

Afghan rebels daunt Red army U.S. marines practice assault landings in Spain

MOSCOW (AP) — The Soviet armed forces newspaper on Monday acknowledged that opponents of the Kremlin-supported regime in Afghanistan are inflicting "immense damage" on that country's economy.

The unusually detailed article in Red Star also strongly suggested that Soviet forces have suffered heavy losses since they were sent to the country in December 1979 to

help the government suppress a Moslem rebellion. It quoted a leading Afghan official as saying, "the Afghan peoples' trust in Soviet soldiers did not come by itself: a big price was paid for it."

The article further acknowledged that the rebels achieved some early successes, in part because of what the article described as mistakes by the Afghan Communist Party in early 1979.

Red Star said the war against the government still "leaves its mark" in the Afghan capital city of Kabul and that food supplies throughout the country are being disrupted by guerrilla raids.

But Red Star correspondent Skrizhalin, a lieutenant colonel, concluded that actions by enemies of the Afghan regime are "becoming increasingly more futile" and that the government is making progress.

Noor Ahmad Noor, a member of the governing Politburo of the Afghan Communist Party, was quoted as saying, "we can now state that the revolution has won."

The article was one of the most vivid descriptions of difficulties in Afghanistan to appear in the government-controlled Soviet press this year. In February, Red Star published another article acknowledging that Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan sometimes have a "very, very difficult" life.

U.S. marines practice assault landings in Spain

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. Marines are about to make an unpublicized practice landing on the Moroccan coast, exacerbating delicate talks with a new Socialist government in Spain, which already is balking over American military bases and its membership in NATO.

"We would not like it," said a Spanish diplomat who asked to remain anonymous. The official objected to the location of the impending Marine landing, near Spanish enclaves on the Moroccan coast across from Gibraltar.

At least one senior Pentagon official is known to have suggested that the U.S.-Moroccan exercise, described as the first ever, be postponed or cancelled. But there was every indication Monday that the maneuvers would go ahead on schedule starting today.

The exercise comes at a time when the United States faces

the possibility of tough negotiations with the new Socialist Spanish government over continued American use of key bases in Spain.

The new Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez said during the recent election campaign that he would try to renegotiate a base agreement with the United States signed only last July. Also, Gonzalez said Spain would reconsider its membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which it joined in May.

The United States needs the air bases in Spain, but it also values a recent agreement with Morocco which gives it access to air bases there in event of a Middle East emergency.

The United States has courted Morocco as a moderate Arab state, in addition to the North African country's importance in deploying U.S. emergency forces.

Plans for the Marine landing on the Moroccan coast had been kept under wraps. Pentagon officials indicated the secrecy surrounding the increasingly close military ties between the two countries was necessary to safeguard Morocco's position with other Arab nations less friendly to the United States.

For the same reason, the United States is downplaying a planned Marine practice amphibious landing in Oman either late this month or early in December.

"Some of these countries want our friendship and benefits from it, but they don't want it to show," said a Pentagon official who declined to be identified.

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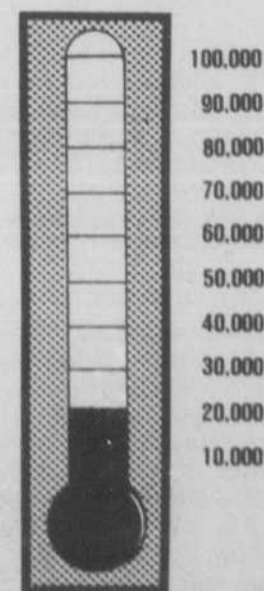
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