Their inexperience in the arts and lack of knowledgeable specialists do not encourage boldness by foundations and corporations, Goody says. They prefer to help mainstream organizations, such as ballet companies, pay salaries or to support projects that will have broad public appeal. The NEA and the states tend to fund more experimental work. Government programs always risk politicizing the arts, Goody notes. Politicians are often divided over whether to support excellence or encourage "democracy" in the arts. Constituents pressure them for patronage.

Nevertheless, there is strong support for government subsidies in Washington and the statehouses. Despite two recent Reagan administration attempts to cut the NEA budget, federal arts outlays continue to grow. So do state contributions. And while foundations will not increase their donations much in the near future, corporations will as their profits grow. In short, art and poverty are not soon likely to become synonymous again in the United States.

OTHER NATIONS

In Afghanistan

"Report from Afghanistan" by Claude Malhuret, in *Foreign Affairs* (Winter 1983/84), Reader Services, 58 East 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Four years after invading Afghanistan, the Soviet Army is still bogged down in an inconclusive war. Yet Malhuret, head of the Paris-based volunteer group, *Médecins sans Frontières* (Doctors without Borders), which operates six hospitals in Afghanistan, writes that the conflict is not, as it has been called, "Moscow's Vietnam."

American commanders in South Vietnam (like other Westerners in recent antiguerrilla wars) tried to enlist the villagers against the insurgents. But Soviet generals take a different approach. According to Malhuret, their goal is not winning over the population, but terrorizing it. Mao Zedong once observed that successful guerrillas submerge themselves in the rural population like "fish taking to the water." The Soviet response, Malhuret writes, is to "empty the fish bowl." The huge number of Afghan refugees—some four million of the nation's 15–17 million people have fled to Pakistan and Iran—is not an unintended consequence of war but a result of deliberate Soviet strategy.

There are now about 115,000 Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Since late 1980, heavy casualties inflicted by the Afghan Mujahedeen guerrillas in rugged terrain have forced the Soviets to rely less on ground attacks, more on air raids. Helicopter gunship strikes and the dropping of mines and of booby-trapped toys designed not to kill but to maim—"an injured person is much more trouble [to the rebels] than a dead person," Malhuret explains—have emptied the Mujahedeen's rural strongholds of up to half their population. And large Afghan cities, such as Herāt

and Quandahār, have not been spared Soviet bombs.

The Soviets have not picked an easy task. As yet, they control little of the countryside, and their material losses have not been trifling (e.g., possibly 4,000 armored vehicles over the past five years). The Afghans show no signs of giving up.

In the end, however, Malhuret believes that the Afghan resistance "will probably be beaten." With no real need to answer to world opinion (thanks to what Malhuret calls the "negligence" of the Western press) or to placate its own citizens, the Kremlin can simply outlast the Mujahedeen. During the 1920s and 1930s, Malhuret recalls, the Soviets took 20 years to suppress the Basmachi (bandit) Revolt in their southern Muslim republics. But they did it.

How Well Off Are The Soviets?

"On Infant Mortality in the Soviet Union" by Murray Feshbach and Nick Eberstadt, in *Population and Development Review* (Mar. 1984), The Population Council, 1 Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10017.

In the Soviet Union, official statistics for the early 1970s reveal a sudden jump in infant mortality. Demographers Murray Feshbach of Georgetown University [see "A Different Crisis," *WQ*, Winter 1981] and Nick Eberstadt of Harvard have argued independently that the change in numbers is symptomatic of widespread ills in Soviet society, a view that has deeply influenced some U.S. policy-makers.

Last year, Fred W. Grupp and Ellen Jones of the U.S. Central and Defense intelligence agencies, respectively, challenged the Feshbach-Eberstadt interpretation [see *WQ*, Winter 1983, pp. 42–43]. They contended that the upsurge—from about 23 to 28 deaths per thousand Soviet births between 1971 and 1974—was largely a statistical mirage, the result of improved medical reporting in the nation's five Muslim republics. But Feshbach says here that even Soviet researchers accept the infant mortality increase as real. Among the explanations for it cited by Dr. A. I. Smirnov of the Soviet State Planning Committee is the fact that an increasing proportion of Soviet births occurs in the "high mortality regions" of Central Asia.

Moreover, Feshbach asks, why would Moscow stop publishing statistics on infant mortality after 1974 if not "to hide an unhappy reality"?

Eberstadt questions much of the evidence used by Grupp and Jones. One Soviet expert they cited, Viktor Kozlov of Moscow's Institute of Ethnography, has since clarified his work, stating that most underreporting of births and deaths was eliminated by the late 1960s. And Eberstadt notes that infant mortality is not the only Soviet "quality of life" indicator that has taken a nose dive. Between the early 1960s and 1976, the last year for which data are available, the death rate per 1,000 people increased dramatically (by up to 43 percent) in almost every age group in the Soviet population.