEGAN IN KANDAHAR ON 20 AUGUST.

15. EXTERNAL: NAJIB SENT A CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO RAJIV GANDHI FOLLOWING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFGHAN- INDIAN FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION (AS DID RATEBZAD).

NOT FOR MEDIA-

NEW DELHI: WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANYTHING THAT YOU CAN ADD REGARDING THE SETTING UP OF THIS ORGANISATION WHICH HAS RECEIVED LITTLE PUBLICITY HERE.

16. NAJIB RECEIVED NEW SOVIET AMBASSADOR, MOZHAEV, ON 19 AUGUST, ON A COURTESY CALL. MOZHAEV PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS TO KARMAL ON THE SAME DAY.

17. DRA HAVE BEGUN PREPARATIONS TO SEND A DELEGATION TO THE COPENHAGEN PEACE CONFERENCE, 15-19 OCTOBER.

18. 1500 AFGHAN SCHOOL CHILDREN HAVE RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE SOVIET UNION WHERE THEY HAVE BEEN ON HOLIDAY. ON 19 AUGUST PLANE LOAD OF AFGHAN TEENAGERS, ALL OF WELL-OFF WESTERN DRESSED APPEARANCE LEFT FOR THE SOVIET UNION. PART OF SUMMER PROGRAMME OF

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YOUTH VISITS TO SOVIET UNION.

ECONOMICS

19. POWER SUPPLY IN KABUL HAS BEEN ERRATIC IN THE PAST WEEK, POSSIBLY CONNECTED WITH SABOTAGE TO GENERATING UNIT REPORTED IN PARA 4 OF LAST SITREP. BAKTAR CARRIED 55,000 PASSENGERS AND 2,000 TONS OF FREIGHT IN FIRST 4 MONTHS OF THIS AFGHAN YEAR. REGULAR DOMESTIC FLIGHTS ARE CLAIMED TO 13 DOMESTIC CITIES WITH A FURTHER 3 COVERED WEATHER PERMITTING.

MISCELLANEOUS

20. IT IS CLAIMED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION THAT THERE WILL BE MORE SCHOOLS SET UP TO CATER FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES, TEACHING THE STUDENTS IN THEIR NATIVE TONGUE. LANGUAGES MENTIONED WERE UZBECK, TURKMAN AND BALUCH. AT PRESENT THERE ARE 2641 STUDENTS STUDYING IN 80 UZBEK CLASSES, 106 STUDENTS IN 6 TURKMENI CLASSES AND 97 STUDENTS IN 9 BALUCHI CLASSES.

NOT FOR MEDIA:

21. JAPANESE CHARGE SAYS THAT HE HAS HEARD THAT A CIRCULAR HAS GONE ROUND GOVERNMENT OFFICES ORDERING THE REMOVAL OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF KARMAL. NO INDEPENDENT CONFIRMATION OF THIS YET HENCE NFM CAVEAT. HOPE TO CONFIRM ONE WAY OR OTHER BY NEXT WEEK'S SITREP. IF TRUE, THIS WOULD BE A VERY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT. ALSO, RUMOUR THAT KARMAL HAS BEEN REPLACED AS C-IN-C OF ARMED FORCES BY NAJIB. (THIS SEEMS UNLIKELY AS IT WOULD REQUIRE A CHANGE IN THE PRESENT SYSTEM WHEREBY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL IS C-IN-C).

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