

TO DIE IN AFGHANISTAN

(A Supplement to
"Tears, Blood and Cries":
Human Rights In Afghanistan Since the Invasion
1979 to 1984)

December 1985

A Helsinki Watch and Asia Watch Report

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HELSINKI WATCH COMMITTEE

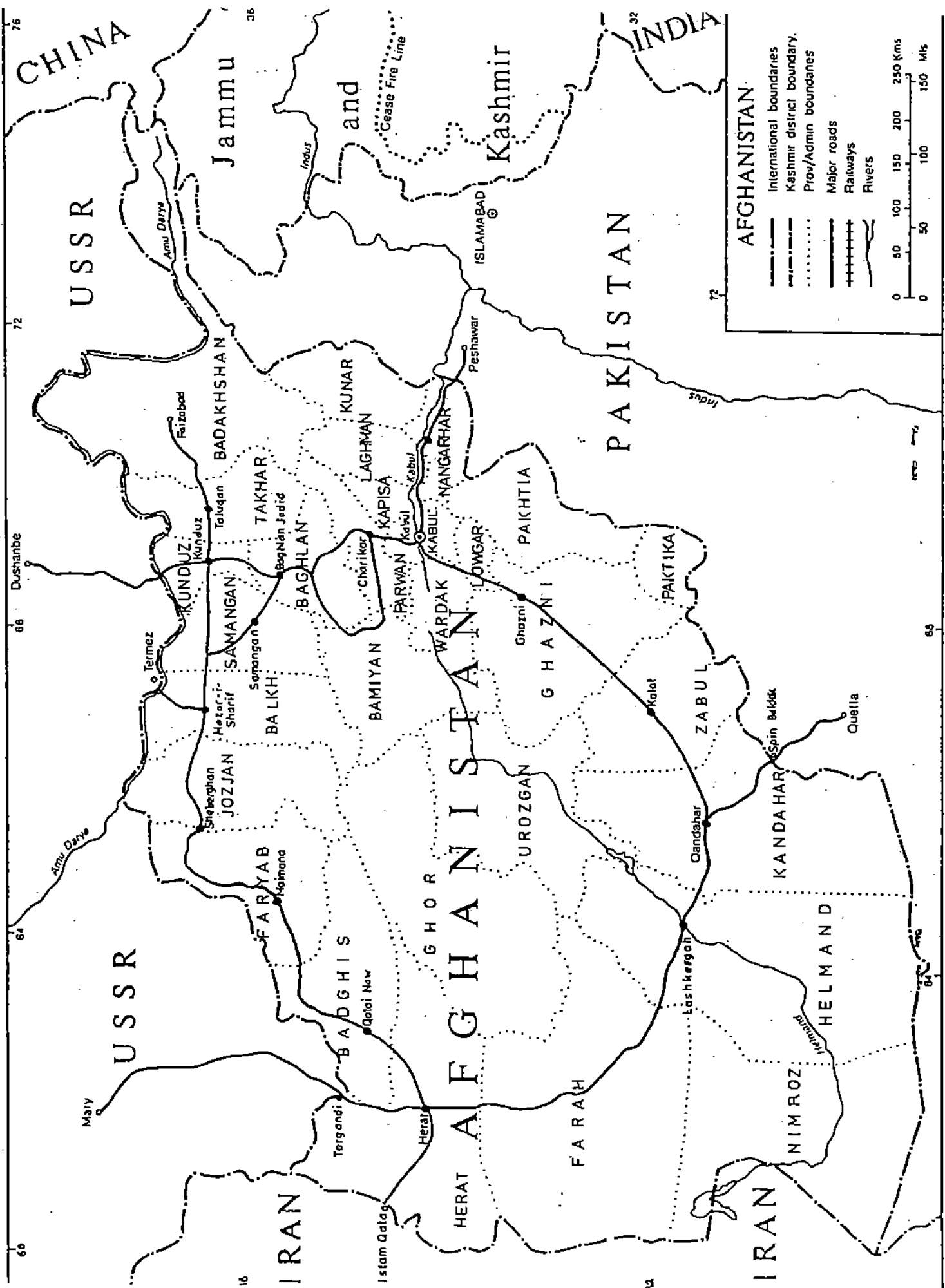
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"I was in prison; I was tortured; I suffered a lot; but the hardest thing for me was to leave my country. My main wish is to die in Afghanistan."

Fahima Naseri, refugee
Peshawar, August 1985

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Above all, we wish to thank the refugees -- men, women and children, both named and unnamed in this report -- who gave us their trust in sharing their tales of tragedy with us. It is their words which form the body -- and certainly the soul -- of this report.

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I. INTRODUCTION

On December 27, 1984, the fifth anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Helsinki Watch issued a report entitled "Tears, Blood, and Cries": Human Rights in Afghanistan Since the Invasion, 1979-1984. The 210-page report, based largely on eyewitness testimonies, revealed the vast dimension of human rights abuse in Afghanistan:

Just about every conceivable human rights violation is occurring in Afghanistan, and on an enormous scale. The crimes of indiscriminate warfare are combined with the worst excesses of unbridled state-sanctioned violence against civilians. The ruthless savagery in the countryside is matched by the subjection of a terrorized urban population to arbitrary arrest, torture, imprisonment and execution. Totalitarian controls are being imposed on institutions and the press. The universities and all other aspects of Afghan cultural life are being systematically "Sovietized."^{1/}

The sixth year of the Soviet occupation saw the continuation, even intensification, of these practices. At the same time human rights violations came under increasing scrutiny. The publication of the Helsinki Watch report was followed a few months later, in February 1985, by the first report of the Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, Professor Felix Ermacora of Austria, and by his interim report to the U.N. General Assembly later in the

^{1/} Helsinki Watch, "Tears, Blood and Cries": Human Rights in Afghanistan Since the Invasion, 1979-1984, December 1984.

year. In a review of Professor Ermacora's first report and the Helsinki Watch report, Indian legal scholar A. G. Noorani noted, "On every major aspect, the reports tally."^{2/}

No one knows the number of Afghans killed since 1978, but estimates converge on a figure of about 1 million out of a prewar population of 15 to 18 million. Afghans remain the world's largest group of refugees, accounting for approximately half the world's refugee population. There are 2.5 million Afghan refugees registered in Pakistan, with perhaps another half million unregistered. Iran claims 1.9 million Afghan refugees, some of whom may be prewar migrants.

Refugees continued to flee in 1985. The flow into Pakistan has been reduced to a total of 2,000 to 3,000 per month into the Northwest Frontier Province and about half as many into Baluchistan.^{3/} The regions directly bordering Pakistan have

^{2/} A. G. Noorani, "Human Rights in Afghanistan," Indian Express (New Delhi), June 14, 1985. The first U.N. report is United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Forty-first session, Agenda item 12, "Report on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan prepared by the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Felix Ermacora, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1984/55," E/CN.4/1985/21, 19 February 1985.

^{3/} Anneliese Wilke, a German reporter with long experience in Iran who visited Afghan refugee camps there, reported on the German government radio, Deutsche Welle, on August 22, 1985: "From the rate of refugee arrivals, one can infer the intensity of the fighting in Afghanistan. 120 people daily were coming in the month of March. In June 2,000 people came all at once. At present the rate is about 80 per day."

already been largely emptied of population, and the new refugees are arriving from great distances: "This year we are getting people right from the Oxus River," Ahmed Zeb Khan of the Pakistan Commission for Afghan refugees, told Helsinki Watch.^{4/}

Monitoring human rights in Afghanistan did not become any easier over the past year. All communications media in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (D.R.A.) remain under the control of the ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (P.D.P.A.) and its Soviet advisers. The Soviet-Afghan authorities continue to refuse entry to human rights organizations including not only Helsinki Watch but even the International Committee of the Red Cross (I.C.R.C.) and the U.N. Special Rapporteur, whose request to visit the country remains unanswered. With the exception of a few chosen Western journalists, the D.R.A. has refused to grant journalists even highly controlled access to the capital city. Moreover, the Soviets and the D.R.A. have made good on their threat to kill Western journalists entering Afghanistan clandestinely with the resistance. In late September 1985 Charles Thornton, a medical reporter for the Arizona Republic, was killed by Soviet troops in an ambush in Kandahar province, although it is impossible to

^{4/} Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 19, 1985. The Oxus River, also known as the Amu Darya, marks the border of Afghanistan with the USSR.

determine if the attack was aimed at him specifically. A few days later a five-person medical team of the French Group Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF -- Doctors Without Borders) narrowly escaped with their lives from an attack by helicopter gunships in Balkh province.^{5/}

Sources of information remain, however. Thousands of new refugees continue to arrive in Pakistan with accounts of why they fled. Some foreign reporters and medical teams still enter and work in the country clandestinely. And the official media of the D.R.A. and the Soviet Union occasionally, if inadvertently, provide information on human rights violations. To supplement the press and other published sources, Helsinki Watch sent a researcher to Pakistan in late August 1985 to question recent refugees and others coming from Afghanistan about the situation there in 1985.

Four findings stand out:

- Thousands of children are being sent to the Soviet Union for ten years of education, in some, perhaps many, cases without the consent or knowledge of their parents. Under an agreement signed in April 1984, children are first gathered in institutions called Parwarishgah-e Watan (Fatherland Training Centers), supposedly intended

^{5/} On the threat to kill journalists see "Tears, Blood, and Cries", pp. 186-189. The recent attacks were reported in Agence France-Presse despatches from Islamabad on September 30 and October 1. BBC reporter Jeff B. Harmon described how Afghan government militia tried to capture him and his cameraman in "Toe to toe with Russians in Kandahar's holy war," Sunday Times (London), August 11, 1985.

for the education of orphans of "martyrs of the revolution." They are then sent to the USSR in large groups, to be raised away from their parents and culture in special centers. Some children are sent voluntarily, some under pressure, and some by force. The authorities have arrested some parents who refused to let their children be sent.

-- For the first time physical evidence has been produced of the existence of anti-personnel mines camouflaged as everyday objects such as watches, pens, and toys. Although refugees arriving in Pakistan have reported the existence of such mines since 1980, the first actual samples were produced in Kabul by the D.R.A. news agency BAKHTAR in a press conference on June 9. The press conference was reported by the D.R.A.'s domestic media and by Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star), the newspaper of the Red Army, with the claim that they were the products of "imperialist terror." Apparently it was necessary to explain the "origin" of the mines to people who have seen them.^{6/}

-- Soviet strategists seem to have adopted an even harsher attitude toward civilians in areas where the resistance operates. There is an increase in massacres of hundreds of people at a time, sometimes entire villages, by specialized commando units. This report presents considerable detail on two such large massacres, in Kunduz Province on the Soviet border and in Laghman Province in eastern Afghanistan. These massacres were selected because there is more documentation available, not because the number of victims is necessarily any greater than in many other massacres that have been reported.

-- The State Information Service, known as KHAD, has apparently added a new set of torture devices to its already varied panoply of techniques. The new devices,

^{6/} The quotation is from Lieutenant Colonel V. Skrizhalin, "V Kovo Oni Tselyatsya: Press-konferentsiya v Kabulye," Krasnaya Zvezda (Moscow), June 12, 1985, p. 3. This is the first occasion on which "mined" pens, watches, and toys have been exhibited. Victims among the civilian population have been unable to produce samples because the mines had exploded or been destroyed.

imported from the U.S.S.R. or the Democratic Republic of Germany, are chairs in which the prisoner is belted securely, in order to receive electric shocks while the chair revolves at a dizzying pace. These tortures can be administered with a mere flick of a switch, making the jobs of the torturers less stressful.

This report presents new evidence of rape, brutal killings, and torture of women. One of those who provided some of this new information also suggested our title, when, after three hours of describing, indeed reliving, her experiences during two interrogations by KHAD, former teacher Fahima Naseri lost her self-control and wept: "I was in prison; I was tortured; I suffered a lot; but the hardest thing for me was to leave my country. My main wish is to die in Afghanistan." In 1985 that wish became a grim reality for thousands more of her countrymen.

II. MASS DESTRUCTION IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

"When the people gather the harvest, the Russians completely burn the harvest with tanks, rockets. When they come to the village they kill children, ladies, [unmarried] girls, old people, and they say, 'We don't need the people, we need the land.' When they captured some old people they told them, 'We don't need the people, we need the land.'"

"They announced something, 'We don't need the people, we need the land.' That's why they're killing the people. They said, 'If there are any Afghan children, we will not be able to rule Afghanistan, so we have to finish this nation.'"

"They announced it by loudspeaker when the troops came. I heard this from the Russian soldiers, 'We don't need the people, we want the land.' My name is Ataullah; I am here. What I have told you is all the truth. You may ask me again and again."

Refugees from Kunduz and Laghman Provinces. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda Refugee Camp, Northwest Frontier Province, Pakistan, August 21, 1985.

"My name is Shir Dal, I am from the Kats area. I lost four members of my family -- my sister's children, her husband, and her. The only thing left alive was one calf -- they even killed chickens, pigeons, everything alive they killed. . . . When the Russians came, the children were hiding in a cave. One Parchami Communist man was with them, and helped bring the children out, and they burned them to death. They were burning the mosques, and they killed even chickens and dogs, and then they went away. When they came back, they began looting. They killed 768 people, along the valley. They burned the fields everywhere in the province, all the way up to the provincial capital. They came back to Surkhrud, and they did more things there. The children who were killed, their parents could not recognize them, because they were burned. They made fires with wood, and put the children in them,

or put kerosene on children and burned them. Sometimes they killed children and then burned them, and sometimes they burned children alive. They were taking children out to the fields and burning them alive, and they put them in the rushes and burned them alive. Burned alive. . . ."

"They hung one 2- or 3-week-old baby boy in a tree, bayoneted him and made the parents watch while they burned him; when the baby was dead, they shot the parents. One half-year-old boy and 7-year-old girl, my sister's children, were killed. It was very cruel. They killed many people, and this is a story people should not forget."

Refugees from Laghman Province.^{7/}

In a 1984 report on Afghanistan Helsinki Watch described the slaughter of the Afghan rural population and the destruction of the countryside:

People coming from just about every area of Afghanistan . . . tell of vast destruction: carefully constructed homes reduced to rubble, deserted towns, the charred remains of wheat fields, trees cut down by immense firepower or dropping their ripe fruit in silence, with no one to gather the harvest. From throughout the country come tales of death on every scale, from thousands of civilians buried in the rubble left by fleets of bombers to a young boy's throat being dispassionately slit by a Soviet soldier.^{8/}

Helsinki Watch's investigations in 1985 confirm that this pattern has continued. The Soviet air force is bombing populated

^{7/} Unpublished interview with Rob Schultheis, journalist, Syeed Farhad, and Sher Mohammad Etebari, Munda refugee camp, Northwest Frontier Province, May 16, 1985.

^{8/} "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit.

^{9/} Ibid., pp. 23-24.

areas, as before, killing uncounted numbers of villagers. Soviet ground forces, now reinforced by specialized commando units, have carried out even larger indiscriminate massacres. The Soviets continue to scatter anti-personnel mines in inhabited areas and have developed new methods for distributing them. Attacks on villages continue to include the destruction of foodstuffs, livestock, standing crops, and the agricultural infrastructure, as well as the looting of personal property.

The Helsinki Watch finding that attacks against the civilian population have intensified in the past year is shared by other observers:

-- "Under Gorbachev, operations against civilian populations seem to have been intensified. Since the second half of March news of a large number of civilians massacred has been received at our Centre from different parts of the country. Here is a rough estimate of some of the various incidents during this period:

"In Helmand Province, some 60 civilians, women and children included, were killed; in Felol Valley (Baghlan Province in the north) about 150; in Khanabad (a district of Kunduz Province also in the north) over 100 people; in the outskirts of Kunduz City 120; in Dehsabz District north of Kabul about 200; at Mangwal Village in Kunar 60; in a small village of Shinwar District, west of Jalalabad, 35 women and children were executed in a mosque where they had taken shelter

"The difference in these operations from the previous ones is that they were carried out in a professional way; it is no more Russian recruits of the regular army who commit crimes out of anger or fear, but some very special commandos seem to be in charge of the operations. Well-informed sources in Kabul talk about KGB special units, called 'the commandos of death,'

which are now operating in Afghanistan."10/

- "In recent months thousands of such refugees have fled from what appears to be one of the fiercest Soviet offensives of the six-year-old Afghanistan war. Since Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev took power in March, his regime has evidently decided that the conflict has dragged on too long. Soviet forces have launched a drive to depopulate the entire northern province of Kunduz in an effort to deprive the mujahedin of food, shelter, and support. Large cities like Kandahar have been reduced to rubble, and throughout the countryside the Soviets have destroyed farms and irrigation systems, burned crops and poisoned wells."11/
- Hanneke Kouwenberg of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan travelled around northeast Afghanistan during May and June 1985. Her observations and conversations led her to conclude: "Before they [the Soviets] would enter a village and pick out a few people. Now they surround a whole village and kill everyone." [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 16, 1985.]
- "Compared to previous years, this one was the most dangerous, because when the Russians come to the village they kill all the women and children. Also they are using some new kind of weapon. They use a glass to shine a light on people and burn them."12/ [Testimony of Saleh Mohammad, son of Mullah Jamal, 30, farmer, Gulbagh village, Chardara district, Kunduz. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, Pakistan, August 21, 1985.]

10/ Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin (June 1985), p. 4. The number of victims in each case is only approximate.

11/ Mark Whitaker with Frank Gibney Jr. in Peshawar, "Afghanistan: A New Soviet Offensive," Newsweek, September 9, 1985, p. 40.

12/ Various reports of this new weapon are discussed below, in the section dealing with the April massacres in Laghman Province.

Indiscriminate Bombings

The units of the Soviet Air Force stationed in Afghanistan continue to bombard villages indiscriminately as part of a strategy of total war or to put pressure on the villages to expel the resistance forces from their area and join government organizations such as the Fatherland Front (Padarwatan). Every refugee from the Afghan countryside has such a story, and every recent refugee from Kabul describes bombed out and burning houses along the way to Pakistan. The following accounts are typical:

- "It was nine o'clock on the morning of January 11, 1985, when a squadron of gunship helicopters became visible above the village of Wonkhi located in Wardak province 75 km. southwest of Kabul city. They flew extremely high over the village. The common people who have turned expert in guessing the intention of the aircraft from their height were confident that their village would not be bombarded on that day. Moreover, the planes passed over the village very fast, which was a further reassuring sight for them. So they started their routine occupations. But not much time had passed when the planes returned, this time at a low height over the village. They came from the east. The villagers guessed this time that the planes were passing over the village to go to Kabul town, as they usually kept that height on return journeys. But suddenly the planes started indiscriminate bombing of the villages of Wonkhi and Hassan Bake, belonging to Sayed Abad district of Wardak province. The MIG planes preceded the gunships. When the planes left the area the helicopters took their place and started shooting guns and missiles against the houses of the villages and against their occupants. The task of the helicopters was different than the task of the MIG jets. The MIGs had already destroyed the mosques, shops, and houses. They had also completely destroyed a mosque where thirty children of the village were busy studying. They were not the only ones present in the mosque. Most of the villagers had also rushed there to take shelter but met the destinies of death and destruction. The gunship helicopters circled those miserable villages, flying very low over them, hunting

any living being visible to them. The livestock, the cattle, and the beasts of burden were also main targets. In short the gunships fulfilled the task of not having anyone escape death. When the planes completed their operations and left the scene, the people of the neighboring villages, who witnessed the bombardments from distant places, rushed to the scene but found no living beings. They started to dig out bodies from the ruined houses, shops, and buildings. The work of removing the piles continued for three days, and the dead bodies of thirty six men and three ladies were unearthed. They also found thirty seriously wounded people. In this tragic bombardment eighty houses and two mosques were totally destroyed in the two villages of Wonkhi and Hassan Bake." [Testimony of Najibullah, resident of Sayed Abad District, furnished by Abdul Karim Muheb, Central Asian Studies Center, Peshawar University.]^{13/}

-- Jan Goodwin, Executive Editor of Ladies Home Journal, witnessed a Soviet-Afghan offensive in Paktia province in late August. She described SU-25s and MIGs dropping 500-pound and incendiary bombs all day long, dozens at a time, on mud houses in the village of Jaji. Many people and cattle were killed by shrapnel. [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 26, 1985.]

Rudy Seynaeve, a Belgian nurse working for Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF), kept a detailed record of the victims he treated while working at a clinic in the southern part of Balkh province during the first six months of the year.^{14/} The area

^{13/} Abdul Karim Muheb, formerly a member of the law drafting department of the Ministry of Justice in Kabul, has joined the Central Asian Studies Center of Peshawar University since leaving Kabul in 1982. He collects, translates, and transcribes testimonies on human rights violations in Afghanistan and assists journalists and human rights investigators.

^{14/} Seynaeve was one of a team of four MSF doctors and nurses interviewed at their clinic by The New York Times, July 23, 1985.

where he worked was largely under the control of the Jamiat-e Islami resistance party. Soviet and Afghan government forces staged an offensive there in January, forcing the medical team and the villagers to escape for several weeks to nearby mountains:

-- "There has been a lot of bombing in December and January, also in February. This was the same time as the Soviet troops were in the Valley of Zari. It was more to protect the troops and the tanks, you can say it was a military action, it was war, fighting against the army.

"Something else is the kind of bombing that we had in April. Marie [Basuyan, another nurse] and me, we arrived the ninth of April in Zari to install the hospital, because it was already one month and a half approximately that the Valley of Zari was free, reorganized, the mines were detected and so on, so it was the eleventh of April at midday -- we just wanted to eat -- that jets and helicopters arrived above the valley, and they bombed a village named Mirzai that is in the Valley of Zari.

"There were four bombs that fell in the proximity of a mill, where they mill the wheat, and four people were wounded by stones. It seems almost every time the bombs are fragmentation bombs, bombs that fall down, and they are razing the whole area with little or even big pieces, big as a hand or big as half of a tongue, pieces of iron. I have one with me that I extracted from a wounded man. There were two of them that had almost all the back and the legs full of pieces of wheat that had crossed the tissue [pierced the cloth]. The wounds were not too deep in general, but they were very dirty, because on the bottom of the wound you had the fabric of the clothes they were wearing, and then the wheat. They infected very quickly. In this area there was no military target. There is a garagah, a barracks for mujahedin on the border of the village of Mirzai, but it was far away, a center of 30 mujahedin residing there, but this was totally on the other side. The mill was on the other side. But four bombs fell down there. The four people wounded were not people from the Valley of

Zari itself, but people that came from high, the mountains, I think they had to come down to mill their wheat. It was the eleventh of April.

"The twentieth of April, jets and helicopters have bombarded the village of Amrakh. It's a valley in the south of Zari. There are mujahedin there, but there they have bombed I think blind, just blind. Fragmentation bombs also. Bombs and also rockets. One rocket pierced a house, and the house collapsed. One child who was in the house died, six years old, his mother got a big piece of iron, it destroyed the whole elbow, two bones were broken. It has been cured now, she has a little bit stiff arm. It was a very bad wound. And a child, a daughter, about two years, had the buttocks ripped open. It was all meat, it was nicely ripped open, it was ugly ripped open with shrapnel in a bad place for a child like this. There were two men that had slight wounds. Also a piece of bomb, a piece of metal, little pieces somewhere on the back and on the shoulder, flesh wounds, but it was also civilians, no mujahedin wounded, civilians also.

"Then, the third one, the 23 [April], again in Zari, near the bazaar, and it's there that Alphonse, the Belgian reporter, said he had seen one bomb -- a lot of white smoke came out. And indeed later on we have seen a piece of a wheat field burnt. I think something of twenty meters along. It was not all the wheat field that was burned. A piece. There there were two wounded, one was badly wounded. It was a farmer that was on his farm and pieces of bombshells came, were flying on his farm, crossed, broke his leg, pierced one leg, and got stuck in the other leg, and he was dying when he arrived, but now he is all right. He lost a lot of blood. And the other one was also slightly wounded, a flesh wound. But also fragmentation. Again we have found a lot of fragmentation. And we have seen. This is nice to see it, I mean a place where a bomb falls, it makes a hole, and then all the trees are cutted from down to up, like stairs all around the hole.

"A fourth bombardment, the 24th of April, also in Zari, very near the hospital and the bazaar. No one was wounded. Again, fragmentation bombs. Just blind. All these four bombardments gave the idea that it was rather blind, but to prove that they can bombard very accurate, let me look [in the diary] somewhere in May. There are three big garagah [resistance bases] in the Valley of

Zari, where the commanders are sitting with their mujahedin when they are retiring from war. And one day, the 30th of May, in the afternoon at 2 o'clock -- they said it is rather exceptional, normally all the other ones were in the morning from 9 o'clock until 11 o'clock generally -- then the afternoon at 2 o'clock, jets were coming, helicopters were coming. It seems it goes like this: helicopters are staying very high, above the target. The jets take off, and it seems the helicopters are giving the order to let the bombs fall. And then two bombs are falling, and precisely on the target they want to hit. Really precisely. It is not a matter of 5 meters. And they bombed the three places where mujahedin reside, the three garagah precisely, with burning bombs and fragmentation bombs, and the three are destroyed. One mujahed was dead. So it means they have air pictures of the region; it means there are spies that know exactly where the mujahedin are, that have exact information about where are the mujahedin staying, and it means they have the technical means to do very precise bombing. It was the 30th of May.

"But also there have been bombardments the 29th of May with burning bombs, and this was in the neighborhood of one garagah, but actually, it was a house where two families were residing, and 8 persons were killed immediately, and 6 were heavily burned, some really all over the body, from the hair until the toes. Later on in the hospital, 5 days later, I think, one boy of 11 died. He was too heavily burned. We couldn't, we couldn't, but the other ones are still alive. And these are burning bombs. They have told me it's a kind of bomb that makes, that gives free a kind of liquid that is burning." He further explained that some villages in a nearby area (Jauzjan province) had joined padarwatan (the Fatherland Front) partly because of offers of government money, but also because "they say, 'To have no bombings on our village we should keep apart from mujahedin.'" [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 17, 1985.]

Massacres

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report on Afghanistan describes several situations in which Soviet air and ground forces have intentionally killed Afghan civilians: in reprisal for resistance attacks;

during house-to-house searches and the accompanying interrogations; as terror tactics during offensives; randomly; and as part of crimes common to undisciplined occupation armies, such as looting and rape.

The New York Times correspondent Arthur Bonner quoted from an interview with a Soviet soldier who had defected to the Afghan resistance and adopted the Moslem name of Ahmed:

"The Soviet troops can't find the mujahedeen so they kill civilians," he said, adding: "Our officers said we must go into a village and kill all the people and animals, sheep, horses, even dogs and cats. But I thought it was the mujahedeen who were fighting against us, not elderly people and dogs and cats."15/

Testimony from a former officer of the Interior Ministry in Kabul who was responsible for radio communications of some military units confirms that the killing of civilians as reprisal is intentional:

-- "When the mujahedin ambushed a convoy, we got certain orders. For example, one time when a convoy was coming through the Salang Pass [on the major highway from the Soviet Union to Kabul] in Parwan province, the mujahedin took positions in villages or over the convoy. So the mujahedin ambushed the convoy. When they shot at the helicopters over the convoy, they lost control, and the helicopters escaped. Then they send a message to the nearest air base to ask for help and also to the nearest brigade or military post. Then maybe 10 to 20 helicopters and MIGs appear and troops move in about two hours and destroy completely all the villages in the

15/ The New York Times, November 1, 1985.

area. [Afterwards] in reports they mentioned, we killed 20 ashrar [bandits], 30, even 100 ashrar. They mentioned the ladies and children also. They were not saying separately the mujahedin and civilians or ladies and children. They were including any village giving help to the mujahedin -- saying so many houses or villages bombed, because they were helping mujahedin. They would say 30, 50 ashrar killed, including women and children, and 'we cleaned the area [mantegeh-ra pak kardim] from all ashrar.'" [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]16/

Helsinki Watch has collected new reports indicating that the various kinds of massacres continued over the past year. The fact that large numbers of villagers, including children, have been killed in extremely brutal ways has been confirmed by other observers.

"I came here for fighting, but they gave me a job at the base. And they were killing civilians, even burning them with flame throwers. I saw them with binoculars running over civilians with their tanks at a village near the base."17/

Such killings are invariably the work of Soviet, not Afghan government forces. In 1984 Helsinki Watch noted:

While we received some reports of killings of civilians by Afghan soldiers, most of the killings we documented involved Soviet soldiers, sometimes assisted by a few Afghans acting as guides or interpreters.18/

16/ The name and precise former position of the witness are withheld at his request to protect family members still in Kabul.

17/ Nasratullah, former Soviet soldier who defected to the resistance. The New York Times, November 1, 1985.

18/ "Tears, Blood and Cries, op. cit., p. 24.

In every massacre reported in 1985, the killing was the work of Soviet soldiers, sometimes with Afghan guides. In some cases Afghan Party members are reported as telling civilians that such killings were not their fault, but the Soviets'.

Massacre in Kunduz Province

We received three detailed, independent reports of a large massacre in Kunduz province last December or January: from Dr. Juliette Fournot of MSF, who met the survivors in Paktia province as she was returning from a medical mission inside Afghanistan and they were on the way to Pakistan; from Abdul Karim Muheb of Peshawar University, who had interviewed a witness; and from the survivors themselves, interviewed by Helsinki Watch in a Pakistani refugee camp.^{19/}

On December 14, 1984, Soviet forces entered the Issa Khel area of Chardara district, Kunduz, and began searches in several villages. The Soviets looted the houses, destroyed foodstuffs, burned cotton crops, raped women, and killed a number of villagers:

"They also threw on this day three hand grenades into the house of my uncle whose name was Janan. My uncle was sitting by the stove in his dining room when the first hand grenade was thrown. As a

^{19/} Dr. Fournot's account is translated into English in Rosanne Klass, "The New Holocaust," National Review, October 4, 1985, p. 28. The three accounts differ somewhat on the exact dates of the events. The following account is based primarily on direct testimony from survivors.

result my uncle was martyred and the other members of the family sustained injuries of different dimensions, most of them very serious. . . . The first grenade was followed by two more, which ruined almost all of the house. It was not only the fate of my uncle's house but of many houses and families in that village." [Testimony of Mohammad Jan, son of Lal Jan, provided by Abdul Karim Muheb.]

Resistance fighters of the area reacted by ambushing the Soviet column on its way back to its base in Kunduz city, inflicting some light damage. On Sunday, December 22, apparently in reprisal, Soviet troops accompanied by a few PDPA members encircled the nearby village of Haji Rahmatullah at 10 or 11 A.M.^{20/}

- "They entered systematically in all the houses, executing all the inhabitants, including women and children, often by shooting them in the head. Three pregnant women were eviscerated [with bayonets]. Fire was set to the houses, and the flames continued to burn for 5 days. The troops also took with them all items of value and money, which the people offered them hoping to be spared, without managing to save a single life in this manner." [Report of Dr. Juliette Fournot, written June 3, 1985, Peshawar.]
- "The Russian troops entrenched themselves on all sides of the village, and anyone coming out was

^{20/} Mohammad Taher, a 40-year-old graduate of the Kabul University Engineering Faculty and son of the village headman (arbab), also attributed the massacre to the villagers' past activities: "The mujahedin of this village had attacked the Soviets many times. They even captured a Russian general and executed him six months before, so they came to take their revenge." [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Panyian Refugee Camp, Haripur, NWFP, Pakistan, August 23, 1985.] There are other reports of the capture of a Soviet general in Chardara District in 1984. See Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin, March 1984.

was shot. . . . We suddenly observed that a small girl was running out of the village while all of her clothes were stained with blood and barefooted she was aimlessly running. One of our mujahed brothers approached the girl in spite of the danger. He asked her the reason for her sobbing, and she could only say that we were destroyed. . . . When we reached the village [after the Soviets had left] we were shocked to find that not a single human being had survived

"It was winter time, damp and very chilly. Every family's members were shot along with their small children while sitting by the heaters inside the rooms. Most of them were killed while still in sitting positions around their fireplaces. We saw many of the ladies holding their babies tight in their bosoms, both being shot together. In most of the cases many people were brought into one house and then the place was hand grenaded and fired [burned]. Hundreds of those martyrs remained under great piles of clay [the principal building material] unseen and untouched. When we started to take them out of the dust and ashes no one was able to recognise his or her relatives. In most of the cases just burnt bodies were coming out. Those with no survivor left behind remained under the piles. Green banners [of martyrdom] were erected on houses or rooms where the dead were lying under the razed walls. [Testimony of Mohammad Jan, Ibid.]

-- "It was 10 a.m. when some Russians and Parchamis entered the village. We were sitting -- we didn't know -- and suddenly they started killing our people. Some of our neighbors were killed at that time. Then they came to my house. My mother, my brother, my mother's brother, in all 8 members of my family were killed, including girls, boys. They were firing with Kalashnikov and Kalakov and they used bayonets too. [Those killed were] my mother, Ayat Gul, my brother Abdul Sami, Abdul Ahad, my uncle, my uncle's wife, Bibi Gul, my uncle's daughters Safia, and Maria, and Mohammad Hakim, my uncle's one year old son. Safia was two years old and Maria was three. They killed all four members of my uncle's family at once with bullets. Our neighbors, Mohammad Akbar, his wife, his mother, and his one-year-old son were killed. My own family, I saw them when they were killing my family, I saw with my own eyes,

because I was hiding myself in the house. The others I didn't see myself when they were killed, but I took them to the graveyard. In one house of our neighbors 23 people were killed. They were all living in the same house, uncles and nephews, all in one house. And 13 members of another family were killed, the head of the family was named Jawlan." [Testimony of Mohammad Taher, 40, farmer and graduate of Kabul University Engineering Faculty. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Panyian refugee camp, Haripur, August 23, 1985.]

With the help of some village elders who were also present, Mohammad Taher then listed the other heads of households in the village and gave the number killed from each family:

Narmurad: 16
Sultan Murad: 15
Hayat Murad: 12
Pacha Qol: 1 (his wife)
Aurag: 9
Abdul Majid: 7
Ali Mohammad: 8
Amir Mohammad: 13
Gholam Hazrat: 18
Mohammadi: 23
Khaliyar: 14
Abuddin: 8
Anamurad: 24
Abdul Aziz: 3
Khal Murad: 5
Diwanaqol: 11
Abdul Rasul: 6
Ishbay: 7
Qasem: 4
Mohammad Yusuf: 4
Gol Mohammad: 8
Panur: 9

This makes a total of 250 victims.

The survivors of the village and the resistance fighters loaded the bodies of murdered children (and, according to some, of women and elders as well) onto bullock carts, and took them in protest to the provincial capital:

- "After the Russians had finished their massacres, we loaded the dead bodies of children and old people and sent them to the capital, Kunduz, for the Governor. And the Governor didn't care about the dead bodies, and he said, take your dead bodies away, I can't do anything about it. The Afghan military officers, the other people working with the government, KHAD, government servants, they told us, 'It was not our work, it is the Russians who are committing all these cruelties, and we don't have any power or right to do anything. So you can take your dead bodies back and put them in the graveyard, and we will ask them afterwards.' When we brought the dead bodies back to the village to bury them in the graveyard, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, they shelled the village again, and we couldn't put the bodies in the graveyard. We had to postpone and bury them at night. We had no time, so we put six people, ten people in each grave." [Testimony of Mohammad Taher, ibid.]
- "Seeing these great piles of dead bodies, we decided to carry some of them in a procession to the city of Kunduz. The dead bodies of those babies whose ages ranged from infancy to two years were chosen so that the people of Kunduz would realize what destiny we faced. It would also draw the attention of Afghan officials to the Russian barbarism in which they were employed. The babies whom we collected from a part of the village filled ten carts, each cart containing fifteen to sixteen bodies. [Dr. Fournot's account mentions nine carts, each with twenty bodies of women and children.] On the way to Kunduz the people received us in every village with eyes full of tears. When the procession approached Kunduz city, the governor of Kunduz received the procession outside the city. The aged men and women of the region who had accompanied the procession could not control their sentiments on seeing the governor and started cursing him and calling, 'shame to you and your criminals.' The governor seeing the scene which had caused common rage and irritation started soothing the masses and softening their sentiments with consoling words. He pleaded with them that the crime had been carried on without his knowledge. He also wanted to oblige the elders and ordered the district administration to present us

three thousand meters of white cloth for the martyrs' shroud, not knowing that those who receive martyrdom in Islam are buried with their clothes on and do not need shrouds. He also tried to sooth them with saying that when they completed the burial ceremonies their elders must meet him to tell the case in its full detail. But not the least official mention is uttered of the crime till this day. They were able to silence the people for the time being, but history cannot remain silent." [Testimony of Mohammad Jan, ibid.]

The killing reportedly continued in this district later in the year. A farmer from Chardara district who arrived in Pakistan last July explained his reasons for leaving as follows:

"It was because of bombardments and the cruelty of the Russian troops. Because when the mujahedin were resisting, the Russians would bomb the villages, and when the mujahedin had to retreat, the Russians would come in the village and kill women, children, everyone. It happened to our village and to our houses also. Just last month they killed 300 people in our district, and they killed more later around Khanabad [another district of Kunduz]. They used heavy bombs to bomb the village. The bombs make a well -- the hole is so deep it brings up water. When they came inside the village they killed many children by cutting their throats. When they found more, they put petrol on them and burned them. They killed 20, 25 children this way. I don't know most of their names, but there was Masum Khan, Mohammad Ibrahim, Gul Mohammad. I saw the children, women, old ladies too. Mostly they killed children, girls, married women, and old ladies. I had escaped with the mujahedin, but when I returned to the village, I saw the children and women." [Testimony of Saleh Mohammad, son of Mullah Jamal, 30, farmer, Gulbagh village, Chardara district, Kunduz. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, August 21, 1985.]

Massacre in Laghman Province

Soviet soldiers killed over 500 villagers during an April offensive in several districts of Laghman province.^{21/} This massacre was noteworthy not only for the number of victims and the cruelty with which many were killed, but also because refugees reported the use of a new weapon, which they described as a very intense light that burns people to death at close range but loses its effectiveness with distance.

Around April 8 Soviet troops secured the strategic Kabul-Jalalabad highway where it passes through Kats subdistrict on the southern border of Laghman. A column of troops then went north and split, half occupying the region around the provincial capital and half occupying Qarghai district. The troops then attacked the villages. After subduing some scattered armed

^{21/} Five hundred is the low estimate of civilian deaths during this offensive. Some estimates place the total closer to 1000. We used the following sources in reconstructing events in Laghman: Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin, numbers 49 and 51 (April and June 1985); "The April Massacres of Laghman," testimony of Jalad Khan, functionary of the Cultural Department of the (now defunct) alliance of traditionalist or moderate resistance parties, edited and translated by Abdul Karim Muheb, Peshawar University; "Transcript of Interviews with Refugees from Laghman Province, Afghanistan, Munda Camp, Northwest Frontier Province, Pakistan, 5/16/85," Interviews by Ms. Syeed Farhad, Translation by Mr. Sher M. Etibari, Rob Schultheis, video and audio tape, furnished to us by Rosanne Klass of Freedom House and by the Congressional Task Force on Afghanistan; and interviews by Barnett R. Rubin with refugees from various villages of Laghman in Munda camp on August 21, 1985, and in Panyian camp on August 23, 1985.

resistance, the Soviets entered villages throughout the area, destroyed crops and livestock, killed whole families at a time, including many children reported to have been bayoneted or burnt alive, looted houses of all valuable objects, and then withdrew.

-- The Afghan Information Centre presented the following details of casualties as a minimum estimate: "In Kats 72 children, women and old people were killed - In Mindrawar 50. Also about 100 cattle exterminated - Qarghayee-Haiderkhany, 150 - Pul-e Jogi, 15 - Kalakot, 35 - Safu-Khel, 12 - Dehmazang, 10 - Tarakhel, 8 - Aghrabad, 9 - Qala-e-Sarfiraz, 14 - Aburrahimzay, 15 - Laramora 14 - Nissir 10 - Charbagh 35, also houses and the bazaar set on fire. - Qalatak, 9 elders executed - Ahmadzay-kelay 6 - Kamalpur 4 - Qala-e-Rahim 7 - Bela 25 - Pacha Kelay 5."22/ The total is 505.

-- "At 9 o'clock [p.m.] the atheist [Soviet] forces came and surrounded the area. The doors of the houses were locked, and they opened the doors with grenades. And one of our commanders was martyred, and they blew up his house. They killed the horses and they killed the cows. And they were searching the houses for ammunition, weapons, and also for money and anything of value. They looted 1100 houses. They killed six people somewhere else -- they were watering their fields. They had a lantern or lamp and were watering their fields, so when they were surrounded, they shot them. At one o'clock they started to kill all the people, ladies, children, old people, religious people. They went into the houses to search them and they killed these people and put them with the cattle. They killed 9 horses too. After 2 o'clock the mujahedin learned what was happening, and there was fighting for three hours until early morning, when the airplanes arrived. At 8 o'clock the mujahedin

22/ Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin 51 (June 1985), pp. 5-6.

escaped, and 3 Russian corpses were left there, and mujahedin burned their bodies. Mohammad Idris son of Shinki, a commander of mujahedin, was killed while he was praying in the mosque. Haji Nurani son of Mirajuddin, an alem [religious scholar], was killed. Mullah Buzurg, the mullah in the Friday mosque was killed also, and his books were burnt inside the mosque. They killed him with a bayonet in the mosque and then they carried his dead body and put it with the cattle. Then there was Qiamuddin -- he was asleep in his house, and they stabbed him in the stomach. Tor, Qiamuddin's son, when his father was killed he tried to resist, so he was killed. [He was 20-22 years old.] One of the small children hid himself in his mother's arms and they stabbed him with a bayonet in his mother's arms. They shot the mother in the breast -- now she is in Peshawar. [The woman, named Bibi Nisa, wife of Annar Gul, was a cousin of Tor who had come to visit them. The son was named Abdul Sattar.] At 2 o'clock in the afternoon 14 MIGs arrived, and 35 horses were killed in the fields. They dropped 39 napalm bombs and destroyed many houses and shops. They fired rockets to burn the fields and orchards. Mostly they hit the trees and burnt the orchards. When we came back to the village, there were many calves, chickens all killed, and most of the houses were destroyed. In my village we found 30 corpses cut into pieces, and the people could not even tell which were women and which were men. Some of them were cut up by bombs, and some by bayonets." [Testimony of Said Mohammad, son of Jan Mohammad, 41, farmer, Fatehabad village, Surkhrud district, Ningrahar Province.^{23/} Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Panyian refugee camp, Haripur, NWFP, August 23, 1985.]

-- Five orphan boys about 10 years old described other details of the killings in Fatehabad: "When they were shelling Fatehabad village, my father was

^{23/} This village is actually in a portion of Ningrahar province adjoining the area of Laghman where the main offensive took place. According to Shir Dal of Kats, quoted at the head of the chapter, after the main offensive in Laghman, the Soviets "came back to Surkhrud [Ningrahar], and they did more things there."

sitting near the cow shed, and he was martyred there by the BM-13 [artillery]. Then the Russians entered the village, burned the houses of mujahedin, looted their property, and they killed some other people also in the village with machine-gun, rifles, bayonets. [Names of victims were] Abdul Nabi, Mahmud, Ghaffar, Mullah Iman Gul. [He estimated their ages at 40, 70, 70, and 90.] The daughter of my mother's brother, Chata Gul, was killed [aged 16], and Khan Lala, son of my mother's sister [14]." Testimony of Nurullah, son of Abdul Malik, ibid. His younger brother, Dil Lala, was also present.]

"At night my father was going to the flour mill with a donkey. The area was surrounded by the Russians, and they killed my father on the way. He was shot and they also used bayonets. He had 17 bayonet wounds in his body. Abdullah, my mother's brother, about 50, was killed. So was Zalmay [22], and Shal [18]." [Testimony of Yusuf Khan, son of Juma Khan, ibid.]

"My father had a shovel, and he was going to the bazaar. The Russians were there, and they hit him with a grenade." [Testimony of Hasan Khan, son of Akbar Khan, ibid.]

The fifth boy was Nurullah, son of the alem, Haji Nurani, whose death was mentioned above. He testified: "The Russians came and they stabbed my father with a bayonet. The Russians came and landed the troops before nighttime. Then at nighttime they came to the house. My father was asleep, and we were asleep also, and they came and stabbed him with a bayonet. My uncle Qiamuddin was killed. [The same Qiamuddin mentioned above.] Also Abdul Halim, Idris [same as Mohammad Idris, mentioned above], Qaisi, my uncle's son, Lal, son of my uncle, Qiamuddin's daughter. Qiamuddin's daughter was also injured. Abdul Malik's wife was also killed with bayonets."

- Tila Bibi, wife of Akbar Khan, recounted the events in Fatehabad as follows: "When the Russians came we fled from the house, my children and I. My husband was running too. The Russians threw a grenade at him, and he died. Eight people from my family were martyred, my husband's brothers, their

sons, cousins, and other people. They looted my house and then they burnt it. When the Soviets came first they turned on a light, something they put up in the sky so it was just like daylight, something they shoot up in the sky. Then they took the people out of their houses and cut their throats or killed them with bayonets, Kalashnikovs, looted the houses, killed the animals. My husband's brain was coming out, he had lost his hand, lost his leg. When I was running away, I saw them cutting the people's throats." [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Panyian refugee camp, Haripur, NWFP, August 23, 1985.]

-- There are several consistent testimonies of mass killing of the inhabitants of Shalatak village near the provincial center of Laghman: "At the small village in Shalatak all the inhabitants were executed; a small girl was the only survivor. The people were burned with petrol. It was impossible to identify their bodies."

"In our region 150 civilians lost their lives in this second attack. Women were raped and summarily executed. At Shalatak, about 20 women and children had shut themselves inside a house. The Russians first threw hand-grenades inside the house and then set it on fire; all the occupants were burned to death."

"According to the reports of other mujahed brothers who have accompanied the wounded men, women, and children to Pakistan who are now in hospitals of Peshawar, seventy four persons were martyred at Shalatak. Twenty seven of them had been martyred in a double story house belonging to a person named Raees. This tragedy has been narrated by a mujahed of the area who had himself seen the scene as follows: The whole family of Raees's kinship had mustered to his house in terror to take shelter because of the strong walls of the house, not thinking much on the fact that walls cannot have any protection to escape the most cruel type of human beings. Seeing the horrified men, women, and children running towards that unfortunate house, the Russians stormed the gates of the house and knocked on the door to allow them to enter the house. The occupants, being horrified, pleaded emphatically not to open the door. The Russians,

observing the refusal of the occupants, interpreted it as a sort of stubbornness. Therefore they locked the house and set fire to it and thus cremated all of the occupants. When the crime was over and the Russians left the scene, the people from Joogi Qalaand Neelawat rushed to the scene with shovels in their hands to save, if possible, the burning occupants. But with each digging they were obtaining some leg or hand of some cremated one. Seeing the situation, a religious leader who had accompanied the group to the scene, whose name is Mullah Buzurg, told the people not to dig and instead make it a piled and raised ground to signify the shrines of those twenty seven martyrs. The same reporter meanwhile narrated that outside a house not very far from the burnt house a martyred lady had fallen on the ground with a live infant child clinging to her breast, sucking it."24/

-- "At noon, the Russians started to move out, and we began collecting the bodies of the martyrs. Many people we could not recognize, because the heads had been cut off, faces crushed by beating. I found my cousin, who was a teacher, at first, I could not recognize him. In each house we found 2 or 3 bodies. They had killed almost everybody. We went up into the Sheikh Mahmud Farindar area of the mountains, and there we found 14 more martyrs -- some without clothes, they had been killed naked, or burned alive, the clothes burned off them. As we carried the bodies down, the Russians saw us and began firing BM-13 rockets, we brought the bodies to the village. . . . The Russians said, 'You are Muslims, believing in God -- call your God to come and save you from death. Where is your God, and how is he?' And the people said, 'We believe in God, and whatever happens in God's will.' And the Russians killed them too." [Testimony of refugees from Qarghai district. Unpublished interview with Rob Schultheis, op. cit.]

24/ Testimonies of: Jamruz, son of Abdul Hafez, of Qarghai, Laghman, member of Jamiat-e Islami, Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin 51 (June 1985), p. 6; Mohammad Yossof, former Afghan army officer, of Kanda, near Laghman provincial center, ibid., p. 5; Jalad Khan, in Abdul Karim Muheb, "The April Massacres of Laghman," op. cit., pp. 2-3.

Witnesses emphasized that it was an entirely Soviet operation:

-- "As the rest of the civil population had fled, there were not enough hands to collect the bodies and bury them; mujahedin groups did the job. After the Russians' departure, an Afghan army unit came and dug ditches for the remaining bodies. The Kabul officials tried to convince the people that only Russians were responsible for the massacre. They promised food, blankets and shelter; but there were not many people to listen to them. . . . The Russian commandos were groups of 20, 25 or 50 men with a leader. . . . Persons knowing how to read and write were brought by the Russians in front of their leaders who killed the prisoners with one shot of a pistol on the forehead. Local teachers who shouted their sympathies with the Kabul regime, even people producing membership cards in the Communist Party organizations were not spared. All had it. A few Party activists and Afghan army officers tried to resist; the Russians killed some of them and sent the rest in armoured cars to their military headquarters."25/

The various sources describe many more such scenes in Laghman. Refugees also tried to describe a new type of weapon that they claimed to have seen from a distance. We cannot verify their claims, but we present their testimonies in the hope that further research will clarify whether such a weapon exists and what its nature is:

-- "They are using a new weapon. It's like a bulb. They gather the people and use it like a

25/ Testimony of Jamruz, son of Abdul Hafez, Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin, 51 (June 1985), p. 7.

mirror to burn everyone. [Several people present from Laghman and Kunduz provinces raised their voices to testify that they knew of the weapon.] Some people escaped to the mountains and hid themselves in caves -- either natural caves or caves made by the mujahedin. In Laghman province I know of 4 caves with 40 or 50 people inside, where first they shot with Kalashnikovs and then took the mirror and burned them. . . . They first used this mirror in Saur [April-May], then in Seratan [June-July], in Tabi and then in Amber. The first time I saw the mirror. The second time, I didn't see it, but I saw the result. The first time I was not so far away. The first troops who came to the village, we killed them. Actually the first time it was not in a cave. Then more troops came and they collected the people, they pointed their Kalashnikovs at them, and then they used this mirror. It was in Garuch and Badpakh villages. They took people from Garuch and used the mirror, then they took them from Badpakh and used the mirror. The people they killed were ladies, old people, children. [Asked what it looked like, he showed a shiny silver-colored snuff box.] It was shiny like this. Maybe like the bulb of a car. When they used it, it gave a light. It's not very big -- a man can carry it in his hand. All the pro-Soviet and Communist countries are helping the Soviets in this war, but the Afghan Muslims have only one power, which is Islam." [Testimony of Said Mohammad, son of Gul Mohammad, farmer, 36, of Omarzai village, central Laghman province. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, August 21, 1985.]

-- "I saw the light once before sunrise, but I didn't see the instrument properly. I saw the same weapon about two months ago, when they surrounded Alishang and Kalacha. [Despite the date, he probably meant during the April offensive in Laghman.] The mujahedin had come at night to their houses. In the early morning when they were trying to return to their bases in the mountains, the first mujahedin informed them that they were surrounded. Then before sunrise they used the mirror, but it had no effect. The mujahedin had left the village. It burned some of the houses, and the children, old people, women tried to put out the fire." Those present agreed that the weapon seemed lethal only

at very short distances. [Testimony of Ataullah, son of Mullah Abdullah, mullah, 48-50, Kalacha village, central Laghman. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, August 21, 1985.]

- "They are using some new kind of weapon. They use a glass to shine a light on people and burn them. . . I never saw it, but other mujahedin say the same thing, that they are using a kind of mirror against the people." [Testimony of Saleh Mohammad, son of Mullah Jamal, 30, farmer, Gulbagh village, Chardara district, Kunduz. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, August 21, 1985.]

There is extensive corroboration about these massacres in Kunduz and in Laghman province. It is the extent of the documentation that makes them unusual, however, not the extent of the killing. There are many testimonies about other large massacres, but it has been difficult to obtain details or to confirm them independently.

- The Jamiat-e Islami resistance party of Kunduz province has prepared lists of massacre victims. There are five lists, each from one village, headed, "List of Martyrs of the Revolution in the village of _____, on the date 3/10/1363 [December 24, 1984]," followed by the names and ages of each of the victims (some children and women are only listed as son, daughter, or wife of the head of household). The villages and number of victims are: Shar-e Asiab, 150; Khukiani, 97; Ta Laloz, 114; Tut Mazar (also apparently known as Gharao Qeshlaq), 154; Gharao Qeshlaq-e Bala, 114. The total is 629. These people were probably killed as part of the same reprisal operation in which Haji Rahmatullah was attacked, but we have no details.^{26/}

^{26/} The lists were provided by Dr. Juliette Fournot of MSF, who originally indicated that these were the victims some of whose bodies were sent to Kunduz city in carts. A number of other testimonies, however, established that those victims were from the village of Haji Rahmatullah, also in Kunduz. These lists apparently result from another incident at almost the same time.

-- "When we were coming to Pakistan with a caravan, we went to Rabatak [Panjsher valley, Parwan province] because of the rainy season. Then we went to Dan-e Ghuri. When we reached Jangaghli area [of Baghlan], we saw that the Russian troops had occupied the area, and we moved back to Changhar [in the mountains]. These Russian troops and tanks went toward the Karlogh dam, and there was air cover for the convoy. There was a village called Karlogh, and the people of the village escaped to some caves. So when the Russians saw that the people had hidden in the caves, 30, 40, 50 Muslims in a cave, they threw grenades into the caves and also fired with Kalashnikovs, Kalakovs, and other machine guns, and they all became martyrs. About 400 Muslims were martyred in that village. There was no fighting, there was no base of mujahedin there. I saw it myself. I had transferred my family to Changhar and then come back. After a week, when the troops left the area, we went to Karlogh village and also to the caves. All the people in the caves had been martyred, 30 persons in a cave, in others there were 40, in some caves there were 50 people. So the people could not carry out all the dead bodies, so we left them. We just closed up the entry of the caves with mud, and the caves became their tombs." The witness stated the events had occurred in Saur (April-May) 1985. [Testimony of Mohammad Ismael, son of Mohammad Hakim, farmer, 43, of Kokchinar village, Baghlan-e Sanati district, Baghlan province. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Panyian refugee camp, Haripur, NWFP, August 23, 1985.]

Anti-Personnel Mines

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report discussed the use of anti-personnel mines:

We received reports about a variety of anti-personnel mines used in Afghanistan by Soviet forces. Often they are used, not for conventional military purposes, but against the civilian population. Some of these mines are powerful enough to kill, but most have charges that only maim.

Soviet soldiers leave minefields around their bases when they leave an area. Their helicopters drop camouflaged "butterfly" mines around populated areas, on roads and in grazing areas. During a sweep through villages, soldiers leave anti-personnel mines in foodbins and other parts of the houses of people who have fled. We even heard of mines in mosques, of booby-trapped bodies that exploded when relatives attempted to move them, and of trip-wires placed in fruit trees that injure the harvester. There are also persistent reports of mines disguised as toys, pens and watches.^{27/}

The hospitals of Peshawar continue to receive children and others who have lost limbs due to anti-personnel mines. The Soviets have continued to distribute such mines during the past year and apparently have developed a new method for doing so, as well. In the past, such mines were distributed from the air, usually by helicopter, or were left in place by ground troops. Now, according to reports from both Laghman and Paktia provinces, mines are also being distributed from land-based artillery shells.

- Syed Fazl Akbar, former director of Radio Kabul and of the Pashto service of Radio Moscow, now director of the Afghan Information and Documentation Centre in Peshawar, described artillery shells distributing such mines in Paktia province during an offensive in August 1985. [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 20, 1985.]
- "They left mines in the shape of a watch, a pen, a thousand Afghani note, a tape recorder, a radio, a camera, small balls for hockey, and a type of bird that children keep. Yes, they did it this year right up until now, when the troops leave the area

^{27/} "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., pp. 56-57.

they distribute these things by air and also by artillery. Mostly children and goats get hurt, but some mujahedin also lost their feet." [Testimony of Said Mohammad, son of Gul Mohammad, farmer, 36, Omarzai village, Central Laghman district, Laghman. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, August 21, 1985.]

-- "In the cliffside house that serves as a base for my particular band of Muj [mujahedin], a young guerrilla medic works to save the mauled hand of a local 14-year-old boy. When the Soviet armor and paratroops were here last week, they left behind some booby-trapped toys, on the off chance there were some children left in Jegdeleg [Ningrahar Province] to pick them up. This boy found a bright red plastic truck by the river and made the mistake of grabbing it. It must have been defective, because his hand -- though a bloody, torn, skinless mess -- still has all of its digits. The medic is washing and rebandaging it daily, trying to ward off infection."28/

-- Rudy Seynaeve, the MSF nurse quoted above testified: "It was on January 6 [1985], after a period of about 10 days occupation of the Valley of Zari in the north of Afghanistan, that government troops turned back, and they left only one little post behind with about 100 men. But before the valley, in the valley, and the bazaar, and everywhere they had been, there were mines, big and little mines. They described to me some as big as a plate you can eat out of, and when you touch the mine, when you are walking on it, it blows one foot away. . . . We have had a victim of a mine that must have been laid in the same period, in the same valley, Zari."

28/ Rob Schultheis, "Among the Believers: Face-to-Face with the MiGs in Afghanistan's Valley of Death," Mother Jones, November-December 1985, p. 46.

Marie Basuyan, another nurse, added, "It was an anti-personnel bomb, a small one, khaki. ... The Russians had spread a large quantity of these anti-personnel mines. They [the victims] said that it was small, like a matchbox. It was small, khaki, in different shapes, it could be square, round. And he lost his hand."

Seynaeve, having found the notation in his diary, continued: "Yes, the 29th of January, that Nur Ahmad, 18 years old, from Aq Kupruk, arrived with half of his right hand away, already 20 days ago he said. So approximately the 9th of January there had been jets above Aq Kupruk, and he said two big enormous bombs they let fall. The bombs they opened in the air, and out of them little things are falling. And he said approximately 120, he said, little, kind of khaki colored, little things, big as a box of matches. You touch it, and you lose three fingers, half a thumb, even more, half of a hand. But he was the only one that got wounded, because all the others had been destroyed by means of sticks and stones. Children were using them, they threw rocks at them. It's approximately the same time that Alphonse [a Belgian journalist] wrote us a letter, and he said that Aq Kupruk had been bombarded as a reprisal, because a weapon transport had passed by."29/

Basuyan said, "There's the story of the soap, also." Seynaeve continued, "It looks ridiculous, it must have been 20 January, that in Kishindih one man was killed by exploding soap. It means, they have a kind of rough soap that they wash the clothes with. They hold it, and they rub it in the clothes, and they said there must have been something, an explosive in the soap, and when you have rubbed a certain amount, it exploded. He was killed. It looks strange, but they have told it seriously. They were not laughing at it. We have

29/ Aq Kupruk is the site of important archeological excavations. We have no information about their condition. See Louis Dupree, Afghanistan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973, 1978, 1980), pp. 256-271, passim.

only heard of one case like this. They say, we don't know if they are really fantastic -- James Bond -- or if it happens.

"Something else, we had another victim of an anti-personnel mine that must have been left by the Russian troops in January, but it only happened somewhere in May. The 9th of May in Zari an old man, a 'white beard' as they say, 56 years old, something like this -- he had the age of my father -- was digging an irrigation canal, and he found a mine, and it exploded, and he lost his leg. He lost his leg, but he had a lot of wounds, because the bones of the leg that was exploded, pieces of bomb were, you could find them everywhere in his body, in his arms, he had a lot of small injuries, but a lot of them, throughout his arms and the other leg and everywhere the bone of his own leg was flying around and made wounds all over his body. This must have been a mine that the Russian troops had left there when they went away in January." "He died," said Basuyan. "Yes," Seynaeve said. "He died also." [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 17, 1985.]

-- M.N. Zalmy, a U.S. trained lawyer and chairman of the Afghan National Committee for Human Rights, described the results of his on site investigation of the situation in Kunar province (northeast Afghanistan on the Pakistan border) during the Soviet offensive there in May and June: "Commander Salaam was hit by an anti-personnel mine and lost his foot. He and 3 other mujahedin saw 4 jets spreading anti-personnel mines. Another commander, Azi, from Chaghan near Asadabad, told me that he and the mujahedin saw helicopter gunships spreading anti-personnel mines in the fields, the road crossings, and wherever they had attacked the villagers, to kill villagers whenever they returned back to the village." [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 24, 1985.]

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report stated that it was impossible to confirm persistent reports of the existence of anti-personnel mines in the form of watches, pens, knives, and other objects:

Almost from the start of the Afghan conflict there have been persistent reports of mines disguised as everyday objects, often objects likely to appeal to children. These reports are difficult to verify. No one has produced one of these mines for analysis, and those we questioned claimed that examples were impossible to produce because the mines exploded as soon as they were touched.^{30/}

In 1985, however, the Afghan government apparently produced such examples at a press conference and attributed their use to "imperialists":

Kabul - At a press conference organized in Kabul by the Afghan news agency BAKHTAR, new evidence was presented of the terror methods that are a key element of the undeclared war waged by imperialism against the DRA. The instruments of terror, exhibited in the hall where the press conference was held, did not outwardly resemble weapons. However, as soon as you take off the cap of a Flowmaster pen, move an arm or a leg on a doll, try to use a lighter to light a cigarette, or attempt to set a watch, an internal explosive device will go off. There was also a set of miniature explosive devices used to booby-trap keyholes -- the device explodes as soon as the key comes in contact with it -- and a booby trap that looked like an ordinary pebble. . . .

The press conference showed that the exhibited instruments of terror were intended for use against the civilian population. No matter what tricks the inspirers of the aggression use to feign love for the Afghan people, no matter how hard they try to

^{30/} "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., p. 60.

masquerade as their protectors, they cannot hide their true, murderers' faces.^{31/}

Rape and Mistreatment of Women

Afghans are generally reluctant to discuss the subject of rape, a topic that, for lack of information, was not dealt with in the 1984 Helsinki Watch report. In 1985, however, Helsinki Watch received a number of reports of rapes by Soviet soldiers during searches and massacres, as well as reports of other forms of brutality specifically directed against women. Although the evidence is sketchy, it indicates that rape is generally not part of the systematic massacres in the villages. Instances of rape appear to reflect the behavior of an undisciplined and unrestrained occupation army.

Helsinki Watch also received reports of rape and abduction in Kabul City. These reports, unlike those from the countryside, accused Afghan PDPA members as well as Soviets. There are also unconfirmed reports of rape and molestation of women in the prisons.

Pregnant women have been singled out for particular brutality during massacres:

^{31/} Lt. Col. V. Skrizhalin, "Who Are Their Targets: Press Conference in Kabul," Krasnaya Zvezda (Moscow, June 12, 1985). Quoted in Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), vol III, June 13, 1985, p. D-3. The press conference was also reported on Kabul radio's domestic service, 1600 GMT, June 9, 1985, quoted in FBIS, vol. VIII, June 11, 1985, p. C-2.

- Survivors of the massacres in Chardara district, Kunduz, (December 1984) told Dr. Juliette Fournot of Soviet soldiers disembowelling three pregnant women with bayonets. During searches the previous week a number of women were reportedly raped. [Fournot, op.cit.]
- "'At Charbagh [Laghman] I had a friend called Gul Haidar. In the past we hunted together. I heard about his death in the latest Russian operations. I went to Charbagh to help his family.' At that point of his story, the man from Jalalabad broke into tears and said, 'At Charbagh the neighbors of Gul Haidar told me that when the Russians went inside his house, his wife was in the process of giving birth to a child. After the departure of the Soviet troops, the neighbors found everybody dead: bullet holes all over Gul Haidar's body, his wife and her belly torn open and the newborn baby horribly mutilated.'"32/
- "In Shahmangal, the Russians took pregnant women and asked them, 'What's in your stomach? A grenade? A mine?' The woman would turn her face away, because Afghan people don't talk like that. The Russian said, 'There's a hand grenade or mine in your stomach.' Then they took bayonets and stabbed them in the stomach, killing the unborn baby and the mother."33/

Rape is among the atrocities described in the following reports:

- Anders Fange, director of the Peshawar office of the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, recounted the following story which he reconstructed from accounts by refugees he met inside Afghanistan on July 29, 1984: "On our way out, we reached Kantewa pass in the early morning, and we ran into

32/ Testimony of a man from Jalalabad. Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin (June 1985), p. 6. This incident is reported to have occurred during the April offensive in Laghman.

33/ Testimony of refugee from Qarghai district, Laghman. Unpublished interview with Rob Schultheis, op.cit.

a huge caravan of people, camels, old ladies, 8- and 9-year-old children carrying babies. The camels were falling down, the donkeys were screaming. We walked faster than the caravan, and when we reached the top of the pass we looked back and saw about 5000 people. I first spoke to Abdul Ma'aruf of Askalan village, Amal sub-district of Kunduz. [The refugees were all from this area.] He said that a Russian adviser was captured and killed by the mujahedin. Other people said he had been killed by a mine. Then in April or May the Russians came to Amal in force." He goes on to describe how they burned the fields, destroyed food, robbed people of money, and, in an incident corroborated by several witnesses, cut the throats of 12 children one by one while asking villagers for money. "This was one of the few occasions when men told me that their women had been raped. They don't like to say it. I checked the story with others. It differed in some details, but mainly it was the same." [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 16, 1985.]

-- "Last year in Jauza [May-June] they took 21 old people from Alishang to another village -- Ren village. They covered their eyes with plastic and killed them. They had some money with them, so they took the money and killed them. When they came back to the village [Alishang], they raped the ladies and killed the children with bayonets. They tried to rape Ghulam Ali's wife, but she escaped. They raped Mahmaddullah's wife, Razaq's wife. When some ladies escaped from them, they killed the children with bayonets [he demonstrated two upward strokes of a bayonet] and kicked the bodies, just to play with them, a girl 8 years old and a boy 5 years old." The girl was Siddiga, daughter of his brother, Aminullah. The boy was his own son, Mirweis. [Testimony of Ataulah, son of Mullah Abdullah, mullah, 48-50, Kalacha village, Laghman. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, August 21, 1985.]

-- "When coming to Pakistan, in Musavi [in April 1985] there was someone crying. I asked, 'What happened?' He said that there was someone who had been going to Kabul. From the other direction a Russian convoy was coming, and the Soviets stopped his bus. During the search a Soviet uncovered his

wife's face. As she had gotten married recently, they laughed at her and took her away from her husband. Her husband tried everything he could to get her back, but they told him, 'Tomorrow at 8 o'clock we'll bring you your wife here.' The boy went home and informed his parents. Next day in the morning, he came there with a big knife, waiting for the Soviets. When the tank arrived, the woman was set down from the tank. She was injured, and her face was bruised. She told her husband, 'I have lost everything. I have lost face. Kill me.' He started to kill her. The Soviets fired at him with Kalashnikovs. His parents who wanted to take revenge for him, were holding an axe, in his father's hand, but they could not take revenge. Instead they were shot dead by the Soviets. All were buried there. Peace be upon them." [Testimony of Ghäusuddin, 73, artist. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Islamabad, August 28, 1985.]

-- "We left [Kabul] because a group of Russians, about 11 or 12 of them, coming from Kolula Pushta and Bagh-e Bala started to search houses. Then they came to Taimani and reached Mu-e Mubarak. They were searching in Taimani [where the witness lived], and in 5 houses they attempted rape. There was no Afghan government guide with them, only one Hazara boy, who was 17 or 16 years old, and it looked like they had paid him to show them the houses. They were trying to steal the valuable things from the people and tried to rape them. So when my father found that they were searching the houses and committing these crimes, he decided to leave Afghanistan. [This was in Saur (April-May) 1984.]

"Before, the conditions in the King's time and in Mohammad Daud's time were very good for women in the schools and universities, and also there were good conditions to work in the offices. But now it happened many, many times that some girls are missing from the University. Some Parcham Party member has taken them away to their houses or other secret places to rape them. In a city bus in Kabul there was a girl from the University who was very pretty. One woman, a Parcham Party member, was also with her. They put some kind of medicine in the nose of that girl, on a handkerchief or

something, and she became unconscious. And that lady cried, 'My granddaughter has become unconscious!' So she asked the driver to let her off the bus and asked a taxi to take her to the hospital. But in the same bus was that girl's uncle. So he also got off the bus, and he didn't interfere; he was watching what was happening. [Men and women would be seated in separate sections of the bus, so it would not be obvious that he was accompanying her.] Then they drove the taxi toward Chelsetun. When they crossed Chelsetun, beside the hills there were some houses, and they took her to one of those houses. And her uncle followed them in another taxi. So when they took her inside the house he informed the government, and the government went inside the house and arrested the people. And all these people were Parchamis, who had kidnapped that girl from the bus. This was the eleventh girl that this band of Parchamis had kidnapped. The eleventh girl's uncle informed the government. Then the government investigated the situation, and I learned about the investigations, that they found that 11 girls had been taken. I don't know if they were punished.

"From different faculties, every day one or three girls are missing, in the same way. And other girls were taken in other parts of Kabul. At the beginning of 1363 [around March-April 1984], 3 ladies were walking early in the morning in Khairkhana to go to the hamam [bathhouse]. They were taken to a tank and disappeared for a month. Their husbands were searching for them. After that one of the ladies was found, and she lived for only an hour and a half more. She told about what happened to the others, and then she died. She said that the other two had been with her, receiving the same treatment, so they had also died. These were Russians who had taken them. The residence of these ladies was in Kala-e Najaran in Khairkhana, and I was also living there at the time. This story is the truth, but I don't know their names.

"Near Mu-e Mubarak, in Taimani ward, 3 girls were walking along the road, and a Russian tank came up from behind them and stopped. They tried to put the girls in the tank. When they took one girl, she fought back, and there were some boys,

students, maybe from the Teachers' Training College or some Faculty, and they came to help the girls. Those students got some sticks from nearby shops. Then a jeep came up behind the tank, and a crowd gathered to see what was going on. So they didn't manage to get the girls in the tank. From the Russian jeep they started shooting. Two of the girls were killed, a vegetable seller was killed, a shopkeeper, and another girl was wounded, and 11 students were killed, and some other people walking along the road were also injured. I saw this with my own eyes in Mu-e Mubarak, Taimani ward, as I told you before, in Jauza 1362 [May-June 1983]." [Testimony of Fariba Hamidi, 21, nurse, of Taimani ward, Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 22, 1985.]

"About one o'clock in the afternoon some students from Zarghuna Lycee [a well-known girls' school in Kabul] were walking home. A Soviet APC [armored personnel carrier] came and pulled off a Hindu girl, put her in the APC, and drove away. Until now no one has seen her again. This was in the summer of 1362 [1983]." [Testimony of former teacher from Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

"Another story happened in 1361 [1982]. In Deh Sabz [a village close to the Kabul airport] there is a place where the women draw water from a spring. Two helicopters flew over. One was scouting, and the other landed. They took away two beautiful young girls in the helicopter and flew away. Three days later a helicopter appeared and dropped the bodies of these girls from the air. The man who told me was my tenant farmer. I have some land in Deh Sabz. He lost his son, and they are guarding our house." [Testimony of former military communications officer. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

-- "They committed rape many times in Kabul. In Khairkhana^{34/} there were two girls going to the

^{34/} There is a Soviet military base in Khairkhana, which may explain why there are reports of two similar incidents in this particular neighborhood.

hamam. Some Russian soldiers attacked them and were putting them in a tank. There were some people with donkeys, bringing vegetables to the bazaar, and they came at the Russians with shovels, hitting them. The Russians killed two men like that, but the girls got away. I saw this myself in the winter of 1981.

"Another incident was in Darulaman. I didn't see it. They took two women and kept them for a week. Then they both were dead, and they left their bodies in the fields. Some villagers found them and went to the government, but nobody told the Russians anything. Some of these villagers came to Pakistan after that, because they were afraid for their women. All the people in Kabul know this story -- they took the bodies to the Presidential Palace. It happened many, many times. They took 7 kuchi [nomad] girls another time, and their bodies were found 10, 15 days later." "[Testimony of Aatur Rahman Dadgar. Interview with Jeri Laber and Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, September 22, 1984.]

Arrest and Torture

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report describes arrests and torture in the countryside:

During offensives or sweeping operations, Soviet and Afghan troops often arrest men of fighting age. They may be imprisoned in temporary detention camps in the field or turned over to the KHAD for interrogation about the resistance. Most of them are ultimately inducted into the Afghan army. . . . Some prisoners are subjected to more thorough interrogation in KHAD jails in Kabul or in regional centers where they undergo intensive torture, followed by imprisonment or execution. . . . Those who are released from prison may then be forcibly conscripted without notification of their families. Torture is also used by Soviet forces during offensives, sometimes with the help of Afghan interpreters, in order to elicit information from villagers about the resistance.^{35/}

^{35/} "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit., p. 64.

These practices, apparently, are continuing. Some male villagers reported that they had escaped when Soviet soldiers arrived, so that they would not be captured for the army.

A defector from the Interior Ministry who had worked in military radio communications as well as in Pol-e Charkhi prison in Kabul described procedures which we could not corroborate, but which we report in view of the unusual access of the witness:

[After helicopters, planes, and troops destroy a village] Then the ambulance helicopter comes afterwards. They try to surround the village and capture anyone and put them in the ambulance helicopter -- women, children, old men, they put them in the helicopter and send them to Kabul, to Pol-e Charkhi prison, to the central zone [zon-e markazi]. Farmers, old people, and so on go first to Pol-e Charkhi. To [the central KHAD interrogation office in] Sedarat they bring the political prisoners.

In the central zone of Pol-e Charkhi prison there are some Afghan police and also Soviets who speak Pashto, Hazaragi, Persian. These are KGB officers trained in Afghan languages in Russia. They interrogate the people and give them electric shocks with a machine. They use electric chairs and ask them, "Where are the ashrar [bandits]?" Among those people some may be physically or mentally weak, so they tell about the mujahedin bases. Some who can control themselves don't say anything until they die. In this way they find the people who are helping the mujahedin, and they clear those with no links to the mujahedin. For this reason they also call it the "clearance zone" [zon-e tasfiwi]. It belongs to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

When they find that some of them are linked to the mujahedin, they transfer them to KHAD, and KHAD has other branches and other methods of torture.

I was working in Pol-e Charkhi as a member of the administration, and I was also imprisoned in Pol-e

Charkhi, and I had colleagues who were working there. I have seen the evidence with my own eyes, and some of my Muslim colleagues also told me about it. I saw with my own eyes that to this central zone they are not bringing the ordinary criminals from the cities. They brought people from the districts and sub-districts when the troops undertook operations. I myself visited the "clearance zone" in the center of Pol-e Charkhi. [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]36/

Destruction of the Rural Economy

The routine destruction of food and agriculture was described in the 1984 Helsinki Watch report:

Various tactics are employed, from the killing of individual farmers to the destruction of the delicate agricultural infrastructure in the Afghan countryside. These tactics are aimed, not only at spreading terror, but at destroying the food supplies in the villages, upon which the resistance depends for sustenance. Farmers are destroyed, food is destroyed, the means of food production is destroyed. Whole regions of Afghanistan have become barren waste where no one can survive.37/

This pattern continued in 1985 and extended to new areas of the country. Apparently, the offensives and massacres in Laghman and parts of Kunduz provinces have added these provinces to the list of devastated areas, which already included significant portions of at least Badakhshan, Kunar, Parwan, Kabul, Ningrahar, Logar, Paktia, Kandahar, and Herat provinces. Along with

36/ The witness's name and precise job are withheld at his request to protect family members still in Kabul.

37/ "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., pp. 70-71.

testimonies about the killing of civilians are descriptions of looting, destruction of houses, destruction of food, systematic killing of livestock, and burning of fields. The following are two of many such testimonies:

"Right now is harvest time, and the Soviets are burning the harvests. I am also from village, you know, and this happened to my cousin just one month ago, and now they are here. In Dasht-e Archi -- this is the uluswali district [of Kunduz] -- they burned more than 100 fields of wheat. And those farmers are refugees right now in Pakistan. They live in Haripur [refugee camp], because they haven't anything left. The main time they are attacking is this time, and also early summer. Early summer is the sowing time, to put seed in the ground, and this is the harvest time." [Testimony of former executive of a government corporation dealing with agriculture. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 19, 1985.]^{38/}

-- "Until we were forced we wouldn't leave our homes and country. They used napalm bombs and burned all the crops. My house was bombed, and all the property in the house was destroyed. They burned the ripe wheat fields in the month of Saur [April]. In the Kats area of Laghman they destroyed about 2000 houses. And they totally destroyed the area. Until now there is no one living there. Until now the empty beds are sitting on the rooftops, because there is no one left there alive." [Testimony of Said Mohammad s/o Gul Mohammad, farmer, 36, of Omarzai village, central Laghman district, Laghman. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Munda refugee camp, NWFP, August 21, 1985.]

^{38/} The name and precise former position of the witness is withheld at his request.

III. MASS REPRESSION IN THE CITIES

A new totalitarian society is being created by the Afghan Communists and their Soviet allies in Kabul. It is a society ruled by a Party and by secret police that recognize no limits to their power to command, control and repress. It is described in the 1984 Helsinki Watch report on Afghanistan:

It is a society in which all sources of information are directly controlled by the government and ruling People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (P.D.P.A.), which, in turn, are under the close supervision of Soviet "advisers." . . . Criticism of the government is not allowed. Private conversations are monitored by an extensive network of spies. Meetings and gatherings must have government approval. . . .

All educational institutions are under total control of the P.D.P.A. The curriculum has been transformed to reflect Soviet ideology. Marxist studies and the Russian language are required courses in the university. Religious instruction in the high schools has been replaced with "politics" classes in which students are pressured to join the Party. Teachers who do not conform to the ideological line are reprimanded or arrested. Students who speak up in class risk arrest.

The Afghan government's cultural policy aims at destroying traditional Afghan cultural ties to the Islamic world and the West and at instituting a Sovietized, Russified culture. . . .

All political parties except the P.D.P.A. -- from Maoists to Social Democrats to Islamic revolutionaries -- have been outlawed. Membership in the Party confers privilege in every area of life. Employees of public institutions who refuse to join Party organizations risk dismissal, demotion or arrest.

The system is enforced by the largest agency of the Afghan state, the State Information Services, known as KHAD. The KHAD has a larger budget than even the military and is directly financed by the Soviet Union.

Organized in 1980 under the guidance of KGB advisers, it remains under close Soviet supervision. KHAD informers sit in virtually every office and classroom in Kabul.

...

The KHAD's Soviet-trained cadres continually arrest those suspected of opposition. Grounds for arrest may be statements obtained from another prisoner under torture, the report of a paid spy, or the desire to find another member of the victim's family. Once arrested, the victim is subjected to a system of interrogation where carefully calibrated tortures ranging from the most sophisticated to the most brutal are administered with almost scientific precision. Those who survive (and many do not) are transferred to prisons where they are crowded into filthy rooms with dozens, sometimes even hundreds, of others, some of whom have gone mad from torture and others of whom are paid informers. After a time, the prisoner may be given a secret "trial" by the revolutionary court, in which those who try to defend themselves are silenced. Some receive long prison sentences, while others receive the death sentence, which is often carried out in secret.^{39/}

Over the past year control over the population of Kabul has continued to tighten. Since the spring of 1985, there has been a marked increase in the number of refugees from Kabul's educated classes. When asked why he had left the country, a former professor at the Police Academy answered with a single word -- "ekhtenag" -- "strangulation" -- and made a gesture, illustrating a noose closing around his throat.

Many witnesses told stories to illustrate the complete Soviet control over the government and security apparatus.

-- "In the Foreign Ministry there were Soviet advisers. They also go to [the talks between the D.R.A.

^{39/} "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., pp. 83-86.

and Pakistan in] Geneva. First was Sofranchuk. Now the leader of the political situation in Afghanistan is also Vinogradov. There are a lot of advisers, but these are the famous men. For instance, if an Afghan delegation is sent somewhere, the speeches are written or controlled by them. After control [inspection] by them the speeches are legal to be read. Even [Foreign Minister] Shah Mohammad Dost -- he makes a draft, and then the Soviet advisers control it, whether it is suitable.

"Babrak Karmal has no power at all. Even his guard is not Afghan -- all of them are Russians. Without advisers he cannot say anything, not even in the Plenum [session of the Central Committee], so some things may not be against the Khalqi members." [Testimony of former official of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 20, 1985.]

-- "There are Russian advisers everywhere, even in the schools. There were Russian advisers in my school. They were telling the teachers, 'Don't think that the policy of the Soviet Union is weak. We are advisers here to train you, and in the near future we will send you as advisers to schools in Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar.'" [Testimony of former teacher. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

-- "All the losses [in battle] were reported the same way ... we had to send 5 copies, to Karmal, the Internal Affairs Ministry, [Prime Minister Sultan Ali] Keshtmand, the Central Committee, and the Politburo (to Nur Mohammad Nur). And another copy was sent to the Soviet Internal Affairs Ministry, because it had a branch in Kabul in Hajari-Najari. This was a factory where they used to do masonry and carpentry, they made tiles and cut-marble tabletops. In this factory they had a branch of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union. The Russians bought the building from an Afghan." [Testimony of former military communications specialist. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

The KHAD remains omnipresent:

-- "There were three older guys who lived on the street where we did who belonged to KHAD in our school. KHAD was sort of watching the other students. If something

bad happened to the Peshahangan 40/, they would take the boys who were against Peshahangan to the principal to punish them. They gave them electric shocks. Amena, the principal, was giving the shock." [Testimony of former student at Mirweis school, 11. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 21, 1985.]

-- "There was a KHAD organization in the hospital, and we could recognize them. Sometimes they would call me on the telephone or come to my house, and they claimed that they were coming to see my new baby. But my husband had left his job three months before, so they thought I might also leave, and they were watching me, I was under surveillance.

"In the hospital the KHAD were watching people, to see if they said something against the government. If they did, they would give a report to the authorities and say you were opposing the government. If they wrote a report against a doctor, some of them were transferred to lower jobs, like in a small clinic. And some of them left their jobs when they found out that the KHAD had written a report about them, and some disappeared. We don't know what happened to them. Maybe they are in prison. They aren't here, and they aren't in India." [Testimony of Dr. Zakia Bayati Safi, obstetrician-gynecologist, 29. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 22, 1985. Dr. Safi received her medical education during a seven-year stay in the Soviet Union, in Crimea.]

Human Rights Monitoring

It is impossible for anyone in Afghanistan to collect or disseminate information about human rights violations by the D.R.A. or the Soviet forces in the country. Even those who have fled the country often decline to testify for fear that they might cause harm to relatives or associates still in Afghanistan.

40/ Peshahangan [Pioneers] is the Party-sponsored organization for children in primary schools.

Thus, in compiling this and other Helsinki Watch reports, the names of witnesses have sometimes been withheld. One such witness, a former official in the security apparatus, refused even to have his voice taped, explaining nervously, "I know a lot, but I am afraid to tell you in Peshawar." He went on to recount the following incident:

"I am afraid for my mother. Some of my relatives gave an interview in Peshawar, and therefore I was under police surveillance. They told me, 'Someone in your family spoke about Afghanistan.' I said, 'I don't know anything about it.' Every day I had to present a report that I was there. I was watched whenever I left the house or the [office -- the witness named his specific place of employment]. In each apartment building of Microraion there are KGB agents, and I lived there, so I wasn't safe there either. It was the Deputy [head of the office] who asked me about it. He said, 'Someone from your family reported on the situation in Afghanistan.'"41/

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report describes the only known attempt to organize a human rights group inside Afghanistan.42/ It resulted in the arrest in April 1982 of four Kabul University professors who were subsequently imprisoned -- Hasan Kakar, history; Osman Rostar, law and political science; Shukrullah Kohgaday, history; and Habib-ur-rahman Halah, journalism. They

41/ Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 18, 1985. Microraion is a neighborhood of modern Soviet-built apartment houses in Kabul, where government officials and Soviet advisers live. By "KGB" the witness meant KHAD. Afghans often refer to KHAD as KGB, since they consider KHAD the Afghan branch of the KGB.

42/ "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit., pp. 87-89.

remain in Pol-e Charkhi prison, the first three reportedly in reasonably good health and spirits. Professor Halah continues to suffer from deafness as a result of beatings.

The four professors have been adopted as prisoners of conscience by Amnesty International, which has reportedly caused the D.R.A. to accuse them of "contact with imperialism."

In the summer of 1984 a representative of the political office of KHAD named Karim met with Professor Kakar in Pol-e Charkhi prison and informed him that he would be released if he would write a retraction [tubeh nameh] of his views and appear on television to announce it. (This was a repetition of an offer that had been made previously.) Similar offers were reportedly made at the same time to Rostar and Kohgaday. All refused. Professor Kakar is reported to "look very happy in jail, laughing and joking. He says, 'I am happy to be in prison at a time like this. My conscience is clear [ruhan aram hastam].'"^{43/}

Religion

The current government of the D.R.A., unlike its two predecessors, does not openly attack Islam, the religion of 99

^{43/} Testimony by someone close to the Kakar family. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 20, 1985. Apparently Halah has not been asked to recant, perhaps because his physical and mental health have not good.

percent of Afghanistan's citizens.^{44/} It praises Islam in public while exercising control through the Ministry of Religion (formerly the Department of Islamic Affairs). Nevertheless, observance of Islam is an obstacle to success in school and in government employment, and at times may lead to persecution, punishment or arrest:

- "The Minister got some information about me -- very bad things about me.... There it was written, ^{He} is not interested in the government. But the most important thing is that he is an idealist and prays in his office every day.' If Afghanistan is free, I will show you the report." [Testimony of high-level defector. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 18, 1985.]
- "We are not allowed to speak about religion in the school. If we speak about religion, the Peshahangan send reports to KHAD. The Peshahangan are responsible to report about the teachers. If the teachers speak about religion, they must report it. I had some trouble myself. They interrogated me and sent me a letter, that next time I speak about religion I will get in more trouble. This was a warning. If it happened a second time, I would be sent to prison." [Testimony of former teacher. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]
- "Two years ago I was in prison. I was going to Mazar-e Sharif, and I came through the deserts and reached Aliabad [sub-district, in Kunduz]. It was very small, and I didn't know that it was a government-controlled place. I made ablution to pray, in a stream, when one person came. They saw I was a religious person, and when they found out I was not from the government, they took me to the sub-district headquarters. A clerk there was the KHAD officer, and I was interrogated. They beat me with Kalashnikovs and asked, 'Are you a mullah? Where did you study?' I denied that I was a mullah. I

^{44/} See "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit., pp. 115-117.

said, 'I cannot read or write, I am illiterate.'" [He then described how he escaped with the help of a soldier from Maimana Province. Testimony of Abdul Baqi, mullah, of Dasht-e Archi, Kunduz. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Panyian refugee camp, Haripur, NWFP, August 23, 1985.]

- "About one month before I graduated from Kabul University, there were four Parchamis following me and three other girls because we were wearing chador, and they recognized that we were Muslims." [Testimony of Fariba Hamidi, nurse, 21, of Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 22, 1985.]
- "It happened once that some of my relatives and I and Bashir prayed in the school. After that for about a week the police wouldn't let us come to school. This was last year in Deh-e Nau school." [Testimony of former student, 11. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 21, 1985.]
- "My wife was a teacher. She studied in the Faculty of Theology of Kabul University. She was under pressure, they asked her why she was hinting in favor of Islam. Because in the twelfth grade they study tafsir [interpretation] of the Holy Koran. In the class were some Communist students, and they wanted to insult her. They posed some hard questions. Sometimes you are forced to combine tafsir with the political situation. You have to attract students to Communism through tafsir and the Koran." [Testimony of former government official. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 20, 1985.]

Arrest, Torture, Trials, Imprisonment, and Execution

On June 3, 1985, by Decree No. 39 of the Revolutionary Council, the D.R.A. proclaimed an amnesty for some prisoners. Those to be released by the amnesty included adolescents, women with sentences up to 5 years, men over 65 with sentences up to 5 years, men with sentences up to 1 year, and men sentenced up to 5 years who had served half of their term. The terms of other prisoners were to be reduced by one third to one half. The scope

of the amnesty, however, was seriously reduced by the decree's third article, which excepted from the decree prisoners convicted under 18 separate articles of the Penal Code, including most "counter-revolutionary" offenses. Hence we do not know how many prisoners, if any, actually benefitted from the decree.^{45/}

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report devoted 44 pages to documenting the fact that "the Afghan regime and its Soviet allies maintain and enforce control in the cities through fear instilled in a terrorized population, aware of the ever present possibility of arbitrary arrest, torture, imprisonment, and execution."^{46/} Although it is too soon to document specific patterns of arrest, torture and imprisonment during 1985, new evidence emerged in 1985 about certain practices alluded to in the 1984 Helsinki Watch report. Several witnesses also described a new torture device imported from the USSR or East Germany. An 18-year-old girl was tortured with it for fifteen days after her arrest in the fall of 1984 for distributing opposition leaflets:

-- "I was arrested on the fourth of Agrab last year [October 27, 1984]. Two days before I had gone to Khairkhana to distribute shabnameh [underground leaflets], and I was marked absent from school. On Saturday I returned to school and took an examination.

^{45/} The text of the decree was read in Dari over Kabul Domestic Radio Service on June 5, 1985. See Foreign Broadcast Information Service VIII, June 6, 1985, p. C-1.

^{46/} "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit., pp. 123-166.

After I left school, they followed me, and when I got home, I found that a group of people had searched my home. They arrested us [her and her cousin] and took us to KHAD in Sheshdarak.

"During the day I was not tortured. At night, between one and two, I was tortured. They used electric shocks, held our feet and beat them, and asked about our relations with mujahedin, with what group we were working, where we got the leaflets. Despite all this I did not confess.

"For the electric shocks there was a new machine brought from the Soviet Union. They fixed wires around the wrist. There was a chair on which they made you sit. They tied us to it and connected the wires to the electricity. Then they pushed a switch. The chair turned around in a circle. When they connected it to the electricity, the chair moved so fast it made me dizzy. I was tortured like this for 15 days, between one and four in the morning. All the interrogators were men.

"We felt it was a Soviet-made machine, because the members of the KHAD were talking about it among themselves, saying that the new imported machine works well and really makes the people confess easily."
[Testimony of former student from Zarghuna high school. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Islamabad, August 28, 1985.]

-- "They have changed the method of torturing. They have a new machine from East Germany for torturing. The new machine was brought in 1984, very modern machines for torturing. There is a chair, a very comfortable chair. The accused must sit in the chair. When they turn the switch, it turns at 1800 r.p.m. Then there is another type of machine, going zig-zag, knocking the people on the ground. A man came here who showed a broken arm. He saw a doctor in Lahore. He told me he could not drive more than one hour now. I also heard about these machines from another driver. He was from Jaji [in Paktia]. He had a transport company, he had many lorries, and he was coming always to Peshawar with grapefruit and other fruit, and also he brought things to Kabul from Peshawar. He was under the eyes of police. I saw him five months before. He was tortured in January 1985 and left the jail in March. After a few days he came to Peshawar." [Testimony of Col. Mohammad

Ayub Asil, former professor at the Police Academy and director of the Passport Department, Ministry of the Interior. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 17, 1985.]

-- "I heard from my friends who worked in the prison that there was an electric chair. There are wires, lines in the chair. You push the button, and the electricity comes. The chair also turns at 1000 r.p.m." [Testimony of former official of the security apparatus. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 17, 1985.]

The high school student's uncle mentioned that "they had beaten her so badly her eyes could not be seen. And from so many electric shocks, she has many problems." He described her hypersensitivity to noise and stress. When asked if she had any problems sleeping, she replied, "I am afraid of sleep."

Another woman, former science teacher Fahima Naseri, described the torture of women, both in 1981, during her first arrest, and in 1984, when she was arrested again. Much of her testimony confirms the reports of other Afghan women torture victims such as Razia^{47/}, interviewed by Helsinki Watch in 1984, and Farida Ahmadi^{48/}, who testified in 1982 at the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal in Paris. Indeed, Fahima Naseri recalls seeing Farida Ahmadi in the Sedarat interrogation center.

47/ "Tears, Blood and Cries", pp. 138-140.

48/ See Pierre Blanchet, "Le Recit de Farida," Nouvel Observateur, December 25, 1982, p. 41. Farida Ahmadi's case was also cited in the entry on Afghanistan of Amnesty International's Annual Report 1983.

Arrested on April 23, 1981, for her work in organizing demonstrations against the Soviet invasion, Fahima Naseri was first taken to the Party headquarters in Microraiion, where men and women Party activists beat her under the guidance of Soviet advisers. She was then taken to the KHAD office in Sheshdarak: "What struck me most at the entry of the KHAD was the music -- all sorts of very, very loud music, European, Asian, Afghan. And after the first moment I heard the cries of women, men." She was kept alone without food listening to the loud music and the cries until late at night, when a woman and a man came to interrogate her. After they left, she was watched to be sure she would not sleep.

Some time the next day she was taken to another place, which she learned later was the main interrogation office of the KHAD in the Sedarat palace. "They left me in a room where on the walls I saw spots of blood and all kinds of insects and rats. I have never seen so many insects." That night she was taken to a "well-decorated room of the old regime" and interrogated by a seated man named Kaiwan as well as women named Alantab [mentioned by Farida Ahmadi] and Rahilla Tajzai. "They started to beat me and pull out my hair. Alantab was the one who pulled my hair most often. This method of questioning continued until 3 A.M. Then they took me to a room where there were other women sleeping on the floor, and told me to sleep there. I asked where, and they said, 'Here, with the other bitches.'" Two of the prisoners turned out to be undercover KHAD agents. She was preoccupied with worry about her parents, her husband, and her two children.

"The third night they came and took me. They kept asking questions, but this time they brought an instrument with wires. There was a sort of collar of iron they put around my neck. They took off my shoes and made me put my feet on the floor. They brought my notebook with names in it and asked, 'What is your organization, what is your connection with bandits, who are these names in the book?' I said they were my friends, it doesn't mean anything. They gave me an electric shock, and I jumped up. They repeated it the same way. On the third day of electric shock torture, I realized that if I raised my feet, the current was less. So when I saw they were about to push the button, I raised my feet. The wires were attached to my hands, and there was a button on the machine. Each time the electricity passed through me, I fell flat, like a

corpse. My heart palpitated, and I was nearly numb. The fourth night they tried several times more, and then they stopped.

"Then they took me to a dark room with tables, not so big a room, and a woman and a man were there. They again started to pose questions and pull my hair. I had already lost three fingers of hair. [She pulled back her hair to show how it had receded by the width of three fingers.] They made me stand and slapped me. This was the worst, because it did not hurt very much, but it was very insulting. They made me stand on one leg, and when one foot fell down, they would beat me.

"When they finished making me stand on one foot, they took me into another room, where there was some bluish water. They told me to stand in it. And my feet felt like there were needles in them, like ants eating them. It felt like needles, and my feet started to swell as if they would burst. Since then I have pain and a swelling in the toe from that, and an infection. [She showed a swelling on her foot.]49/

"After I think the thirteenth night they took me to another room [she began to weep], that smelled, it was very dark. In this room it stank. I saw a corpse, and there were cut fingers, cut-off limbs, blood." [Overcome at this point, she had to leave the room.]50/

After this she was left alone, except for psychological torture consisting of false news about misfortunes befalling her family. Four months later she was sentenced to one year of imprisonment and one and a half years of parole.

49/ Razia described being forced to stand in a chemical that made the skin come off her feet during her detention in Sedarat. "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., pp. 139, 140.

50/ Farida Ahmadi was taken to the same room: "The first thing they showed me in KHAD were corpses and pieces of corpses." Pierre Blanchet, op. cit.

On May 22, 1984, she was arrested again. A man from KHAD came to her apartment in the afternoon with two KHAD women she knew, Malia Sina and Nazifa. [Razia also mentioned the names Malia and Nazifa as interrogators in Sedarat.] They took her along with her three children, saying that she should come to Sedarat to reclaim her handbag, necklace, and watch, still missing from her previous arrest. They dropped the children in the street near her mother's and took her to Sedarat. She was kept alone in a room from 3 to 6 P.M.

"This time I didn't have the same attitude. I had more assurance, because I said, I can survive the same tortures. And I knew that everyone had taken care of my children while I was in prison. I got up to open the door, but it was locked. I started to knock on the door. I was confident, because I knew they had nothing against me.

"A large old man who looked a little like my father came in with forms to fill out. It was different from the first time, when they had asked questions and then written the answers. This time it was already filled out. He began to talk, and to my surprise he had an accent of [Soviet] Tadzhikistan. If he had an accent of Afghanistan, Panjsher, Badakhshan, I would have recognized it. On this form were my name, first name, parents' names, my cousins, second cousins, and at the end of it was a question: 'How many times have you been arrested?'

"I answered, 'I was only arrested once,' and I gave the dates. 'This time I have only come for my bag, necklace, and watch.' This man insisted that I had to write it was my second arrest, but I refused to write it.

"A girl named Zakia came. I knew her and her sister Mohsena. They both work for KHAD. Zakia said, 'Give me the keys to your house.' I asked, 'Why?' She said, 'You are still on parole. You must confess. If not, you will be hanged.'" Zakia eventually seized the keys.

"Toward night a group came back. They started to talk outside the room, saying, 'We found lots of evidence in her house.' When I heard it, I asked what they had found. It was nothing but the Holy Koran. They did it only to scare me. I knocked on the door and said I wanted to go to the toilet. Zakia opened and said, 'You must confess, or else you will be hanged.'

"The night passed. In the morning a girl named Hamida came and took me into a furnished room. She said, 'Now we will ask questions, and you must confess, or else you will be hanged.' This time, unlike the other, they constantly said I would be hanged.

"Again they started to ask questions: 'You must confess. All of your family has been arrested.' They showed me forms with photographs of my children and said they would be sent to Parwarishgah-e Watan. They said, 'Your sister has been arrested, your whole family has been arrested.'" This pattern repeated itself for 23 days, as more and more of her family were added to the list of those arrested. [All of these statements were false, except that her sister had indeed been arrested briefly four days after her arrest.]

"This time there was no physical torture, but I was in a terrible state because of this. After six months one day someone came and said, 'We are reopening your file. You have spoken too much to the other prisoners. We will judge you again.' [Speaking to other prisoners was forbidden.] I thought, 'Who cares?' I was ready for anything. 'Nothing is worse than this. Being hanged would be a relief. Pol-e Charkhi couldn't be worse than here.'" After forcing her to sign some papers saying she had been well treated, however, she was released, as she protested: "I said, 'You should have some proof to put me in prison! Now after six months you say you have no evidence.'" "

Fahima also saw many other things in prison:

"One of the things that struck me the most was that when pregnant women were taken to the hospital [from prison] to give birth, they were brought back with their children, but as soon as they came back, they started interrogating them again. As a result of tortures, they had problems and couldn't nurse their babies. They had chest infections." [Fahima Naseri, former science teacher. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 27, 1985.]

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report described the role of Soviet advisers in interrogation:

Soviet advisers are present in all major detention centers, most visibly in Sedarat. In most cases, it appears to be Afghans who carry out the torture and interrogate prisoners, but they are supervised by the Soviet advisers, whom they frequently consult. . . . The Soviets also take direct charge of the interrogation of important prisoners. . . .

Direct Soviet involvement seems to be increasing.^{51/}

New testimony confirms this analysis:

-- A resistance fighter under Commander Abdul Haq of Kabul Province was arrested around February 12, 1983, the morning after he had helped destroy an electric pylon. He was not captured with a weapon, however, and was tortured first in the Fifth Office of KHAD (the counter-insurgency office) and then in Sedarat. He described the role of Soviets as follows: "In the KHAD Fifth Office Russians were coming and interrogating us. The Russians asked, 'Where is your center? Why did you join the ashrar? Why did you use rifles against the government?' He had a translator, but he spoke Persian. I said, 'I don't have a center.' He asked, 'Why are you an ashrar?' I said, 'We are not ashrar, we are people working the land.' If we agreed we are ashrar, they would have killed us. During that session I was not tortured. The Soviets gave the order, and then the Afghans gave the torture.

"In Sedarat there were many, many Soviets. There were many Soviet advisers supervising the interrogators, giving advice on how to give torture. They were working as sort of inspectors of the interrogators. One adviser interviewed me there. He asked me, 'Why did you oppose the government and join the ashrar? What was the main reason?' But if I told him, they would execute me. So I said, 'I am poor, a peasant's son, and I have never been an ashrar.' He had an interpreter who spoke Persian. That time I was beaten, slapped, and kicked. The Soviet adviser beat me with his hand and kicked and punched me. Only Afghans gave the electric shocks, but the Soviets were ordering them to do it.

^{51/} "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., p. 147.

"The Soviets asked more complicated questions. The Soviets would ask, 'Why did you destroy the pylons? Why did you want to cut off the electricity? Why did you become an ashrar? Why do you destroy mosques, villages, government buildings?' The Afghans only asked simple questions, like, 'Where is your center? Why are you against the government?'" [Testimony of Nader Khan, son of Mohammad Anwar Khan, 23, of Tangi Charo area, Deh Sabz District, Kabul Province. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 21, 1985.]

- The student from Zarghuna high school could see the Soviets controlling the interrogation in Sheshdarak KHAD: "There are Soviets in Sheshdarak KHAD, but not in Department 7, where I was. During my interrogation the Soviets didn't come. But there was a Soviet adviser to the head of KHAD in Sheshdarak. And we were told that if someone does not confess, he advises the members of the KHAD about the torture.

"We had two ways of knowing that the Soviet advisers were telling them how to torture. First, our building was opposite the Sheshdarak office building. We could see the Afghan taking papers into his [the adviser's] office. And, second, when the Afghan KHAD people came back [from the adviser's office], they were saying that such and such a person should be tortured or should be released. So we think it is controlled by the Soviets."

- Fahima Naseri also saw Soviets in the interrogation centers and was able to judge how their role changed between 1981 and 1984: "There were a lot of Soviet advisers in KHAD. We heard in prison [in 1981-1982] that there was some control by the Red Cross or human rights organizations, and therefore the Soviets didn't intervene directly. But we could see them behind the doors signing the papers and even telling the Afghans what paper to use. The Afghan KHAD people did nothing without their orders.

"The main difference the second time was the increased dependence of the Afghan KHAD on the Soviet advisers. The last time it was much more pronounced than the first time. For example, the Afghans bragged to each other about being close to the Soviet advisers. They competed with each other for their attention. The first time I clearly distinguished the Soviet advisers

from the Afghans, but this time the Soviets were in direct contact with the prisoners. I also heard that the Soviets give torture themselves sometimes for more suspect, more dangerous prisoners. I especially heard this the last time."

The lack of all protection for the accused in the Special Revolutionary Courts^{52/} is revealed in the words of Babrak Karmal himself:

"In December [1984] in a speech to Khad investigators, Special Revolutionary Prosecutors and Special Revolutionary Tribunal officials, President Babrak Karmal declared that 'false humanity . . . [towards] the counter-revolutionaries' should be avoided. He urged prosecutors to object if the court 'unjustifiably determine[ed] a light punishment' and directed courts to acquit defendants 'only in the light of total and clear innocence of the accused.'"^{53/}

After trial a prisoner is transferred to prison to serve out the sentence or to await execution. Professor Hamidullah Farhat, former lecturer in Physics at Kabul University, who spent three years and three months in prison after his arrest in February 1981, clarified the system of administration in the prison. According to his testimony, after a strike in Pol-e Charkhi in June 1982 ^{54/}, the prisoners awaiting trial were separated from those

^{52/} See "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit., pp. 156-161.

^{53/} Amnesty International Report 1985, p. 197.

^{54/} See "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit., pp. 153-154.

already sentenced. Those still under investigation were placed under the supervision of the Parcham-controlled KHAD, while those who had been sentenced were held under the administration of the Khalq-controlled Ministry of the Interior.^{55/}

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report described conditions of detention in prisons and interrogation centers that routinely include overcrowding, lice infestation, inadequate food and sanitation, punitive control of access to toilets, abuse by guards, and spying by informers among the prisoners. The report also described special rooms for most dangerous prisoners, including some rooms "with such a low ceiling that it was impossible to stand up, about 1m by 1.5m."^{56/} The existence of such cells was confirmed by a former official of Pol-e Charkhi prison. We also learned of cells where "dangerous" prisoners are kept chained in cages.

-- "In Pol-e Charkhi there is a special block of cells for dangerous prisoners. [He drew a diagram, showing that it was a three story building to the left of the main gate, next to the circular arrangement of the eight principal blocks.] In these cells, there is no room to stand up. As soon as the prisoner sees them, he loses his morale. I saw them. I was imprisoned there [under the Taraki regime]. I was the commander there, and then I was imprisoned there. I spent eight months there, because I permitted some prisoners to walk in the

^{55/} Professor Hamidullah Farhat was interviewed by Barnett R. Rubin in Peshawar on August 19, 1985.

^{56/} "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., pp. 137, 138.

sun. At that time the construction had not been completed, but now it is completed. There is no central heating, Actually, it has a heating system, but they don't turn it on, because they want the prisoners to be cold." [Testimony of former official of Pol-e Charkhi Prison. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

-- "We were in a cage in Pol-e Charkhi. In this cage, you can't stand up, and we were handcuffed to the side of the cage." [Testimony of Mohammad Hasan ~~Saikh~~, former employee of the Ministry of Water and Power in Kabul, where he worked as an agent of the Jamiat-e Islami resistance party. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Islamabad, August 28, 1985.]

The Revolutionary Courts continue to sentence many people to death. Although the D.R.A. announces relatively few executions publicly, reports from prisoners indicated that dozens, perhaps as many as a hundred or more prisoners a week are taken at night from Pol-e Charkhi for execution, and that executions, including sometimes extra-judicial ones, continue in other prisons around the country:

-- "A Supreme Court judge who fled Afghanistan for India said today that his country's legal system had been reduced to what he called organized 'terror' by the Soviet-backed authorities. ...

"[Mohammad Yusuf] Azim said he knew of at least 100 cases in which it had been announced that people had been sentenced to death by the special courts. Many others were executed and their sentences recorded by the courts after the executions. 'Many of these victims never appear in court, and in these instances the special courts do not even know them,' he said."^{57/}

^{57/} Reuters, New Delhi, April 26, 1985.

- "There were many people executed in Pol-e Charkhi: a commander of a group of mujahedin from Hodkhel [northeast of Kabul near Pol-e Charkhi] named Azim Jan, Jalil from Ghazni Province, who was chief of finances of the mujahed front of NIFA [National Islamic Front of Afghanistan]. They were executing people sometimes every day, sometimes every other day, sometimes every third day, 30 or 40 people. When they were taken to execution, they were first taken to the first floor of block one. Their faces were covered, and their hands were chained. Then they were put in a special truck and carried to the executions. We watched from the windows. Some were crying 'Allahu Akbar' [God is great], but some were gagged." [Testimony of Nader Khan, son of Mohammad Anwar Khan, 22, resistance fighter of Hezb-e Islami (Khaless), of Tangi Gharo, Deh Sabz district, Kabul province. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 21, 1985.]
- "From the beginning of this year, from Hamal [in late March, the Afghan new year] after sunset two vehicles without doors and windows would come to pick up prisoners sometimes every day, sometimes every two days, and they took the prisoners and carried them to Polygon Field, code number 15. [This is the military code for the brigade stationed at Polygon Field behind the military academy near Pol-e Charkhi. Polygon Field is the main execution ground.] First they had doctors take out all their blood, because they need a lot in the hospital, and then they were shot. Then tractors and bulldozers came and covered them with mud.
- "When the prisoners were taken to be executed, they would cover their eyes, gag them, chain their hands, and put them in the vehicle and transferred to Polygon no. 15. The prison was four stories high, and the prisoners upstairs could see where they were going. At the beginning a soldier would stand there to keep the prisoners from seeing them execute people, but sometimes the prisoners could see them in the distance. When they were transferred, on that night the prisoners in each block would pray for the dead and recite verses of the Holy Koran. We knew about the blood because some of the soldiers were also Muslims. We got the information from different sources, from the

soldiers and from some other people, workers in the prison, or lower ranking army officers.^{58/}

"They took 20, 25, up to 30 people at a time for execution, sometimes every day, sometimes every other day and always after two days, at least three times a week. There were 70 people with me in a cell in block one of Pol-e Charkhi in Ramazan 1362 [around July 1983], and afterwards I only found 20, and the rest were executed." [Testimony of Zmarai Shikari, son of Mian Gul Shikari, 21, resistance fighter of Hezb-e Islami (Khaless), of Gazak village, Bagram district, Kabul province. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 21, 1985.]

-- A prisoner released from prison in Jalalabad (Ningrahar province) in May 1985 described executions there: "Every day they were taking about eight prisoners and killing them in Miali Samarkhel [a nearby military post]. All the Khalgis and Parchamis were very, very cruel. Some of them were killing the people, they were saying, 'I know this prisoner, he killed my brother, he shot at me.' They killed them without proof, without judgment." [Testimony of Dir Mohammad, son of Gul Mohammad, of Charbagh district, Laghman province. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Panyian refugee camp, Haripur, NWFP, August 23, 1985.]

^{58/} Assadullah, a former student of the Polytechnic Institute who was released from Pol-e Charkhi in July 1985, told the Afghan Information and Documentation Centre in Peshawar that he could confirm that condemned prisoners are drained of blood before execution. He noted that the blood was used for "wounded Communist soldiers." See Afghan Realities, November 1, 1985, p. 1.

IV. CREATION OF A NEW, SOVIET-TRAINED GENERATION

It is not a violation of human rights to send Afghan children to the USSR on scholarships or subsidized vacations, of course. But it is a human rights violation when small children are forcibly separated from their families and sent abroad to be trained in a foreign culture or when children are trained as spies or commandos to serve in the Afghan conflict.

For several years now the Afghan government has been administering a variety of programs under which children of various ages are encouraged or pressured to go to the Soviet Union for training periods ranging from months to years. Recently a new program has been introduced under which thousands of children are being sent each year to the Soviet Union for ten years of education. Many of these children are taken from newly established "orphanages" known as Parwarishgah-e Watan (Fatherland Training Centers). Others are separated from their families and culture by incessant pressure, deceit, or force.

Short-Term Study Programs in the USSR

Various methods have been used to send children to the Soviet Union for visits of up to six months. Although some students report good educational experiences, others reportedly have been forced to work:

- "Right now in the school they start to send, we heard on the radio, maybe about 8,000 or 5,000, more than that they have sent to the USSR by different ways.

And they put a special obligation on them. If they go to USSR, they will see many things. For example, if a child is about seven or eight years old, he is coming back from USSR, and he has a doll with him, or something else. The other poor people, when they look, from different parts of Afghanistan, maybe they lost their parents, they think, this child came from USSR with a good suit, with some dolls and puppets, it's a good way." [Testimony of former executive of Afghan government corporation. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 19, 1985.]

-- "Mostly when we line up before going to class, the principal would show us pictures of students who have gone to the Soviet Union, what things they are doing there.

"The Peshahangan went to Russia in time to pick apples or corn. Three times I ran away from the school to keep from going to Russia. They took students two or three times to the airport, or somewhere, and brought them back. Each time I ran away, I didn't show up. I used to give some money to the servant who was working over there, and he would let us go for drinking water, and we left the school. We threw our bags out the window and picked them up. We were scared, because they took some other students in a separate car, and they were told that they were going to be sent to Russia. So we were scared we would be taken to a car." [Testimony of eleven-year-old former student at Deh-e Nau school, Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 21, 1985.]

-- "When we were in Afghanistan, in 1362 [1983], more than 300 students were sent to the Soviet Union. Their age was seven, eight, nine years old. When they were in the Soviet Union, they were getting food, clothes, everything, good living conditions, and also they were telling the families without enough income, they had to send their children, because they were not able to give proper food or clothes to the children. So they gave these children to the government, and they sent them to the Soviet Union. And in the Soviet Union they were trained to join Padarwatan [the Fatherland Front]. In Russia they were brainwashing them and constantly telling them that if we succeed in Afghanistan, we will make you the same kind of dolls, playgrounds, and give you the same kind of food. They showed these children on Kabul TV. One of the

neighbors who was sitting in our house, his son was in the Soviet Union. When he came back, I asked him these questions, and he told us." [Testimony of Fariba Hamidi, nurse, 21, of Taimani ward, Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 22, 1985.]

- "They were sending seventh and eighth grade students to the Soviet Union. When they came back, they were weak, worn out. I asked them why. They said, 'They were taking us by bus and forcing us to work in a garden or to wash carpets. We were forced to work a lot in Russia.' They were sad and upset. They were also from our school." [Testimony of former teacher from Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

Force or deceit were sometimes used either to send the children or to lengthen their stays:

- "They were forcing students to join Sazman and Peshahangan. When they join Peshahangan, there is no need for parents' permission -- they are sent to Russia. For instance some boys about 11 or 12 years old, Ilyas and Iqbal, went to Russia without their parents' agreement." [Testimony of former teacher from Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]
- "They were sending children from kindergarten, about three years old up to nine years old, they were sent to the Soviet Union. Kindergarten and pre-primary school children were sent, too. The parents had to send their children, because if there was a group of 20 children, if maybe five were willing to send their children, because they were Party members, fifteen of them were opposed, but they had no right to refuse. They had to send them because of the fear that the government will punish them. I don't know their names, but some people were coming to work [at a hospital in Kabul] and talking about this. When I asked them, 'Why do you send your small children to the Soviet Union,' they said they had to, because there was no other way. I heard this personally from many patients I examined, from teachers, from nurses in the hospital. The children stayed 20 days, one month, up to six months." [Testimony of Dr. Zakia Bayati Safi, obstetrician-gynecologist, 29, of Kabul.

Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 22, 1985. Dr. Safi lived for seven years in the Soviet Union (the Crimea), where she received her medical education.]

-- "From my class, two classmates went to the Soviet Union. There were 15 or 20 who went, but I know only two, Shah Jehan and Naqib. They were taken to a private room, and they were told that if they go to the Soviet Union, they will get a lot of good things, like a bicycle and other good stuff, so they went home and discussed it with their parents, and finally their parents let them go.

"They were told that they were going to go for only three months, but when they went there, they sent letters to the class. They said that they would be there for ten years. So the students went to their house and told their parents that we got a letter from your sons, and they say in their letter that they are going to stay there for ten years. Then their parents got mad, and they said that probably they would come to the school and talk to the people who had taken their sons for only three months or five months, but now they are going to stay for ten years. How come? I went to the houses of both, I even had lunch over there. [Naqib returned after one and a half years. Shah Jehan had not returned. This occurred about two and a half years before the interview, when the witness was in third grade.]

"The students who went to the Soviet Union in first, second, or third grade, after they graduate from eighth grade, they are supposed to go to the Soviet Union to study. Some who finished eighth grade were taken by force. A policeman came to the school, and they were taken by force to the Soviet Union. This happened when I was in third grade in Deh-e Nau school [in 1983]. There was a guy named Bashir, he was from Panjsher. He was taken by force. Bashir's mother was there, and some of the classmates went downtown with her. Then the police rented a taxi and took Bashir and his mother to go to the airport. There was no place in the taxi for us, but the police asked us, 'If you really want to go to Russia, come on, get in.' But we refused, so we went home. Later on we found out from Bashir's mother, she told me, 'The police gave me a picture of my son, and after that I didn't see him again.' Bashir's father was dead."

[Testimony of eleven-year-old former student at Deh-e Nau school, Kabul. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 21, 1985.]

Some children whose parents were killed in bombing attacks were transferred directly to the Soviet Union:

- "When they bomb some village and the parents lose their lives, if some children survive, they collect them and take them to the Soviet Union. They collect babies, two years old, three years old, and send them to Russia. We were getting reports from the districts and subdistricts. The military commanders in the political headquarters had to report, 'In this area we have completed the operation, and so many villages were destroyed, and so many children captured by the "forces of friendship" [guwa-e dost, the term used to refer to Soviet forces] and transferred by helicopter to the Soviet Union.' In many, many reports they said that so many children were captured." [Testimony of former military communications specialist. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]
- Ingvar Oje, a journalist for Dagens Nyheter (Stockholm), reported that, when he was in New Delhi in May 1985, he met an Afghan physician who described seeing Soviet forces collect small children orphaned after a bombing attack in the Hazarajat region of central Afghanistan. [Telephone interview with Barnett R. Rubin, July 5, 1985.]
- "In the bombarded villages and cities members of the Afghan army gather surviving children and take them to Kabul, where they are later prepared for their departure to the Soviet Union. Out of the surviving Afghans a group is gathered to make its trip to Moscow."59/

59/ Walter H. Rueb, "50,000 Afghans Sent by Force for Indoctrination in the Soviet Union and its Satellites: Schoolchildren also Affected," Die Welt (Hamburg), August 5, 1985. This article, datelined Bonn, appears to be based on reports from unnamed Kabul government defectors in Germany.

Long-Term Study Programs in the USSR

In 1984 Babrak Karmal announced a new program under which thousands of children would be sent to the Soviet Union for ten years of education.^{60/} Many if not the most of these children are first sent to an institution founded in May 1984 called Parwarishqah-e Watan, or Fatherland Training Center. The Parwarishqah-e Watan serves as a conduit into the other program.

In addition to collecting orphans, the Soviets and P.D.P.A. use a variety of means, from persuasion to kidnapping, to recruit students into the program. Poor families are told that sending their children to Parwarishqah-e Watan or the Soviet Union will provide economic security. The authorities threaten to arrest parents and exclude their children from school if they refuse to give up their children. There are reports of parents who were arrested, and of children kidnapped from their homes or even on the street by soldiers and Party members.

-- "They started sending first graders for ten years in 1363 [1984]. It was an emergency program. The Party members were saying that although the Soviets had tried to convince the older people, it was not possible, because of their ideology. So they started an emergency program to start with children and train them. From my first- grade class 10 students out of 22 were sent. The teachers who were members of the Party sent even more, not only from first grade, but

^{60/} See "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., pp. 110 and 190.

from second and third grade too. When they are older than nine years, they don't send them." [Testimony of former teacher. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

- "There are some children who have become orphans. They have lost their parents or fathers or guardians. Either their relatives were killed by Khalqis and Parchamis, and they have no living relatives, or they are children of Khalqis and Parchamis who were killed, but they have no relatives, or their relatives will not accept them, because they are not Muslims. There is an institution for them in Wazir Akbar Khan on the north side of Kabul. This is the Parwarishgah-e Watan, or Fatherland Training Center.

"This institution for the orphans is run by KGB and KHAD together. They have their own separate schools, hostels, dormitories, and a different syllabus for their teaching. The majority of these orphan students are sent to the Soviet Union, because they don't have any relatives. The Soviets and the KHAD think they will be the hard core of Communism in the future. Other children might cry for their mother and father, but these children have no one to cry for.

"In other schools they don't come directly to talk about Karl Marx, socialism, because they don't want the students and parents to revolt. But the curriculum for the orphans is different, because it is a curriculum based completely on the Communist way of teaching. Children in other schools might take the books home to their parents, but these children don't have any parents.

"There are very few people who know about this. I get the information from different sources, from people who are still in Kabul. People come here who are close friends -- I don't like to disclose their names. Especially there are people from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Planning. The Planning Ministry is the central office for sending people to the Soviet bloc." [Testimony of Professor Rasul Amin, former Professor of Political Science, Kabul University. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 17, 1985.]

- A recent defector from a high level position in Kabul, when asked about reports of an agreement to

send thousands of children to the Soviet Union for ten years, answered: "This agreement was signed with the trade union organization for ten years. It states that the USSR will accept at least 2000 each year for ten years. If there are more, it doesn't matter.

"Most of them are from Parwarishgah-e Watan. This was established two years ago with the aim of educating fatherless children, members of the Party. These children are under the care of the government, and all are directly sent [to the USSR].

"Some volunteer, because it is free. Mostly they are poor people, they find them through the school. The director of the school knows if a child is poor and has no father. He reports to the government that in this school there are such children. They encourage them, saying you will go to the Soviet Union for ten years, and you will be educated, fed, and you will come back and get a high position. They have to allow them. They use sweet words to encourage the parents.

"There are two parts [of Parwarishgah-e Watan]. One is in Wazir Akbar Khan, and one in Kart-e Seh [two neighborhoods in Kabul]. The one in Wazir Akbar Khan is right behind the American Embassy.

"The first group was sent to the Soviet Union before I came here. When they were sent to the airport, the majority of them were crying that we don't want to go there. They shouted, 'Take me back home.' But they were taken. The second group, when I was here, I heard that more than 2000 were sent.

"In the USSR they live alone, by themselves. They are located in some special places, and they are provided with everything. It is in Central Asia. The majority of them are taken to Tashkent -- they can speak Persian there. Also, infants can be sent."
[Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 18, 1985.]

-- "Some parents were arrested. He was my close friend. He had three children in -- I forgot the school's name -- also in Kart-e Parwan. Two times they said, leave these children to send them to Soviet Union. They were 8 and 11. The name of their sons, one was Hamed, and the other was Seddiq. They were sent by force to the Soviet Union, and their father, Wali Jan, and his

wife [named Seddiqa], they are in jail right now. Wali Jan was an ordinary man in private business, in the bazaar. He was in the business of spare parts for automobiles. First they arrested the parents, and then they sent the children. They were arrested about 45 days ago. You know, this story happened, I saw it happen, and also there was a question to me, and this was the cause that I came to here.

"I don't know exactly for how long they are sent, but they have a special godown [warehouse] for children. They call it Parwarishgah-e Watan. We say this is a godown for children, to make groups and send them to Soviet Union. And they took them there, and from there they sent them." [Testimony of former executive of government corporation. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 19, 1985.]

-- "Everyone knew in Kabul that they are sending all the children to Russia. In Kabul they had the Parwarishgah-e Watan, and they were transferring the children from Parwarishgah-e Watan to Russia. Mrs. Karmal is the head of it. They are sending seven-year-olds straight from first grade for ten years, up to college. Then they go for further study. Some of my colleagues told me, they were at Kabul airport, and when they loaded the students at the airport, the parents were crying. The children were smaller than my youngest. These were the ones sent for ten years." [Testimony of former military communications specialist. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

-- "Some students went to Russia. Some went for ten years. These were first grade students. Maybe their parents were Party members; I don't know. When the fathers were in Parcham or KHAD, they would come to class. They were asked to take their sons away from the school so that they could be sent to the Soviet Union. So they came to school and said goodbye to the school. But their mothers did not know -- they had divorced their husbands, because the women were Muslims. The children were crying, they didn't want to go. Some children lost their morale in Russia and were brought back.

"When the parents lost their lives, killed by mujahedin or in a bombardment, if they had relatives in Kabul, they came and went to school. Or if there

was a heavy bombardment, and the parents were lost, if the child had any relatives in the Party, they would move him to Kabul and send him to school. Some of these were sent to Russia. Some of the ones sent for a long time were orphans, who were forced to go, some agreed, and some were against. In the Parwarishgah, all the teachers are Soviets, Mahbuba [Karmal, the wife of Babrak] is the only Afghan there. [Testimony of former teacher. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 25, 1985.]

-- "Last year [1984] in the month of Sunbullah [August-September] one of my colleagues who was working for me was forced with some other girls and three or four boys to go to the alleys of Deh Mazang and Jamal Mina. They had the duty to search the houses, and find all those children who had no fathers and were being kept by their families. Their families were very sad and unhappy, and the mothers were crying. They took some kind of note from all of them and made a list. Then some soldiers came with a vehicle and took the children out from the houses by force, took them to the airport, and flew them to the Soviet Union. Of course, this was by force, not by their own will. No family, no matter how poor or hungry they are, could willingly send their innocent children to the Soviet Union, where they have no future.

"When this colleague of ours came, this colleague of ours was one of those Party members, and she was working for them, and she herself told us with her own tongue, 'We have collected three thousand children from the houses in one month.' She was a girl with human feelings, and she was crying and saying, 'We took people by force from their houses and sent them to the Soviet Union.'

"I also heard that a girl had disappeared, and her mother went to look for her. A military officer met her and saw that she was crying. He asked, 'What has happened, madam?' She said, 'I have lost my daughter, and I am looking for her.' He answered, 'Madam, do not cry too much. Your daughter was taken away by soldiers. You can go there, to the military camp [he stated which one], and you can see your daughter. She is there.'

"When she arrived at the camp, she had many difficulties, and she was leaving. But her daughter

saw her from a window, and started calling, 'Mommy, mommy, I'm here.' The mother complained to the soldiers, and they gave her back her daughter, but they said, 'If you make trouble about this, you will be punished. Not only you will be punished, even all of your family will be punished.' I heard this story from a patient who came to the hospital in Kabul. She had a daughter, and she told me, 'Keep hold of your daughter, don't let her go out in the street, because unfortunately it sometimes happens that the Russian soldiers take small children and send them to the Soviet Union.' It is the truth. It is not propaganda." [Testimony of Afghan obstetrician-gynecologist. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 26, 1985.]

-- Abdullah, father of Brig. Hakim Jan of the Afghan Army, described conditions in the capital to the Afghan Information Centre: "He also reported that during the last two months of 1984 some hundred children between the age of three and six have disappeared in Kabul. The concerned families go every day to the Ministry of Interior asking for help, but the authorities pretend to know nothing about the business. Sources in Kabul say that the Russians and their Afghan agents are now stealing children in order to send them to Russia."61/

-- "I know of students sent to the Soviet Union. I myself am a teacher, and they took students from my own classes, between seven and twelve years old. One of my students, Shah Wali, about twelve years old, was taken to the Soviet Union. His parents came and asked the principal, 'Where is our son?' The principal said, 'I don't know. He is lost.' This was last November [1984] in Ahmad Khan School in the Rika Khana neighborhood [of Kabul].

"Then there was an old man, the school watchman. He had two sons, and he was a rather poor man. His wife, the father of his sons, had died, and he had remarried. They asked him to send his sons to Parwarishgah-e Watan. They told him, 'You are poor, and they will be well taken care of there.' Finally

61/ Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin (January 1985), No. 52, p. 14.

he agreed and took them to Parwarishgah-e Watan. One day I greeted him and asked, 'How are your sons?' He said, 'Madam, a misfortune has struck me. They have sent my sons to the Soviet Union.' "[Testimony of Fahima Naseri, teacher. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 27, 1985.]

-- "I went to school for some time this year before I came here. This happened in the beginning of Hamal [late March]. The parents were strongly opposed to their children being chosen to be sent to the Soviet Union, but the government collected them forcibly from the schools without getting permission. Our high school also has first, second, third grades. We saw with our own eyes that they collected the children, and they were sent forcibly. The Parchamis collected the children, took them to the office of the school, and then took them to Parwarishgah-e Watan. That time they collected them from different schools and different classes, from each class about 10 to 15. Then they made a group of them and sent them together. The children were eight or nine years old.

"When the children were collected, they were told, 'We will send you to the Soviet Union for one month for recreation.' After they were sent, they were not given to their parents. Their fathers were summoned to the office of the school. And they said that they should give permission to the government to send their children to the Soviet Union: 'If you agree, that is fine. If you don't agree, in that case we will know how to treat you and your children.' Those who didn't want their children sent to the Soviet Union were told, 'You have no right to attend the school.' The parents couldn't do anything, because if a father comes, and he doesn't agree, then he is arrested by the government. What can he do for his children?" [Testimony of Maria, 18, former student at Zarghuna High School. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Islamabad, August 28, 1985.]

Training Children as Spies

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report described a program "to train boys aged about 10 to 14 as spies":

These children, sometimes orphans, are recruited into an organization called Peshahangan, meaning "Vanguard" or "Pioneers." They are sent to the Soviet Union and trained in weaponry and espionage. The Soviet-Afghan authorities then send them into resistance-held areas with various missions, such as collecting information or assassinating commanders.62/

In 1985 we obtained further confirmation of this practice. Yahya Massoud, brother of Panjsher Valley resistance commander Ahmad Shah Massoud, described one such boy who was captured in Panjsher in 1982. Stephane Theollier, a French student and freelance journalist fluent in Dari who had interviewed and filmed the boy in Panjsher, provided additional details in a separate interview. We also interviewed one such child directly, a boy who had been captured by the resistance in Kandahar.63/

-- "One of them was a boy we captured in Panjsher in 1982. And this boy was about 12 years, and he was from Jaji [in Paktia Province]. He came to Salang, and he was sent by the Soviets to the Panjsher for spying. If you have seen [British journalist] Sandy Gall's film, you will see this boy in this film. And Stephane Theollier also has a film of him. And the Commander of Salang sent him to Panjsher, and Massoud asked for something from this boy. He was 14 months in USSR, and there was about 100 boys that were sent by Soviets in USSR to be trained in spying. When Massoud asked him, 'How you can follow a man?' He explained how you can follow a man if you want to follow him, on the road, in the bazaar. And Massoud gave him his Kalashnikov. Can he use it? He used it.

62/ "Tears, Blood and Cries", op. cit., p. 190.

63/ For more information on this child, see John Barron, "Trained as a Terrorist -- At Age Nine," Readers' Digest (August 1985), pp. 69-73.

very quick. Then Massoud put one paper on the ground. He asked him, 'How you can get it from the ground?' He took a handkerchief and took the paper from the ground [without leaving fingerprints]. And he was very clever boy. And he was the first student in his class in USSR. Before he was sent by Soviets to Panjsher, he was coming by helicopter three times. He knew the names of all the villages in Panjsher." [Testimony of Yahya Massoud. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 19, 1985.]

-- "When I came back to France from Panjsher in 1982 with this film, it was the first time that anyone in France had seen a film of such a young Afghan spy, and they refused to show it on television. They said it wasn't sufficiently proved, maybe it was faked by the mujahedin.

"But when I interviewed him, he explained exactly how it had happened. He was sent to the USSR to learn to handle weapons. He knew how to take apart a rifle. He had been sent to Panjsher to find out where Massoud hid, how the people protected themselves from bombing in the Panjsher, where were the weapons caches. These were the objectives.

"I think he was 10, 11 years old. I think he was from Kabul. You could tell he was not from Panjsher. He had an accent.

"He said that his parents were pro-Soviet and that some people came to take him and had explained to his parents that, as Communists, they had to prove their support, the only thing to do was to give their son to them so that he could be trained in the USSR. I think his parents were not at all happy about it, but finally, they had to agree.

"He spent eight months in the USSR, in Tashkent. He knew exactly everything in the Panjsher Valley, where he had never been before. He explained that he was a native of a small village, that he had come to find his aunt and take her to Kabul. He knew that next to a certain house there was a particular slope in the terrain. The Soviets had taught him all this so he could say that he knew the village well.

"But when they kept on interrogating him more about the geneology of his family, his ancestors, et cetera,

he got confused and made mistakes about the names of his uncles.

"He was sent from Kabul to a village on the road from Kabul to the Panjsher Valley, Charikar, and there he was turned over to an old man who was supposed to escort him. It was in the company of this person that he met a group of mujahedin. The old man explained the story about bringing the boy's aunt to Kabul and asked the mujahedin to help him.

"This was in the summer of 1982. Afterwards there were others. There were two of about the same age in the Panjsher in 1983. And they were also filmed, and, since it was the second time, they [French television] agreed to show a film of them, by someone else."
[Testimony of Stephane Theollier. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 27, 1985.]

-- "I was going to school in Kandahar, and my father was the head teacher of the school. A Russian army officer came to my school, and they took me along with three other kids. [The witness and the three other boys all had fathers who were members of the Khalq faction of the P.D.P.A.] They took us to the Sazman [youth organization] in Kandahar, and we were there for seven months. For seven months they were teaching us about the Soviet Union. Later, when we were in the Soviet Union, we were taught how to use a pistol, a Kalashnikov. During this time I went home only on Friday. The office was in the military garrison. This was three years ago.

"After seven months I went to the Soviet Union. My father was in favor of it. He said I should go, because it's a nice place. I went to Tashkent, outside of Tashkent city. There were seven kids in each room from different parts of Afghanistan, Mazar, Tashqorghon. Some of them said that their fathers forced them to go, and some of them said that they were there without the permission of their parents. They were taken from schools. They were not orphans. The parents didn't know they were there.

"I was in Russia for six months. They taught us that when we came across mujahedin, we should kill them. The teachers were a lady named Leila -- she was from Bukhara -- and another was from Tadzhikistan, I forget the name. We were told, when there are mujahedin around, we should

inform the Youth Organization.

"After breakfast, we were taken by vehicles to an army base. There they taught us to use pistols, Kalashnikovs. We learned that we should go to the centers of mujahedin and tell them that we are orphans, ask for money from them, spend the night there with them, and then come and report. They taught us that the Americans and the Chinese were in Afghanistan. In the afternoon they took us for volleyball.

"For one week we were given vodka, and then the next week we were given beer, in cans. They said, 'It's a good thing to drink.' We were all forced to drink, by Leila and the other teacher.

"After six months I came back to Afghanistan. I was looking for mujahedin, so I asked some kids if they had seen any mujahedin. They said, 'Yes,' there were some of them. I tried to open fire on them, but a mujahed caught me and took away my pistol. [He showed a wound on the fleshy part of the back of his hand.] I was wounded here because the pistol got caught on the skin. This was seven, eight months after I came back from the Soviet Union.

"I was living in Sazman behind the Afghan division in the base, in Chawk-e Shahidan, in Kandahar. [He drew a map.] I visited my father and mother on Friday. I got 1,000 Afghans per month. And the other kids, who had not been to the Soviet Union, were getting 800. I was their commander. My father was making 2,000, and my elder brother, in the military, was getting 6,000. I got the money for the other kids and would give 800 to each of them.

"We were trying to kill mujahedin, ambushing them. There were a group of kids with me, hiding somewhere, and then, when there were any mujahedin passing by, we would open fire on them. If any of the kids got wounded, I would take them to the hospital. These kids were 7 to 9 years old. They were using a different kind of pistol than me, a smaller one. I was maybe 9 or 11 years old.

"One time there were 200 kids, and 100 of them were wounded by bombs. I was hit here [indicating over left eyebrow]. Some of them were killed, I don't know

how many. This was in Malajat, 3 kilometers from Kandahar. We were going in front of a Soviet convoy. The Soviet forces were going after the mujahedin, and we were going in front. Then fighting started between the mujahedin and the Russians. And all of a sudden the jet fighters came and bombed that area. We were just walking in front of the Russians, with our pistols out. The secretary of Sazman told us to go to Malajat, because the Russian forces were going there, to get reports about where the mujahedin were. I remember a few names of boys who were killed: Nasir, Bashir, Wali Mohammad, Torialai, Gol Jan, Gholam Ali, Nangialai." [Testimony of Naim. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 18, 1985.]

We received no reports of such child spies captured in 1985, and do not know whether this program has been continued.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE

The 1984 Helsinki Watch report describes how some Afghan resistance groups execute or mistreat prisoners of war, as well as other prisoners, such as suspected spies. They also sometimes attack civilian targets associated with the Kabul government.^{64/}

In 1985 we received reports of abuses by some resistance parties, especially the Hezb-e Islami (Hekmatyar), carried out against civilians and also against captured resistance fighters affiliated with rival parties. In addition, the D.R.A. charged that resistance forces shot down a civilian airliner taking off from Kandahar airport in early September. None of the resistance organizations in Pakistan has claimed responsibility for the action, and there does not appear to be a pattern of attacks by the resistance on civilian aircraft.

The 1984 agreement between the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Afghan resistance parties under which Soviet prisoners were to be turned over to the ICRC in Pakistan is currently in a state of informal suspension. The resistance parties, expecting some reciprocity, hoped that the Soviets and the D.R.A. would agree to grant the ICRC access to captured resistance fighters. The Soviet-Afghan authorities, however, in

^{64/} "Tears, Blood, and Cries", op. cit., pp. 195-210.

violation of the Geneva conventions, continue to refuse to allow the ICRC to work in Afghanistan. In the absence of reciprocity, the transfer of Soviet prisoners has been suspended.

In late April 1985 a group of Soviet soldiers and Afghan army officers held in Pakistan by the Jamiat-e Islami at a storage depot near Zangali, 15 miles south of Peshawar, were killed in an escape attempt. Sources differ as to whether the prisoners were seeking asylum in the West or remained loyal to their own side. The international repercussions of this incident, principally pressure from the Soviet Union, led the government of Pakistan to insist that all Soviet prisoners be moved back inside Afghanistan.^{65/}

Following the transfer of Soviet prisoners back to Afghanistan, the ICRC began discussions with the newly formed alliance of the seven major resistance parties on the possibility of a prisoner protection visit to resistance detention centers inside Afghanistan. The following information was confirmed by Francois Zen Ruffinen, head of the ICRC delegation in Pakistan, during an interview in Peshawar on August 24, 1985:

"The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), with headquarters in Geneva, will make use of its 'right of initiative' to enter Afghanistan without visas at several points in order to survey and inform itself about Afghan and Soviet prisoners held by the resistance, according to a reliable source Thursday [August 22] in Islamabad.

^{65/} See Steven R. Weisman, "Blast in Pakistan Has Officials Jittery," The New York Times, May 16, 1985.

"According to sources close to the guerrillas, the ICRC delegations, which will visit Afghan territory from Pakistan after the conclusion of negotiations currently in progress with all the parties, will also investigate the conditions of life and the consequences of the war for the local population.

...

"The right of initiative is granted to the ICRC by the Geneva Conventions. No reaction from the Kabul authorities was known as of Thursday afternoon."66/

The Kabul authorities reacted three weeks later:

"Charge d'affaires of the Embassy of Pakistan in Kabul was summoned today to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DRA and the following was conveyed to him by the deputy foreign minister.

"According to Swiss News Agency, the military Government of Pakistan with the help of the counter-revolutionary bands is seeking to get the representatives of International Red Cross infiltrated illegally and without visa from Pakistan into the territory of the DRA.

"This illegal action is to take place with the accord, permission and the assistance of Pakistani authorities. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) like any other countries considers the illegal trespassing of any foreigner through the Pakistani soil into the territory of the DRA a gross violation to its sovereignty and territorial integrity and reckons the military Government of Pakistan responsible for it.

"The international organizations including the Red Cross International Committee can take contact with the DRA authorities through the diplomatic channel.

"The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan lodges its severe protest with the Pakistani authorities on the illegal intention and the accord of Pakistani authorities about the trespassing. The DRA

66/ Agence France-Presse, Islamabad, August 22, 1985.

cautions that the dangerous consequences of this illegal action will be borne by the military authorities of Pakistan."^{67/}

As of this writing the ICRC has not undertaken any visits inside Afghanistan, because at least some of the resistance parties are opposed to granting the ICRC any access to their prisoners unless there is progress toward reciprocity.

Some elements of the resistance have tried to arrange prisoner exchanges. Although some purely local exchanges have taken place, at least until recently, Soviet policy has opposed such exchanges. For example, following his successful capture of the Afghan army base at Peshghor in June 1985, Panjsher Valley resistance commander Ahmad Shah Massoud reached an agreement with Khalqi officers of the Afghan Army to exchange 116 Afghan officers for captured resistance fighters. In order to prevent the exchange, the Soviets landed commando forces, apparently intending to recapture the prisoners. The prisoners were all (or mostly) killed, either in the crossfire or by the resistance. On August 24, however, two Soviet prisoners were exchanged for six captured resistance fighters in Logar Province. One of the Soviet prisoners was reported to be the son of a senior Communist Party official of the Ukrainian S.S.R. who came

^{67/} BAKHTAR (Afghan government news agency), Kabul, September 5, 1985. Quoted in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, September 5, 1985, VIII, p. C-1.

to Afghanistan to find his son.^{68/}

Some outside observers did obtain access to resistance prisoners in 1985, and their testimonies confirm that some resistance groups keep prisoners in abusive conditions, torture them, and execute them, without distinguishing prisoners of war from other types of prisoners, such as captured spies.

-- "In Malajat [outside Kandahar, at the headquarters of resistance leader Haji Abdul Latif] I saw 12 Afghan army prisoners lined up in chains before a judge named Malawi Abdul Bari, who was awaiting orders to execute them from the guerrillas' high command in Peshawar, Pakistan. Bari claims to have executed 2,500 prisoners.

"The judge told me: 'I have personally slit the throats of 1,000 khalgis. I have sent 500 Russian infidels to the gallows.' Other prisoners, he said, were shot, decapitated or stoned to death.

"This information was given in front of the 12 prisoners, whose own fate seemed certain. They listened impassively, while the judge's chief executioner, Muhammad Juma, fondled an axe and grinned. 'This is no ordinary axe,' he said. 'This is for halal [execution by blade].'

^{68/} For a description of reported local exchanges in Baghlan province, see Arthur Bonner, "The Lot of Russians in Afghan Hands," The New York Times, November 2, 1985. Commander Massoud's brother Yahya described the Peshghor incident to Barnett R. Rubin in Peshawar on August 19, 1985. On Peshghor see also the interview with French scholar Olivier Roy in Afghan Information Centre Monthly Bulletin (September 1985) and the response from Jamiat-e Islami in ibid. (October 1985). "Soviets, Afghans OK Swap: Russians Change Tactics in Prisoner-Guerrilla Exchange," New Haven Register, October 19, 1985, p. 20, describes both the exchange in Logar and the Peshghor incident.

"But Bari's brand of justice is swift and formal compared with that of the mujaheddin at Markazee Apo [sic], a Hezbi-Islami guerrilla camp in Kandahar province. There, 12 prisoners, presumably Russian, were recently bayoneted to death. The stench from their decomposing bodies, buried in makeshift graves, permeates the camp.

"At the camp, a stooping figure in a tattered uniform was led around by a heavy chain. He was a khalqi prisoner who, after 30 days there, seemed no longer human -- the guerrillas called him char (donkey). The soles of both his feet had been sliced by daggers and one of his knees had been crippled during torture. The mujaheddin pulled up his eyelids, spat in his face, playfully ran a dagger across his neck, competing to get a reaction. The man's face remained expressionless, his trembling lower lip the only sign of pent-up rage and humiliation. In the month since his capture, he had not spoken.

"'This communist spy is an infidel,' the camp commander said. 'He does not even pray. The day that he speaks, I will cut his throat.'"69/

-- Stephane Theollier, a French student, described a prisoner of fighters belonging to Hezb-e Islami (Khales) in Kabul province. He saw the prisoner while on a mission to provide humanitarian assistance to civilians inside Afghanistan: "It was about ten days ago. There was a prisoner who was himself an ex-mujahed who had killed some other mujahedin. The commander showed me the prisoner in a room, and it was terrible, because the prisoner had been there, according to the mujahedin, for six months, but actually, after I talked to him it turned out he had been there for nine months.

"He claimed he was innocent, that it was his cousin who had killed the two other people but he had escaped, and that he had been arrested, and that since he was considered as a criminal, a profiteer,

69/ Jeff B. Harmon, "Toe to toe with Russians in Kandahar's holy war," Sunday Times (London), August 11, 1985.

someone who had sold his weapons without any scruples, they kept him.

"He was in very bad physical condition, because he was in a dark room, with no windows, and he almost never went out. So I saw him, I spoke to the commander, and after that they took better care of him. Starting from the day I went there the prisoner was taken out every afternoon. He was shaved; he had had very long hair, with fleas, lice. He was washed, and I gave him injections of serum, gave him some vitamins to make him more energetic. Then he began to eat, and so on. He was always asking when I was going to leave, because he thought that when I left his situation would go back to what it had been.

"I told them, 'According to Islam you should bring together the family, the witnesses, the people who arrested him.' But they told me that since it was a tribal area, Pashtun, it was up to the family of the two people killed to avenge their deaths. They told me that if they let him go, he would be killed at the first crossroads by someone from the family, and they were protecting him from that. Also I think there was no judge in the area."^{70/}
[Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 27, 1985.]

The conflicts among resistance parties also lead to human rights abuses of various kinds:

- Mohammad Hakim Aryubi, a former diplomat, currently an official of the National Islamic Front of Afghanistan (NIFA), claimed that the fundamentalist parties in Peshawar sometimes kidnap or kill

^{70/} According to the tribal code of Pashtunwali, the family of a murder victim has the right to take vengeance, badal. The Islamic fundamentalist parties are opposed to the tribal code, in place of which they favor the Islamic law or shari'a, to whose requirements Theollier referred. Apparently they lacked either the means or the will to enforce it, however, so the case remained unresolved in either code.

members of rival parties or intellectuals who are not sufficiently "Islamic." He mentioned an Afghan general trained in the USSR who had defected to Peshawar and was then kidnapped and killed allegedly by members of Jamiat-e Islami. He also charged that Khwaja Sadiq, an official of the alliance of three moderate or traditionalist parties had been kidnapped by members of Ittehad-e Islami (Sayyaf) in July 1985: "His son came to see Ishaq Gailani [a NIFA official, nephew of NIFA leader Syed Ahmad Gailani] today. We don't know if he is alive or not." [Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, August 18, 1985.]

-- "Massoud had planned to organize the central areas of Afghanistan, Ghorband, Bamiyan, to make some posts of mujahedin in these areas. He himself went to Ghorband. He was there for 12 days in Ashaba. He talked with some commanders of Hezb-e Islami about how to organize Ghorband and make unity in Ghorband. At first the commanders of Hezb-e Islami agreed to cooperate with Massoud.

"So Massoud came back to Panjsher, and he sent someone back to Ghorband to talk to Hezb-e Islami -- Hayatullah Khan. He was a very important member of Massoud's organization in Salang and Ashaba. Hayatullah Khan had an M.A. in Agriculture from England. He was there for four years. He was from Baghlan province. Then Hezb-e Islami made an ambush against them, and Hayatullah Khan was killed in this ambush, and some important members of the Panjsher Front were captured by Hezb-e Islami, and the clashes between the groups started again. ...

"About twenty people were killed. The Hezb-e Islami killed them. They cut their hair, nose, eyes. One of the Panjsheris who was captured by Hezb-e Islami, he is still in Ghorband. He introduced himself that he is from Salang, not from Panjsher. And one person was from Kandahar, and he talked to the Hezb-e Islami in Pashto, so they saw he was not from Panjsher. He had worked in Panjsher for a long time. He was also caught in this ambush. He told me all these stories. This was about one month ago, more than one month." [Testimony of Dr. Shariat, responsible for organization of northern provinces for the Panjsher Front. (Shariat completed three years in the

Medical Faculty of Kabul University, and is known as "doctor.") Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 19, 1985.]

- "In Qala-e Kandi [Kunar Province] there were 20 Hezbi families. Some days ago they said they wanted to join Jamiat. The Hezbi commander there was Mawlawi Fakir Mohammad. Then the Hezbis took everything from the people, and when they didn't want to give, they beat them." [Testimony of Hanneke Kouwenberg, Swedish Committee for Afghanistan, who travelled in Kunar province in May and June, 1985. Interview with Barnett R. Rubin, Peshawar, August 26, 1985.]

APPENDIX

TESTIMONY OF GHAUSUDDIN, AFGHANISTAN'S LEADING ARTIST

The violations of human rights in Afghanistan continue to drive major cultural figures from the country. One such refugee in 1985 was Ghausuddin, Afghanistan's leading painter and graphic artist. In an interview in Islamabad on August 28, 1985, he described the many pressures that finally forced him to flee Kabul on foot last April. He is 73 years old and suffers from the after-effects of a heart attack:

"My name is Ghausuddin. I am 73 years old. I studied in Afghanistan at the Afghanistan Industrial High School under Afghan and foreign teachers, starting in the time of King Amanullah Khan [reigned 1919-1929]. When I was a student at Industrial High School, Amanullah, the king at that time, came to the high school. He was leaving for Europe. He sat at our high school, and I painted a picture of him. Then he gave 100 golden coins to his son, and his son gave me the coins as a gift. They gathered all the able boys from all over Kabul, and Faiz Mohammad, who was the Minister of Education, gave me the coins in the presence of the son of Amanullah. In 1311 [1933] I graduated from the school with highest honors.

"My father was the head of the Kabul Museum and also a good artist. After graduating from high school, I was employed as a teacher in the same school, but when my father got sick, the government hired me as my father's deputy in the museum. This was in 1317.

"Two years later I was again hired by the Industrial School as a teacher and also as vice-principal. I taught theater and painting. Then the Ministry of Information and Culture of that time decided to establish a museum and a theater called the Educational Theater, and I was the

founder of this organization.

"Then, at the government's request, I was sent to Kandahar to paint historical pictures of Afghanistan. At the same time I taught in the Ahmad Shah and Mirweis High Schools in Kandahar. I painted about 20 pictures there. The present government of Afghanistan has collected my paintings from the Kandahar museum as well as some paintings from the home of the previous King of Afghanistan, Zaher Shah, and they have made a National Gallery. Two rooms are of my paintings. Still I don't know what they have done with my paintings since I have left Kabul, if they are broken, or if they have been kept.

"After three years I returned to Kabul. There they sent me to the museum of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications. I worked there for three years and designed many postage stamps.

"For six years I worked in the Arg [Royal Palace, today the House of the People]. I taught King Zaher's family, his children, and in addition I painted a portrait of his family.

"Then I was transferred again to the Industrial High School as a teacher and also became the principal. Then in 1349 [1970] I had a heart attack, and the government retired me. For two years I didn't work, but then I opened a private course in painting for Afghan students. After I opened this private school, I also taught at the Faculty of Fine Arts at Kabul University for four years.

"About two years ago, after the Soviets had invaded Afghanistan, I was informed that a Russian artist was coming to my home to see my pictures. He was the Vice-Chairman of the Soviet Artists Union. His name was something like Solokhov.

"He came to my home accompanied by six armed guards. They encircled my home and he came in. He looked at all of my paintings. After seeing the pictures, he left my house, and, two weeks later, I was summoned by the Central Committee.

"There they had gathered many of the artists from

different places. Some of them were my students. We were told that the government was going to establish a Fine Arts Association and that they needed people to work for it -- music, theater, cinema, architecture, and painting. And they had chosen me to be chairman. But I did not accept it -- I said I was ill -- because I felt that the Russian who had come to my house had appointed me. The Afghans, including my father and myself, have never accepted being the slaves of others, and we can never accept being the slaves of others. And as the present government of Afghanistan was installed by the Russians and is a puppet government, I never liked it.

"I waited for the opportunity to leave Afghanistan. [Last February or March] I asked to go to India under the pretext of seeking medical treatment, but I was told by [Prime Minister] Keshtmand, 'If you go to India, you won't come back.' The Indian ambassador to Afghanistan had agreed that I could go to a military hospital in Delhi for treatment, but this was refused by Keshtmand. He told me, 'Instead you can go to Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany.' My wife was also sick, and we were going to go together. I have two children [boys aged 9 and 11], and the government said, 'We will send your children to Parwarishgah-e Watan [Fatherland Training Center], and they will go to the Soviet Union and stay there for ten years.'^{71/}

"On the other hand, I also have a son who worked at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, and the government had wanted to arrest him. He was informed, and he escaped to India, from where he went to the U.S.A. At the same time, I was told, 'Your son works for the CIA, and since you are his father, you must also work for the CIA.'

^{71/} This is one of many stories of parents being pressured to send their small children to the Parwarishgah-e Watan and thence to the Soviet Union. See chapter IV.

"Another time I was summoned by Dr. Najib, the head of KHAD. One day I was in a friend's house, and I wanted to go to the bazaar to get some medicine, because I was sick. My friend was an engineer working for the Air Force. He sent his nephew to the bazaar to bring me the medicine, but later on we were informed that he was arrested by the soldiers and sent forcibly to military service.

"The engineer went to find out where he was. He was sent to Khost. As soon as he landed at the airport, mujahedin attacked the airport, and he was killed. He was brought to Kabul, and at his funeral ceremonies, everyone was angry. I couldn't control myself, and I said various things, maybe against the government. Among the people there are spies everywhere, members of KHAD. They recorded what I said.

"Then I was summoned by Dr. Najib, the head of KHAD. He told me, 'You are speaking and acting against the government.' I said, 'Maybe I have done so, and maybe not, but you mistreat the people and treat them very cruelly. Just because someone goes out, he doesn't deserve to be sent to the military service just because of his age. But you forcibly arrest him. And how should he fight against his Muslim brothers?' In response to this he said, 'Ostad [teacher, a term of respect], I strongly request you to keep your hands off it.'

"What troubled me so much was that I was informed, 'Today such a village was bombed, today so many people were killed.' I even heard some members of the Central Committee proudly boasting, 'I killed such a number of people, bombed such and such a place.' That troubled me so much that it even made me cry for hours and hours in my home.

"And besides hearing about the bombardment and the murder and killing of the people, what troubled me the most was the torture of the prisoners in the jails. A neighbor of mine was released, and he said different things that strongly affected me. He talked of different kinds of torture, of pulling out the nails and pushing skewers into the prisoner's body, and there were instruments they put up the anus of some prisoners. These were electrical things. And they would put a stake in

the ground, bring the prisoner, tie his feet closely together and get a hammer and another stick and hammer it between his two feet. They put the prisoners on the ground and then the soldiers beat them with shoes, hitting them on the face, hands, belly. In Pol-e Charkhi, I was informed that some of the prisoners after being beaten for many days are taken to the place of slaughter. Their eyes were blindfolded and their hands bound, and they were buried alive by tractors. This was in Amin's time and also up to the present. Although they released some of the prisoners [in January 1980 just after the Soviet invasion], they have filled the prisons again and again.

"My wife, who was a teacher in Ariana High School, who is also an artist, was told to join the Party. She didn't accept. Then in Hamal [March-April 1985] Karmal decided that the people who were not members of the Party should join it, and if someone refused, he would be strongly punished.

"I was sent a letter, but I refused to join. I said, 'How can I join? I am an old man.' I got the letter, and the person who had brought me the letter told me to sign [the application for Party membership], and so I said, 'I am sick, I can't.' He told me to write in front of him, as you are writing now. Then he asked me for one of my pictures. I gave him one, and he left. It was two o'clock in the afternoon. I left the letter on a table in my home, and we left everything. By ourselves, my wife and I and two children left the house with just a few things: my paintings and some belongings of my wife. Then we went to Kot-e Sangi [a neighborhood in Kabul] and stayed there that night. Then we went to Logar, and in ten days we reached Pakistan, on the 25th of Hamal [April 14, 1985].

"My wife was paid 2,500 [afghanis per month]. I was paid 10,000 for the university and 6,000 for my pension. Besides that I painted many pictures and sold them for a lot of money. But I left everything. Every day I was hearing that such and such a person was killed, such a village was bombed, such a person was arrested, so I couldn't help it, I had to leave my country. It affected me so much that at the age of 73 I left Afghanistan

and came to Pakistan on foot. I am an old man with white hair, and at my age I didn't want to sell out and be considered a reactionary.

"On our way to Pakistan I was even more affected, because what I had heard I saw with my own eyes. I went to a house that was half-destroyed. I sat in a room where I saw a vase with flowers in it, and another one in which I saw some barley. And I saw some clothes, covered with blood. And on the other side of the room I saw a piece of the Holy Koran which had been used as toilet paper.

"When we reached Musavi, there was someone crying. I asked, 'What happened?' He said that there was someone who had been going to Kabul. From the other direction a Russian convoy was coming, and the Soviets stopped his bus. During the search a Soviet uncovered his wife's face. As she had gotten married recently, they laughed at her and took her away from her husband. Her husband tried everything he could to get her back, but they told him, 'Tomorrow at 8 o'clock we'll bring you your wife here.' The boy went home and informed his parents. Next day in the morning, he came there with a big knife, waiting for the Soviets. When the tank arrived, the woman was set down from the tank. She was injured, and her face was bruised. She told her husband, 'I have lost everything. I have lost face. Kill me.' He started to kill her. The Soviets fired at him with Kalashnikovs. His parents who wanted to take revenge for him, were holding an axe, in his father's hand, but they could not take revenge. Instead they were shot dead by the Soviets. All were buried there. Peace be upon them.

"I saw something which was really strange. On my way I saw many different villages that were bombed, destroyed, some of them burnt. When I came to Jaji Maidan [Paktia province], where the military post is, there was firing, and I saw the bullets hitting the ground all around me, but I recited verses from the Holy Koran and I was not affected at all.

"There were a few young boys who asked me, 'Why don't you ride a horse?' I said, 'Because I am tired from riding horses, and my feet have gotten so swollen I can't ride it.' But they made me

mount the horse, and they made it run. My wife came on foot, and she lost some of her toenails.

"When I reached the border, to cross the border, taking leave of Afghanistan, I cried and picked up a handful of Afghan soil, and I told my family that wherever I die, they should spread this on my grave.

"I saw the camps of the Afghan refugees in Pakistan. These are the people who have lost their homes in Afghanistan. They live under very miserable conditions. It affected me more and more. But I am grateful to our good neighbors [in Pakistan] who are helping us and letting us come and live in their country.

"And now my final desire as an artist and an Afghan is to show the people of the world by painting the misery of the Afghans with the tip of my brush, to show the people of the world how a poor country is fighting a powerful country. You know, when writers write, it affects some people who are educated and know how to read, but paintings affect the educated and also the uneducated. My only desire is to keep the history of Afghanistan alive. I pray to God to give me much strength to spend in service of the mujahedin and the salvation of Afghanistan."