

## **October 11, 1981**

### **Conversation with Babrak Karmal**

#### **Citation:**

"Conversation with Babrak Karmal", October 11, 1981, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Cheremnykh, "Kto blefiroval?: Stseny iz Afganskoy Tragedii", "Art Contact", St. Petersburg, 1994, p. 217. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.  
<https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/113135>

#### **Summary:**

This document reveals the difficulty in distinguishing between rebels from the local population. The often coercive tactics of the Afghan military, which drew in individuals who would not join on their own, shows the difficulty in differentiating between rebels and local people.

#### **Original Language:**

Russian

#### **Contents:**

Translation - English

Babrak Karmal - How do you determine the precise number of rebels and distinguish them from the local population?

Cheremnykh - It's not easy. Reliable information is needed. I'll give you an example regarding Petawa, Karabagh District. Not so long ago Yakubi came to us and reported that up to 600-900 rebels were concentrated not far from Petawa. I thought a bit. Petawa is a small settlement and there is no room there for a large band. Our scouts went down there and reported that a group of 15 headed by Safi Ahmaddin had come to Petawa from Pakistan. These 15 men had forced local [people] (up to 80 men) to join them and a band of up to 100 men was formed. If these 15 men had not come from Pakistan the local population would not have joined. This example is also characteristic of other regions.