

runs the vital Salang Road connecting Kabul with the Soviet Central Asian republics) and the Paghman from 1981 to 1983 failed to wrest these areas from Mujahideen control.

In 1984 the Soviet Union began a depopulation campaign in the Afghan countryside, destroying villages, crops, and animals in resistance areas and forcing the inhabitants to flee to refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran. Moscow hoped in this way to deprive the Mujahideen of logistical support within Afghanistan and, through the massive outflow of refugees, to undermine support for the resistance in Pakistan and Iran. During this period, Soviet regular and special force units were used more frequently in military operations as the Afghan army had proved ineffective.

Soviet strikes against the Mujahideen drew closer to the Pakistani border during 1985 with offensives in Kunar and Paktia in June and September of that year. Frequent cross-border incursions - 198 in the first nine months of 1985 - by Soviet and Afghan forces were also reported. To disrupt resistance logistics, the supply routes from Pakistan were mined and military operations were mounted occasionally along the border.

During 1985 élite heli-borne commando units (Spetsnaaz) were frequently used for night ambushes of Mujahideen convoys as the Soviet Union tried to deprive the resistance in Afghanistan of support from the refugee camps in Pakistan. The "security belts" (depopulated no-man's land) surrounding Kabul were also widened to 30 miles.

Since the beginning of the occupation, the Soviet Union has supplemented its military campaigns with a long-term programme to "Sovietize" Afghan society. Under the tutelage of the KGB, the security apparatus - Khad - was expanded to over 20,000 operatives, some of whom succeeded in infiltrating resistance groups based in Pakistan. Local tribal leaders were recruited for the new militia to guard against guerilla operations in