

# NEW EVIDENCE ON THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

## Introduction

By Christian Friedrich Ostermann

What was behind the Soviet decision in December 1979 to invade Afghanistan? And when and why did Mikhail Gorbachev decide to pull out Soviet troops nearly ten years later? What was the role of the US covert assistance program, in particular the Stinger missiles? What role did CIA intelligence play? How did the Afghan War's history, a key step in the rise of militant Islam, intersect with the history of the final decade of the Cold War? These were among the questions addressed at a major international conference, "Towards an International History of the War in Afghanistan," organized in April 2002 by the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) in cooperation with the Woodrow Wilson Center's Asia Program and Kennan Institute, George Washington University's Cold War Group, and the National Security Archive.<sup>2</sup> Designed as a "critical oral history" conference, the discussions between policy veterans—former Soviet officials and former National Security Council (NSC), State Department, and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officials from the Carter, Bush, and Reagan administrations—and scholarly experts centered on newly released and translated US, Russian, Bulgarian, German, Czech, and Hungarian documents on the war, a selection of which are printed below.<sup>3</sup> In addition to those mentioned below, conference participants included former RAND analyst *Alexander Alexiev*, former CIA officials *George Cave* and *Charles Cogan*, Ambassador *Raymond L. Garthoff*, former Kabul University professor *M. Hassan Kakar*, Ambassador *Dennis Kux*, Ambassador *William Green Miller*, former Carter NSC staffer *Jerrold Schecter*, President George H. W. Bush's Special Afghanistan Envoy *Peter Tomsen*, and former Reagan administration Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs *Nicholas A. Veliotis*.

The available Russian documents—including a set of materials provided to CWIHP by Russian military expert *A. A. Lyakhovskiy*—revealed how one-sided official reporting from Afghanistan severely limited Soviet policy options between March 1979, when an uprising in Herat and calls for Soviet intervention first surfaced during discussions in Moscow, and the final decision-making process on intervention that fall.<sup>4</sup> Russian scholar *Svetlana Savranskaya* argued that the Soviet leaders' almost exclusive reliance on alarmist KGB assessments of a quickly deteriorating situation in Afghanistan in the fall of 1979—at the expense of more cautious military intelligence and diplomatic channels—constituted a critical factor in the decision to intervene. That year, Soviet concerns mounted over the possibility of a potential US intervention in Iran following the ouster of the pro-Western Shah. Moscow, moreover, feared that the United States sought

a substitute foothold in Afghanistan and worried about maintaining its credibility with communist world allies. Soviet leaders were genuinely concerned that Afghan strongman Hafizullah Amin was either a US agent or prepared to sell out to the United States. At the CWIHP conference, former US Charge d'Affaires *J. Bruce Amstutz* as well as other participants forcefully refuted allegations of Agency links to Amin. In his five conversations with Amin in the fall of 1979, Amstutz remembered, the Afghan leader did not in any way suggest that he was interested in allying himself with the United States.

US relations with successive communist regimes in Afghanistan had been volatile since the April 1978 communist coup, the "Saur Revolution." The accessible KGB record remains garbled on a key event in the downward spiral of the US-Afghan relationship prior to the Soviet invasion of 1979: the still-mysterious February 1979 abduction and subsequent killing of US Ambassador Adolph Dubs. The materials, provided to CWIHP by defected KGB archivist *Vasily Mitrokhin* (published as "The KGB in Afghanistan," CWIHP *Working Paper No. 40*, available at <http://cwihip.si.edu>), suggest that the Amin regime, against the advice of the US embassy in Kabul, had authorized the storming of the hotel where the ambassador was held by three terrorists associated with a radical Islamic group. It remains unclear why the KGB recommended the execution of the only terrorist who survived the hotel storming of the hotel before US embassy personnel could interrogate him. Dubs had in fact advocated a wait-and-see policy toward Kabul and had favored the resumption of Afghan officer training in the United States, which had been suspended after the communist take-over in 1978, eager as other State Department officials to avoid forcing Kabul to rely solely on the USSR.

But by early 1979 relations between the two countries were rapidly declining. Following a meeting with Amin, Carter Administration NSC official *Thomas P. Thornton* recounted providing a negative assessment of the regime that influenced the US to suspend its assistance program to Afghanistan, a decision reinforced by the "Dubs Affair." In mid-1979, the Carter administration began to provide non-lethal aid to the Afghan resistance movement. The Reagan administration would indeed inherit an active program of covert military aid to the Mujahaddin that had begun in December 1979 (though some conference participants suggested that a US-funded arms pipeline was in place as early as August 1979—an assertion repudiated by some of the CIA officials present). In the early 1980s, under the leadership of CIA Director William Casey, this aid program expanded into a sophisticated coalition effort to train the mujahadin resistance fighters, pro-

vide them with arms, and fund the whole operation. In 1980, the government of Saudi Arabia decided to share the costs of this operation equally with the United States. In its full range of activities, the coalition included the intelligence services of the United States, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Pakistan, and China. According to the former CIA station chief in Pakistan, Milton Bearden, at the height of the covert assistance program in 1986-1987 the coalition was injecting some 60,000 tons of weapons, ammunition, and communications equipment per year into the Afghan war.

Nevertheless, *Elie D. Krakowski*, former special assistant to US assistant secretary of defense for international security policy during the Reagan administration, argued that US aid and in fact overall American strategy toward Afghanistan remained half-hearted and inconsistent, mostly due to the fact that Afghanistan policy derived largely from the United States' relationships with Pakistan and Iran. This, in turn, meant allowing the Pakistani ally broad leeway, with the result that US assistance was channeled largely to radical Islamic resistance groups. Confronted with allegations that one third of the Stinger missiles alone were kept by the Pakistani intelligence service for its own purposes, the former CIA officials at the conference asserted that oversight over the aid program was tighter and more discriminate than publicly perceived.

London-based Norwegian scholar *Odd Arne Westad* pointed out that Russian documents reveal how quickly the Soviet leadership grew disenchanted with the intervention in Afghanistan. A narrow circle of leaders had made the decision to intervene, with KGB chief Andropov and Soviet Defense Minister Ustinov playing critical roles. According to *Anatoly S. Chernyaev*, a former member of the Central Committee's International Department and later a key foreign policy adviser to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, many Soviet officials like him learned of the invasion from the radio. Even at the time, criticism of the decision within the Soviet elite was more widespread than often assumed. Not surprisingly, internal discussion of settlement proposals began as early as spring 1980. These proposals bore remarkable similarities to those introduced by the United Nations in 1986.

By the time Gorbachev came to power in March 1985, the war in Afghanistan had developed into a stalemate. The Soviet forces were mainly tied up in cities and in defending airfields and bases, leaving only roughly 15 percent of their troops for operations. According to *Lester Grau*, a US Army specialist on the war, the Afghan conflict had become "a war of logistics." *Grau* also emphasized the heavy toll disease took on the Soviet troops; almost 60 percent of them were hospitalized at some point during the war. Some advocates of the US covert aid program, such as *Congressman Charles Wilson* (D-TX), contended that the aid program drove the Soviets out of Afghanistan and credited the decision to introduce the shoulder-held Stinger missiles in 1986 as the basic turning point of the war. This missile proved highly effective against Soviet helicopters.

In a further effort to build military pressure against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, *James G. Hershberg*

(George Washington University) presented evidence from declassified US documents that in 1986 the Reagan Administration's National Security Council staff tried to funnel aid to the mujaheddin through Iran as part of its covert arms dealings with Tehran—a previously undisclosed aspect of the Iran-Contra affair whose ultimate impact remains unclear.<sup>57</sup> Former CIA Iran expert *George Cave*, a participant in the clandestine US-Iran contacts spearheaded by then-NSC aide Lt. Col. Oliver L. North, confirmed that the US sought to collaborate with the Iranians against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

Based on his notes of CPSU Politburo meetings and conversations between Gorbachev and foreign leaders, *Anatoly Chernyaev* argued that Gorbachev had decided to withdraw from Afghanistan within months of taking power. The Reagan administration's active program of aid and assistance, in coordination with its coalition partners, played an important role in shaping Moscow's decision to end the war and withdraw. But *Chernyaev* pointed to the loss of public support within the Soviet Union—as reflected in demonstrations by the mothers of soldiers, negative press reports on the campaign, and the high number of desertions—as the paramount impetus for the Gorbachev's decision to withdraw. Gorbachev could not pursue his campaign for perestroika unless he ended the war in Afghanistan and sharply reduced the arms race. But the decision was highly controversial. Now a withdrawal would raise questions about Soviet credibility ("they think this would be a blow to the authority of the Soviet Union in the national liberation movement")<sup>6</sup> and might cause a domestic backlash ("they will say: they have forgotten about the sacrifices and the authority of the country").<sup>7</sup> Thus it took the new Soviet leader considerable time to gain approval from the other members of the Politburo and the leadership of the army and the KGB.

The new evidence illustrates the dilemmas that confronted the Soviet leadership. Sensitive to potential fallout from images similar to those of the US pullout from Vietnam a decade earlier, fearful of turning the Afghanistan into a "bloody slaughterhouse" (General Varennikov), and determined to preserve a "neutral" and friendly regime in Afghanistan, Moscow leaders, particularly Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, favored an exit strategy of "Afghanization" without "losing the war." But as with perestroika in general, the transformation Gorbachev urgently pursued in Afghanistan proved both far more difficult than anticipated. Propping up the (last) communist regime of Najibullah through additional aid while Soviet troops were still in the country gave ever more leverage to a ruling Communist elite largely content to leave the fighting to the USSR "while they live quietly in palaces."<sup>8</sup> Turning the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) into the "leading force" of "national reconciliation" stalled as party officials resisted the almost certain loss of the party's leading role. "Karmalism"—ideological rigidity combined with inaction—gripped much of Moscow's chosen instrument of change. Najibullah himself seemed to many in Moscow a questionable "No.1" for a "new Afghanistan," yet Gorbachev felt

stuck with the Afghan leader: “who can we work there if not with Najib?”<sup>9</sup>

Washington’s (and Islamabad’s) unwillingness to cease military assistance to the mujaheddin as part of a Afghanistan settlement added to the frustrations of the Soviet leader, as Chernyaev’s notes of Gorbachev’s conversations demonstrate. Najibullah’s far-flung proposals for joint operations against Pakistan, and Gorbachev’s references to fall-back options notwithstanding, the Kremlin chief remained committed to withdrawal from Afghanistan “without fail.” Though massive economic and military aid from the USSR continued through 1991 (as Gorbachev promised Najibullah as late as 1989), the last Soviet military units departed Afghanistan in February 1989.

The documents printed below illuminate Soviet policy not just toward Afghanistan but offer fascinating insight into Moscow’s dealings with the subcontinent as a whole, particularly the dynamic of relations among Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. Particularly striking in this regard is Gorbachev’s 20 July 1987 conversation with Najibullah about joint retaliatory actions by India and Afghanistan against Pakistan. To cover the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and relieve pressure on the Kabul regime Najibullah suggested the “risky” idea of provoking serious “disturbances” in the border regions of Pakistan in case India launched “a preventive attack, as a sort of demonstration, on Pakistan. Not to occupy its territory but as a show of force.” According to Chernyaev, Gorbachev “unceremoniously ridiculed” such suggestions, yet at the time, according to the transcript, Gorbachev’s response was far more equivocal.<sup>10</sup> The release of additional documentation from the Gorbachev Foundation and other archives will help to further clarify the broader regional context of Moscow’s policy in Afghanistan.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> I owe thanks to Samuel F. Wells Jr., James G. Hershberg, Svetlana Savranskaya, and Gary Goldberg for contributing to this introduction and document edition.

<sup>2</sup> The conference—one in a series of “critical oral history” conferences being organized by CWIHP and its partners on key Cold War flashpoints—followed an earlier meeting on the Soviet invasion and the fall of detente in the context of the multi-conference “Carter-Brezhnev Project,” sponsored by the Norwegian Nobel Institute and Brown University’s Watson Institute for International Studies in October 1995. For further information and documentation see *CWIHP Bulletin* 8/9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 133-184.

<sup>3</sup> The full conference document reader, “Toward an International History of the War in Afghanistan,” is available at the Cold War International History Project. Copies of the original Russian and other archival documents are accessible at the CWIHP/National Security Archive collection (Russian and Eastern European Documents Database (READD)) at the National Security Archive, Washington, D.C. (Contact Svetlana Savranskaya at the Archive by phone: 202-994-7000, fax: 202-994-7005, email: Svetlana@gwu.edu).

<sup>4</sup> For prior CWIHP publication of documents on the Afghan War, see Odd Arne Westad, “Concerning the Situation in ‘A:’ New Russian Evidence on the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan,” *CWIHP Bulletin* No. 8/9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 128-132; for further documentation, see *ibid.*, pp. 133-184.

<sup>5</sup> See James G. Hershberg, “The War in Afghanistan and the Iran-Contra Affair: Missing Links?” *Cold War History*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (April 2003), pp. 23-48.

<sup>6</sup> Gorbachev, quoted in Chernyaev’s notes of CPSU Politburo meeting of 23 February 1987, printed below.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Gorbachev, quote in Chernyaev’s notes of Gorbachev’s meeting with Najibullah, 20 July 1987, printed below.

<sup>9</sup> Gorbachev, quoted in Chernyaev’s notes of CPSU Politburo meeting of 21-22 May 1987, printed below.

<sup>10</sup> Chernyaev, *My Six Years*, pp. 161-162.

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# Gorbachev and Afghanistan

Edited and Annotated by Christian F. Ostermann

## Notes from Politburo Meeting, 29 May 1986 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

GORBACHEV. *Concerning Afghanistan.* We've replaced [Afghan President Babrak] Karmal with Najib[ullah]. But this is not a "fait accompli," but a justified action on our part. How are we behaving? [USSR] Ambassador [Fikryat A.] Tabeyev told Najib point blank: "I made you the [People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan's (PDPA)] General Secretary." It's time to recall him since he's acting like a governor-general. Tabeyev is, of course, a serious, important person, but it's time for a change together with a change of policy.



## Notes from Politburo Meeting, 26 June 1986 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

GORBACHEV. We've reached a new stage of relations. There's a new leadership now. Where is it going? We should handle things so that they take more on their own shoulders.



## Notes from Politburo Meeting, 24 July 1986 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

GORBACHEV. *About Najib.* It's hard to build a new building from old material... Weapons deliveries are not to be increased... Forty percent of Afghanistan's border is not covered, and it's impossible to do it.

God forbid we've made a mistake with Najib.

A coalition government, including those who are outside the country but not "in the enemy's camp". (not yet)

## Notes from Politburo Meeting, 25 September 1986 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Have a secret exchange of opinions with the Pakistanis about expanding the Kabul government with exiles.



## Notes from Politburo Meeting, 13 November 1986<sup>1</sup> (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

GORBACHEV. Intuition advises [me]—something is threatening [us]. I'm afraid *we've lost time!* We've become accustomed [to the situation]. Why?—"a war is going on, it's business as usual, life goes on." "A strange war!"—they'll soon stick this term on us.

Comrades, once you adopt a policy you need to follow it. After all, this is war! We've been fighting six years already! Some people say: if you act this way it can go on 20 or 30 years. And it will be so!

People ask: what are we doing there—will we be there endlessly? Or should we end this war? Otherwise we'll disgrace ourselves in all our relations.

The strategic objective is to conclude the war in one, maximum two, years and withdraw the troops.

[President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR Andrei] GROMYKO. Admits that there was an underestimation of the social conditions and all the other circumstances when "they agreed to military support" of Karmal. He proposes turning to the King (who is in exile in Italy)<sup>2</sup> and persuade the Americans to [make] joint efforts, go to London, and get in touch with Pakistan.

The main thing is to halt the war and withdraw the troops. This will be necessary—we will conclude a treaty, etc.

[KGB Chairman Viktor M.] CHEBRIKOV. There won't be a resolution by military means; it's necessary to step up a search for political solutions. *Najib has never been in Moscow* but we met Karmal five times at a high level. This circumstance is in Karmal's favor among the opposition. We need to invite Najib and decide everything with him.

[Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard] SHEVARDNADZE. We need to end the war. And we need to have talks everywhere to do this. We should designate a time for the withdrawal. If we do not, the talks will fall apart.

Our comrades, both here and there in Afghanistan, can't get used to the idea that we are dealing with a sovereign country at all. Neither the Ministry of Foreign Affairs nor the Ministry of Defense nor other agencies have gotten used to this. Therefore things haven't worked out according to our design: let Najib himself decide everything.

We need to give him full freedom of action.

GORBACHEV. We have set a clear goal: help speed up the process so we have a friendly neutral country and get out of there.

[Fmr. Soviet Ambassador to the US and head of CPSU CC's International Dept. Anatoly] DOBRYNIN. We need to have an "Afghan Reykjavik." Give Najib freedom of action (...)

GORBACHEV. Why is this issue on the table again? Why are you all not doing this? Why? In what office have they made decisions which contradict Politburo decisions?!

But we have a concept. We approved it at the Politburo. There is no implementation of the concept.

Seemingly turns to [Chief of Soviet General Staff, Marshal Sergei] Akhromeyev: they climbed in – they didn't calculate, they embarrassed themselves in all directions. And they could not use military force in a real way. And now it is necessary to climb out (...) We need to climb out!

AKHROMEYEV. (Makes a brilliant report.) In 7 years in Afghanistan there is not one square kilometer where a Soviet soldier has not trod. But he ought to go, as the enemy is coming, and he will restore everything as it was.

We have lost the battle. The majority of the Afghan people right now are with the counter-revolution.

We overlooked the peasantry; they got nothing from the Revolution. Eighty percent of the country is in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries. And the situation of the peasants there is better than in government-controlled territory.

GORBACHEV. In accordance with the policy adopted in October 1985 a clear goal has been set—to speed up the process in order to have a friendly country and leave. But all our actions in all avenues—political, diplomatic, economic—have not given us any forward movement. And Karmal's policy was simple: sit and rule and leave the fighting to us.

They panicked in Kabul when they found out we intended to leave.

We replaced Tabeyev in order to let them know that we are oriented toward Afghan independence. But what happened? Again we are doing everything ourselves. Our people are only trained for this. They tie Najib's hands and feet.

In a word, the implementation of the concept is going badly, but we need to get out of there.

But two points need to be clearly kept in mind:

- 1) Leave there over a period of two years; 50% of the troops per year.
- 2) Expand the social base of the regime; a real distribution of political forces in the leadership is necessary to do this. And have them stew in their own pot with all their eastern pluralism.

Deal with their entire Politburo. Approach Karmal and even those who consider one another bandits, although 80% of them are.

Put the issue of our withdrawal to them sharply and name the procedure for the withdrawal: 50% the first year, 50% the second.

Engage in direct talks with Pakistan since there are 3 million Afghans there who fled the country. It could be a mess.

(...) We don't want socialism there. And the US will not climb right in with military force if we leave.

If there are no American airfields, military bases, etc. in Afghanistan, then what? Let the Afghans themselves deal with the rest.

AKHROMEYEV confirms that the US will not go into Afghanistan with troops.

GORBACHEV. Therefore we need courageous decisions and to involve the Americans in our policy.

Invite Najib in December.

We're creating a Politburo group on Afghanistan for two years, headed by Shevardnadze [and] including Chebrikov, [Chairman of the State Planning Committee Nikolai V.] Talyzin, [Chairman of the State Committee for the Agro-Industrial Complex Vsevolod S.] Murakhovsky, [Minister of Defense Marshal Sergei] Sokolov, and [former Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan Fikryat A.] Tabeyev.

He turns to [Deputy Chairman of the KGB Vladimir] Kryuchkov: Is it an ordinary matter to withdraw troops once you have deployed them? Yes! But since no one objects. So do you see? We have agreed.



## Notes from Politburo Meeting, 21-22 January 1987 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

SHEVARDNADZE. Najib makes a very good impression, but not everyone supports him, even in the leadership. Some comrades are vacillating. But he speaks correctly when he says he has no other people. He has taken the initiative into his own hands. I think that the mujaheddin<sup>3</sup> chiefs have mis-

calculated in refusing to talk. The country's economy is in ruins.

Little remains of the friendly feelings toward the Soviet people which existed for decades. A great many people have died and not all of them were bandits. Not one problem has been solved to the peasantry's advantage. The government bureaucracy is functioning poorly. Our advisers' aid is ineffective. Najib complains of the narrow-minded tutelage of our advisers.

I won't discuss right now whether we did the right thing by going in there. But we did go in there absolutely without knowing the psychology of the people and the real state of affairs in the country. That's a fact. And everything that we've done and are doing in Afghanistan is incompatible with the moral character of our country.

GROMYKO. It's incompatible that we went in?

SHEVARDNADZE. And this, too. The attitude toward us is more negative than it seemed to us.

And we're spending a billion rubles a year for all this. An enormous sum, and responsibility needs to be taken for it. And count up again in every detail how much Afghanistan costs us at the present time. [Soviet Premier] Nikolai Ivanovich [Ryzhkov] doesn't have such data right now. But in the United States they think we'll need 2 billion a year and the Japanese think 3 billion. I'm not talking about the lives of people.

GORBACHEV. We won't talk right now about how this revolution came into being, how we reacted, and how we vacillated about whether or not to deploy troops.

GROMYKO. Yes, yes.

GORBACHEV. Right now we need to proceed from what we have at the present time and what steps need to be taken.

GROMYKO. I agree with the description of Najib...

Probably with Najib's consent some kind of coalition government agreeable to us needs to be created... It would not be suitable to the pursuit of our new policy to recall our advisers.

RYZHKOV. The report by Eduard Amvrosiyevich [Shevardnadze] gives a realistic picture. Previous information was not objective. The situation forces us again to approach the problem in a serious way. Nothing needs to be simplified. Najib's personality is important, of course... But...

GORBACHEV. Each village there is full of such personalities.

RYZHKOV. It's an illiterate society. The Revolution led to a worsening of the people's situation. We need to pursue a firm policy of getting out of there in two years. It's better to pay with money and kerosene, not with men. Our people don't understand what we're doing there. Why we have been there seven years.

It is easy to leave, [but] we can't just throw everything to the whims of fate. Many countries would forsake us. We need to take steps so that, when we leave, affairs proceed toward the creation of a neutral, friendly Afghanistan.

What steps should be taken? An army. Why not a paid army? What will prevent it from deserting? – Good money. They don't believe in slogans (...) Generally speaking, I would not reject the idea of a mercenary army out of hand.

It is better for us to hand out weapons and ammunition. And have them fight themselves if they want to. Actively guide a parallel political settlement. Everything needs to be used: contacts with Pakistan and with the US.

[Yegor] LIGACHEV. We cannot bring them freedom by military means. We have suffered a defeat in this cause. And the information of Eduard Amvrosiyevich is the first objective [information], although it is grave. We didn't consider the consequences and set our hopes on the military way. I think the policy of national reconciliation is correct.

If the question is put before the people: is it better to let our people, our soldiers die, or to give every kind of aid? I think that every person to the last man will favor the second path.

And to work on the Pakistani avenue, with India, with China, and with America. But to leave like the Americans did from Vietnam—no, we still have not come to this, as they say.

[Marshal Sergei L.] SOKOLOV. The military situation has recently become worse. The shelling of our garrisons has doubled. They are fighting mainly in villages, counting on our not retaliating against population centers.

It is impossible to win such a war by military means.

The first task is to force the Afghan leadership to actively bring the program of national reconciliation to the population. If this does not happen, the army will be of no use.

The Afghan army has cost us 3.5 billion rubles. And another 1.5 billion [rubles] are planned for this year. They have everything they need to fight.

In 1986 the 40<sup>th</sup> Army lost 1,280 men.

To analyze economic aid: they are asking for three times more than they need. Yes, we ought to help. But there must be a benefit. In 1981 we gave them 100 million [rubles] in free aid. And it all stayed with the elite. In the villages there is no kerosene, [there are] no matches, nothing.

CHEBRIKOV. We discuss the Afghan issue more than any other. The comrades have analyzed it well. It's as if we've received much new material. But if we lift the documents, all of this has already been described.

There are no [new] findings about the situation. Mikhail Sergeevich [Gorbachev], you've been telling this to Karmal.

GORBACHEV. Thus, we confirm our firm policy. We will not retreat once we have started.

Act in all avenues. Seriously analyze where and how to use our aid, and start up foreign policy mechanisms through [UN Special Envoy Diego] Cordovez and Pakistan. Try to do

business with the Chinese and, of course, with the Americans.

When we went into Afghanistan we were wrapped up [*zakol'tsovany*] in the ideological aspects and calculated that we could jump over three stages right away: from feudalism to socialism. Now we can look at the situation openly and follow a realistic policy. For we accepted everything in Poland—the Church, the individual peasant farms, the ideology, and political pluralism. Reality is reality. The comrades speak correctly: it is better to pay with money than with the lives of our people.



### Notes from Politburo Meeting, 23 February 1987 (Excerpt)<sup>4</sup>

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

GORBACHEV. The situation is not simple. Now we're in, but how to get out racks one's brains. We could leave quickly, not thinking about anything and making reference to everything which the previous leadership started. But we can't act that way. India would be concerned, and they would be concerned in Africa. They think this would be a blow to the authority of the Soviet Union in the national liberation movement. And they tell us that imperialism will go on the offensive if you flee from Afghanistan.

But the domestic aspect is important, too. A million of our soldiers have been to Afghanistan. And all in vain, it turns out. The matter has not been brought to an end. We're not answering to our own people. They will say: they've forgotten about the sacrifices and the authority of the country. It provokes a bitter taste—for what did you lay down [the lives of] people?

...Don't exclude America from an agreement, even as far as making a deal with the Americans. And we need to rub Pakistan's nose in it, letting them know that the Soviet Union isn't going anywhere. Could [President of Pakistan] Zia ul-Haq possibly be invited to Tashkent to meet with me and even "pay" him in some way? We need flexibility and resourcefulness, for otherwise there will be a slaughter and Najib will fall right away. Continue talks, don't let them be broken off. And possibly we'll have to make concessions about the withdrawal periods.

Are there doubts about what I have said right now (voices: No! No!)? Then let's act accordingly.

### Notes from Politburo Meeting, 26 February 1987 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

GORBACHEV. Material aid. The expenses are enormous, and they are justified if they solve the Afghan problem.

SHEVARDNADZE. We will have made a mistake again if we haven't foreseen what awaits us. To withdraw troops now is the only correct solution.

GORBACHEV. And we won't let the discussion get diverted on the topic of who was at fault. Right now, about material aid.

GROMYKO. But they asked us to deploy troops 11 times. We turned them down. There was, of course, the simplistic idea that the presence of our troops would put Afghanistan on the correct path. But I do not now believe for a second that Afghanistan could have created its own army no matter how many resources we invested there. Nevertheless, we have no alternative—nothing is left [but] how to supply it.

GORBACHEV. There is an "alternative"! For example, if we deploy another 200,000 [troops] but then that is the collapse of our whole cause. So the withdrawal of troops is the only correct decision. But other decisions might be required at a given moment. Take something from what [Najib's Chief Soviet Advisor] Polyanichko suggested. And don't be hasty with the withdrawal of advisers: everyone will see that we're running away.



### Record of a Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs Giulio Andreotti, 27 February 1987 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

[G. ANDREOTTI] The issue of Afghanistan. Obviously, you know that in recent years resolutions regarding the Afghan issue have been adopted in various forums of the European Community [EC]. We noted that recently the Soviet Union made a series of new announcements. I particularly have in mind a message to the Islamic Conference which I personally value highly. This was a very skillful political move. It is



therefore not surprising that the countries of the European Community have gained the impression that a solution of the Afghan problem is coming which everyone has always advocated and considered it necessary to confirm their opinion and to call upon the Soviet Union to continue moving along this correct path.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I want to make one comment. We have information from very reliable sources which I think we can consider reliable. The US has set itself the goal of obstructing a settlement in Afghanistan by any means, for if America is not successful it will be deprived of an opportunity to present the Soviet Union in a bad light in the eyes of world public opinion. If this is so, and, I repeat, we are almost convinced that our information is reliable, the matter takes on a difficult nature.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. Even the Pakistanis are telling us of the pressure that the Americans are putting on them.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yes, the Pakistanis are complaining that the Americans are putting pressure on them to obstruct a settlement. I earnestly request that you not let the Pakistanis down, for then the Americans will finally crush them.

G. ANDREOTTI. (Laughs) Thank you for the confidential information. I know about this. The Pakistani minister of foreign affairs is my personal friend. He was a prisoner in Italy.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This means that our information agrees with yours.

G. ANDREOTTI. But it's impossible to forget that there are various forces in America. Other and, I think, the most influential American circles are undertaking other steps, for example, to cancel the sanctions against Poland. I also know about the trip which [Undersecretary of State John C.] Whitehead made through the Warsaw Pact countries not long ago. And he had very open conversations with the Poles. I think that it would be in both our and your interest that America have ever increasing influence in determining the political course of the country.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We also see this. We follow US policy very closely and respond to signals which come from reasonable, realistic circles. Naturally, we understand that these circles also represent and defend US interests. We do not preclude rivalry and competition with America, but on a realistic basis. Generally speaking, we have a positive frame of mind but not everything depends on us.

G. ANDREOTTI. Some words about an international conference on the Middle East. I am personally advocating serious preparations for a conference. During meetings in the US I even used the expression "preparations for preparations."

For if there are no serious preparations for an international conference then it will be doomed to failure from the beginning. Such carelessness is impermissible.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We are of this same opinion.

G. ANDREOTTI. You obviously know about the differences with the Israeli leadership, including those which are public. The prime minister and the minister of foreign affairs often come out with not simply contradictory but even diametrically opposed statements.

I would like to clarify that in a document approved by the EC there is nothing written about the need to renew diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel. We requested that this desire be sent to the Soviet leadership confidentially, so to speak, "in their ears." This was my suggestion. I stated frankly that this issue is very delicate, and it is not necessary to make public statements.

On the other hand, Israel is probably right in some regard when it questions how a country that does not have [diplomatic] relations with it can participate in an international conference on the Middle East. Possibly you could reexamine this issue since you maintain diplomatic relations with dozens of countries which have the most diverse economic, social, and political systems. I well understand your difficulties connected in particular with the psychology of the Arabs. But right now several Arab countries are beginning to move in the direction of recognizing Israel. If the fate of the conference possibly depends on the issue of restoring diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel, would it not be worth doing this?

I also know about the difficulties with the Palestinians. We ourselves also suffer from them. Who should represent the Palestinians, [Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman Yasser] Arafat or not? We support Arafat inasmuch as we do not see anyone else who could be the representative of the Palestinians in present circumstances. Mr. Gromyko once said to me that Arafat is the "black cat" in your relations with Syria. But where is another representative right now who could represent the Palestinians instead of and better than Arafat?

M. S. GORBACHEV. We see both of these problems. If one talks about our relations with Israel then possibly at some stage of a movement toward a conference in the course of this process we could return to this issue. But not right now. It does not seem possible to pull this question out from the general context of the present situation.

As regards the PLO, we also are of the opinion that this is a reality which needs to be considered. If the interests of the Palestinians—and the PLO represents them—are cast aside then nothing will be achieved by any conference. There are things from which it is impossible to escape. The Soviet Union favors the PLO being a constructive participant of the Middle East process. We maintain relations with many Arab regimes in the course of which the PLO situation is also dis-

cussed. We call upon them to preserve the PLO as an organization representing the interests of the Palestinian people. But you know it is easier for all of us to fly off together to another galaxy than for the Arabs to agree among themselves.

G. ANDREOTTI. This is correct. Many people, when they talk about an international conference, mention as a difficulty the issue of whether the Soviet Union should participate in it or whether the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people. I think that the main issue which should be decided is where should the country be located which is granted to the Palestinian people. They have suffered so much. The question now is not of your recognition of Israel. Possibly in the course of preparations for the conference we would be able to use the argument about restoring diplomatic relations between the USSR and Israel to exert pressure on Shamir. But resolve the issue at the conference itself.



## Notes from Politburo Meeting, 21-22 May 1987 (Excerpt)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

SHEVARDNADZE reports: expressing serious worry and alarm at the state of affairs: the policy of national reconciliation is producing a certain result, but very modest.

GORBACHEV. (After [General Valentin I.] Varennikov's report) Thus we won't go into a new Afghanistan with the present regime. The regime should be transformed. But how are we to act? You say that the Afghan army is not able to perform its role independently, but what then about a withdrawal of our troops?

VARENNIKOV. The policy of national reconciliation is dying out.

GORBACHEV. But we have already told Najib to do everything himself and not run to us for advice. He sees that a national reconciliation will not be reached, yet he does nothing. This is a typical Karmalism.

You're right: it will turn out like the soldier thinks there, that they're forcing him to fight for us and not for his homeland.

VARENNIKOV. There's generally no sense of a homeland there. There's kin, the tribe, and the clan; a soldier fights for [his] family because a large part of the territory is under the rule of the mujaheddin.

GORBACHEV. The mujaheddin, too, proceed from what you're saying.

VARENNIKOV. They are an illiterate people, but we are agitating for socialism and imposing the idea of a national democratic revolution. But they don't understand any of this there in Afghanistan.

There are tendencies toward stagnation. More could have been done in five months.

KRYUCHKOV. It's impossible to withdraw, flee, and throw everything away. I understand the Politburo policy this way: shift everything onto Afghanistan and have them learn to manage to act independently. Otherwise [it will be] a bloody slaughterhouse. The problem is not just that the word "democratic" in the name of the Party (PDPA) is not suitable. The Party can be renamed. But it needs to be kept in mind that the very concept of "Party" is strange to an Afghan. But Najib is first of all the leader of the entire Party. But without the government he is nothing to Afghans. And "Islamization" needs to be added to the Party's appearance.

GORBACHEV. Yes, this is a realistic approach. We are obliged to conduct a realistic policy. And this needs to be remembered: there can be no Afghanistan without Islam. There's nothing to replace it with now. But if the name of the Party is kept then the word "Islamic" needs to be included in it. Afghanistan needs to be returned to a condition which is natural for it. The mujaheddin need to be more aggressively invited to [share] power at the grass roots. No one is stopping this from being done. But Najib should speak as President and Chairman of the State Council. The personal factor has great importance there.

If Najib is nominated for the post of President then have him right away proclaim another program and not [one] around the PDPA.

Who can we work with there if not with Najib? But [if] we turn away completely, though, everything will slip away [and] they'll say to us: the Soviet Union betrayed us.

It's clear that the Afghans will not rally around the PDPA. They will not accept it. And [we] need to talk now not about a second wind in Afghanistan but a last. If we exclude a prospect connected with Najib then we have lost everything. It'll turn out as with Karmal. And then what—we'll withdraw troops and bug out? We'll leave bruises all the same. But it's necessary so that there will be fewer of them and that it not be painful. We need to think about ties with the King. We need to avoid the formula that a coalition government is only to be based on the present government. And not to make Najib "No.1."

AKHROMEYEV. A leading role for the PDPA will never happen. And if we take that point of view there will be an endless war which we will never win. A coalition government is possible but not with the PDPA having a leading role, only with its participation, where it does not have decisive influence. Let there be a "bourgeois government" there for about a year

supported by our bayonets.

GORBACHEV. If we tell them this right now, they will simply flee.

GORBACHEV. It would be a mistake if we simply cleared out of there. We will not explain to our people why. But in Afghanistan, whoever is on the side of the mujaheddin will long remember how we were killing them and those who are with Najib, that we put everyone on the level of their enemies with one stroke. And we will not get a friendly Afghanistan. At the same time it is impossible to continue this war endlessly.

Accordingly, we need to find a political solution which will not exclude any military operations. To put it another way, the policy of national reconciliation is the correct one. But how to flesh it out? Specific steps are needed. In this form it comes to nothing. A broader spectrum of diverse forces needs to be contacted.

Right now the positions of the United States and Pakistan are hardening. This is in order to frustrate the policy of national reconciliation. We cannot disregard even one avenue.

1) Cordovez. Think hard how to do business with him and not break off contact.

2) We have not approached the United States of America in a real way. They need to be associated with the political solution, to be invited. This is the correct policy. There's an opportunity here.

3) Diplomatic steps in regard to the leadership of Afghanistan itself. There are chances of influencing them. They are afraid that we will simply bug out like the United States did from Vietnam.

4) Military operations. The tactics of territorial pressure need to be improved. Give weapons to local authorities. The Afghans are able to keep their word [if] they have their morale. It is important to try that our aid reaches them in the sense of supplying the soldiers with everything they need. Get the officers interested. Detachments exist in the field and more will spring up. But they will then act only in our favor when the whole process operates in the necessary direction.

5) What is preventing the opposition being brought into the government or local bodies of power at the grassroots? Invite them and make an announcement to this effect; get the word to the people that they are ready to do this.

6) The PDPA needs to be left a defined role and not pushed out. And let other parties be created, let's say, an "Islamic Party of Afghanistan." Let them combine all the forces capable of national leader-

ship. In any case an Islamic element needs to be inserted in the Party name. And also have the PDPA change its form and nature.

I do not want to say right now what place will be left for Najibullah. But by nature he is most probably leader of the government, since the president should be a neutral figure. And there should be something like a parliament with an influential post of chairman.

7) It is clear it will be impossible to get by with 2-3% in the government for the opposition. Realistically, if we want to achieve something, no less than 50%.

8) We should be finished with the Afghan issue in a year and a half. A firm deadline. And Najib needs to be told about this deadline. Warn him again: do as you yourself think and ask us less often. But tell our advisers: stop commanding there. And condition Najib so that he acts as he considers necessary and not send 20 questions a day to Moscow.



### **Record of a Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, Cde. Najib, 20 July 1987 (Excerpt)**

*[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

M. S. GORBACHEV. In the name of the Soviet leadership we welcome you to Moscow, Cde. Najib. Your visit to Moscow to talk and to exchange opinions here is well-timed.

NAJIB. I would like to express my deep gratitude for the opportunity afforded me to meet with you, Mikhail Sergeevich, and with members of the Soviet leadership. The constant attention which is devoted to the problems of Afghanistan is displayed in this.

Our meetings and conversations have become a good tradition and have great importance for the work of the DRA Party and government leadership. We view today's meeting as a manifestation of your constant attention toward Afghan affairs and the Afghan Revolution. And this is why I view today's meeting as a great honor for myself. I express appreciation for the organization of my brief visit which will allow me to share ideas about the trends of the military and political situation in Afghanistan and the plans for our future work directed at its normalization.

If you will allow me, then, following established tradition I could first inform you about the state of affairs in Afghani-

stan. In doing so I would like to give you prepared material on this issue but in today's conversation I would like to dwell on key topics of principle. (hands over the material).

M. S. GORBACHEV. Thank you. As always, we study your material closely. As you know, our comrades in Kabul regularly inform Moscow [*tseñtr*] of your ideas and assessments. However this material, it seems, allows us to realistically determine how accurately they are passing on your ideas and what they add from themselves (commotion).

NAJIB. They do not add, rather they enrich them.

First, I would like to dwell on an analysis of the initial results of implementing the policy of national reconciliation and problems we are encountering at the present time in carrying out this policy; to talk about the immediate tasks of the Party in promoting this policy, including in the area of military policy and economic work; and to touch on several problems of the international activity of the PDPA and the DRA government.

At the present time what is the focus of attention of the Party and governmental leadership are the issues of the unswerving implementation of the steps for national reconciliation developed in all areas—political, economic, military, and ideological. As the accumulated, although as yet insignificant, experience shows, as regards the fight against the counterrevolution, the defense of the gains of the Revolution and normalization of the situation, there is no alternative to the policy of reconciliation. It is nevertheless important that the period past has convincingly demonstrated the impossibility of resolving the problems facing Afghanistan by military means alone.

I'll dwell on several specific topics.

A mechanism has been created for implementing the policy of national reconciliation, the main links of which are appropriate commissions. At the present time more than 10,000 reconciliation commissions are operating in the country, joining together tens of thousands of patriotically-minded representatives of the population, including former rebels. These commissions can be viewed as temporary operating bodies of local authority with a specifically marked coalition structure.

In the period after the proclamation of the policy of reconciliation, of a total of around 164,000 [rebels], fifteen thousand armed rebels openly came over to the side of the government. More than 600 groups with a total strength of 53,000 men are holding talks with the government. Part of the counterrevolutionary formations, about 50,000 men, are taking a wait-and-see position. However, as before, there is an active nucleus of the irreconcilable opposition numbering 46,000 men. The groups in it continue serious resistance to the measures which people's power is implementing.

The process of returning refugees to the DRA has been stepped up. More than 60,000 people have already returned to various regions of the country. Their numbers could be even greater if obstacles were not placed in their way by Pakistani and Iranian authorities.

The policy of national reconciliation, the proclamation of which was a surprise to the opposition, is deepening the split in the ranks of the irreconcilable counter-revolutionary organizations operating within the framework of the "Alliance of Seven." In particular this has been displayed by the failure of the plans to create a "provisional government," a "government in exile" by uniting the leading counter-revolutionary organizations. A tendency toward a division between the second echelon of the counter-revolution—the middle link of the leadership of counterrevolutionary groups and organizations in Afghanistan—and the highest echelon located in Pakistan is also increasingly perceptible.

In a word, interest in participating in the policy of national reconciliation is growing in the opposition camp. The attitude of the counter-revolutionary organizations toward former King Zahir Shah, who is inclined to look for a compromise, is indicative in this sense. It can be said that the attitude toward the former King is a unique "litmus test" through which the real positions of one or the other counterrevolutionary group are revealed. But, in any case, there are a considerable number of serious opponents of the former King in the opposition, chiefly representatives of right-wing, reactionary forces, who think that the appearance of Zahir Shah on the political stage could strike a serious blow to the plans of the counter-revolution in Afghanistan.

M. S. GORBACHEV. These forces are striving in every way to diminish the importance of this figure and the possible role of the former King in achieving reconciliation. And he himself is displaying great caution.

NAJIB. The main thing is that the policy of national reconciliation become a unique catalyst for the sentiments of the population to strengthen their support for the measures of the PDPA and government. It can be stated with confidence that the policy promoted by the PDPA enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of the Afghan people and meets the national interests of the country. But, on the other hand, in the process of implementing the policy of reconciliation all the more often reserves are being identified and not used by the Party, including those for a further increase of its authority.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Have you thought about the question of what the basis will be for national reconciliation considering the great diversity of attitudes, interests, and trends existing in society?

NAJIB. Yes, of course. In our view, in these conditions the objective possibilities for a larger role for the PDPA increases by expanding its social base. But, nevertheless, it would be premature and incorrect to say that the policy of national reconciliation has brought such tangible results and acquired an irreversible nature. The enemy is not only not stopping fighting but is intensifying resistance to the policy of the PDPA and government. Washington and its allies in the region are continuing to whip up tension in and around Af-

ghanistan and are escalating combat operations. Our country has become one of the main links of a policy of state terrorism being pursued by the US. In implementing the designs of their patrons, the main blow of the counter-revolution is being directed at the PDPA.

As is well known, since May of this year the counter-revolution has begun at the orders of the White House to implement a plan to create a "national council of mujaheddin" with the functions of a provisional or transitional government. However the reactionaries are making efforts to discredit the PDPA and the policy of national reconciliation, seemingly separating the Party from the policy of national reconciliation. In the opinion of these forces such an approach could give them an opportunity to gradually nullify reconciliation itself.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In other words, they are, so to speak, "for councils, but without communists." For a neutral, independent Afghanistan, but without the PDPA.

NAJIB. There are also subjective reasons for the current difficulties. It is necessary to admit openly and self-critically that up to now the PDPA has not made a sharp turn toward an active implementation of the policy it advanced and is insufficiently purposeful and diligent in solving the problem of creating [the appropriate] conditions for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Moreover, even at the highest level of the Party and government there still remains a narrow-mindedness of views, a lack of initiative, a disinclination to free themselves from the burden of past mistakes, and conservatism. The fact that in local Party organizations and among the population in the districts work has still not been properly organized to explain and propagandize the results of the June CC PDPA Plenum could serve as an example of this.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Is it not the case that some comrades in the PDPA leadership will identify the interests of the people and the country with their own welfare and their own egoistic interests?

NAJIB. Yes, this is actually so.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The question also arises: do not individual comrades view the policy of creating a coalition government and expanding the social base as a threat to their positions and status? A real revolutionary thinks about his own country first. This is his fate, too. If there then are such sentiments, will they interfere with the process of national reconciliation? In this connection there is the question of the historic responsibility of the PDPA leadership to their own people, especially considering the policy of reconciliation and the solution of the problems of a political settlement under the conditions of the upcoming withdrawal of Soviet troops.

NAJIB. I completely agree with you. It ought to be openly admitted that as before there is a feeling of routine in our

work and a substitution of words and slogans for specific deeds. Control of the expeditious solution of pressing problems and the implementation of planned measures has been poorly organized. Executive discipline is still at a low level. The Party and government bureaucracy often displays a lack of initiative. This could be illustrated, for example, by how things are going with the solution of the critical problems of helping the peasants, providing medical services, and the other first-priority needs of the population. It is completely understandable that all this negatively reflects on the authority of the PDPA.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It could be said that there exist two levels of problem solving. The highest level is the adoption of decisions which would consider the interests of all groups and sectors of the population to the maximum possible degree and would determine the way to support these interests under Afghan conditions. If this can be achieved then the population itself will actively participate in the implementation of such measures, not waiting for steps from various government bodies. The second level is translating these decisions into practice. Those responsible for carrying out government policy are the local party and government bodies who are called upon to work to support the very interests of the population. What interest is this to us in this regard? Perhaps something is interfering with the adoption of the necessary decisions at the highest level. Perhaps the decisions which are being made are not being realized at the grassroots. We would like to understand this.

NAJIB. Specific and correct decisions are being made. Moreover, they are encountering ever greater understanding and support from the people, who are displaying a readiness to actively assist in their implementation. Government bodies at the local level are taking specific steps for their realization. But when specific work from higher levels of the government and party bureaucracy is required to implement decisions which have been made, the process slows down. We encounter inaction, laziness, an inability to work, a love of routine, and a lack of understanding of the problems being faced by several members of supervisory bodies. Executive discipline is weak. It would seem in present conditions that the leadership itself would be an example of dedication and purposefulness. Unfortunately, however, this does not yet happen, mostly due to surviving group thinking and factionalism.

M. S. GORBACHEV. If the decisions being made do not affect the interests of the population, for example, the peasantry, then no bureaucrats will be able to do anything. And on the contrary, if they do affect [the population] then things will move. I will cite an example from history in this connection. Why was Lenin's Decree on Land effective? After its proclamation Soviet power was still far from being established. But the peasants, to whose interests the Decree responded, took the land themselves and translated the Decree into practice.

I would like to stress this: if a particular decision affects [someone's] interests, then the mechanisms for their [the decrees] implementation will be found. But it will not work out if something is not fully thought out in decisions and decrees made by the PDPA and government and the interests of one or another group of the population are overlooked.

NAJIB. I can say in this regard that the policy of national reconciliation has evoked a warmer reaction from the Afghan people than in the ranks of the PDPA. Regrettably I have to say that the activity of the Party is lagging behind the situation and the reaction of the population.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Probably the reaction in the Party is varied. Those who represent the working levels are trying to do everything necessary to satisfy their aspirations. However, obviously there is the leadership level, which is afraid of losing its privileges if the PDPA withdraws to the background under the conditions of reconciliation. They are concerned not for the fate of the Party but about some interests of their own.

NAJIB. I agree with your statement.

M. S. GORBACHEV. And everything turns on this.

NAJIB. What do we consider the main tasks of the PDPA and the government to implement the policy of national reconciliation considering the current situation? First of all, we have to concentrate our efforts on actively translating into practice steps to defend revolutionary achievements, especially considering that we are entering a new stage of the policy of national reconciliation. Today new complex and critical tasks are on the agenda which the Party should resolve in the shortest possible time. In this regard, in our opinion, the main directions of the work should be the following.

We think that it is necessary to increase pressure on the enemy with emphasis on stepping up contacts with various sectors of the opposition—monarchists, “moderates,” representatives of the big and middle bourgeoisie, clergy, and tribal leaders and elders.

We have to develop and carry out such specific measures which would facilitate the imparting of an irreversible character to the process of reconciliation, which the enemy especially fears.

One of the main areas of work is the expansion of coalition forms of power at all levels.

The task of creating a bloc of leftist democratic forces on a platform of support for the policy of national reconciliation, involving all patriotically-minded forces in cooperation under the slogan of defense of the independence and non-aligned status of Afghanistan, and the strengthening of friendship with the Soviet Union is being promoted to the forefront. In so doing we do not exclude that other forces acting in the conditions of reconciliation will receive access to political activity, of course, on the basis of their principles.

The PDPA has also announced and has stressed with

specific steps its readiness to create a multi-party system in the country. Political parties are receiving the right to [perform] appropriate activity on condition that they will act in support of peace and security in the country. Moreover, they will be afforded the opportunity to realize their goals and tasks in the framework of the National Front.

However, I would like to openly admit in this regard that the National Front has not yet become an influential and notable force in society. The scope of its activity is limited to large cities but even in this situation its organizations function poorly. One of the main reasons for such a state of affairs is that until now we have viewed the National Front as a part of the Party and have restricted its activity to the limits of Party requirements. The time has come for it to become a genuine union of all patriotically-minded forces on a voluntary, not compulsory, basis.

It happened that in the draft constitution of the DRA which we submitted at a national conference the obligatory collective membership of particular parties, public, and political organizations in a National Front was stipulated. It appears that this is an incorrect formulation of the problem. Therefore we have in mind introducing a corresponding amendment to the final draft of the Basic Law, for it is important that the Front facilitate the attainment of national reconciliation.

There is yet one more problem which is of concern. As before, there are people in the PDPA who favor not the creation of a bloc of leftist forces but are for the fusion of leftist democratic organizations with the PDPA. However, as experience has shown, the artificial union of four such organizations with the PDPA did not produce a political effect. Actually, in these four organizations in the PDPA only 885 people joined. At the same time they continue to maintain their organizational structure and act in accordance with their programmatic and regulatory requirements.

On the other hand, as is well known, there are leftist groupings of the so-called “radical type” in Afghanistan, in particular the Revolutionary Organization of Workers of Afghanistan. They place the leading role of the PDPA in doubt and damage the unity of leftist forces. Therefore it would be more correct and advisable for the PDPA to work in cooperation with leftist democratic organizations in a common bloc, at the same time actively implementing measures to restructure intra-Party activity. In our view, a recently adopted law about parties creates good preconditions in these terms.

M. S. GORBACHEV. That is why it is very important to correctly determine what the “face” of the PDPA should be at this stage.

NAJIB. Absolutely. I would like the PDPA to remain the leading mobilizing force. But, unfortunately, a wish is one thing and life and practice are another. At the present stage we do not have the strength to compete for such a role.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I think that at this stage of implementing the policy of national reconciliation, in the conditions of form-

ing a broad coalition the PDPA could play a leading organizational role. And at the same time it would actually be unrealistic to count on the Party maintaining its present position after achieving national reconciliation. It's necessary to accurately forecast the situation which will develop in the background of the processes now already underway, put this policy into effect, and [forecast] the situation after achieving reconciliation.

In other words, the step-by-step principle should be at the foundation of the determination of the near-term and long-term tasks of the PDPA. At the present time the PDPA is operating in conditions of a struggle for implementation of the policy of national reconciliation. A correct evaluation of the tasks of each stage, a precise and realistic analysis of the situation at each of them, will help correctly determine the role and place of the PDPA in the first and second stage.

At the present stage the PDPA is the leading force of national reconciliation. It fulfills its role, relying on a scientific analysis of the situation in Afghan society, the processes taking place in it, and a correct evaluation of the historic stage of this society. Preserving its revolutionary character, at the same time the Party understands that right now it needs to work on translating a minimal program into practice, that is, the realization of national democratic reforms. And here it should act with a consideration for the entire spectrum of political and social forces of Afghan society. And now at the stage of realizing a policy of national reconciliation and after achieving its goals and turning to democratic reforms, the PDPA should consider the real situation in Afghanistan. Otherwise this will be adventurism.

Of course, right now the PDPA can do much in order to play an important role in succeeding stages. It is important not to lose time now and that the PDPA be the initiator of the policy of national reconciliation and that it be ready to share real power—all this will substantially facilitate the strengthening of the authority of the PDPA, and create a good foundation and opportunities for the future. But if it is more expedient for the Party now to place its cadres in all institutions of government authority then it could create favorable conditions to preserve and strengthen its positions. Of course, the task is very difficult and the process of its resolution will be difficult, but you and I have come to the conclusion that there is no other way.

There can be mistakes and losses on this path. You won't avoid them. Of course, it is easier to shout, proclaim revolutionary slogans, and fight for the purity of the revolutionary banner. This is the spirit of "Karmalism." Those who uphold it would like for the Soviet Union to fight while they live quietly in palaces. But such an approach and such a situation can in no way suit the Afghan people, let alone the Soviet Union. The Afghan public is tired of the war. We need to be realists and politically responsible people.

Now, when you are moving to the next stage in realizing the policy of national reconciliation it is very important to show the danger of reasoning in the spirit of "Karmalism." Tell Party members bluntly that inactivity and an unwillingness to realistically analyze the current situation are being

hidden behind pseudo-revolutionary leftist phraseology. People need to be united in an understanding of what needs to be done at the present stage.

Information is reaching Moscow that there are such sentiments: the policy of national reconciliation "is coming to an impasse, which means the loss of revolutionary achievements and a retreat from goals which had been reached." This is all nonsense, irresponsible chatter. The Party needs to be told bluntly about this and those who are mistaken need to be set straight.

It is very important at this stage not to allow a split in the PDPA.

The future of Afghanistan can only be secured through national reconciliation. It is impossible to jump to socialism without a stage of national democratic reforms. We and the Chinese had "great leaps." We know how they end.

The fate of the PDPA after achieving national reconciliation will depend on how the Party acts now, at the present time. It is impossible to retain authority on [the force of] Soviet troops. But while our troops are in Afghanistan, all capabilities need to be used. Propose such a policy that the people see the PDPA as a national force. The authority of the leadership and those who implement the policy depend on this. And it cannot be otherwise. I got so actively involved in your information because this is the central point of the political situation.

NAJIB. In the first PDPA platform adopted in 1966 one of the main tasks that was established was the joining of various classes and sectors of Afghan society together on a national patriotic basis. But after the Revolution we forgot this principle and monopolized power. Instead of isolating the enemy we isolated ourselves and lost touch with the people. Now we are trying to convince our own people that we have not repudiated these principles once and for all. Therefore we are forced to take one or two steps back in order to correct errors of dogma. We are doing this on a principled basis.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The Party should be ahead of the people. One cannot lose touch with [one's own] base. A fondness for leftist slogans leads to sectarian politics. This is why the situation has become difficult when all of society is undergoing a certain historical stage of its development and the Party has withdrawn into its own circle and its own ideas. Whether one or two steps need to be taken is more evident to you. But [they] need to be together with the public.

NAJIB. I will note that some people interpret our actions as a retreat. But in reality this is a movement forward in all directions—inside the country and in the international arena. We are at that stage of our development when to advance we need first of all to correct the mistakes which have been made. There have been and [still] are mistakes. We are correcting them.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I completely agree with your analysis and assessments, with one reservation. All this needs to be

done without losing time. Because Afghanistan is a country at war. You cannot ponder for years.

NAJIB. I want to note that our efforts to create a leftist democratic bloc are being implemented quite successfully. Moreover, we intend to develop contacts with the so-called social democratic party “*Afgan mellyat*.” This organization operates both inside and outside Afghanistan. Specifically, such a meeting took place not long ago in Delhi. On the whole we hope to complete work to form a bloc of leftist democratic forces by fall.

Work is also being done to create political organizations which would express the interests of categories and sectors of the population. I have in mind joining the representatives of the Afghan clergy together into an Islamic Party. We are acting cautiously in this direction since we don’t want such a party to be imposed from above. This would be a mistake and could be used by the enemy in their interests. Additionally, in order to intensify work with the clergy we plan to introduce structural changes in the Ministry for Islamic and Waqf Affairs.<sup>5</sup> The implementation of the planned measures would allow the opposition to recommend their representatives for this Ministry through Islamic committees operating in the country. Thus yet one more channel of communication with various groups of counter-revolutionary forces could arise.

NAJIB. The creation of a peasant party could be an effective step in attracting the peasantry to participate in political life.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Was there such a party in Afghanistan earlier? Through whom, in your view, could such a party be formed?

NAJIB. There was no such party in the past. As regards the members of the peasants party then they could be landowners, peasants who receive land in the process of reforms, and members of agricultural cooperatives. I think it is a realistic matter, considering a certain interest which is being shown by the population itself.

We are also encouraging representatives of the ethnic bourgeoisie to create their own democratic party. We are confident that the successful implementation of these plans will permit the PDPA to find a way out of the situation in which it has to confront the counter-revolution alone. The union of all democratic, ethnic forces on a common platform would facilitate the creation of political pluralism and be in accord with ethnic interests.

Of course, all this is directed at strengthening cooperation with patriotic forces who have moderate positions on the whole. But we continue to swing [our] work around to strengthen our contacts with the so-called “rightist” forces.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Probably a moment will come before the elections when the PDPA will have to share posts in the government bureaucracy with other parties. Otherwise a situation could develop where, in accordance with the law

adopted in Afghanistan, different parties could be created and operate but all the positions remain in the hands of the PDPA.

NAJIB. I agree with you completely, Mikhail Sergeyevich. Actually they can gain access to real power in the government bureaucracy themselves as a result of elections. It is tactically more advantageous for this to be done ahead of time by the PDPA. Such a step could produce a positive effect both inside the country and abroad.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In addition, this would intensify the split there, outside the country.

NAJIB. We have also established contacts with several leaders of counter-revolutionary organizations in the “Alliance of Seven.” Without question, former King Zahir Shah would be a realistic and suitable candidate to be used in a high government post under the conditions of national reconciliation.

Moreover, while searching out and expanding contacts with the highest level of the counterrevolution, we are concentrating our attention on work with its middle echelon. In our view one could go so far as recognizing a certain autonomy and independence of mid-level rebel chieftains on the territory which they control on the condition of their recognizing the central government, albeit only partially. As regards the opposition outside the country then here the main target is its moderate part. Expansion of ties with representatives of “moderates” would allow us to create a greater split and dissension within the “Alliance of Seven.”

In this context I would like to consult with you on this issue. In our view it would be advisable to turn to the opposition, first and foremost the moderates, with a proposal: open your own missions in Kabul to have constant contact and talks within the framework of national reconciliation.

Now about military issues. At the present time our measures in the political, economic, and ideological spheres are directed at solving military problems. In doing so, the main attention in the military area is devoted to fighting the irreconcilable part of the counter-revolutionaries whose strength is 46,000 men, as I have already noted above.

We understand that the problems of strengthening the armed forces are quite important from the point of view of implementing the policy of national reconciliation; however it has to be said that a great many, good well-founded decisions directed at strengthening the armed forces, primarily the army, have not yet been carried out.

As an analysis of the current state of affairs shows, we have made several mistakes in determining priorities in military policy. For example, at one time a decision was made to bring the armed forces up to 500,000 men. However, right now we have a ten-fold advantage in manpower over the nucleus of the irreconcilable opposition. Such a task is therefore incorrect, even if there was not a high level of desertion, which has reached thirty thousand, or a need to discharge men into the reserves who have served their terms.



The main thing is to concentrate efforts at increasing the combat readiness of personnel already on hand, and solving the problems of providing necessary discipline and coordination between various branches of the armed forces, and units and subunits. To put it another way, it's necessary to achieve a qualitative, not [just] quantitative improvement of the DRA armed forces. The problems of staffing combat units and subunits, the [manning] level of which at the present time is only 40% of authorized strength, can be solved only by transferring servicemen into them from logistical subunits, administrative echelons, and [other] staff.

What has great importance for stepping up the fight against the counter-revolution is a directive of the HQ [Headquarters] of the Supreme High Command providing for the creation of military districts and subordinating all armed formations to a single command within the zones of responsibility of the corresponding army corps. Such a measure will facilitate, in particular, more active participation by border troops deployed in border areas in combat operations to neutralize rebel groups. In this connection we are requesting you examine the issue of transferring the advisory functions in the border troops to the staff of the Chief Soviet Military Adviser.

In solving the problem of creating special purpose units of the "commandos" type by a call-up of volunteers, we intend to subordinate them directly to the HQ of the Supreme Commander. In addition, in present conditions we have to increase the level of coordination of the Ministries of Defense, State Security, and Internal Affairs under the command of the Supreme Commander within the framework of the Supreme High Command. Such a coordination of operations already exists, without doubt, but it is of a predominantly military nature, and it needs to be given a more political direction.

Taking this opportunity I would like to express appreciation to you, Mikhail Sergeyevich, for agreeing to send to Afghanistan such an eminent military leader as General of the Army V. I. Varennikov. Moreover I would like to ask that you consider these following ideas of ours.

At the present time all plans for combat operations which are developed by the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Operations Group headed by, V. I. Varennikov, are submitted to Moscow for coordination. This leads to a loss of time. Obviously it would be more suitable to give General of the Army V. I. Varennikov the authority to make operational decisions in the field. Moreover, he could also be given the functions of coordinator of the activity of all Soviet military organizations in Afghanistan in waging combat operations.

A new department has been created in the PDPA CC in order to strengthen political work in the armed forces and expand the military-political education of the population. Considering the importance of this task we would like to ask you to consider the possibility of a temporary assignment to the DRA of a special adviser to help in the work of this department. Of course, we have arranged for the gradual reduction of the strength of the advisory staff, but nevertheless we are proceeding only from the interests of the matter in this

request.

Regarding the problems of party work to implement the policy of national reconciliation. I completely agree with your assessment of the nature of the new stage of implementing the policy of national reconciliation and the PDPA's growing responsibility in it. From this point of view, in our opinion, the June plenum of our Party's CC was an important step in understanding the future tasks of the PDPA. It demonstrated that by an overwhelming majority the members of the PDPA are supporting the policy which has been advocated. The plenum seemingly marked the conclusion of a certain period in developing and implementing this policy and showed that the Party has outlined a specific framework for the policy of reconciliation.

The readiness for compromise, the introduction of a multiparty system in our country, the creation of coalition governing bodies, the formation of a bloc of left democratic forces including the PDPA, etc. lies at the base of our future activity. In developing the concept of reconciliation, we submitted the draft constitution for public discussion and we are examining the possibility of changing the name of the country and even the Party. By the way, in connection with the following question – I intend to change the name of the PDPA—I need to consult with you about the following. Considering the law about parties, the Karmalists could take steps to create their own political organization. One can already observe such a tendency. Therefore if we rename the Party then they could name their organization "PDPA" as a counterbalance and act against us.

The main task of the present stage of development of the PDPA's activity is preparation for an all-Party conference. Considering the magnitude of the issues which have to be decided at the present time we are devoting special attention to work in this direction.

M. S. GORBACHEV. When do you think it possible and necessary to hold the conference?

NAJIB. In about two or two-and-a-half months. This is why we need to sharply step up work to explain the decisions of the last plenum.

Taking into consideration that, regarding the questions being submitted for its consideration, the conference could be equal to a congress, it is obvious that organizational measures have to be put on the agenda. The time has come to cleanse the Party of people who speak against the policy of national reconciliation, factionalists, and saboteurs.

The most important task, the task of overriding importance, is to strengthen the authority of the Party. That fact that even under the conditions of a coalition the post of president should belong to the PDPA can be viewed as a favorable precondition to take the necessary steps directed at preserving the Party's positions under new conditions. Of course, even now one ought to think about the correct placement of people. And in this connection the question arises about forming a united monolithic nucleus in the PDPA leadership by drawing on capable young party activists.

M. S. GORBACHEV. But are there such possibilities? Are there are trained young cadres?

NAJIB. Yes. But they need to be used and advanced more boldly. In doing so one can in no way forget about trustworthy party veterans. Everything ought to be done so that their rich experience is used with maximum effectiveness. This will be especially important when the PDPA has to confront opposition forces under completely new conditions in a future situation.

I would like to consult with you on such a serious topic as the ethnic problem. We understand that the Party needs to solve the ethnic issue. And we need to take specific steps in this direction. Individual comrades even speak of granting autonomy to various ethnic groups of the population.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This is actually a very serious issue and it is impossible to ignore it. But the main thing is that such decisions not be artificially imposed and not conflict with existing realities. A mechanism has been worked out in Afghanistan over the ages which to a particular degree has supported mutual relations between the ethnic groups, sectors, and population groups in the country. Therefore it's important to look for such ways to solve the problem which would dialectically consider their interests and organically integrate the ethnic groups in the process of consolidating society. If you propose something new to the people which they do not understand, this can complicate the process of national reconciliation. In any case, it is more apparent to you, and only you, how to proceed. The main thing is respectful and impartial relations with everyone.

I'll cite an example of solving the ethnic problem in our country. At one time I worked in Stavropol' Kray, which includes the Karachay-Cherkesskaya Autonomous Oblast.' Ninety thousand Karachay, 35,000 Circassians, 14,000 Abazi, 11,000 Nogay, etc. live here; Russians comprise 53% of the population. Nevertheless there are newspapers and radio and television broadcasts; literature is developed; and instruction in the schools is done in all the national languages. The ethnic factor is also considered when assigning party and government personnel.

It is understood that the ethnic problem is very delicate and tricky. But it is impossible to solve other problems without solving it.

NAJIB. I share your point of view. Right now we are working on creating a Ministry of Nationalities proceeding from such an understanding of the problem. We are taking steps to develop the culture and preserve the customs, traditions, and the national characteristics of various ethnic groups. The draft constitution provides an option to create ethnic entities. But nevertheless I think there is no need for haste here. We ought not be eager to solve this problem by purely administrative methods.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Right. A normalization of the situation needs to be achieved. Live in peaceful conditions, and then it

will be more evident what ought to be done. Then everything will become clear.

NAJIB. Haste in solving such complex problems is extraordinarily dangerous. We already have the bitter experience of carrying out land and water reform. The mistakes made in this area were palpable, but all the same they did not lead to especially negative consequences. However if a mistake is made in carrying out ethnic policy, then it will be a powerful "delayed-action bomb."

Right now we are working on a well thought-out, considered, and scientifically-based PDPA concept on the ethnic issue. And we would like to send it to you after preparation of the corresponding document.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We will study it carefully without fail. But again I repeat: the main thing is to take steps yourselves. It is more evident to you [what to do]. In Marxism the main thing is recognition of dialectics and their employment in specific historical conditions.

NAJIB. Briefly about economic issues.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Is our aid reaching you as intended?

NAJIB. On behalf of the PDPA CC and the government I would like to express deep gratitude for the enormous unselfish aid which is being given our country. We see in this firm guarantees of a successful solution of revolutionary problems. Along with the large-scale free aid of the Soviet Union which is being sent for the needs of strengthening the armed forces and increasing the standard of living of the population, border trade and direct ties between the various Soviet republics and oblasts and Afghan provinces have great importance. These are no longer simply inter-governmental relations but invariably strengthening ties between our peoples. Without question, the development of such ties will

M.S. GORBACHEV. Not long ago in the CPSU CC a conference was held with the leadership of a number of republics and oblasts which were charged with implementing direct ties with Afghanistan, giving direct aid to the population of Afghan provinces, and developing human contact. This ought not to be forgotten in order that the free Soviet aid reaches those for whom it is intended, ordinary Afghans.

NAJIB. Eh. A. Shevardnadze told me about the results of this conference. We know well how seriously the Soviet comrades approach the question of developing direct ties. Recognizing the full measure of their responsibility for the successful implementation and the correct and effective use of the free aid being granted us, the Party and government leadership of Afghanistan is also trying to devote constant attention to improving the operation of Afghan agencies in these areas. At the same time it has to be said that shortcomings and oversights still exist in the activity of the Afghan side. We will try to remove them.

Taking this opportunity, on instructions of the PDPA CC, I would like to state several additional requests.

First of all, we would be appreciative of favorable consideration of our proposal for the command of the Limited Contingent of Soviet Troops and the staff of the Chief Military Adviser to give us assistance as before in the organization of work to distribute free Soviet aid among the population. This would have great political importance in terms of propagandizing the idea of friendship with the Soviet Union among the population.

In the interest of strengthening long-term cooperation between our countries in the economic sphere, we request you consider the question of building an approximately 200 km Kushka-Herat railroad branch line and return to the issue of developing the Aynak copper deposit. We understand that the realization of such projects is fraught with considerable expense in the initial stage, but all this would be repaid a hundredfold.

In terms of involving the population in supporting the government and strengthening the political position of the Soviet Union, the further improvement of trade, economic, cultural, and other ties between the northern provinces of the DRA and the Central Asian republics of the USSR can have great importance, but so also does the solution of the problem of expanding the practice of building "Soviet border to DRA province" electric power transmission lines.

We think that the opportunities for cooperation with COMECON [Council of Mutual Economic Cooperation] member countries are still being insufficiently used in solving the economic problems of Afghanistan. The conditions for expanding ties with socialist countries are good, including the creation of joint enterprises.

Now I want to touch on issues of the international activity of the PDPA and government. First of all, let me state a request to help us establish and expand Afghanistan's ties with progressive countries through CC CPSU channels, especially with those where the parties or governments in power could be viewed as leftist. In addition, we would be appreciative for help from Soviet diplomatic missions in various countries in establishing contact with the Afghan opposition.

In light of the announced policy of national reconciliation, the foreign policy activity of the Party and government is at the present time being implemented sufficiently actively. In spite of the fact that India has not yet given its consent to hold a conference on reconciliation on its territory, our foreign policy is exerting an ever-growing influence on the moderate, wavering part of the opposition.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In conversations with [Indian Prime Minister Rajiv] Gandhi we discussed in detail issues connected with Afghanistan and around it. It is very important that Afghanistan not fall under US and Pakistani influence. This would be absolutely unacceptable to them. This is a good basis for cooperation with the Indians.

But there's one difference. The Indians are afraid that normalization of the situation in Afghanistan will lead to Pakistan directing subversive activities against India. One can

feel, although they do not talk of this, that the Indians are interested in the USSR not hastening to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan. But in this position India is considering the interests of India alone 100%, but the interests of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union maybe 20%.

Since Afghanistan and the Afghan people having lived for so many years in a state of war they could hardly agree with such a formulation of the question. The desire of the Afghan people for peace is the main reason why the policy of national reconciliation is encountering growing understanding and support.

NAJIB. Considering my possible future meeting with Gandhi I would like to consult with you about the following issue. At the present time we are on the threshold of renewing talks in Geneva. We are trying to put constant pressure on Pakistan to act so that they neutralize those circles in the Pakistani administration who favor positions sharply hostile to Afghanistan. Of course, in the present circumstances even the policy of national reconciliation itself has become an effective factor in influencing the mood of the Pakistani population. But besides this we have traditional possibilities of influence. I have in mind the Pushtun and Baluchi tribes and also the opposition movements. There is an opportunity, for example, to work in Sind Province.

Not long ago we sent S. Layek to Delhi. The thing is, the famous leader of the Pushtun tribes of Pakistan there, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, is hospitalized in serious condition. He began his political activity even before the time of Mahatma Gandhi [the leader of the Indian nationalist movement]. They even call him "the Gandhi of the border tribes." Right now he is over 100 years old, of which he has spent 40 years in prison. In his will he expressed the wish that he be buried not in Pakistan, which, he said, is a "prison for peoples," but in Afghanistan. Unquestionably, we will try to get a suitable propaganda effect from this fact.

In the course his visit to Delhi, Layek met with Gandhi and delivered my message to him. In the conversation the Indian leader noted that the US had turned Pakistan into a bridgehead for a fight against India and Afghanistan, using the Sikhs and the Afghan counter-revolution, accordingly, for their own interests. In this regard he proposed thinking about joint retaliatory actions by India and Afghanistan against Pakistan. What do you think, would it not be worth it if Pakistan and the US try for a political settlement and develop a coordinated plan for such actions together with India? I even have an idea, a risky one, you could say. In this matter I am proceeding from the Indian leaders seriously thinking from time to time about the problem of launching a preventive attack, as a sort of demonstration, on Pakistan. Not to occupy its territory but as a show of force.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Gandhi even told me that they have plans to dismember Pakistan.

NAJIB. If the Indians do this, we for our part could, without being directly involved, provoke serious disturbances in the

border regions of Pakistan where Pushtun and Baluchi tribes live. However, the danger of a US military presence arises. But could the Americans decide to act against India? I think not. Even the simple fact of an American presence in the region would create problems for them far more difficult than in Vietnam. There is still one serious factor, however, the presence of the Soviet limited contingent. This issue could obviously be studied as an alternative.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I think that the special measures you are taking justify themselves. Moreover, the other side is resorting to similar actions.

NAJIB. You are right. The effectiveness of our measures has a particularly notable effect on the political situation in such provinces as Sind and Punjab.

M. S. GORBACHEV. [We] need to constantly go in the main direction which we have jointly decided on: to achieve a political settlement. If we encounter direct sabotage of the efforts for a political settlement on the part of the US and Pakistan [or] some kind of harsh measures to undermine the developing process, then obviously we will discuss with you how to act.

But today the two main issues on the agenda are: the implementation of a policy of national reconciliation and the achievement of a political settlement. Of course, this does not exclude the possibility of carrying out special measures, including ones coordinated with India. However [we] need to act so that they do not lead to a direct confrontation, not to open a path to the Americans in this region.

Not long ago a group of retired Pakistani generals came to our military attaché in Pakistan, who requested that assurances be given to the Soviet leadership that they would not permit Pakistan to be turned into a bridgehead for an American military presence. We are determining right now whether this was an initiative of the generals themselves or a move instigated by Zia ul-Haq. In any case, in Pakistan they understand they ought not to play dangerous games with the Soviet Union. They see the limits.

In discussing long-range issues with Gandhi, we have proceeded from [the assumption] that there is the Soviet Union and there is India in this region and an independent, non-aligned Afghanistan would be a stabilizing element in the region. We intend to collaborate with India in the long run. Especially with Gandhi. It is very difficult for him right now. But we support him in that difficult situation which has evolved in India.

We think that the basic interests of the USSR, India, and Afghanistan coincide as regards the international issues and the situation in the region.

NAJIB. There are several more issues connected with our foreign policy activity.

We are on the eve of the convening of the 42<sup>nd</sup> UN General Assembly session. Considering the work that we are doing, opportunities have arisen to try to introduce changes

to the General Assembly resolution on Afghanistan which are favorable to us. Together with this we have developed a plan of specific actions to strengthen Afghanistan's positions in the Non-Aligned Movement, to work with the member countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and in other directions. In particular, we plan to send 67 delegations to various countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to conduct explanatory work there. [We] intend to enlist the aid of socialist countries in implementing the foreign policy measures of the DRA government. [We] plan to distribute special material on the subject of refugees as an official UN document in order to deprive Pakistan of an opportunity to use this problem against us.

M. S. GORBACHEV. But have you estimated how many refugees could really return to Afghanistan, even if [only] approximately?

NAJIB. We think that the return of the overwhelming majority of the refugees can be expected if the barriers from Pakistani and Iranian authorities are removed. We have information that many of those who left Afghanistan as our enemies are now actively speaking out [*vystupayut*, which can also mean "acting"] against the counter-revolutionary chieftains. But, of course, we need to work more actively to involve the various specialized UN agencies in solving the problem of the refugees.

What are our immediate plans to implement the policy of national reconciliation? In the first place in determining these problems we rely on the positive momentum created in the course of implementing this policy. We have held meetings in party organizations with a single agenda dedicated to the problems of translating Party policy into practice. They have shown that the steps being taken by the PDPA are exerting the proper influence both on party members and the population as a whole. At the same time, in the process of the work the need arises to improve the planned measures, the approaches, all the work. For example, one of the important areas is the development and consolidation of the legal basis for the policy of national reconciliation in the course of the implementation of which various questions arise, even as far as the granting of the opportunity to all public and political organizations to openly express their opinion.

In accordance with a decree of the DRA Revolutionary Council, the Party has been granted the right to draw up proposals to reorganize the political structure of the country. In this connection a group has been created within the framework of the PDPA CC Secretariat which includes representatives of both our Party and other political organizations. It has been given the task of drawing up proposals to create a bloc of leftist forces.

We understand the importance of organizing reconciliation work this way in order that the role of public organizations and the population itself be more broadly displayed in these processes. For example, the decision to extend our call for a cease-fire for six more months was adopted at the initiative of the National Front, the Higher Extraordinary Recon-

ciliation Council, and the Higher Council of Ulemas and the Clergy. In the immediate future we plan to prepare and send messages to fraternal parties and the Socialist International in which, along with an explanation of the substance of the policy being followed, we will state requests to give appropriate aid in its implementation.

In the military field we will solve the problems of neutralizing the irreconcilable rebel groups and destroying caravans with weapons, fortified regions, and bases. At the same time the implementation of measures to cover the border with Pakistan and Iran will be continued. Our goal is not to let the counterrevolution consolidate their positions, especially in the border zone, which should become a bulwark of people's power.

All these measures have been recorded in the composite plan of the PDPA CC Politburo. We will try to actively implement them in practice, relying on the aid of all the Soviet comrades working in Afghanistan. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express appreciation for the support which has been given us by the Soviet Embassy, Cde. Ambassador P. P. Mozhayev, the CPSU CC group of advisers to the PDPA CC, the Manager of Affairs of the CPSU CC Cde. Kruchina, and other comrades.

Considering the large and important measures which we plan to carry out—I have in mind the all-party conference and the PDPA Congress planned for the coming year—I would like to request the tenure of the CPSU CC adviser to the PDPA CC Politburo, Cde. V. P. Polyanichko, be extended.

Dear Mikhail Sergeevich, we constantly feel your attention and concern, your exacting attitude. In spite of your great workload you find time to deal with Afghan affairs. Among us in our country we know you as a genuine friend of the Afghan people, a firm fighter for peace, a stout internationalist. The efforts, which the CPSU and Soviet government are undertaking at your initiative in the name of the progress and prosperity of the Soviet people, find a keen response in our hearts. We seek to learn from you how one needs to love one's native land and fight for common human ideals.

Two hundred and twenty days have passed since our December meeting. During this time the policy of national reconciliation has become a reality and your ideas played a role in its development. The results of the January and June CPSU CC plenums have evoked a broad response in Afghanistan, and I would like to congratulate you on their success. By decision of the PDPA CC Politburo, the texts of your reports at these plenums were translated into Dari and Pashto and printed in large numbers. Party members study these documents. Highly esteeming the constructive, peace-loving initiatives you have advanced in the name of the CPSU and Soviet state directed at stopping the arms race and ensuring peace and security, as internationalists we see our duty in the creation of conditions for the withdrawal of the Soviet military contingent within the agreed timeframe.

We are deeply appreciative of the unfailing aid and support which the CPSU CC Politburo and the entire Soviet leadership give us. The meetings and conversations with Cdes.

Eh. A. Shevardnadze, A. F. Dobrynin, and other Soviet comrades and the visits of various Soviet delegations have special importance for us. We are constantly aware of the aid of the CPSU CC Politburo Commission on Afghanistan. All this strengthens in us a confidence that with our joint efforts we will build an independent and non-aligned Afghanistan without fail which will forever remain in a position of friendship with the Soviet Union.

M. S. GORBACHEV. For my part I would like to describe briefly the situation as we see it.

Your information has again confirmed the coincidence of the points of view about what is happening in Afghanistan and those measures which the PDPA needs to implement within the framework of a new stage of the policy of national reconciliation.

Comrade Najib, you should know that, with the great responsibility which rests with the CPSU CC in the areas of domestic and foreign policy problems facing our country the problems associated with Afghanistan are always at the forefront of our attention. We usually don't report them, but these issues are very often discussed in the Politburo.

Inasmuch as we and you have opened a new stage in the development of the situation in Afghanistan, the Politburo Commission headed by Eh. A. Shevardnadze has resumed its work. Besides the Politburo, the Soviet government, the CC Secretariat, and our other organizations and departments devote the most serious attention to Afghan problems. We proceed from the position that the root interests of the USSR and the DRA coincide. First and foremost this determines our policy with regard to Afghanistan for today and the future. We have always treated Afghanistan with respect, as early as Lenin's time.

But there are also factors of no little importance such as the civil war in Afghanistan and the presence of our troops. This gives our relations a special character and forces us to constantly deal with questions of relations with Afghanistan.

We have carefully listened to your information. We draw a general conclusion from it: the policy of national reconciliation which you and we have worked out together is the correct one, and it should be continued. The problems cannot be solved by military means. In the person of Comrade Najib we see a political leader who understands the depth and importance of the processes which are occurring and the correctness of the chosen policy of national reconciliation for the destiny of Afghanistan.

It can be said that the policy of national reconciliation enjoys the support of the Afghan people. It is supported by progressive forces in the world, realistic circles, and all those who are actually interested in a political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. It can also be said that national reconciliation is proceeding with difficulty and is encountering resistance from the counterrevolution and also from those forces of inertia in the PDPA itself which do not want to live and work in a new manner. There is nothing unexpected here. This should shock neither you nor us. On the whole, we and

you foresaw this. No one inside or outside Afghanistan has suggested an alternative to the policy of national reconciliation put forth by the PDPA. This is a fact. Employing our terminology, it can be said that Afghan society has learned this through suffering. The people are tired, they want peace. This is the main thing. But whom does it not suit? The rebels and, excuse me for the harsh words, those who think only about their own hides.

The main part of the Party leadership is concentrating around the policy of national reconciliation. And Afghanistan needs these people right now. They will also be needed tomorrow. I would say this: the main criteria for assessing the political and professional characteristics of workers of different levels is their attitude toward the policy of national reconciliation. I am dwelling on this issue in detail because it is the main one. There should be no doubt or wavering in the correctness of Afghanistan's current choice. We are deeply convinced of this.

Now about the role of the PDPA in the policy of national reconciliation. Without question, the PDPA is the leading force in the implementation of this policy. And the more authority this program gains, the more authority the Party will have. A contradictory but dialectically clear situation is developing. On one hand, the PDPA, in expanding its social base and adopting a policy of creating a coalition government, is seemingly undermining its own authority. But this is not so. This is just an appearance. The true authority of the PDPA is being formed right now. It is necessary that there be no defeatist sentiments so that those in the leadership understand this correctly. While our troops are in Afghanistan, the process of national reconciliation needs to move forward as the PDPA views it and not as the rebels want. The potential of national reconciliation is still far from exhausted. It needs to be used to the maximum. It is impossible to replace it with anything. Right now despairing, defeatist sentiments and any doubts or wavering are simply impermissible. New impetus is needed to move the policy of national reconciliation forward. Please convey this opinion of the CPSU CC to the entire Afghan leadership, the PDPA Central Committee, and the government.

It is necessary to act decisively right now and systematically turn the policy of national reconciliation around. Create reserves for the future now. Create opportunities for a real presence of the PDPA in all areas of Afghan society now. This is lacking now.

We have carefully listened to your ideas about what needs to be done in the near future, and we support you. But information is reaching us that decisions made in Kabul reach the grass roots very much watered down.

When we talk about the second stage of the policy of national reconciliation, then we mean that it began on 14 July, that is, on the day when the Afghan government declared its readiness to extend the cease-fire and respond only to military operations of the other side. It is evident that in the second stage of the reconciliation the question arises at the practical level of forming a coalition government, and the creation of other parties and a bloc of left-democratic forces.

You cannot refuse to cooperate with those who do not share your point of view. On the contrary, you have to create real pluralism in society and in government structures. Probably it would be tactically correct to put the stress on joining these forces together and the policy of national reconciliation and the cessation of military operations would be such a unifying factor.

You've talked about the principles of volunteerism. These need to be encouraged in every way. And they need to be followed especially consistently in the creation of structures of political power.

Possibly it is not necessary to require that other, newly-created parties loudly advocate friendship with the Soviet Union. For them, it would be equivalent to recognizing the presence of Soviet troops. Let them come to this themselves. But when the organizational structures of these parties are registered, our Embassy will get in touch with you in order to establish dialogue with these parties.

Now some words about the specific tasks of this new stage of reconciliation. It seems to us that it is necessary to decide the issue of the president more quickly. As far as we understand the situation, there is no other candidate for the post other than Cde. Najib. Yes, and comrades from your entourage maintain the same opinion. In spite of the fact that the process of understanding is proceeding with difficulty, the main representatives of the leadership, including Cde [Prime Minister Sultan Ali] Keshmand, support this idea. It is very important to correctly place party cadre in government and party posts ahead of time. All this needs to be done in order to adopt a constitution in the near future and thus create the legal basis for the second stage.

I agree that the discussion of creating a transitional government needs to be translated into practical terms. And very well thought-out, considered steps are needed here. It is very important to draw the opposition into a dialogue about the creation of a coalition government. There need to be several options for its makeup. There are options which would suit both you and us. A coalition government should include figures who enjoy real authority and influence and who will work in favor of national reconciliation, and not the first people who come along.

I think that the tactic of public appeals to the opposition has justified itself. Moreover it will become effective if it is combined with a designation of specific posts in the governmental structure. This would also facilitate the process of dividing the opposition. The leaders will undoubtedly reject this proposal but the ordinary members will be drawn to it. But work needs to be done in this direction. It is also necessary to think carefully about the possibility of granting specific posts in the government to two or three rebel leaders. But these should be real proposals and not political games. We completely support your plans to continue contact with foreign opposition centers. We will help you in this where there is an opportunity.

You are right, Comrade Najib, when you say that the present stage of national reconciliation requires new approaches and an abandonment of stereotypes and methods

which have outlived themselves. And it is correct that you want to hold a party conference in order to consolidate the Party and all healthy forces. Hence we support all your plans in this regard.

Some specific issues in terms of military policy. Those issues which you have raised require deep analysis. They go in the right direction. We will think them over and decide together.

I would like to stress one more thing here: the military policy, as it is being pursued today, suits neither you nor us. But when is it going to be dealt with if not today, when our troops are [still] in Afghanistan? I agree with you that we need to improve the quality of military training. The special forces subunits of the “commandos” type are justifying themselves. Great attention needs to be devoted to them.

NAJIB. Excuse me for interrupting you, Mikhail Sergeyevich. I am surprised how we have been fighting for eight years. When Karmal was the supreme commander he did nothing. We actually lost these eight years.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It is especially important not to permit debates between the former “Khalq” and “Parcham” wings. Send this to the comrades from us: if this happens it will be a stab in the back. This would be the same as treason and suicide.

We are very impressed with how you are conducting ethnic policy. You are conducting it in a considered fashion. This has great importance.

As regards international issues then, as before, we will help here, considering our common goals and those changes which are taking place in Afghanistan. We will lay bricks in the building of good relations between our countries and peoples.

And lastly. I want again to draw your attention to the necessity of the maximum use of the temporary presence of Soviet troops so that the policy of national reconciliation produces the results that you are counting on. And we are counting from 1 January of this year.

NAJIB. Seven months have already passed.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Time is flying and we need to use it to the maximum. The Soviet leadership, as before, is giving Afghanistan the highest priority attention.

Please send greetings to your comrades from the Soviet leadership.

We invite you, Comrade Najib, to the celebration of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October Revolution as the head of an Afghan delegation.

How would you view the possibility of carrying out a joint flight of Soviet and Afghan cosmonauts? The information about this could be included in a report about our meeting today.

NAJIB. You, Mikhail Sergeyevich, have seized the initiative from me. I also wanted to propose this idea to you. The prob-

lem is that the use of surface-to-air missiles by the counter-revolutionaries, especially Stingers, have not failed to affect the morale of our pilots. But the prospect of space flight will lift them.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It would be necessary to show Pakistan that Stingers can hit their territory, too.

NAJIB. We will do this without fail.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We have one path—only forward. I am glad to meet you. I am glad that you are not only in good physical shape but deeply understand the problems which lie before you. Act confidently. Unite the Afghan leadership and Afghan society around you.

You will have an opportunity to rest a bit. If you want to see something or meet with Soviet comrades then we will organize this.

NAJIB. Thank you very much. Today’s meeting is a great honor for me. Its results will be used by us in the course of preparing for the all-party conference of the PDPA. I will say openly: such meetings with you, our senior comrades, are always exceptionally useful and instructive for me. I assure you that I have always been and will remain a faithful student of the Leninist school.

I want to express thanks for the invitation to the Great October celebration. I accept it with appreciation.

Please accept my wishes for the health, success, and welfare for you and your family.



**Record of a Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan Najibullah, 3 November 1987**

*[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

M. S. GORBACHEV. First I want to thank you for the warm feelings you expressed in today’s speech. Your sincere words will find a path to the hearts of all the Soviet people, especially our women and mothers.

I am glad for the opportunity to meet with you and exchange opinions, although briefly. Of course, we will hardly be able to talk about much. Nevertheless there are questions which ought to be discussed.

I greet you on our holiday. We are glad that in the persons of the DRA delegation we greet representatives of a neighboring country with whom we have established a long

friendship. At the same time we welcome our new friends from Afghanistan, keeping in mind the new spirit of our mutual relations. It can be said that the old and the new Afghanistan are embodied in this.

You heard the report. We worked on the report a great deal. Very serious effort, thought, and significant analysis was required. Its preparation required several months. If you paid attention, all three sections of the report were connected by the single thought of our past and the present day, our present concerns. Of course, we could have deferred an analysis and assessment of the historical events of past years and done them separately. But we needed to do them for the present day. Therefore we had to deal with them.

Much of what has to be decided today in the process of *perestroika* traces its roots back there in history. Therefore it's necessary to look into history, into one or another event, and construct our policy accordingly.

As regards the third section of the report, "Great October and the Contemporary World," everything is also explained in it inasmuch as our domestic interests are compatible with common human interests. We need a normal international situation.

Strictly speaking, the report is therefore called "October and *Perestroika*: the Revolution Continues." It reveals the essence of the task which we have seen before us: the cause of October needs to be continued, drawing lessons from the past. And to create good foreign policy preconditions for deep changes in society. This is what we wanted when going to this festive meeting. It is possible that someone expected something else. But this is just what we needed. We still have to enhance the ideas described in the report very seriously.

But how are things in Afghanistan? I congratulate you on your election to the post of Chairman of the Revolutionary Council. It is good that this was done.

I would like to find out, how the measures are being implemented which you developed for placing people to augment the leadership echelon? I congratulate you on the successful completion of the all-party conference of the PDPA. At one time the information which came from Afghanistan concerned me. The conference placed critical tasks before the country.

It is very important right now not to permit discord in the leadership and in the Party itself in the face of such tasks. It is necessary to take people into the headquarter's apparatus who could be sent to the provinces so that they could work there.

How did Lenin act in his time? He sent [Grigory Konstantinovich] Ordzhonikidze here, [Sergey M.] Kirov there, and [Josef] Stalin and [Mikhail] Frunze over there. I have named only several of the important figures of our Party and government. But so it was with officials of lesser rank. All of them headed key sectors, which was dictated by the demands of a crucial stage in the development of the Revolution and the conditions of the Civil War. Such revolutionaries were needed, not those who occupied "warm chairs" and received profits.

It is necessary to send energetic people invested with

authority to work in newly-liberated regions of Afghanistan and, yes, to the provinces which have long been under the control of people's authority, giving them help there from local party and government personnel, elders, and other representatives of the population, regardless of their party affiliation and political coloration—everyone who favors national reconciliation. And then such a representative will be surrounded by local people and local authorities. Here ties between local authorities and Kabul, and coalition forms of government will be created.

NAJIBULLAH. First of all, on behalf of the members of our delegation permit me to express to you, dear Mikhail Sergeyevich, and all the Soviet leadership, our heartfelt thanks and appreciation for the invitation to take part in the festivities on the occasion of a glorious date, the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. All of us are under a deep impression from your report, which could rightfully be called an action program for the international communist and workers' movement and all peace-loving people of the planet.

Turning to the works of Lenin again and again, we find answers to the burning issues which life presents us with.

Your report, which we will continually and comprehensively study, is such a source of creative inspiration and a school of Leninist thought for all revolutionaries.

Speaking of our work, I would like to note that, as a whole, the all-party conference went successfully. But serious shortcomings in our political, organizational, and ideological work were clearly identified in the process of its preparation. As before, the conservative forces remaining in the Party, relying on old methods and forms of work, are trying in every way to prevent the new from sprouting and do not want to cooperate in the process of reconciliation. These shortcomings have deep roots caused by the existence of a gap between word and deed in the PDPA. We understand that it is impossible to achieve the implementation of planned ideas with declarative statements and slogans alone. The consciousness of party members needs to be changed in a decisive manner. From this point of view the importance of the all-party conference is quite great. We are again convinced of the need to get seriously busy with educating the party cadre and all its members.

We well understand your recommendations expressed in December of last year and during the meeting this June about the need to consolidate the Party and its unity, and we will strive to implement them in practice. However it ought to be recognized that the situation still existing in the PDPA is the reason for the stagnation of the implementation of the policy of national reconciliation. But the main and hopeful result of the all-party conference was that it gave a mandate and instructions to the party leadership to intensify work to step up the reconciliation process.

Some words about the progress of implementing this policy. I think there is no need to give numbers and other statistical data. The main conclusion is that this policy enjoys growing support from our people. Today only the farthest-right wing of the counterrevolution does not respond



to our peace-loving proposals.

M. S. GORBACHEV. But the groups in Iran and Pakistan have managed to join their forces together. By the way, who is the head of this union, what party does its leader represent?

NAJIBULLAH. Actually, as a result of direct pressure from the Americans and the Pakistani administration, the counter-revolutionary organizations have announced they have united and elected a single leader, [Muhammad] Yu[nus]. Khalis. He heads the Islamic Party of Afghanistan and at one time split from [radical Islamic Party of Afghanistan (Hizb-i Islami) leader] G[ulbuddin Hekmatyar's]<sup>6</sup>. However, we know that, in spite of formal unification, the counterrevolutionaries still have not managed to overcome serious existing differences.<sup>7</sup>

I would like to inform you, Mikhail Sergeevich, of several of our short-term plans. In a month we plan to hold a Loya Jirga at which we will adopt a constitution for the country and elect a president. Afterwards it is intended to hold elections to a National Council, which will form a government. In this connection I would like to consult with you regarding the following issue.

In the course of conversations with Cde. Eh. A. Shevardnadze, we discussed in general terms the question of the content of the first address of the president after his election by the Loya Jirga. It seems to us that this speech ought to first of all reflect the thought that the president is the exponent of the interests of all the people and all the social sectors of the population, and not narrow party interests.

In addition, it ought to be noted that our Revolution is national democratic in nature, but not socialist. Therefore in the present and succeeding stages the constructive participation of all political forces and all sectors of the population—the clergy, ethnic entrepreneurs, the intelligentsia—is urgently required in the solution of nationwide problems, firstly ensuring peace, which is what the PDPA is calling for.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Correct.

NAJIBULLAH. One more important point connected with the role of the PDPA. I intend the PDPA representative to be elected to the post of president, and it will be stressed in the address that the president embodies and defends the interests of the entire people, and all groups and sectors of the population, and not [just] the Party.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This needs to be done. The candidacy itself of the president is the result of compromise and therefore it should reflect all interests. In other words, the president is the national leader.

NAJIBULLAH. The necessary attention will also be devoted to stating a position about such issues which are traditional for our society as “Jirga” democracy and the customs of the

people.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This is correct, for the Jirga joins together real authorities on whose opinion the support of the government depends to a large degree.

NAJIBULLAH. The issue of creating conditions for the withdrawal of Soviet troops occupies a special place. It will be stressed that, in calling upon the Afghan people to create coalition forms of government, the leadership of the country is trying to ensure the necessary preconditions to turn to the Soviet government on a whole range of issues connected with the times and schedule of such a withdrawal.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Right.

NAJIBULLAH. It is evident that the thought also ought to be expressed that the armed forces of the country firmly watch over the revolutionary achievements, express the interests of all the people, and defend the independence sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan. They are subordinate to the president as supreme commander.

In addition, the address is to note that in conditions where a new constitution is in effect in Afghanistan various political parties receive the right to be established and function on condition that their paramount goals will be the attainment of peace, a cessation of bloodshed, and the progress of the country along the path of social and economic development.

M. S. GORBACHEV. But is this principle contained in the present draft of the constitution?

NAJIBULLAH. Yes, we have stipulated the introduction of a multiparty system.

One more point. Considering that the ethnic issue is an acute one in Afghanistan we plan to stress in the address the readiness of the country's leadership to do everything necessary to solve it. It will be announced that at the present stage the most important task is the achievement of national reconciliation. Therefore we are appealing to all ethnic minorities to help translate this policy into practice. If the policy of national reconciliation is successful conditions will arise to ensure the genuine equality of all ethnic groups and tribes of the country, even as far as giving them national autonomy and the right to self-determination.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I think that such an announcement would be appropriate for your problems.

In Lenin's time, 5,000 soviets [councils] were formed in rural areas populated by ethnic minorities. There's the flexibility of Lenin's ethnic policy for you!

Will the president be elected at the Loya Jirga?

NAJIBULLAH. Yes.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This means the Loya Jirga elects the

president. But what then?

NAJIBULLAH. The Loya Jirga will first of all adopt the new constitution and then elect the president.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Will the Loya Jirga also remain after this? But how is it proposed for the president to be elected subsequently?

NAJIBULLAH. The upcoming Loya Jirga will be convened only to fulfill the above tasks. After the president's term expires in five years, a Loya Jirga will be convened again.

M. S. GORBACHEV. One more question. How will the representation from all the provinces of Afghanistan in the Loya Jirga be ensured? Or [will it be] partially, only from those which are in the government's sphere of influence and then it will not be fully legitimate [*nepolnotsennaya*]? Can you estimate how many representatives there will be in the Loya Jirga?

NAJIBULLAH. On the eve of the departure of our delegation to the Soviet Union, a meeting of Commission to Prepare a Draft Constitution was held. Individual members of the Commission proposed holding elections of representatives to the Loya Jirga via mass public organizations.

M. S. GORBACHEV. What is meant by this? Will elections of representatives from all provinces of the country be held, or will regions where the bandits are spreading terror not name their representatives?

NAJIBULLAH. Although it was stipulated that the elections are to be held throughout the entire country, the principle of election of representatives to the Loya Jirga which was proposed does not agree with the traditions of democracy which exist in our society. Therefore I proposed – and it was adopted – to grant the right to the population of each province to elect 10 representatives apiece as they see fit. We don't want to impose our will on the population.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I support your point of view. It is very important to ensure genuine popular representation in the Loya Jirga. But you're going to the Jirga by a difficult route. The counter-revolution will oppose its success. To what extent have you thought out the problem of ensuring the necessary support of Jirga representatives? For example, on the issue of the president?

Other issues also arise: who will open the Loya Jirga? Where will the candidacies be discussed? Evidently this means the creation of a sort of Council of Elders which could nominate three or four candidates?

NAJIBULLAH. Yes, exactly.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This means one or two candidates from the PDPA, let's say, Najib or Gorbachev. But what about the

Council of Elders? Will it have the right to discuss with the opposition the possibility of its nominating its own candidate?

NAJIBULLAH. The irreconcilable opposition will obviously not do this. As regards those who are ready to support national reconciliation then without question they will get this right.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This is important. Possibly some liberally-minded figure can be prepared and even choose a candidate from among the most inveterate enemies. But soundings should have already been necessary to do this. It is impossible to permit the counter-revolution to then have an opportunity to say that it was left out of participating in the election of a president, which was all cooked up by the PDPA, and accuse you of fraud.

But how will the government be formed?

NAJIBULLAH. The president appoints a prime minister, who is charged with forming a cabinet of ministers. The government will be approved by the National Council, which should give it a vote of confidence.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This means an approach is needed here which is appropriate to the problems of creating a coalition government. You need to know beforehand who is to be given the post of prime minister. If the post of president remains with the PDPA, the prime minister should be a representative of an opposition party. If the chieftains of the counter-revolution and Zahir Shah refuse to accept this proposal, then select a suitable candidate from among prominent authorities who have recently entered into cooperation. Have him be a figure with competence [*malokompetentnyy deyatel'*]. But it's necessary to show such courage here.

Generally speaking, Cde. Najib, an exceptionally important and critical stage is beginning. Unfortunately, we don't have the opportunity to discuss all the problems before us in detail since I have a meeting scheduled with Cde. János Kádár.

I want to suggest to you: think about all these suggestions. We will also think [about them], consult with the Soviet embassy, and with the commission headed by Eh. A. Shevardnadze.

All possible alternatives associated with the implementation of the policy of national reconciliation ought to be considered—both the election of the president of the country, the appointment of the prime minister, and the formation of a coalition government, which needs to be done so that the Loya Jirga actually reflects the entire spectrum of political forces of present-day Afghanistan.

Describe your thoughts, views, and ideas and send them to us. And we, for our part, will be ready accordingly. In a word, everything needs to be discussed again. But in general, from what you are saying, everything is going in the right direction.

NAJIBULLAH. I agree with your suggestion. But now I would

like to briefly touch on two more topics. Of course, the address ought to reflect a position regarding the issues of the further economic development of the country and Afghanistan's foreign policy.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It is advisable to describe the approach to economic problems so that the desire of the leadership to do everything necessary in the interests of the broadest sectors of the population, and in the interests of the peasantry, clergy, and ethnic entrepreneurs is obvious to everyone.

NAJIBULLAH. Agreed. Regarding foreign policy issues, I would like to say the following. The personal representative of the UN Secretary General, Cordovez, recently sent us his scenario for future talks about a political settlement. Obviously Cde. Shevardnadze ought to be consulted about this question.

M. S. GORBACHEV. But what do you think of Cordovez' proposal?

NAJIBULLAH. There are unacceptable aspects in it for us but there is a grain of reason, a positive momentum [*pozitiv*], which ought to be used. I think that we could send you our ideas on this account in writing.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Good, write them. We'll think about them and consult. It's possible that Eh. A. Shevardnadze will come to you.

The time is such right now that it's necessary to think very well and act. And the iron needs to be struck while the fire is hot. The people need to be drawn to your side so that the dynamism of national reconciliation is not lost. The counterrevolution has not yet really united. So this does not turn out like a train which starts moving and gains speed, and suddenly brakes and is stopped.

M. S. GORBACHEV. And think about one other thing. We could have told this to Reagan. The Americans seemingly want to take part in the political settlement of the Afghan problem. I do not believe in their sincerity. But everything is possible. In the twilight of its term, the Reagan administration wants to show that—together with the Soviet Union—it is contributing to a settlement of the situation in such a hot spot as Afghanistan. But, of course, they would like a settlement to be achieved in which the PDPA is shunted into the background, although it is already clear today that peace in Afghanistan can be achieved only by considering that the PDPA is an equal among other political forces. Nothing else will work.

We are telling the Americans that we are ready to support their participation in the settlement process. But in doing so they must proceed from current realities, that is, recognize that a government, an armed forces, a security service, a Ministry of Internal Affairs, etc. exist in Afghanistan. We are stressing that this is reality, as real as the existence of the opposing force. So let's find ways to solve the problem.

But you need to look not at the Americans, but promote the process, widely opening the door to the creation of a coalition inside the country.

On the whole, you've held a good party conference. Now your task is to urgently implement the decisions made and go forward. As regards those in the PDPA who do not believe in national reconciliation, these skeptics need to be given a good pension or sent abroad.

Not everyone is grasping the challenges [*zadachi*] raised at the party conference. But it became clear after the discussions what this is—national reconciliation.

NAJIBULLAH. Two requests in conclusion, if you'll permit me. First, as you know, we decided to create a zone free of rebel bands in the north of Afghanistan. A need arises in this regard to conduct a "cleansing" in this region using USSR KGB Border Troops. At the same time we have also requested consideration of the question of granting aid in solving the economic problems of this region.

Second. On the way to Moscow I visited Volgograd, a city which was raised from the ruins after the Great Patriotic War. Not long before this I had the occasion to visit Kandahar which we also have to rebuild anew. Therefore I turn to you with a request to help us build one more housing construction complex.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We will consider these requests without fail.

But I have in turn a request of you—inform us of how matters are going with the use of the free supplementary Soviet aid. Are we being hasty with the allotment of 2 billion rubles? Information is coming to us that the aid is not reaching the people for some reason.

NAJIBULLAH. We are not yet using the goods which are coming into the current year free aid account. We are still using the remainder of the 7,000,000 rubles aid previously given us. The losses here were 2%. We are trying to tighten up control. We have been able to reduce losses to some degree although this is still insufficient.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It's necessary to closely follow how it is being used so that there is no misuse. And the people should feel this. This should actually be your fund. It should be in your hands. It's good that you went to Kandahar and promised to help rebuild the city. You could have given an order to give the necessary aid to the population from this fund.

But if the fund is administered by a bureaucrat then it'll all trickle into the hands of his relatives, through clan and family ties. In a word, it'll end up with those who handle its distribution.

Whoever is abusing authority needs to be punished and imprisoned. And let everyone see that he is a thief, although possibly it is not considered a sin according to the Koran to embezzle aid received from an atheist.

NAJIBULLAH. Permit me to express gratitude to you, Mikhail Sergeyevich, and all the entire Soviet leadership for the constant aid and support.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Send our greetings to your comrades and wishes to firmly go along the chosen path.



### **Conversations between M. S. Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan regarding Afghanistan, 9 December 1987 (Excerpt)**

*[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

R. REAGAN. The regional issues relate primarily to other issues, first among them—Afghanistan. This is, first of all, about the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. We know one another's point of view, and I would welcome it if you would announce a withdrawal of Soviet troops. I think such an announcement should have been made long ago. Without doubt, the situation in Afghanistan is difficult, primarily for you, and we could help you, guaranteeing that no other governments in this region would threaten you in Afghanistan. We will do everything in our power to guarantee that Afghanistan will be an independent, neutral country, and we hope that Soviet troops will be withdrawn from it by the end of 1988...

M. S. GORBACHEV. Our order of priorities coincides with yours. Therefore I will begin with Afghanistan (...).

Regarding Afghanistan, within the framework of the Cordovez mission, there exists an agreement of principles about non-interference and guarantees from the US, the USSR, and Pakistan, and it would be good if Iran were on the list. There exists a plan for the return of the refugees, and guarantees are being given to the mujaheddin in Pakistan and Iran. All this will help. The issue of the timing of the troop withdrawal remains open. President Najibullah has suggested—and consulted with the Soviet Union about this, although this is his own suggestion—that Soviet troops leave over the course of 12 months with the understanding that this timeframe could be reduced by 2-3 months if everything goes smoothly, but from the very start the process should be tied to national reconciliation and the creation of a coalition government. But only the Afghans themselves should decide the issue of the nature and composition of such a government. I share your idea about an independent, neutral, multi-party Afghanistan. It is in this very framework that a society is now being formed in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is not a socialist country. It is a semi-feudal pluralistic society. How they are to live and develop is for they themselves to decide. But you under-

stand that the issue of Afghanistan is not a simple issue. We have a more than 2,000 km border with them and therefore we need a friendly neighbor. But I can assure you that the Soviet Union is not hatching plans to create bases in Afghanistan. We have not been thinking about this. We think that it is necessary to conclude the process begun there on the basis of national reconciliation. And the Afghans have even said they are ready to give half of the posts in a government of national reconciliation to the opposition, including the post of prime minister. We support this but the decision is to be made by the Afghans themselves. Neither you nor we can decide how to divide up these posts. I think that if we advised our friends to act in the direction of national reconciliation, and you also conscientiously [*akkuratno*] advised this to those with whom you maintain relations—we know you have such capabilities since not long ago you received some opposition leaders—this would not be bad.

Speaking of the withdrawal of our troops, I will say that we are interested in this and have already begun to withdraw our troops. But you ought to cease financial support and weapons aid to the opposition. I can say that on the same day as the withdrawal of Soviet troops is announced they will not participate in military operations except for self-defense purposes. You yourself understand that the situation can be most unpredictable. It would be good if you and we agreed about cooperation and demonstrated this to the world. We favor an indigenous [*narodivshiy*] neutral regime in Afghanistan, a regime that would not be unacceptable to either of us, nor to the Afghans. Therefore let us agree about this and we will inform Najibullah and you, the opposition, about this.

R. REAGAN. We will try to exert influence on them. However, the president of Afghanistan has an army, and the opposition does not. Therefore it is impossible to ask one side to put down its weapons at the same time as the other keeps theirs. It seems to me that they need to meet together to find a political solution.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I think that there are real preconditions to solving this problem. Let our experts think about it...

By the way, Iran is also taking aim at Afghanistan. If we put too much pressure on Iran, then they could respond somehow in Afghanistan.



### **Conversation between M.S. Gorbachev and R. Reagan, 10 December 1987 (Excerpt)**

*[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated by Gary Goldberg for CWIHP.]*

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yesterday I touched on the Afghan issue. I will say frankly: I have noticed from your side a certain restraint and unwillingness to get involved in discussing the ideas I expressed about solving the Afghan problem. Therefore I would like to stress that we are ready to talk seriously with you on this topic; moreover, to agree on several principal aspects.

If you want, then we will not make this agreement public. The Soviet Union would name a specific date for the withdrawal of its troops, and the United States would obligate itself to halt aid to known Afghan forces. That is, we would act synchronously. On such-and-such a day we would begin the withdrawal and on the same day you would cease aid to the forces in the opposition. When we name a day then it would simultaneously signify that from that date our forces would not participate in combat operations except in cases of self-defense. I again stress that we don't want Afghanistan to be pro-Soviet or pro-American. We think that it should be a neutral country.

It seems to me that such a suggestion provides a basis for our cooperation in resolving the Afghan issue. But I have developed the impression that the US takes the following position on this issue: the Soviet Union is "tied down" in Afghanistan, and let them get out of there however they want, and the United States will criticize all the time and then impede the withdrawal of our troops.

If you actually take such a position then it will be hard for us to find a common language. All the same, let's think together about some businesslike approach and joint practical steps. In our summary document we could write down in a general way that we discussed the issue about Afghanistan. (...)

R. REAGAN. In reply to the ideas you expressed I'll try to explain to you what difficulties we have in regard to, let's say, Afghanistan or Nicaragua. The present Afghan government has its own armed forces. If we agree with you that the Soviet Union withdraws its troops and we halt aid to the freedom fighters in Afghanistan, then they would end up disarmed before Afghan government troops and would be deprived of any opportunity to defend their right to participate in a future government. Therefore we think that within the framework of our decision with you the Afghan government troops should also be disbanded. This would allow both sides to take part in a discussion of the settlement process on an equal basis...

G. SHULTZ. Regarding the Afghan issue, we think the working group has made a step forward. The Soviet side let us know that the issue of troop withdrawal is not tied to the conclusion of the process of national reconciliation. This process will take quite a lot of time and the Afghan people themselves will determine through what stages it must pass. It means that one element that has been lacking until now can be included on the agenda at the next stage of the Geneva talks, namely the withdrawal of Soviet troops.<sup>8</sup>

M. S. GORBACHEV. On condition that it is tied to the issue of American aid to opposition forces; that is, the day of the start of the troop withdrawal should be the same day that American military aid stops. If such an agreement is reached, then Soviet troops will cease participation in military operations and observe a cease-fire from the start of the withdrawal. The rest (creation of a coalition government, etc.) the sides will do and implement, whether by themselves or using the mediatory mission of Cordovez.

I can repeat what I said this morning – we want the new Afghanistan to be neither pro-American nor pro-Soviet, but a non-aligned, independent country. If we agree to withdraw our troops and the US does not stop financial and military aid to the opposition forces then the situation would only deteriorate further, which would make it impossible for us to withdraw troops. Therefore we tie troop withdrawal to the cessation of aid to opposition forces and outside interference.

I think that our discussion of this issue was good. I propose that henceforth we put this discussion on a more practical basis and begin a specific discussion about it.

G. SHULTZ. Yesterday in the working group the Soviet side welcomed US support of the Accords already reached in the Geneva talks. We said that one important agreement is lacking between us at present, namely the time of Soviet troop withdrawal.

M. S. GORBACHEV. [Translator's note: possible a word missed due to a spurious character at the beginning of the sentence] [More] about cessation of American aid to Afghan opposition forces. Let's agree on the time and announce it. But if you need additional time to think, please, think. But right now we are inviting you to make a specific joint step.

It would allow [us] to verify how sincerely the US administration is trying to ease the situation in Afghanistan. For us this verification would have great importance inasmuch as it would allow us to correctly assess US actions in other situations also.

G. SHULTZ. At the Geneva talks a proposal was made that the United States could halt deliveries of lethal weapons to Afghan freedom fighters 60 days after the start of the Soviet troop withdrawal.

One more issue remains unresolved, namely how the process of national reconciliation will proceed, in parallel with the Soviet troop withdrawal or whether the Soviet side agrees to include in the summary document a point that both sides support the Accords on Afghanistan which were reached at Afghan-Pakistani talks in Geneva.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. We are not tying the issue of the timing of the Soviet troop withdrawal to the process of national reconciliation, which naturally will be a long process. We confirmed this again yesterday.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It can be said in the concluding document that after conclusion of a summit meeting the USSR and the US will begin specific work on this issue through diplomatic channels with the participation of interested parties.

G. SHULTZ. We do not object.



**Conversation with US Vice President George H.W. Bush, 10 December 1987 (Excerpt)**

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

(...)

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yesterday, when we met with you, I did not see optimism from your side about how the Afghan problem could be unknotted, for a suitable solution could be found in Afghanistan, Central America, Cambodia, and the Persian Gulf right now. However, I felt that the United States had no special desire to solve these problems.

G. BUSH. When I was talking with Dobrynin he said that in his view Pakistan did not want to halt aid to the Afghan rebels and was very much afraid of losing aid from the US.

With regards to Afghanistan, we frankly do not know what contribution we could make to help the Soviet side get out of the current situation...

M. S. GORBACHEV. Regarding the Afghan problem, I think your administration could contribute to a search for its solution. If you would say that you are halting aid to the opposition, the rebels, with the start of the Soviet troop withdrawal, we would name a specific time. If this does not happen, if the US acts according to the principle “you got yourself in, you can get yourself out,” then the entire problem will be deferred. If we were to begin to withdraw troops while American aid continued then this would lead to a bloody war in the country. I don’t know what we would do then. The Soviet Union does not intend at all to tie Afghanistan to a particular political system. Let it be independent.

G. BUSH. And we are not in favor of installing an exclusively pro-American regime in Afghanistan. This is not US policy.

M. S. GORBACHEV. And we are not in favor of a pro-Soviet regime. Let Afghanistan be independent. However, the American side should not continue deliveries of weapons and the financing of aid to the rebels. We ought to take this up seriously in order to ensure the establishment of a coalition gov-

ernment in this country which would suit both you and us, and all domestic political forces in Afghanistan. Right now there is a chance for practical results.

(...)



**Record of a Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with Indian Minister of Defense Krishna Chandra Pant, 11 February 1988**

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

M. S. GORBACHEV. Please pass to Rajiv [Gandhi] that I very much value our cooperation and our exchanges of information through various channels about the situation in the region where both we and you have very important interests.

I would also like to ask you and the Ambassador to send to Prime Minister Gandhi one observation having perhaps a global character, an observation which is not superficial but born as a result of serious analysis. We see that the reactionary circles in the West—as distinct from realistic circles—are very worried about that the pioneering [*initsiativnaya*] policy which the Soviet Union, India, the Non-Aligned Movement, and progressive forces are now following. These forces are trying to consolidate right now and are looking for ways to seize [*perekhvatit*] the initiative and disrupt movement along the path which leads to strengthening security and improving international relations. This is not to the militarists’ tastes.

Therefore they have begun to literally attack the Soviet embassy and the General Secretary personally and are doing everything in order to denigrate his policy both in domestic affairs and in foreign policy. We see that Rajiv Gandhi and other progressive figures have not been ignored. This is a very serious fact which needs to be considered. Right now the periods of euphoria and panic have passed for them, and they are consolidating. For example, the Soviet Union, India, and other progressive regimes for them are like a bone in their throats.

At the same time it is impossible not to see anything else. Our joint efforts and our peace initiatives are enjoying ever greater support in the world and are drawing all realistically-minded people to our side. This is a very important factor whose significance is growing. Therefore there is every reason to look at the future optimistically.

K. Ch. PANT. Thank you, Mr. General Secretary. I recall with great pleasure your visit to Delhi, the time we spent together, and the thorough conversations with you.

I recall not only your official statements but your numer-

ous statements in personal conversations with me. A great impression was made on me by the fact that your words correspond so harmoniously with your actions both in Soviet domestic and foreign policy. Probably many of the thoughts you then expressed came hard. But you have not retreated from your chosen path and follow it firmly.

It should be said that I share your optimism in connection with the positive processes in the world which are the result of your efforts. A new generation is recognizing the imperatives of the nuclear age and it understands the need for changes in the world which would be in accord with the turbulent changes in science and technology. I think that you gave this new generation a charter of values, a charter of concepts which could touch chords in the souls of people.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Thank you for this important thought and this assessment.

K. Ch. PANT. The desire for peace was very strong earlier; however it was quite amorphous. But you have managed to put it on a clear path.

The [the December 1987] signing of the agreement on intermediate and shorter-range missiles [INF Treaty] was an important step forward. Now we await with impatience the next step you have been talking about—the achievement of an agreement on strategic weapons.

M. S. GORBACHEV. You know the impression is being created that neither Congress—both the Democrats and especially the Republicans—nor even the closest circle of the President will allow him to reach this agreement.

K. Ch. PANT. Yes, this is also possible.

M. S. GORBACHEV. They evidently have already distributed roles among themselves. Nevertheless, we favor the achievement of such an agreement as soon as possible. We will drag them along the road of disarmament.

K. Ch. PANT. If they don't come to an agreement then they will have to defend their position, and this will not be easy.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yes, this is so. And the election campaign will leave an imprint on the entire situation.

K. Ch. PANT. Of course. But at the same time the number of supporters of peace in the US is growing, especially among ordinary Americans.

We are maintaining close contact with you about Afghanistan. I cannot say anything new right now. I can state that we consider the initiative you have taken to be a bold step which will in the final account facilitate the elimination of this dangerous hotbed of tension.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Right now a group of our comrades is there with special authority from the Politburo. They report

that, after the latest steps we took, Najib is looking at the situation more optimistically. I think this man has great potential, and he will show himself in a new situation.

I think that we and you need to maintain contact, exchange opinions, and see to it that the situation does not get out of control and develop in an undesirable direction.

When I was in Washington I informed the Americans that we are ready to withdraw our troops from Afghanistan and discuss practical steps in this regard; the Americans avoided discussing the substance of the issue. They would like to maintain the present situation in Afghanistan, for it allows them to maintain their presence in the region and strengthen their position, in particular in Pakistan.

But it ought to be noted that Reagan's team [*komanda*] took into consideration and welcomed the fact that the Soviet Union is not tying the issue of creating a coalition government with the issue of the presence of our troops in Afghanistan. It seemed to them that the presence of Soviet troops allows us to influence the situation in Najib's favor. But the Pakistanis are already saying now that they will not sign an agreement until a coalition government is created.

Earlier they thought that our announcement of our readiness to withdraw our troops from Afghanistan was only a propaganda slogan. However, now when we and Najib announced the troop withdrawal and when India supported this step they are openly interfering. They see that the Soviet Union, Najib, and India are acting confidently and think that they "have agreed on how to act." Therefore they have now begun to maneuver.

[Indian Diplomat] T[riloki]. N[ath]. KAUL. But you've taken the wind out of their sails with your step.

K. Ch. PANT. At the same time there are also grounds for concern. Earlier the Americans gave them, and now, first and foremost, Pakistan. In insisting on the interconnection of these two issues it is pursuing matters toward the creation of a government of fundamentalists.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Absolutely right.

K. Ch. PANT. And this is in no one's interests but Pakistan's.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yes, we and you need to think about this seriously. And not only think, but do something.

K. Ch. PANT. And so we think that you have come forward with a good initiative and now need to follow the situation attentively.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We have created a special group which is dealing with this. The Minister of Defense and other comrades are its members.

K. Ch. PANT. One more aspect of the situation: there are many weapons there now. The Americans have created large reserves in Pakistan of which the Afghans could avail them-

selves. Is it impossible to arrange that these weapons be destroyed within the framework of the agreements? For if the “Stingers” fall into the hands of terrorists and are used against civilian aircraft there will be chaos.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yes, this is actually a difficult issue. But if we raise it then they can say—and what about Soviet weapons in Afghanistan? And then the process could be dragged down since we don’t want to leave Najib naked.

Pass to Rajiv that we understand in the most serious way his idea about the need to strengthen the Kabul government in a military sense and consolidate its positions in Afghanistan. Everything possible is being done for this.

Of course, it is difficult to foresee everything. The Americans, and not only they, can also aggravate [the situation]. Why, we will think, how [are we] to behave in this case. Then they will completely unmask themselves.

K. Ch. PANT. Some words about the situation on the Indo-Pakistani border. Clashes occurred in September and October in the region of the Siachen Glacier. We repelled the attacks of the Pakistani forces; however there were casualties. Right now the situation is relatively quiet. But we have information that possibly they are preparing for new attacks.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I think that Prime Minister Gandhi expressed a very correct thought when he said that our countries should act so that Zia and the Pakistani regime have as little freedom of maneuver as possible.

K. Ch. PANT. There is one aspect causing very serious alarm which you know about. This is the problem of the creation of nuclear weapons by Pakistan.

Pakistan is getting enormous aid from the US. Of \$4 billion, \$1.8 billion is military aid. Right now the Pakistanis are on the threshold of obtaining nuclear weapons. This is our assessment and yours, too. This creates a very serious problem. We have acted honestly and done everything in order to avoid a further aggravation of this issue. However, a situation is being created right now where blackmail is possible.

Of course, we don’t want the resources needed for socioeconomic progress to have to be used for such ends. However our security is paramount. Therefore we have a dilemma before us. Our public is reacting to this very sharply. I could not fail to mention this in a conversation with you.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This is the continuation of a conversation which we had in Delhi. I think that it is very important to firmly hold a principled position. This will prevent the adventurers in Pakistan from realizing their plans. I think that the assessment of the situation which we gave in Delhi remains the same. But the situation needs to be watched all the time.

## Record of Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with US Secretary of State George Shultz, 22 February 1988

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

G. SHULTZ. In any case we have discussed all the issues in detail as never before. We have not come to any special conclusions. But we have worked to advantage. Our discussions are becoming ever more sophisticated.

Regarding the problems of Angola and Cambodia we have agreed that there are opportunities for cooperation. We discussed the problem of the Iran-Iraq conflict. I would be interested to hear your ideas on this account. This also relates to Afghanistan

We welcome your announcement regarding Afghanistan. We think that the situation is quite promising right now. We want the upcoming round of Geneva talks to be the last. We see that there is movement in this process. We want this difficult process to finally be concluded.

At the same time it is completely natural that our side wants to obtain certain assurances regarding the substance of this process. Yesterday I tried to explain what this is about. Yesterday we discussed this issue in detail and I would be interested to hear your ideas.

I’d like to talk about the Middle East, the region where I will be going soon.

M. S. GORBACHEV. First an idea of a general nature about the role of our countries—the USSR and US—in efforts to settle regional conflicts. I think that we should show the world an example of cooperation in these issues. If we establish such cooperation then it’s possible to hope that conflicts will be resolved considering the interests of all involved countries.

G. SHULTZ. I can agree with this.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We will not loose the acutely painful knots which have accumulated in the world with other approaches.

I am saying this because I feel that you have maintained a negative attitude toward our genuine desire to work with you in solving these acute problems. Possibly the problem is that you developed this attitude long ago. But possibly the problem is the channel which, as we understand it, comes from the National Security Council. As before, there they think that the Soviet Union both today and tomorrow will remain a power with which the United States will collide everywhere in the world and is “guilty” of everything everywhere. If such an attitude remains then it is hard to count on progress and collaboration.

But a completely different conclusion can be drawn from that fact and [the fact] that both you and we are everywhere.



And I've said this to you more than once and have said it publicly. If we and you are everywhere we are simply connected in searches for a balance of interests. Such an approach will stimulate searches and the finding of outcomes and solutions. That's our philosophy. It is important for an understanding of regional situations.

How is it specifically being interpreted, particularly in the issue of Afghanistan?

We came to Washington—and informed you first—of our plan of actions and invited you to work with us in a search for a solution to this acute, difficult problem. We received and considered your ideas regarding the fact that the accords at the Geneva talks should be achieved as soon as possible and our departure ought not to be tied to the formation of a coalition government in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the discussion in Washington on this theme did not work out.

Nevertheless we think that our countries could collaborate in the situation around Afghanistan and could give an example of how to approach regional conflicts. We made our recent announcement in order to push you in this direction. After this you began to move.

But what is happening? Now you're rejecting the advice which you yourselves gave us. If we want to have a neutral, non-aligned, independent Afghanistan, then let the Afghans themselves discuss and decide what kind of government they should have. What is unacceptable here? Wasn't it you who were speaking about this all the time?

We've said that both your and our capabilities of influencing the situation will be limited after the signing of an agreement. And we see this already now. It's already more difficult to do business with our friends. Each of them thinks first of all about themselves, about their future, and the future of their country. And this is completely natural.

But it seems to me that we can play a role in settling this conflict. You wanted us to make an announcement about the withdrawal of our troops and set a date and timeframe for our withdrawal. We have done this. The path is open.

I welcome what you have said: the upcoming round should be the last. This is the only correct approach. When all is said and done we cannot dance to the moods and emotions of one or another side in this conflict. This issue is too important to the Soviet Union to please someone with silly dancing [*pol'ka-babochka*]. And all the same it is impossible not to see who has had enough of whose impudence—and I am not afraid of this word—to say that the Soviet Union's statement about the troop withdrawal from Afghanistan is all just propaganda.

G. SHULTZ. We are not saying that. We welcome your statement. We accept it as it is. I believed the seriousness of your intentions even a year and a half ago when Eh. A. Shevardnadze first announced them to me.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I want to again assure you that we have no intentions of establishing a springboard in Afghanistan to rush toward warm waters, etc. This is nonsense. We have

never had such intentions and do not [now].

We want you to facilitate the quickest possible signing of the Geneva Accords so that Afghanistan is an independent, non-aligned, neutral country with the government that the Afghans themselves desire. And let's push matters from both sides in the direction of such a settlement so that it is bloodless.

G. SHULTZ. I agree with this.

M. S. GORBACHEV. You asked me to talk about the Middle East and the Iran-Iraq conflict.

G. SHULTZ. Permit me to say a few words to begin.

I won't repeat everything that I said yesterday to Eh. A. Shevardnadze. I was talking about what constitutes the essence of our concerns in the context of which we are following the Geneva Process. We want this process to work well. I have not changed my point of view in comparison with what I said in Washington about the difficulties of forming a coalition government.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It will not be formed either in Moscow or in Washington.

G. SHULTZ. Nor in Pakistan.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Especially not in Pakistan.

There are contacts taking place between Afghans now which we did not know about earlier. Things are happening there which neither you nor we know about. We need not imagine ourselves as unique masters of the destiny of Afghanistan.

G. SHULTZ. Good. I am ready to limit myself to what I have said.

Let's switch to the Iran-Iraq conflict.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Please pass to the President that we hope to work with the American side in the issue of an Afghan settlement.

The Iran-Iraq conflict. We think that in the course of searches for ways to settle the problem certain new elements of collaboration between our countries have appeared both at the bilateral level and within the framework of the Security Council. We value this. This is important in itself and from the point of view of future prospects in the UN Security Council. It is important that such cooperation continue and not dwindle.

We are ready to work with you in the next stage. But centrifugal tendencies have now appeared in the Security Council, and you are now the chairman of the Security Council. Hence [your] efforts are needed. We have not wasted our term as chairman of the Council. So don't waste yours.

G. SHULTZ. We want to achieve a success.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We will help you in this.

G. SHULTZ. Yesterday we discussed a somewhat new approach to this problem. First, a mandatory embargo of arms deliveries to a country which does not observe the previous resolution. Plus two more ideas for this. Determine an exact date at which the arms embargo would go into effect. However, there would be an interval between this date and the vote in the Security Council, let's say, 30 days. In addition, it would be proposed that the Secretary General create a special negotiations group or appoint a special representative who would deal with this issue exclusively.

In reality, as Eh. A. Shevardnadze told me yesterday, the UN Secretary General has many other responsibilities. Therefore it would be desirable to fill in the overall picture with this new element in order to step up the talks. Such a representative would work within a set timeframe. In doing so he could turn to the Security Council at any time and announce that in his view the effective date of the resolution could be postponed since progress has been noted in his efforts. Thus the representative would have a certain instrument of influence in his hands.

That's the new idea which appeared in the course of our discussion.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We will discuss your suggestions. In this context such an idea is new to us. We are ready to make a constructive contribution to the solution of this problem. I want to ask you to pass the following to the President. In our view it is exceptionally important not to permit this conflict to spread or grow or let a dramatic situation arise which could end up involving many countries.

Such a prospect worries us very much, and therefore it is necessary to carefully check all the steps. Of course, it's necessary to act firmly and consistently. But at the same time to be concerned that the result not end up being directly opposite of what we're trying for.

G. SHULTZ. Yes, we understand this.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Tell me, have you been thinking about the possibility of reducing your military presence in the Persian Gulf? Or do you think that such a step would be taken as a sign of weakness? You can solve the missions which you put before yourselves there with fewer ships.

G. SHULTZ. The mission which we are performing there is a continuing one. We are performing it successfully. Not long ago we reduced our military presence in the Persian Gulf and withdrew two large ships. As a result the configuration and size of our presence changed. The mission remains as before. However, we calculated that we can perform it with fewer resources.

We have no desire to maintain large numbers of ships there. When the size of the problem lessens our presence will too.

[US National Security Adviser] C. POWELL. When Eh. A. Shevardnadze raised this issue yesterday I pointed out that the buildup of our presence in the Persian Gulf during the last 6-6 [sic] months led to the appearance of only two additional combat ships. The buildup occurred mainly through mine-sweepers, helicopter carriers, and other ships which do not present a threat and are needed only for trawling operations.

We adjust the size of our presence as we understand the situation better. Therefore it became possible to withdraw two large ships. As the threat decreases and as we understand the situation better, we will be able to make further adjustments.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Good. As I understand, we can conclude the discussion of the Iran-Iraq conflict with this.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. We have agreed that we will continue consultations on this issue.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The Iranian element is also present in the Afghan situation. And we need to consider this.

G. SHULTZ. We understand this. This element is also present in the Middle East equation. I talked about this yesterday.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Absolutely right.

As regards Afghanistan, Iran is trying to have a fundamentalist government formed there.

Eh. A. Shevardnadze. And not only there.

G. SHULTZ. In my opinion, the Iranians would not object to fundamentalist governments in the Kremlin and Washington (laughter).

M. S. GORBACHEV. All the same, they can scarcely hope for this. Possibly it is true they pray for it.

Now about the Middle East. We familiarized ourselves with your proposals sent via Ambassador [Jack F.] Matlock. In addition, all the Arabs to whom you turned with these proposals have actually turned to us.

I welcome the process of collaboration which is beginning, although it is still quite weak, in searches for a solution to this chronic problem. We waited for you to be convinced that it would be hard to solve this problem without the participation of the Soviet Union. I think there could be common ground there between us.

We favor a just, comprehensive settlement considering the interests of the Arabs, including the Palestinians, and Israel on the basis of the return of the occupied territories and the solution of other problems. No other approach has a chance of success here. It is impossible to ignore anyone's interests. We are considering your proposals from this point of view. Of course, there are also certain differences between us. But both of us understand that it is impossible to impose some solution and it is impermissible to ignore the interests of any of the parties or groups.

In this light a critical understanding of your proposals regarding the Middle East is occurring. Many think that in spite of elements of flexibility in your proposals they are nevertheless based on an old approach and that that same policy of separate deals with a limited number of participants is being pursued under the cover of talks about a conference on the Middle East. The fact that your proposal reflects a negative position with regard to a Palestinian settlement and, in particular, the UN serves as an example of this.

They reason this way: on the one hand, your proposals are sort of directed at trying to provide an armistice and to removing the bitterness in Gaza and the West Bank of the Jordan River. If this were done in connection with an overall settlement this would be understandable. If not, this is a completely different matter.

As you know, we have proposed to begin the work of the preparatory committee with the participation of the permanent representatives of the Security Council which would comprehensively discuss both the multilateral and the bilateral aspects of a settlement. We think that this is a clear, natural approach.

(...)



**Record of Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party [PCI] Alessandro Natta, 29 March 1988 (Excerpt)**

*[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

M. S. GORBACHEV. Regarding Afghanistan. The signing of the agreements in Geneva is grinding to a halt through the fault of the US and Pakistan. However, we will continue. Our representatives have said to the Pakistani delegation that the Soviet Union can act alone in this role. We firmly intend to settle the situation which has developed around Afghanistan politically.

[Italian Communist Party leader] A[ntonio] RUBBI. Will the Afghan issue be raised at Shevardnadze's meeting with Shultz in April<sup>9</sup> and what are the prospects of discussing this issue at the summit meeting in May of this year?

M. S. GORBACHEV. The issue of Afghanistan has been repeatedly discussed with the Americans, including during my visit to Washington. They wanted us to name a time for the withdrawal of our troops. We did this, and Washington agreed

that the US for its part would stop helping the rebels. The American side has long insisted that it is impossible to talk about forming a transitional government while Soviet troops are in Afghanistan. In this event it "would be formed on 'Soviet bayonets.'" We accepted this point of view. But the Americans suddenly began to say that such a government needed to be created before the troop withdrawal. It's true that they then had to return to the previous position. We had already agreed at the first stage to withdraw a considerable part of the troops. That is, we accommodated them here. And the Americans thought up yet one more obstacle—"symmetry" in halting aid. Then we said to them: we will aid Afghanistan on the basis of long-concluded treaties. To demand of us that we stop these actions is the same as our side demanding the US cease US military aid to Pakistan. This is how they're maneuvering. But we have firmly decided to work actively in favor of a political settlement and bring the matter to an end.

A. NATTA. There are forces in America which are absolutely and definitely interested in the USSR remaining in Afghanistan.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We know this. But in other countries for various, often contradictory, reasons there are forces which also do not desire the withdrawal of Soviet troops. There are even such forces in Africa. The substance of their reasoning boils down to the following: "you're abandoning Afghanistan; it means you're also abandoning us."

A. NATTA. There are substantial forces which are worried about what will happen in Afghanistan after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. It is very important that there be no big trouble there.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We don't want a pro-Communist regime in Afghanistan. We want to preserve good-neighborly relations with this country with whom we've had decades of collaboration and a border totaling 2,500 km. Right now the Afghans themselves need to make a very serious analysis of Afghan society. It is obvious that those groups who came to power in 1978 made a mistake in evaluating the situation and thought it possible to leapfrog several stages in the development of the country. The question right now is of involving all the ethnic forces in running the country and taking economic and political pluralism into consideration. In other words, we now see that the theoretical mistakes of the Afghan comrades in 1978 led to political mistakes, to a "superrevolutionary character" [*sverkhrevolyutsionnost*].

A. NATTA. I don't want to return to polemics. And I didn't want to raise this question. But you know our point of view. The PCI is convinced that the deployment of troops to Afghanistan in 1979 was a mistake. But this is not a mistake of the current leadership. We are now convinced that the Soviet Union has made a completely correct decision directed at national reconciliation in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of

the troops.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In concluding the conversation I would like to express deep satisfaction at its substance and the atmosphere of our meeting. I hope that in the future our meetings will take place in the same spirit of trust and respect. Please pass cordial greetings to the Italian Communists and the workers of Italy. As before, my promise to visit Italy remains in force.

A. NATTA. Genuine thanks for the conversation. I wish you, Cde. Gorbachev, and all the CPSU leadership great success in your work and in implementing the policy of *perestroika*.



**Record of a Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with President of Afghanistan, General Secretary of the CC PDPA Najibullah, Tashkent, 7 April 1988**

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyayev and translated by Gary Goldberg for CWIHP.]

M. S. GORBACHEV. I welcome you, Cde. Najibullah, in a fraternal way as President of a friendly Afghanistan, our neighbor, and as General Secretary of a party close to us. Considering the occasion and the intention we have come a long way for this meeting. We now stand at a threshold beyond which lies the signing of the Geneva documents and where a new, difficult, and, I would say, unique stage is opening up, requiring a very well-considered policy, creative [*neordinarnyye*] steps, and very flexible tactics from both of us.

I see the political meaning of our meeting today at this critical moment as again demonstrating the collaboration of the USSR and Afghanistan and the leadership of our two countries to the peoples of our countries and the entire world.

Second. We can already foresee that regardless of how the situation develops after the signing of the Geneva documents – acutely or relatively quietly – great responsibility will rest on the Afghan leadership and first of all on the President of Afghanistan. We think it our duty to welcome the President at this moment and give him every political, moral, and practical friendly support, proceeding from the principles and traditions of collaboration we have developed with the Afghan people in these difficult years for Afghanistan.

We proposed holding a meeting trying at this moment to even further back up the President and support him before the entire world. Naturally, this requires not only moral and political support but also aid in other categories.

And I see even one more task for today's meeting in examining specific aspects arising before the signing of the

Geneva documents and the practical issues of preparing Afghanistan for a new situation. And we don't have to begin from zero here. All the members of the Politburo have received information from Eh. A. Shevardnadze and V. A. Kryuchkov about the conversations during these days with you in Kabul. The Soviet leadership also knows about the conversation held here in Tashkent. Hence we will act right away, as we say "taking the bull by the horns," finish deciding, and clarify everything that remains.

After such an introduction I want to again greet you here and give you the floor.

NAJIBULLAH. Deeply respected, dear Mikhail Sergeyevich! Dear comrades! For me, the representative of the Afghan people and the party and government leadership, expressing the interests of the country it is a great honor to meet with you and discuss the fate of Afghanistan which now has drawn the gaze of all humanity.

We can rightfully say that our relations rest on a firm foundation laid back in V. I. Lenin's time. The fine, beautiful edifice of our friendship has risen on this foundation. The new floors of this building of traditional friendship are rising today by your hands, Mikhail Sergeyevich, and these floors are being built from even stronger material. I share your point of view that our meeting in Tashkent opens a new page in the history of the friendship and collaboration between our countries and fills them with new substance. This is instructive for everyone.

You know that in the meetings with Eh. A. Shevardnadze in Kabul, we carefully examined all issues affecting the domestic and foreign aspects of the Afghan problem. I want to express great gratitude for the valuable advice given by Eh. A. Shevardnadze. I and my comrades have comprehensively examined the results of these talks and unanimously approved them. Afghan-Soviet relations are now at a qualitatively new stage.

I would like to state some ideas in development of the conversations in Kabul. We have a need to consult with you regarding the issues of the further organization of presidential authority, the structure of presidential government, and the Geneva process. But first of all let me briefly tell you about the situation in and around Afghanistan.

I note with satisfaction that, thanks to the constant efforts of our government, several hopeful factors are appearing in the progress of the situation in the country. Many features of the policy of national reconciliation are acquiring an irreversible character and are being realized in practice. Generally speaking, the policy of national reconciliation has become comprehensive. The fact that it has received recognition in Cambodia and Nicaragua also confirms that at its base it is correct and objectively reflects reality.

The main feature of the situation in Afghanistan is the desire for peace. Figuratively speaking, the people see the light at the end of the tunnel. The policy of national reconciliation has permitted [us] to fuse the interests of people's power, that is, the establishment of peace, with the interests of the peasantry, which comprises the opposition's base.

The initiative in carrying out the policy of national reconciliation and its propaganda are in our hands, and the path to victory passes through this policy. But, naturally, we are backing our steps in the political area with steps in the military and economic areas. If we want to defend our system, then it is necessary to raise the people's standard of living, and this is impossible without comprehensive aid from the USSR.

It ought, however, to be admitted that we are required to increase the effectiveness of the Soviet aid and reorganize the entire mechanism of its use. This is a high-priority area, together with the Geneva Process. We can get specific tangible advantages in it.

Speaking of foreign policy, I stress that the constructive position taken by the Soviet Union and Afghanistan has forced the enemy to go on the defensive, which has created additional opportunities. A letter received from Shultz, which Eh. A. Shevardnadze showed me, is evidence that the US and Pakistan are concerned that they do not lag behind the settlement process.

There are broad opportunities to develop our initiative, although naturally in order to get concessions we will have to give some ourselves. We are doing that. Concessions have to be made for the successful conclusion of the Geneva Process. At the same time new opportunities will be created for bilateral collaboration between us.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In the Politburo we asked ourselves the question: what alternative would be more advantageous – have the Americans sign the Geneva Accords where both we and they take on certain obligations, or [they] refuse to sign them when we are implementing the withdrawal of troops under a scenario most favorable to us [?] All the same, we've come to the conclusion that it is desirable to sign the Accords.

The signing of the Accords could create a framework so that events do not take on extremely acute forms. When there are obligations of parties there are opportunities to put pressure on those who shirk them. And we still intend that it would be very disadvantageous for both the US and Pakistan to refuse to sign the Accords. They have unmasked themselves in the eyes of the entire world. And that being the case we have a situation where we can make accommodations and compromises.

Thus, we have chosen the first alternative as the main one. But we should also have our approaches in reserve in case the signing of the Accords breaks down. This will be a more difficult option, but it also has its strong points.

In any case one thing is clear – and we are convinced that we have an understanding in this – the real situation in and around Afghanistan needs to be used in order to move the policy of national reconciliation along to the end. You have now said that in Afghan society, in all its sectors, including the opposition, the trend toward peace and a normalization of the situation is gaining strength. But this means that the people are tired of war. This is the trend.

There is a strong trend which has formed in Soviet society – a desire to finish with the Afghan problem by means of

a political settlement. And this desire is being transformed into an appropriate policy. Right now there is a real chance of achieving a settlement in and around Afghanistan and opening the road to progress and a peaceful life to the Afghan people.

We do not exclude that the succeeding stages of the process will develop in acute forms. But we think that if we act wisely and judiciously we can avoid such acute forms. The time has come today when arrangements for broad pluralism in politics and ethnic and religious relations will have decisive importance for the country.

When you and we together formulated the policy of national reconciliation we were already talking then about expanding the social base of the regime. You will remember what discussions this provoked in the PDPA and Afghan society. Some simply turned out to be incapable of understanding the policy of national reconciliation and acting in this situation. But this was a stage of policy formation and now there will be a more difficult step when the “mujaheddin” appear next to the PDPA as a major component of the realization of the policy of national reconciliation and those who stood on the other side of the barricades appear in government and public life. Representatives of other parties which were seen as enemies for many years will appear next [to the PDPA]. Now it will be necessary to share posts with them and organize a new power structure.

This again calls for discussion. Again the policy of national reconciliation will undergo a serious test. And here again it is important not to become bewildered. You have said correctly that it is especially important to reinforce this policy with corresponding socioeconomic measures. Proposals in this regard are being formulated in the Soviet-Afghan Commission on Economic Cooperation, the Soviet part of which is headed by V. S. Murakhovskiy. We will help you without fail and help you thoroughly. But the President and his colleagues need to think about where all our aid needs to go.

But there are many other problems. For example, comrades have been telling me that 11,000 hectares of irrigated land are not being worked, that the peasants do not use them. Why are these lands not put to use or leased? We're doing much in this regard right now in our own country. This factor can also be used in Afghanistan. In generally, it's important to use the capabilities you have more fully. Afghanistan is fully capable of building an economy based on its own resources, using our aid.

We are ready to give practical aid, especially to move quickly in accommodating refugees. But all the impediments in Afghan society need to be removed and the road opened to private enterprise, primarily small property owners and tradesmen. In five years China increased their grain harvest by 100 million tons only thanks to giving land to the peasants there.

But I have interrupted you. Please continue.

NAJIBULLAH. With the signing of the Geneva Accords we will gain additional opportunities to expand the policy of national reconciliation both in domestic and foreign areas.

The American side, as Shultz said in his letter, will not halt their attempts to give the counterrevolution weapons aid. But under conditions in which we have expanded and are continuing to expand the social and political base in the country, the counterrevolutionary movement will increasingly lose the nature of political terrorism and become simply criminal.

In order to maintain the initiative we intend to carry out a number of political measures which we are preparing considering the upcoming withdrawal of Soviet troops. We talked about this in detail with Eh. A. Shevardnadze in Kabul. This point was reflected also in the draft of our joint statement about the results of today's talks. For example, I am thinking, considering the upcoming Soviet-American summit in Moscow, whether it is possible to examine the question of some part of the Soviet military contingent be withdrawn from Afghanistan as a goodwill gesture. This would be perceived positively both in our country and in the whole world.

Such a withdrawal could be implemented before Reagan arrives, regardless of whether the Geneva Accords are signed or not.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Do you have in mind beginning on 15 May, as it was agreed?

NAJIBULLAH. Yes. In other words, it's not necessary to wait the 60 days between the signing of the Accords and its entry into force.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I understand this, hence in maintaining the 15 May date we keep our word and don't present a gift to Reagan.

NAJIBULLAH. It's necessary there not be the impression that Reagan arrived and exerted some pressure regarding the troop withdrawal.

M. S. GORBACHEV. As a gesture the withdrawal could begin before his arrival, that is, 15 May. Let's think about it. But I'm in favor of this in order to adhere to our statements of 8 February<sup>10</sup> with the understanding that we are acting according to our own program and not to please Reagan.

NAJIBULLAH. One principal difficulty arises with the signing of the Geneva Accords—the formulation about the border.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I know what you're talking about. This is a consequence of the colonial policy of the English who in particular created border disputes. But now this all needs to be looked into.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. The English deliberately left this problem so that disputes would arise.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We are trying to do a good deed but they're trying to use this issue against us and you. But we'll act so that everything is normal.

NAJIBULLAH. I am sure that it will be so. The issue of the "Durand Line" is, of course, complex. The English drew this line, dividing the Pushtun tribes and creating a situation which is a source of tension. Amir Abdur Rahman himself, who at the end of the last century signed the agreement with the English, did not recognize this line. He signed the agreement to get a monthly allowance of 12,000 rupees from the English.<sup>11</sup>

M. S. GORBACHEV. It would not be bad to use this method on occasion even now (everyone laughs).

NAJIBULLAH. Not one government in Afghanistan has yet recognized this "Durand Line" as the border. And if we do this now, an explosive situation would arise in society. Therefore we have tried to select a formula such that an Afghan-Pakistani agreement about non-interference would not signify official recognition of the "Durand Line" by us or cause any concern among the Pushtuns. We found such a formulation in the end.

There was a tough battle for a day with Zia ul-Haq but he was forced to agree to it. We had already started to congratulate one another on this success. But then something unforeseen happened – the "rose" in our garden bloomed (I have in mind [Afghan foreign minister Abdul] Wakil's conduct in Geneva). Nevertheless, we are resolving all the difficulties all the same, since at one time we were close to recognizing the "Durand Line," generally speaking.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I understand this well since you were in the Afghan delegation that arrived in Moscow in October 1985. I said back then that one could not hurry. Now the situation is such that some outcome needs to be found according to a formulation. You, as a Pushtun president, have found it. What does Minister of Foreign Affairs Wakil think?

NAJIBULLAH. He is against it.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It turns out that he is more Catholic than the Pope himself.

NAJIBULLAH. Absolutely correct. In this regard, he is a proverb – the kasha is hotter than the cauldron.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It seems to us that Wakil is an honest man. Perhaps it turned out that he has been at the talks in Geneva for a long time and ended up removed from what was going on in Kabul? Perhaps – and this is completely natural – he is not always and is not completely informed about everything?

NAJIBULLAH. No, we regularly inform him about everything. But he is somewhat of a hothead. Of course, they often think that wisdom and composure come to a man with age. But in our situation we have to be as wise in 40 years as those who have reached 80. This is no time for emotions right now.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I know that the opinion in the Afghan leadership on this issue was unanimous.

NAJIBULLAH. We held a special meeting of the Politburo yesterday. I openly informed all the members of the Politburo about doubts that had been raised about Wakil. The comrades asked only one or two clarifying questions and expressed the opinion that the formulation which had been found is to our advantage. By the way, this is the formulation of Wakil himself. He only wanted that it not be in the second article of the Accords about non-interference but in its preamble.

On the whole I want to again stress that with the signing of the Geneva Accords we will be able to come closer to a quieter version of the development of the situation.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Did you also prefer this version?

NAJIBULLAH. If the Geneva Accords are signed, then we will get strong additional opportunities to strengthen the policy of national reconciliation. We will try for an easier, quiet version.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This would be very desirable. But it's necessary to prepare for the worst. But if we talk about this version, then what are main, most key problems? How can final success be ensured, even in such conditions?

NAJIBULLAH. First of all, in the difficult version the issue of a withdrawal of troops on a bilateral basis ought to be considered. We have also prepared a number of other proposals which we told to the Soviet comrades in Kabul.

M. S. GORBACHEV. First, do I understand, is this the creation of a security force and the redeployment of Afghan troops around primary facilities in order to ensure their manageability [*upravlyayemost'* ]?

NAJIBULLAH. Absolutely right. We need to create a security force, redeploy forces, and create a concentration of them.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We will help solve the problems of financing and weapons supply issues. Even in the most difficult and severe conditions, even under conditions of strict monitoring [*kontrol'*], we will completely supply you with weapons in any situation. We are using every mountain in Afghanistan for this.

NAJIBULLAH. We have a saying: even the highest mountains have their roads.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Further. In order not to lose time, consolidate the structure of presidential power along the lines: President, governors, other bodies. But do you have people suitable for appointment as governors?

NAJIBULLAH. There are such people and we are already

working in this direction.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This is very important. I understand that candidates to the positions of governor-general need not be PDPA but can be representatives of other parties or opposition groups.

NAJIBULLAH. That is what we are proceeding from. We will try to include more people who are neutral.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This is a very important issue. If you appoint PDPA representatives to all 25-30 governor's posts, then everyone will say: there's your pluralism for you, there's your policy of national reconciliation. Your prestige will suffer and so will we, since it will seem that all this was encouraged by the Soviet Union. The president should be above the interests of the PDPA. He should represent the national interests. They are watching you in the entire world. And you need to be very precise.

NAJIBULLAH. We are trying to act in such a tone. We have prepared appropriate steps but did not want to hurry because of elections to the National Council which began on 5 April. We did not want to somehow complicate the holding of elections. Of the 30 candidates for governor only three represent the PDPA and the rest are from the most diverse sectors and political forces. We are appointing these three comrades to those provinces where there are very strong party organizations.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This is good.

NAJIBULLAH. We plan to introduce this structure in the provinces: a governor and his three deputies, one of which is a PDPA member and two are local authorities.

M. S. GORBACHEV. But you need to leave [some] leeway [*rezerv*] of positions for the opposition for the possibility of additional steps, considering the policy of national reconciliation.

NAJIBULLAH. We intend to do this including at the level of deputy governor.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. And in the National Council.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The problem of refugees especially needs to be worked on. It requires more specific solutions. A good welcome of refugees in Afghanistan and providing them with everything necessary will shrink the base in which the opposition operates. As I have said to you, we are ready to help in this. But you should take a position with regard to land and [with regard to] supplying them with construction materials.

NAJIBULLAH. Last week we had an expanded meeting on the issue of refugees. We are preparing to receive 1.2 million refugees, counting, of course, on your financial and material

aid. We are approaching this issue not simply from an organizational point of view but are examining it as an important political problem, especially considering that the refugees are speaking out against the leaders of the counterrevolution more actively.

There is one more important field in our activity—contacts with the opposition, which have now become more active. We are trying to draw the broadest possible sectors of the opposition into the process of peace talks and are especially intensifying work with the counterrevolutionaries inside the country. Almost a third of the counterrevolutionaries maintain illegal contact with us. In the process, not only detachments associated with the moderate groups of the “Alliance of Seven” but also of the groups of Hekmatyar and Rabbani are entering into contact with us. This process will obviously intensify with the signing of the Geneva Accords. Only 50,000 active counterrevolutionaries oppose us. And when the enemy tries to present the “Alliance of Seven” as a united force, this is not so.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The strength of counterrevolutionary detachments is sometimes set at more than 200,000.

NAJIBULLAH. Yes, altogether the counterrevolutionaries number 270,000 men. A third of them are talking with us; 50,000 are irreconcilable; and the rest are taking a wait-and-see position. Relying on the results of Geneva, we can attract the passive part of the counterrevolutionaries to our side.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Evidently this option needs to be played out: how to act if a parallel government is created in Afghanistan, or in some part of it. And it will try to seize one province after another and displace the legal government of the country.

NAJIBULLAH. After the withdrawal of Soviet troops the situation in a number of regions will without doubt become difficult. Our comprehensive plan envisions that we will conduct work among the population which has fallen under opposition control together with a concentration of the armed forces. We will send in the armed forces in certain cases. In a number of provinces, besides redeployment, we envision the creation of powerful organizational nuclei, including in those regions which border Pakistan.

If we are to speak openly, we have not heretofore enjoyed special influence in many regions and have sent organizational nuclei there, but they were weak and could not act. Actually, these organizational nuclei dropped in from Kabul were not working bodies but controllers [*kontrolery*]. It turned out that we tried to attract the population by using force. If we act considering the specifics of our society, then we will create organizational nuclei on a new basis so that they actively help us or at least serve as a sort of buffer. Now I would like to talk about Zahir Shah.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Has he begun to distance himself?

NAJIBULLAH. By nature Zahir Shah is conservative. However, he is interested in getting his place in the process of reconciliation.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It is good that your attitude toward him is better than the “Alliance of Seven,” which has written him off. You can score some points in this matter.

NAJIBULLAH. We will do just that. The factor itself of Zahir Shah should work to split the “Alliance,” especially considering that the extremists do not agree to his candidacy. However, some extremists are trying to establish contacts with us while rejecting the candidacy of Zahir Shah.

Analyzing the situation further, I want to note that the enemy continues to strengthen his forces, bring in caravans with weapons, and create his reserves in various regions. We are preparing to launch strikes on bases and depots and intercept caravans. But we associate the larger scale of operations with the results of the talks in Geneva. We are also considering the possibility which you have been talking about: the enemy could create a government in one of the regions of Afghanistan in order to turn to the Americans with a request for recognition.

M. S. GORBACHEV. At one time in one of our previous conversations we were talking about how Lenin acted in emergency situations. I was talking then about the Leninist policy with regard to the mid-level peasantry which ensured that it switched to the side of Soviet power and, essentially, ensured the defeat of Kolchak and the counterrevolution.

Being so busy with military and structural problems and searching for contact with the opposition, I think it’s necessary not to forget the religious aspect. When the ethnic groups see that you show concern for them, they will respond with reciprocal steps, for in the final account they too are in favor of peace so that their people can quietly till their land. This is a decisive factor which also does not contradict the Koran.

In our country the Orthodox Church has seen much in *perestroika* which is compatible with its views, since we are cleansing society of distortions, fighting against drunkenness, calling for respectfulness and industriousness, and acting for peace. The Church openly says that it supports the Party’s policy. There will evidently be a meeting with [Patriarch] Pimen and other members of the Synod in connection with the millennium of Christianity in Russia.

All this needs to be considered, for a policy built outside realities is not viable, is doomed to vacillations, and leads to disappointments.

NAJIBULLAH. Not long ago we had a closed meeting with representatives of Hekmatyar at which we had a very free conversation. They told me that in Islamic issues I had gone so far forward that they could give me a membership card in their party, that is, the Islamic Party of Afghanistan.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. But how did they react to your



election as president?

NAJIBULLAH. They said that I needed to agree to two things –to accept a membership card of their party and give up the post of president. They said in this respect that while in Moscow I were to declare publicly that I am ready to sacrifice my life and the post of president for the sake of peace. I replied to them that I could think about the first. But they were too late about the second. I told them, you say that 80% of the territory of the country is under your control. Why then did you not take part in the Loya Jirga which elected the president since you could have voted in the Loya Jirga for another person and he could have been elected president. When I said that I was ready to give up anything, I was General Secretary of the Party, but not president. Now when I have become president I cannot betray the trust of the people.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Probably they have also begun to display greater realism.

NAJIBULLAH. The policy of national reconciliation is also influencing their positions.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The people will not support the fundamentalists.

NAJIBULLAH. We have our own “fundamentalists;” one of them is in Geneva right now (he has Wakil in mind).

Permit me to touch on the situation in the PDPA CC Politburo and Secretariat. Briefly put, the membership of these bodies has been confirmed, and there are no grounds for concern. We are trying to work actively on a collective basis.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In any event. You and your comrades should have clearly in mind that both the president and the others are always in the people’s sight. The alignment of forces can be different but if an emergency situation arises, we will come to the rescue and do everything necessary. Let them know about this.

NAJIBULLAH. I am very grateful.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I am saying this just in case. We are not immune. But our Afghan friends should act confidently.

NAJIBULLAH. Fortunately, I can again say that the situation in the leading bodies of the Party is improving.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It is important in order that efforts not be wasted on clarifying relationships at this difficult stage.

NAJIBULLAH. By the way, Hekmatyar’s representatives both directly and indirectly tried to find out how matters are with unity in the leadership.

M. S. GORBACHEV. You see that this issue is of interest to

both them and us but from another point of view. Each is pursuing their own goals.

They asked me in the West how matters are with unity in the Politburo. Generally speaking this is constantly tossed up by imperialist centers in order to inflame our population. They say that there are two, three, four groups in the Politburo, and some say that there are even five. They reason this way: if discussions are going on, it means that there are enemies of *perestroika*.

Another topic which is tossed up are relations between ethnic groups. They splashed out so many fabrications in connection with the events in Armenia and Azerbaijan.<sup>12</sup> They declare that the first person responsible for spilling blood is Gorbachev. But they are silent about the fact that Gorbachev’s address facilitated the normalization of the situation. This is not to their advantage. Returning to the theme of Islamic fundamentalism I will say that they are trying to toss this topic up on us here, in Uzbekistan.

NAJIBULLAH. Our old acquaintance Karmal is also busy with this matter; he states that M. S. Gorbachev remained isolated.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The policy of *perestroika* in the USSR is a realistic policy, expressing real needs. The people understand it. A parallel can be drawn here with the policy of national reconciliation being followed by the Afghan leadership. Of course, a strong political will and decisiveness are required. But what your comrades were telling me before the meeting with you shows that the process is going in the right direction.

Please pass on that we welcome the solid work by the PDPA CC Politburo and Secretariat under the leadership of Cde. Najibullah. Whoever acts in this manner is a real revolutionary. Those who are worried about their own income, who wallowed in mercantile ideas, have left this path. You need to be free of them. Right now when Afghanistan is at a turning point it is impermissible to think about income, payment, and portfolios. A revolution requires total commitment [*samootdacha*]. And at such times one need not fear strong, loud words.

NAJIBULLAH. The problem of forming a presidential form of government is very important but we do not have experience here. But considering the peculiarities of our society, the factor of the president has greater significance for us than the factor of general secretary. It seems to me that it’s necessary to create a small, but very active presidential staff which would ensure communications with the people. There is a basis for this staff but the work has not been completed. We cannot decide how presidential and executive power are to relate to one another. During the conversations in Kabul we asked you for help in forming a presidential form of government. As Eduard Amvrosiyevich noted, this issue is of course within our own competence.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In fact, we cannot dictate what you have.

There is no analogy here; moreover, we ourselves have been very thoroughly occupied with improving the structure of the leadership. We can, of course, send comrades who could help organize the purely technical work of the presidential office.

The boundaries of functions need to be determined, including [those] at the provincial level. Inasmuch as all the remaining bodies will be formed on the basis of elections but the governor, as a person appointed by the president, is a representative of the highest central authority, he should look after how presidential decisions are being implemented in practice. You need to look for the correct forms and you need to look for them yourselves.

NAJIBULLAH. Our mistake in the past was that we created a structure of five bodies in the provinces instead of centralization. Proceeding from the recommendations of Soviet comrades we will create a system of undivided authority under the leadership of the governor.

One more issue should be under the constant attention of the president – the strengthening the armed forces on the basis on the policy of national reconciliation. Unfortunately, in spite of the fact that Soviet troops are being withdrawn the Afghan army does not yet have the capability to wage independent operations and defeat the enemy. The level of material and technical supply of the army is high, thanks to your aid. However, there is an acute shortage of personnel, especially junior officers. Although a mechanism has been created for raising the standard of living of personnel, there has not yet been a complete turnaround [*otdacha*]. True, we are taking additional steps and are studying all possibilities to solve the personnel problem. There is just no way the army can bring its strength up to 200,000 men.

As I have already said, a redeployment of military units is being planned and a headquarters of the Supreme High Command will operate. Military councils have been created in corps and border brigades. We are constantly improving the structure of the armed forces, are creating “commandos” subunits, and are actively working on the formation of a special security force. This security force will be formed based on special MGB [most likely: WAD (*Wizarat-i Amaniyyat –i Dawlati, Ministry of State Security*)] units. Then we will bring the strength up to 33,000 men from the best MGB [WAD] and army units. The entire security force will undergo special training and have distinctive markings.

M. S. GORBACHEV. They will be based on brigades?

NAJIBULLAH. Yes. The security brigades will be deployed on four axes in Kabul. The main mission of the guard is to protect people’s power and the primary centers, primarily Kabul, and ensure the security of the leadership. Generally speaking, the plans have been drawn up and work is proceeding but there are problems, mainly regarding material and technical supply.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We will consider all this in the Politburo.

I think the economic and military issues will have to be considered separately.

NAJIBULLAH. It is important that the nucleus of our revolutionary army be composed of a special purpose security force which would prevent any coup attempts.

There is one more issue in the military area connected with military policy. The problem is that we have formed several units from bands which have crossed to our side. But they are worried right now that extremists will take revenge on them after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. They are asking us to help them with weapons and ammunition. We request the Soviet comrades consider this possibility.

Economics has special importance for solving domestic and foreign problems. Unfortunately, in spite of comprehensive Soviet aid, we are not able to carry out our plans completely. The growth of the revenue portion of the government budget rose 15% in recent years, while expenses rose 60%, especially for military needs. The national income rose only 6% total, instead of the planned 40%. Inflationary processes are developing, and the value of the Afghani is falling. Prices are rising 15-20%. An additional 9-10 billion Afghanis are issued annually. The state debt quintupled and is now 100 billion Afghanis.

M. S. GORBACHEV. And at the same time we’re trading in bicycles, the output of a restored private enterprise, hence it is ruined.

NAJIBULLAH. I have been dealing with this problem in real earnest. I invited the owner of this enterprise to my office, which in itself is without precedent, and talked with him in detail. I asked him if he had any complaints or difficulties. He gave the same reply all the time, that he has no complaints or difficulties. Of course, I know that this is not so: he was simply afraid of the officials of the bureaucracy. Only at the very end of the conversation did he say that he had no telephone and that this was hampering his work. I promised to help him.

We are feeling a shortage of petroleum products, but the construction of a refinery in Shebergan [in northern Afghanistan] with a capacity of 500,000 tons a year has not yet started. The implementation of plans to increase the production of glass, paper, and various essential goods has also not begun. About 700,000 children are studying in schools, but only 30% of them have the necessary conditions for normal study. An additional 20 billion Afghani are needed for repair and restoration of the road network. I would like to ask you to help us in solving all these problems.

The development of bilateral Soviet-Afghan relations will have decisive importance for strengthening democratic rule and increasing the resources to oppose the counter-revolution. The question arises of how to replace our cooperation in military terms under conditions of the withdrawal of Soviet troops and afterwards. But we need to replace it with economic cooperation. We need to pay serious attention in these terms to the development of trade between the

Soviet Union and Afghanistan.

We understand that we are asking for a lot of aid in the most diverse fields – from the delivery of consumer goods to direct financing. If you agree, we will send our proposals to the Soviet leadership.

Now one more issue, again in the military area, about whether it is possible to consider leaving part of the Soviet servicemen, for example, ten to fifteen thousand, to protect economic facilities and in training centers as well.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Considering that the Soviet military advisers are not among the troops it is possible to consider your request.

NAJIBULLAH. I'm talking about training centers and special technical groups to support the operation of airfields and roads.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This needs to be looked into. But, of course, all the requirements about including advisers in the troops are in the framework of the Geneva Accords. And then, naturally, when military equipment is delivered help will be required to assimilate it. This is normal everywhere it is delivered.

NAJIBULLAH. Possibly the principal aspects of this issue could probably be formulated in a new friendship treaty.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yes, it's possible.

NAJIBULLAH. We are trying to solve problems connected with the training of military personnel and are doing it with our own resources but would like to expand collaboration and at a base in the Soviet Union.

In the worst case scenario we are providing for the creation of a reserve strongpoint in the north. Individual steps have already been taken, and we have informed the Soviet comrades of them. Much can be done here, from joint provision of security to still greater development of direct communications and giving new stimulus to border trade.

These are the main ideas which I would like to describe today and which were described in greater detail to the Soviet comrades in Kabul. I want to stress that in your person, Mikhail Sergeevich, and in your colleagues, we see the true friends of Afghanistan. It is very important that the entire world considers the Soviet Union and Afghanistan as a single whole and sees that how successfully the friendship between our peoples is developing and deepening. We feel your support and solidarity deeply. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts. But we ourselves are not sparing efforts to carry out the tasks which lie before us.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Two days ago I talked with F[idel] Castro by telephone and told him of our upcoming meeting in Tashkent. Castro displayed great interest and expressed complete support for our steps and requested that I send you greetings. Castro said that he considers you simpatico and

hopes that you like him. He added that, of course, that Cde. Najibullah cannot travel right now but let him remember that they are waiting for him in Cuba. Generally speaking, I felt like F. Castro was confident that Cde. Najibullah will lead the new Afghanistan.

Two days ago I talked with the Indian Ambassador in Moscow who sent me a message from R. Gandhi. We talked with him about issues of Soviet-Indian relations. I said that I would be meeting with you in Tashkent and that we would send corresponding information to the Indian side after I return to Moscow.

The Ambassador stressed that India and Rajiv Gandhi personally were interested in strengthening Afghanistan in its non-alignment position in order that Afghanistan be a country maintaining friendly relations with the Soviet Union and India. He noted that the Indian side is actively facilitating this process. It is good that India and we are ready to help strengthen the positions of the Afghan leadership.

You and I met at a good time. We need to formulate our common position before the signing of the Geneva Accords, ensure they are signed, and the main thing – agree on joint steps at a new stage of development of the Afghan situation.

We will consider all the issues you touched on in the Politburo and try to solve them as much as the situation permits.



### **Record of a Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with President of Afghanistan, General Secretary of the CC PDPA Najibullah, 13 June 1988**

*[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

M. S. GORBACHEV. I welcome you to Moscow, Cde. Najibullah. I congratulate you on the successful conclusion of your strenuous journey. I know that you have been working well and productively.

At the present time I am sort of staying in the “underground.” It seems that periods of “underground” work are needed in the Soviet Union. Two weeks remain until the start of the XIX All-Union Party Conference.<sup>13</sup> The concluding stage of preparations for it is underway – work is concluding on the report of the CPSU CC General Secretary and other documents of a Conference which doubtless will be an important political event.

I think that it was interesting for you to familiarize yourself with the main points of the CPSU CC for the XIX All-Union Party Conference. This document describes the platform for discussion about the problems of the development of socialism in our country and an attempt has been made to

analyze what is acceptable and necessary to further strengthen it and what is not.

A key issue at this conference of landmark importance will be reform of the political system. Of course I have in mind not the breakup of the government machinery as Lenin described in his work *Gosudarstvo i Revolyutsiya* [The State and Revolution] but its restructuring.

We have to think deeply and comprehensively about the role of the Party at the stage of *perestroika*, considering that much in this area has been messed up [*podnaputali*] and the Party has been overburdened with functions not inherent to it. As a result the Party is not always on top of the situation as the political vanguard. But inasmuch as no one can replace the Party in such a capacity serious oversights and blunders have been committed and here and there even mistakes in domestic and foreign policy. *Perestroika* has brought to the fore the imperative to sharply increase the leading and organizational role of the CPSU, which is especially important in the conditions of a single-party system when there is no other force capable of replacing the Party. The Party has been called on to work out a theory and strategy to develop our society, domestic, and foreign policy. It has been entrusted with the tasks of ideological support, education, and personnel placement.

In this context we must solve the problem of creating political mechanisms which would guarantee the well-founded, reliable fulfillment of the functions of direct management of the country and economic activity by other bodies. Therefore we are again, for the fourth time, advancing the slogan "All power to the councils [*soviets*]!" intending in this regard a considerable increase in the role and authority of these fully-empowered [*polnovlastnyye*] bodies of popular representation. We ought to analyze their functions and missions specifically and secure all this legally and economically. This is the second link of the reform of the political system.

And naturally the problems associated with assuring the constitutional rights of Soviet citizens, the activity of labor unions, the [Communist youth organization] Komsomol, and other public organizations are being deeply thought through, proceeding from the realities of a one-party system. The creation of a socialist law-governed state founded on the supremacy of law needs to be concluded. The linchpin of the entire reconstruction of the political system is opening the road to a real inclusion of the people in managing the government. Of course, these provisions are written in basic party documents. But at the present stage the participation of the people needs to be turned into an inseparable part of the political system.

We have to carry out legal reform and make changes in the electoral system. The CPSU Charter needs to be changed and additions made to the USSR Constitution.

There are great expectations in connection with the Party Conference in our society. That is why it can be said that the Conference is "doomed" to success.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. Israeli Prime Minister [Yitzhak]

Shamir, too, talked about this in particular in a conversation with me in New York.

A. F. DOBRYNIN. Reagan has also repeatedly stressed his interest in the upcoming Party Conference.

M. S. GORBACHEV. American editors have been giving this advertisement for my book about *perestroika*: "Reagan read this book from cover to cover." Obviously this is having an effect on Americans who know that Reagan generally doesn't read books.

All in all, we are passing through a critical stage in Soviet history. And we can not lose it.

I have described to you, Cde. Najibullah, the chief provisions of the main points with which CC of our Party is going to the Conference. A settlement of the situation in Afghanistan is a very important part of *perestroika* and an important part of our policy and yours. And we need to be successful in what we decided together. With this point of view I welcome your present visit.

Your speech at the UN General Assembly session and other steps taken in New York have aroused great interest.<sup>14</sup> There is positive reaction, the theme of which is the thought that President Najibullah is a leader with whom we ought to do business. All this is important for molding world public opinion in the right direction. Now the public will not very much accept hostile inventions about what is going on in Afghanistan on faith and will try to know the truth.

We know from the Cuban comrades that they are quite satisfied with the results of your visit. The Cubans also give high marks to the decision of the Soviet leadership to withdraw troops from Afghanistan... Before this they were constantly sounding out the issue, referring to the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan tying the hands of the Cubans as regards the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

NAJIBULLAH. They talked in these terms in the course of the plenary discussions.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Everyone sees what is happening as a result of the withdrawal of our troops from Afghanistan. As regards us, Cde. Najibullah, the Soviet Union will henceforth do everything necessary to support you. There are no problems here and there cannot be. But however we help you, no matter how much we support you, the troops will be withdrawn. This needs to be kept in mind.

Therefore it is especially important that there be no panic among the Afghan comrades. And there needs to be unity. Otherwise you will end up as a sect of political figures divorced from reality and life. It is still a long way until the ideals proclaimed by the PDPA are realized. A long path will need to be traveled for this [to happen]. Ideals are not established by simple mechanical means. You need time and a corresponding level of development of a society.

If you do not understand, if you are frightened by reality, then everything can be lost. You need to reach higher levels of a political outlook and think about the fate of the

country, and not about incomes, portfolios, and selfish interests. The time has come to look at the situation in Afghanistan realistically. It is time to share power in practice and form management mechanisms on the basis of the realities of Afghanistan with the participation of all political and social forces. Otherwise, this is not Marxism.

Remember how Lenin acted in such conditions. That's why everyone refers to Lenin and finds answers from him left and right. Because Lenin promoted political and ideological goals, relying on specific, real life, not taking any dogmas into consideration. He understood deeply when it was necessary to compromise and maneuver. A classic example was the conclusion of the [1918] Brest [-Litovsk] Peace [Treaty]. But what efforts this cost him! But at the same time when it was necessary he was a decisive revolutionary.

Now it is necessary, considering all the aspects of the situation in Afghanistan, to act consistently in all fields, including [the] diplomatic [one]. But the main thing is work in the country itself. I am getting the impression that the focus of events is shifting to Afghanistan. The domestic armed opposition is appreciably gaining strength. Therefore it is necessary to concentrate efforts in this direction and involve the commanders of armed formations, both in the upper echelons of power and in local bodies. There is no other way. If this is not done there can be a catastrophe.

We can regulate the tempo and intensity of the withdrawal of Soviet troops, no matter that the mujaheddin "are rubbing their hands." Moreover, the continuing violations of the Geneva Accords by Pakistan permit us to do this. We will react to this. Right in Kandahar the withdrawal had barely stopped and right away they reacted. We will act in a similar matter in all cases when there are attacks on our troops. If necessary powerful strikes need to be launched on the rebel bands. I told [USSR Minister of Defense] D. T. Yazov about this. Let them know that it is not permitted to play with us. In a word, both the carrot and the stick need to be employed.

It seems that Hekmatyar is leaving his post. [National Islamic Front leader Pir Sayyid Ahmad] Gilani is replacing him.<sup>15</sup> This figure is evidently different from Hekmatyar. He follows a wait-and-see policy in order to begin larger operations after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. This ought to be closely followed. But it's important not to lose time while our troops are still in Afghanistan. And we still have time – two months remain until withdrawal of 50% of the contingent of Soviet troops and even more until complete [withdrawal].

The main problems ought to be solved during this period. Don't lose time on "agitation" of our comrades in Kabul. Don't be shy about raising questions directly with Moscow. We'll examine them. The help of the Soviet ambassador and our other representatives is always at your disposal. But when doubts arise in conversations with them ask them directly whose opinion they are expressing – their own personal [opinion] or that of the Soviet leadership. In addition, if the opinion of the Soviet leadership reaches you and you, Cde. Najibullah, as a man, as the leader of a country, have other ideas, inform us. We will study them here carefully and report our point of view.

[Some] friendly advice to all Afghan comrades and first of all to you as President, who has the necessary political experience, intellect, and knowledge: you need to act independently.

There are specific issues which we need to discuss with you. As has already been noted the timetable of the troop withdrawal can be adjusted considering the actual situation. But in this regard you need to proceed from the fact that we will withdraw the troops without fail. In this context the most important task is to speed up measures to strengthen the army and special security force. I know about your requests, especially about the security force.

It is important to strengthen political work in the armed forces with material incentive measures and take steps to build up material resources. Eh. A. Shevardnadze, V. M. Chebrikov, D. T. Yazov, and the heads of other ministries and agencies are examining all the problems you raise. Part of them have already been decided. Eh. A. Shevardnadze will inform you of them.

Some of the problems, for example about foodstuffs, will remain for the time being since we do not have the capability to satisfy these requests. As soon as such a capability appears we will examine it again and make a decision. I note in this regard: it is necessary to use the available resources with maximum effectiveness and do everything so that the aid being offered is not squandered.

An important avenue of work should be stepping up contacts with realistic, sober-minded forces of the opposition and everyone who is ready to enter into talks. I have the impression that you personally have enormous capabilities for creative [*nestandartnyye*] steps in this area. Your opposition has half as many relatives (laughter).

You could argue in favor of your position that in present conditions an opportunity has been opened to the Afghans themselves to solve their own problems. Appeal to the need to understand the groundlessness for Afghanistan of a policy of confrontation with the Soviet Union, with which there is a common border of 2,500 km.

And have the opposition not entertain any illusions regarding Zia ul-Haq and the present rulers of Iran, who are not abandoning plans to dismember Afghanistan. They [offer] no guarantees of the independence, territorial integrity, or sovereignty of Afghanistan but the Soviet Union does, regardless of whether our troops are there or not. If you cast aside ideological differences then the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, one can say, are destined to collaborate. Our bilateral relations have deep roots and are completely in accord with the national interests of our countries. The Soviet Union is genuinely interested in a good neighbor living and working on its southern borders. And how can Pakistan and Iran help Afghanistan? Not at all. They will only try to chop off a piece of the Afghan pie.

In connection with the Geneva settlement, at the present time the Western countries are trying to construct something like a "Marshall Plan" through the UN. In other words, to create a base to penetrate Afghanistan on the rails of economic aid. Don't stray from cooperation in the implementation of such a program. It is possible there are positive as-

pects from the point of view of expanding contacts with the West and the UN. But maximum caution ought to be displayed here and be on your guard so you are not “swaddled” as happened in Angola and Mozambique. Progressive revolutions have long been underway in these countries but they cannot yet get out of the powerful embraces of the West. As soon as [Angolan President] Dos Santos tries to do this, they will practically seize him by the throat.

NAJIBULLAH. Dear Mikhail Sergeyeovich, first of all I want to express genuine gratitude for the opportunity that has been afforded to discuss our problems and tasks with you and consult with you regarding issues which the Afghan leadership has to decide at this critical historical stage of the development of Afghanistan. I thank you for the explanation of the main points of the CPSU CC for the All-Union Party Conference. I am convinced the Conference will be equal to a Congress in its importance.

Briefly about the trip to New York and Cuba. In our view, the work done was quite useful both from the political and propaganda points of view. Of course, it would be premature to expect immediate political dividends since time is required for quantity to become quality.

I am happy to fulfill a request of Fidel Castro and pass on his warm comradely greetings to you, Mikhail Sergeyeovich. I think that he has a feeling of genuine respect for you. For example, Fidel Castro told me that the policy of national reconciliation in Afghanistan developed jointly with Soviet comrades has so impressed him that he would even like to revive [Cuban dictator Fulgencio] Batista in order to engage in national reconciliation with him.

M. S. GORBACHEV. (Laughs) I get the allusion. Generally speaking, Fidel Castro is different than [Cuban revolutionary and guerilla leader Ernesto] Che Guevara. Without question, the people love him and he enjoys enormous authority. In a word – he is a legendary personality, but legends should be constantly nourished somehow.

NAJIBULLAH. I agree with your statement. Now some words about trends in the development of the situation in Afghanistan. The beginning of the withdrawal of Soviet troops has complicated the military and political situation in the country. The situation has worsened in a number of border provinces; an increase in the infiltration of caravans from Pakistan with weapons is being observed, and depots and bases are being created on our territory.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The recent destruction of two depots is a good thing. This is how you need to act henceforth.

NAJIBULLAH. The main goal which the irreconcilable opposition is trying to realize is the seizure of a provincial capital which has an airfield. If this is done the main axis will be the seizure of Jalalabad or Kandahar where combat operations have been especially active recently, and also the creation of an airlift to receive American military aid, bypassing Paki-

stan. At the same time the enemy has intensified psychological warfare which is producing its own results and influencing the population of Kabul and other regions.

In the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command we have developed measures to launch strikes on counterrevolutionary groups in the regions of Jalalabad and Kandahar and are preparing operational subunits with a strength of from five to seven thousand men.

It needs to be noted that negative processes are being aggravated by the latest outbreak of disputes in the PDPA CC Politburo and in the leadership as a whole. Many of our comrades voted in support of the policy of national reconciliation at party conferences and plenums. But right now when the matter has reached practical work and really sharing power with the opposition, they are evasive or openly resist. The passivity of members of the Party leadership is having a negative influence on the mood of ordinary PDPA members, especially in the army.

As a result, desertion has recently increased, including absconding with weapons. In these difficult conditions the natural and normal process of self-purification of the PDPA has begun – casual and vacillating people who joined the Party only to realize their own egoistic ambitions are leaving it. We intend to maintain this trend because, in our view, such a purification will be only to the PDPA’s advantage.

I want to stress the timeliness and the importance of your address to the PDPA leadership. Your message was deeply and comprehensively discussed at the Politburo. The comrades entrusted me with passing our message of reply to you. (Passes the message of reply from the Afghan leadership to M. S. Gorbachev.)

M. S. GORBACHEV. Since you left this message with our comrades before your departure for New York I have familiarized myself with it. You acted correctly in suggesting that all your colleagues in the leadership sign it.

If the notion of dividing the PDPA into independent “Khalq” and “Parcham” parties, which individual comrades are expressing, takes over, this will be doomed to catastrophe. This would be a blow to the position of the President and would make your work more difficult. You would have to leave the Party. In the final account all this would turn into a catastrophe. It’s necessary to remember the folk wisdom which says that a fish rots from the head.

NAJIBULLAH. I completely agree with your opinion. I would like to touch on international issues further. At the present time we are proceeding from the position that Pakistan is not fulfilling and indeed is not demonstrating readiness to fulfill the Geneva Accords. As regards Iran, it is occupied with the problems of the Persian Gulf and the attention of Iranian leaders is being deflected from Afghanistan by the Iran-Iraq War, in spite of all the hostility of their positions.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Some days ago Zia ul-Haq sent me a message in which he virtually disclosed embraces of friendship, lying with the tears of tender emotion. He officially

invited me to visit Pakistan. In his step there is obviously a tactical stratagem and a recognition of reality. He needs to consider the possibility of what will happen to Pakistan if the Soviet Union, India, and Afghanistan pressure him from three sides.

NAJIBULLAH. When did the message arrive, before the recent events in Pakistan?

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yes, literally days before.

NAJIBULLAH. It seems to me that your visit could be exceptionally useful in terms of [putting] appropriate pressure on Pakistan.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I am not going there. But if there is some positive movement in the position of the Pakistani administration then it's possible to consult and propose to Zia ul-Haq that we meet somewhere.

NAJIBULLAH. I agree with you that if there are constructive elements displayed in Zia ul-Haq's policy a meeting between him and the Soviet leadership could be useful.

M. S. GORBACHEV. We have repeatedly said to the Americans that the Geneva Accords concerning Afghanistan are a touchstone of the US readiness to actually improve relations with the Soviet Union. The latest information indicates that the US Administration is displaying increasing realism in the analysis of the situation in Afghanistan which is based on data of American representatives in Kabul, understanding the staying power of the present regime, and that it cannot simply be removed. Yet not at all long ago they had different assessments. But the smallest allusion to differences in the Afghan leadership and disputes which occur will immediately become known to the Americans. Therefore I advise you to warn your comrades that they be more careful and chatter a little less.

NAJIBULLAH. Thank you for the friendly advice.

Returning again to foreign policy problems, I want to note that, unfortunately, the Geneva Accords have not yet brought the expected cessation of outside interference. I raised these issues in conversations with UN Secretary General J. Perez de Cuellar and D. Cordovez. They promised to take the necessary steps to activate a monitoring mechanism and assured me that Pakistan had reportedly expressed readiness to take all measures in their power.

In a word, the first 15-20 days after the start of the withdrawal of Soviet troops were quite difficult: a certain tension arose in the Party and we displayed an unnecessary haste in our steps. But right now work is getting down to normal and we see our miscalculations and also our capabilities more clearly. A unique breathing spell has come when each of the sides is organizing. In my view, we need scarcely expect large-scale combat operations from the armed opposition in the near future. Fearing the Soviet troops, the armed formations

will try to amass their forces and at the same time step up propaganda work, sabotage, and terrorist activity. Moreover, the disputes between the foreign and domestic forces of the counterrevolution are growing stronger.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The armed formations which are operating inside Afghanistan are less extremist. They need to consider that they are in plain view of the people.

NAJIBULLAH. Exactly so. Of all the [rebel] groups the most active are those of the Islamic Party of Afghanistan, which G. Hekmatyar heads. They are concentrating their main efforts on the Kabul axis, trying to sow panic among the capital's population with shelling and terrorist acts.

It should be noted that at the present time the population of Afghanistan as a whole is displaying a notable caution and a desire to get their bearings on the situation. It is waiting to see if the present government holds out or not. This also refers to armed formations created of rebels who crossed over to the government side.

We are acutely faced with the problem of achieving a decisive turning point in the psychological mood of the population. But this can be done only by launching decisive strikes on irreconcilable groups. This is the psychology of the Afghan people. If they see that we could teach the rebels an exemplary lesson then the balance will swing in our favor. In this regard I would like to ask you to approve several large-scale military operations. The armed forces of Afghanistan would take a direct part in waging these combat operations. Soviet troops would be in the second and third echelons. This would boost the morale of the personnel. And victory in such operations would give them confidence in their ability to defeat the enemy by themselves.

M. S. GORBACHEV. This can be done only if an attack is made on our troops. In this case our retaliatory actions would be confirmation of the statement we made that we will react to violations of existing agreements by the other side in an appropriate manner.

NAJIBULLAH. We will diligently put the policy of national reconciliation, which is gaining increasing popular support, into practice. The recent changes in the upper echelons of government, the appointment of authoritative representatives of the population by governors, and the creation of a coalition government have evoked a favorable response.

At the same time we intend to continue working with Afghan emigrants, in particular former King Zahir Shah, although considering the situation main reliance will all the same be placed on establishing contact with the domestic opposition.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Now you need not only to have intentions but to already be working.

NAJIBULLAH. We also will resolutely overcome intra-Party differences and attempts by individual comrades to abandon

and avoid supporting the leadership.

M. S. GORBACHEV. There is already a circle of people around the President who can be relied on. But it needs to be considerably expanded, contact made with representatives of various forces, and rally them around yourself. You need to work more actively with the new Prime Minister [Muhammad Hassan Sharq],<sup>16</sup> with Layek, other comrades, and also with representatives of the patriotic clergy.

Eh. A. SHEVARDNADZE. Individual Soviet comrades have expressed ideas about the advisability of dividing the functions of the President and the General Secretary of the Party CC. This was not the opinion of the Soviet leadership and we have disavowed them.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I want to repeat what I have been saying: in such cases you could ask whose opinion the Soviet representatives are stating.

NAJIBULLAH. As Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, I will strive to keep all military matters under personal control. We are faced with big problems and we will need your assistance. I described my proposals in this connection to Eh. A. Shevardnadze and A. F. Dobrynin earlier.

M. S. GORBACHEV. I repeat: we will henceforth do everything to help you. But again I insistently call to your attention that you not squander our aid.

NAJIBULLAH. I would like to consult with you about this issue. In present circumstances the policy of exerting appropriate pressure on Pakistan seems important. In these terms the sending of Eh. A. Shevardnadze's letter to the UN Secretary General was opportune. The USSR MID Statement of 29 May 1988 was very important. Moreover, in my view, appropriate steps could be taken through the Pakistani Ambassador in Moscow and also through third countries.

It is important to get the UN to have the groups of observers work directly in the border regions, in the zone through which the so-called "Durand Line" passes. As regards propaganda work, then it ought to be given a purposeful, active character, and to specifically expose Pakistan from the facts of [its] violations of the Accords. The main thing for us is to ensure the fulfillment of the Geneva Accords.

In conclusion I want to assure you, Mikhail Sergeyevich, that we will do everything necessary in spite of current difficulties in order to preserve the gains of the Revolution, consolidate, and increase them.

M. S. GORBACHEV. You can always be confident that the broadest support will be given for your efforts on our part.

NAJIBULLAH. We consider the policy of national reconciliation to be part of the policy of *perestroika* of which you, Mikhail Sergeyevich, are the initiator. The ideas of *perestroika* have international importance and go far beyond national

boundaries. They have become exceptionally popular among the Afghan people and have been turned into a factor capable of strengthening their national pride. Therefore we fully understand the responsibility which rests on us at the present stage and will work persistently to translate the policy of national reconciliation and *perestroika* in Afghan society into practice.

M. S. GORBACHEV. It is important that everyone with whom you work and whom you involve in cooperation are imbued with the understanding that we have no secret, selfish designs regarding Afghanistan. Our policy has been and will be based on respect for the Afghan people, their values and traditions, and full recognition of the independence and sovereignty of Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union will continue to help you solve the problems of developing the country, move Afghan society along the path of progress, and restore general international recognition of Afghanistan. We are genuinely interested that there be a loyal neighbor at the southern borders of the Soviet Union with whom our country has a longstanding friendship.



### **Record of a Conversation of M. S. Gorbachev with President of Afghanistan Najibullah, 23 August 1990**

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow. Provided by Anatoly Chernyaev and translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

M. S. GORBACHEV. Cde. Najibullah, I welcome you to Moscow. I hope that your rest in our country has gone well.

NAJIBULLAH. I am genuinely thankful to our Soviet friends for the attention shown me and my family.

I took it with special appreciation that you, Mikhail Sergeyevich, found an opportunity to receive me for a conversation in spite of your enormous workload. I know at what a strenuous pace you have to work at the present time and therefore I highly appreciate your agreement to this meeting.

M. S. GORBACHEV. In fact, today our country is undergoing an exceptionally critical period of its development when it has to make such big decisions and when the future of Soviet society has to be determined. All this requires an enormous mobilization of forces and total commitment. In a word, the load is great. Possibly in some respects it is now quieter in Afghanistan than here.

Evidently those problems which we are deciding can justly be called problems of growth. If you consider them from today's positions then they, of course, cannot fail to



cause serious concern. However, from the point of view of the future and ultimate objectives it could hardly be expected that in such an enormous country as the Soviet Union deep revolutionary changes and the reconstruction of all facets of life could occur smoothly and painlessly.

I will say openly: the first-priority issue today is to stop the further development of crisis phenomena and keep the state of affairs in its present form. Otherwise the situation will deteriorate further. The Soviet people and the leadership of the country understand this well and are experiencing it. It is clear that the only way out of the present situation is to move the cause of *perestroika* forward. But everything here is not so simple.

As is well known the practical implementation of *perestroika* was preceded by discussions around this idea and development of the theory and practice of *perestroika*. When *perestroika* was discussed at the level of theory then everyone greeted it as an important and urgent step on the path to the renewal of society. But the realization of the policy of *perestroika* has touched all spheres of public life – the government, the Party, the army, personnel, etc. and has exposed socioeconomic problems and problems of inter-ethnic relations which had accumulated over the years.

The task before us at the present time is to do everything necessary to stabilize the socioeconomic situation. This would permit us to remove tension and create conditions to gradually come to a solution of other problems through corresponding phases. Right now two central questions are on the agenda – acceleration of economic reform and transition to a market [economy], and preparation of a union treaty. In concentrating on these fundamental political problems we of course are in no way forgetting about the need to satisfy the needs of the people in food, housing, restoring [*navedeniye*] proper order, and ensuring discipline in the area of material production.

It needs to be noted that the political situation in the country is quite acute. Opposition forces speculate much about current difficulties although they propose nothing new. Some of them advocate “capitalization”, which our people would never do. The Soviet people support the idea of a transition to a regulated market, that is to a market which would open the way to efficient labor, enterprise, and initiative, while preserving social justice.

In my speech in the Odessa Military District I touched especially on those problems which worry our entire country today.<sup>17</sup>

NAJIBULLAH. I have carefully familiarized myself with your speech.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Now attempts by certain forces are being noted at using the discussion about means for fundamental reforms of the economic system to cancel everything that has been done up to this time. However it is clear that reliance on leftist radicalism and war communism has not stood the test of time and history. At the same time this does not quite mean that a conclusion follows from this about a

crisis of socialism. Our own rich, accumulated experience allows us to see the goals and continue moving with conviction toward a revolutionary renewal of society within the framework of the socialist choice we have made considering the achievements of world civilization, the Twentieth Century first and foremost.

The coming months will clarify much. Questions of the type “will the current leadership hold onto power?” are now already being tossed about, even in the newspapers. We are convinced power needs to be retained at whatever cost. If others came to power it would put the country through serious trials. For in this case a possible alternative is that matters would lead to a dictatorship.

I am confident that the choice we have made is the correct one. But we need to remove socioeconomic tension and bitterness as quickly as possible. That is why I have considered it necessary to cut short my rest in order to deal with all matters in real earnest.

Yesterday we discussed issues associated with economic reform, the transition to a market, and preparations for a union treaty with a group of comrades for six hours. Today, at the request of N. I. Ryzhkov, I have to meet with members of the Presidium of the USSR Council of Ministers. Right now approaches to solving the most immediate, medium-term, and long-term problems are being worked on.

As you see, our meeting takes place at a very difficult time. I want to note that we are churning our relations with Afghanistan quite a bit. With all our own difficulties we hold Afghanistan and the solution of the Afghan problem in our field of vision constantly for we view the fate of Afghanistan as a part, an important part, of *perestroika*.

As the development of events shows, in spite of all its efforts the Afghan opposition is not managing to secure the realization of its planned goals. Differences and internecine conflict in the enemy camp are intensifying. All attempts to unite its uncoordinated forces have ended unsuccessfully.

As far as I know the situation in your country as a whole is quiet and all primary transportation arteries are functioning. The leadership headed by the President and the government and Party bodies are working actively. In our view the holding of a Party congress and the adoption of decisions important for the fate of the country was a timely step. The renaming of the Party to “The Fatherland Party” symbolizes, it seems, its readiness both in policy and in practice to collaborate with all national forces.

All this confirms the analysis which we made together back in the fall of 1985 when *perestroika* was proclaimed. I want to especially note your personal service and great role in this context. It is also important to travel further on the planned path and not lose one’s bearings and give way to defeatist sentiments. I include both you and myself in this completely.

I know that you have already been informed of the results of Eh. A. Shevardnadze’s conversation with US Secretary of State J. Baker in Irkutsk.<sup>18</sup> We have formed the opinion that the Americans are beginning to better understand the realities of present-day Afghanistan. Such a conclusion can

be drawn in particular from the fact that long ago they advanced a demand that President Najibullah renounce power as a preliminary condition for beginning an all-Afghan dialogue and starting the process of forming new bodies of power and holding elections. Now, such conditions are not raised, although President Najibullah himself has declared his readiness to renounce power for the sake of Afghanistan if, of course, the people want this.

The impression is being created that the Americans are actually concerned with the danger of the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. They think, and they frankly say this, that the establishment today of fundamentalism in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran would mean that tomorrow this phenomenon would encompass the entire Islamic world. And there are already symptoms of this, if you take Algeria for example.

But the Americans were and will remain Americans. And it would be naïve if one permitted the thought that we see only this side of their policy and do not notice other aspects. It is clear that the US is not opposed to fundamentalism becoming the banner of 40 million Soviet Muslims and creating difficulties for the Soviet Union. They object only to it affecting their own interests. The US also approaches East European issues in a similar fashion, trying to tie them to the West. Of course, they would also like to see the Soviet Union weakened.

As regards the process of a political settlement of the Afghan problem I note that the RA [Republic of Afghanistan] government is operating from active positions here both inside the country and in the international arena and trying to make the negotiations process more active.

In spite of our own difficulties and problems and all the changes inside the country we, of course, considering all of these circumstances, will continue the policy of supporting the Afghan leadership and developing cooperation with Afghanistan. I think that today we are right to talk about collaboration, keeping in mind existing opportunities you have for this.

Another position with regard to Afghanistan—if, let's say, the present Soviet government were to leave Afghanistan to its own fate—it would not be understood in our society, although, of course there are people who think otherwise. These are assorted populists, etc.

NAJIBULLAH. Chairman of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet Boris Yeltsin publicly came out for halting aid to Afghanistan.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yeltsin speaks like “an old, broken record” always and everywhere. He has two themes in all: first, “the bad Center is guilty of everything” and second, “take everything in your own hands and do it yourselves”. In a word, a latter-day anarchist who, it is true, cannot be compared with [Russian revolutionary agitator and political writer Mikhail Aleksandrovich] Bakunin, an eminent figure of our history.

I will try to include Yeltsin in the real process of *perestroika* but I do not know whether this can be done.

Nevertheless, efforts in this direction continue because in the present conditions of our society the unresolved status of various problems, even such ones, also ricochets on the President. I think that either this phenomenon itself will go up in smoke or Yeltsin will be restructured and join the work. There should not and cannot be a place in politics for personal resentments and ambitions, especially when the fate of a country is being decided, although it needs to be admitted that affection and goodwill between its members have a certain importance for the effective workings of any leadership.

NAJIBULLAH. Before beginning an analysis of the military and political situation in Afghanistan permit me to cordially congratulate you, Mikhail Sergeevich, on your re-election as CC CPSU General Secretary. The Afghan people know you as their true friend, a consistent fighter for peace and security in the entire world, including in Afghanistan, and as an eminent political figure of modern times who enjoys the deserved respect both in the Soviet Union and among the world community.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Thank you for your congratulations.

I would like you in the course of the analysis of the military and political situation to also give your assessment of the changes in Pakistan's position after [Pakistani Prime Minister B[enazir] Bhutto was removed from power.<sup>19</sup>

NAJIBULLAH. As is well known, the Geneva Accords regarding Afghanistan are a good basis for achieving a political settlement and establishing peace in our country. But if Afghanistan and the USSR honestly observed the agreements which were reached, the other parties to the agreements have traveled another road. As a result the scale of aggression and interference in the affairs of Afghanistan has not decreased but has begun to increase.

In the process of facing armed pressure from the Afghan opposition independently the RA [Republic of Afghanistan] government has managed not only to frustrate their plans to seize power in the country but to demonstrate convincingly its vigor and vitality. Having suffered defeat in combat operations at the front the enemy made an attempt to undermine the Party and government from within and attain their goal by organizing a military coup. The failed plot of former Minister of Defense Sh[ahnawaz] Tanay was a link in a chain of military confrontation between the government and the extremist part of the opposition.<sup>20</sup>

As a whole, the situation around the country is entirely satisfactory. Combat operations are being mainly waged in provinces bordering Pakistan and several other regions. However, as before, the enemy is subjecting Kabul and administrative centers to missile bombardment and artillery shelling. Nevertheless, the process of normalization of the situation is gaining strength. Particular evidence of this is that almost 2/3 of the field commanders have ceased armed combat.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Are they simply maintaining neutrality or are they participating in social, political, and economic

activity?

NAJIBULLAH. In crossing to the side of the government they join various armed formations or take part in peaceful activity.

Thanks to the aid of the Soviet Union we are managing to completely solve the problems of supplying the population with essentials at a satisfactory level and to maintain economic activity. Only recently as a result of the delay of Soviet deliveries have there arisen difficulties in the supply of fuel and grain. I am confident that these are temporary difficulties which will be soon eliminated with the aid of Soviet friends.

As regards the state of affairs among the Afghan opposition, it is characterized by a continuing exacerbation of differences among them, and a deepening of the split between the Alliance of Seven in Peshawar and the Shiite organizations based in Iran. We are trying to use this situation to expand our contacts with various opposition forces, in particular with Afghan emigrants in Europe and first of all with the circle of former King Zahir Shah.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The extremist part of the opposition, as far as is known, has a quite negative attitude toward Zahir Shah.

NAJIBULLAH. We think that in any case the extremists will not participate in a political settlement. Indecisiveness in combat operations against the government of Afghanistan and internal differences among the various groups of the opposition have led to even Pakistan becoming disappointed in their creation – the so-called “transitional government of Afghan mujaheddin”. All this is also increasingly influencing the mood of the Afghan refugees, who are beginning to more insistently demand their return home.

M. S. GORBACHEV. How many refugees are outside Afghanistan?

NAJIBULLAH. The total number of refugees is 5-5.5 million, including about 3 million in Pakistan, up to 1.5 million in Iran, and 1 million in other countries.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Part of the refugees will obviously not return to the country.

NAJIBULLAH. Of course, it's mainly the Afghan emigrants in Western countries who will not return. However the overwhelming majority of refugees live in exceptionally difficult conditions and therefore they will return home.

In a word, the situation is gradually developing in our favor. The RA government holds the political and military initiative in its hands which permits it in the final analysis to confidently count on the opposition entering into talks. We have traveled a considerable portion of the road. A small sector lies ahead, but it is the most difficult part.

It seems that the Americans understand the present-day

realities of Afghanistan well. As has become known, for example, a report by the Special US Representative to the Afghan Mujaheddin P[eter] Tomsen talks frankly about the inability of the opposition to achieve the goals it has set and about the stability of the government of Afghanistan. Moreover he proposed the US Congress hold off on refusing to support the mujaheddin, motivated by the fact that the Soviet Union, under pressure of their own domestic problems, will “be forced to cease aid to the Afghan government”.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The US would like to attain much else [by] exploiting our difficulties.

NAJIBULLAH. It is completely obvious today that we were forced to wage armed combat since the war was imposed on us by enemies. However, for all this, we remain adherents of the policy of national reconciliation and are taking diligent practical steps to implement it. It is sufficient in this connection to list those measures which have been implemented by the government in recent months, namely: the cancellation of the state of emergency; the formation of a new government headed by a figure unaffiliated with a party, F. Khalek'yar; the changes made to the country's Constitution; and a number of decisions directed at developing private enterprise, attracting foreign capital to the country, etc.

The second congress of the Party, held after a 26-year interval, renamed the PDPA the “Fatherland Party” and adopted a new party Program and Charter. The congress was held in an atmosphere of unity, glasnost, and democracy and confirmed that the overwhelming majority of Party members favor deepening the policy of reconciliation, and dialogue and collaboration with other political forces of society. But it needs to be admitted there are also others who are opponents of national accord. True, there are few of them, and they have no importance.

At the present time we are working actively on implementing decisions adopted by the Loya Jirga and the Party congress. Preparations are underway for a national referendum and elections will be organized in accordance with the results.

After Sh. Tanay's unsuccessful coup the state of affairs in the armed forces of Afghanistan improved notably. The morale and fighting spirit of the personnel are strengthening and coordination of activity between the three branches of the armed forces is increasing. In spite of all negative predictions in the spring and summer period Afghan troops carried out a number of successful operations in Jalalabad, in the Paghman District of Kabul Province, and in other regions. In the last four months the Towraghondi-Kandahar, Kabul-Gardez, and Kunduz-Takhar roads were again opened for transport traffic.

The government of the country, the capabilities of which are limited for well-known reasons, has begun to work actively.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Events have confirmed the correctness of the joint conclusion we reached about the need for such a

government in which prominent people unaffiliated with a party will work.

NAJIBULLAH. Of the membership of the current government 17 were educated in Western countries, two in Egypt, one in Turkey, and six in the Soviet Union. I think that even US President George H.W. Bush could not suggest a better government make-up for Afghanistan.

M. S. GORBACHEV. A good argument which Eh. A. Shevardnadze will be able to use in subsequent conversations with the Americans. Actually, whom could they suggest? Hekmatyar?

By the way, how is the institution [*institut*] of governors working?

NAJIBULLAH. Quite effectively. Moreover, we have started to expand their authority. In a number of cases the administrative and territorial division was reexamined and new administrative units were created in order that the governor be first of all acceptable to the population which lives in this territory.

Returning to the theme of the work of the government I will note that without the aid of the Soviet Union it would scarcely have been able to deal with the problems facing the country. I will say openly that voices are heard ever more frequently in Afghanistan that supposedly President Najibullah and the Party say they are in favor of a coalition but in fact are not interested in one. In this regard a reason is advanced as an argument that when the government was formed by the Party its activity was provided every manner of support. However as soon as the government was headed by an unaffiliated person it encountered enormous difficulties in its work.

If we glance at the history of relations between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union then we will again be convinced that they are based on the firm foundation laid by V. I. Lenin and Emir Amanullah and have deep roots. Even in the difficult years of the Civil War Soviet Russia gave Afghanistan aid after they restored their independence. In turn, Afghanistan helped the Soviet Union in the '20s and '30s in the fight against basmachestvo<sup>21</sup> and in the Second World War they did not permit their territory to be turned into a springboard for fascist aggression against the Soviet people.

From the middle of the '50s Soviet-Afghan collaboration actively developed in an increasing direction. Many in Afghanistan really saw and felt that the preservation and deepening of good-neighborly relations with the Soviet Union had great importance for the future of our country. From that time they tied themselves to the Soviet people forever with bonds of friendship and sympathy.

After the 1978 April [Saur] Revolution and especially in the years that Soviet troops were in Afghanistan our countries reached an exceptionally high level of cooperation and collaboration. And although the leaders of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan have courageously recognized the errors of the decision to deploy Soviet troops, a considerable part of

the Afghan public nevertheless remains devoted to the ideals of friendship with the USSR and, as before, associates their aspirations with your country. In the conditions of a difficult military and political situation in Afghanistan when there is no longer support from Soviet troops, they closely follow how the attitude in the Soviet Union is developing at the present time toward events occurring in Afghanistan.

Obviously these people represent a considerable force in present-day Afghanistan and are right to think that the Soviet Union bears a certain moral responsibility that its loyal friends be secured a fitting place in the future structures of state power in Afghanistan. Naturally, certain biased assessments of Afghan events recently appearing in the Soviet Union cannot fail to concern your friends, against whom similar statements are being used.

I am convinced that past mistakes should in no account overshadow the reality and the actual state of affairs, which is more and more developing in favor of the RA government. The government of Afghanistan is acting aggressively and in solidarity and holds the political and military initiative against a background of various collapsing opposition alliances. We think that in the next two-three years we will be able to achieve a decisive breakthrough in the cause of complete normalization of the situation in the country. The Afghan government firmly intends to go forward along the path of political settlement and national reconciliation but it will be practically impossible to realize these goals without the support and aid of the Soviet Union.

As it seems, our enemies - the Afghan opposition, Pakistan, and the US - have still not shown their cards to the end. I agree with you that they are interested in strengthening the positions of Islamic fundamentalism not only among the peoples of Soviet Central Asia but among all Soviet Muslims. Equivalent retaliatory actions will be required to disrupt similar plans and here, in our view, the interests of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan closely overlap.

I have prepared several ideas regarding the further development of bilateral economic collaboration and a number of specific requests for aid for the remainder of 1990 and in 1991. If you agree I could discuss these issues in detail with N. I. Ryzhkov or [USSR Minister of Shipbuilding] I[gor] S. Belousov.

In recent years the Soviet Union has invested many men and much material in Afghanistan and made considerable sacrifices for the Afghan people. Therefore to refuse Afghanistan aid right now, as some figures in the Soviet Union propose, would be a betrayal of those who fought in Afghanistan who have done so much in the name of our friendship, including warriors who are still captives of the Afghan armed opposition.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Neither the past, nor the future of Afghanistan gives anyone the right to approach such issues superficially, on impulse, and deprive the Afghan people of the opportunity to fight for a new Afghanistan. It is also impossible to disregard the common border of almost 2,500 km. between our countries.

NAJIBULLAH. I repeat the idea I told you, that the present economic difficulties of the Soviet Union are the problems of a transitional period and problems of growth. I am confident that the efforts of the Soviet leadership in the very near future will turn the development of the situation around in the direction of an improvement.

As regards Afghanistan, then we are already prepared for mutually beneficial collaboration with the Soviet Union, although in insignificant amounts for the time being. In no way are we interested in the Afghan people being perceived simply as a consumer and nothing more. And, all the same, for the next two-three years the development of the situation in Afghanistan will as before depend to a large degree on your policy.

Some words about Pakistan. As is well known, Pakistan is an artificially created country within whose boundaries they have tried to create a single nation on a common religious basis.

M. S. GORBACHEV. R. Gandhi, too, gave such an assessment.

NAJIBULLAH. Pakistan can be compared to a boiling kettle which is full of various contradictions and antagonisms – religious, national, and ethnic. In order to keep this “kettle” from exploding Pakistani leaders are trying to let off the “steam” of public dissatisfaction, diverting the attention of their people to problems of an external nature. At one time it seized upon the Afghan problem eagerly and actively heated it up. At the present time the Kashmir issue has become a safety valve.

For decades the military has decided and dictated the policy of Pakistan. And even after B. Bhutto came to power the policy of the Pakistani administration regarding Afghanistan remained unchanged: it was only sort of dressed “in civilian clothes.” Nevertheless, right now when Pakistan is allied [*zaangazhirovan*] with Saudi Arabia in connection with the conflict in the Persian Gulf and when Pakistani-Indian relations have sharply heated up, it’s evidently possible to expect some slackening of attention by Pakistan toward the Afghan problem.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you, Mikhail Sergeevich, for the constant attention to Afghanistan and the support and aid which the Soviet leadership and all the Soviet people are giving us in our efforts to achieve peace and stop the war in Afghanistan.

Everything that I said about the importance of Soviet assistance to those Afghan forces which have tied their fate to Afghan-Soviet friendship in no way means that I am concerned about my personal well-being. I assure you that I am ready to sacrifice not only my post but even my life in the interests of Afghanistan and the interests of our friendship.

M. S. GORBACHEV. The truth is that neither President Najibullah nor Gorbachev need much. The main thing are the interests of our peoples and governments.

I thank you for the interesting and well-reasoned analy-

sis of the military and political situation in Afghanistan. I follow the development of events in Afghanistan closely but I consider it quite useful to supplement and deepen my impressions with the view of the Afghan leadership.

I completely share your ideas about the interests of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union coinciding in strategic terms. I add to this that during the ten years of close collaboration our countries have experienced a drama together and sealed the bonds connecting the peoples of the two countries with blood. The duty of the Afghan and Soviet leaderships is to protect and develop the good traditions of relations between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan based on the coinciding interests and existing foundations of friendship. These should determine the specific content of our policy and its application.

Indeed, in present conditions the aid of the Soviet Union to your country can and should have another nature and be implemented in a different scale. In this context we note your statements about the possibilities of giving bilateral collaboration a mutually beneficial character. Obviously we need to move forward in this direction. In a word, there are all the prerequisites for continuing collaboration between our countries, helping Afghanistan finish the great cause it has begun there and preserve the long-standing friendship between the Soviet and Afghan peoples in the future. I stress again – we are not in favor of a discontinuance but in a normal development of relations.

In this connection I welcome your desire to meet with I. S. Belousov with whom you can discuss specific issues of Soviet-Afghan collaboration.

We will also continue our support in terms of advancing a peaceful settlement of the situation in and around Afghanistan. This is urgently needed so that the cause to which we have given so much is successfully concluded in the interests of our countries.

EH. A. SHEVARDNADZE. Cde. Najibullah, we would like to suggest to you that you speak on national television or meet with representatives of the Soviet press. I think that such a speech of yours would be useful, considering the great interest in Afghanistan in our country.

NAJIBULLAH. I will use this opportunity with pleasure.

EH. A. SHEVARDNADZE. Cde. Najibullah, in connection with your upcoming visit to India we think it important that you try to bring the Indians to some specific agreements, for example, in the area of economics.

NAJIBULLAH. I agree with your ideas, although to be sure, I think that it will be difficult to do this. The Indian side, proceeding from their own interests in connection with Kashmir, is stubbornly trying to involve Afghanistan in opposing Pakistan but it is not trying very eagerly to give specific support to settling the Afghan problem.

M. S. GORBACHEV. Concluding our conversation I would

like to note that the exchange of opinions was exceptionally useful, in my view. The main thing is that we wound our political clocks, figuratively speaking.

I wish you success in your work for the good of the Afghan people.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Editor's note:* Excerpts from this meeting have been previously published in *CWIHP Bulletin* 8/9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 178-181; and Anatoly Chernyaev, *My Six Years with Gorbachev*, translated and edited by Robert English and Elizabeth Tucker (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2000), pp. 89-90.

<sup>2</sup> King Mohammad Zahir Shah abdicated in August 1973 and had since lived in Italy.

<sup>3</sup> Also spelled mujahedin, mujahedeen, or mujahidin.

<sup>4</sup> *Editor's note:* A slightly different version of these notes have appeared in *Anatoly Chernyaev, My Six Years with Gorbachev*, translated and edited by Robert English and Elizabeth Tucker (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2000), pp. 89-90.

<sup>5</sup> *Editor's note:* a waqf is a religious endowment

<sup>6</sup> Also spelled Hikmatyar.

<sup>7</sup> On 18 October 1987, Yunus Khalis [Khaless] was elected spokesman of the seven-party mujaheddin alliance.

<sup>8</sup> Several rounds of UN-sponsored talks on Afghanistan between Pakistani and Afghan officials had taken place in Geneva since June 1982. The tenth round of the negotiations opened in Geneva on 26 February 1987.

<sup>9</sup> George P. Shultz visited Moscow (as well as Kiev, and Tbilisi) on 21-24 April 1988 to discuss preparations for the U.S.-Soviet summit meeting in May.

<sup>10</sup> On 8 February 1988, in a statement that was read by a broadcaster over national television interrupting regular broadcasting, Gorbachev announced that Soviet troops would begin pulling out of Afghanistan on 15 May if a settlement could be reached two

months before that date, and that a withdrawal would be complete no more than ten months after it started. See Philip Taubman, "Soviet Sets May 15 as Goal to Start Afghanistan Exit," *New York Times*, 9 February 1988, pg. A1. For the full text of Gorbachev's statement, see *ibid.*, pg. A14.

<sup>11</sup> On 12 November 1893 Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, foreign secretary to the government of India, and Amir Abdur (Abdul) Rahman signed an agreement in Kabul that defined the borderline between Afghanistan and then British India. In 1979 the Afghan parliament repudiated the Durand Agreement.

<sup>12</sup> In early 1988, ethnic disturbances and unrest occurred in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

<sup>13</sup> The Nineteenth Party Congress took place in Moscow from 28 June to 1 July 1988. On the importance of the Congress, see Archive Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), chapter 6.

<sup>14</sup> Najibullah addressed the UN General Assembly on 7 June 1988. Najibullah warned that continued violations by Pakistan of the Geneva accord on Afghanistan could force a delay in the agreed timetable for Soviet troop withdrawal. See *The Washington Post*, 8 June 1988, p. A22.

<sup>15</sup> Gilani [Gailani] became spokesman for the seven-member mujaheddin alliance on 15 June 1988.

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Hassan Sharq was appointed Prime Minister on 26 May 1988, replacing Sultan Ali Keshtmand, who became secretary of the PDPA Central Committee. See Ludwig A. Adamec, *Dictionary of Afghan Wars, Revolutions and Insurgencies* (London: the Scarecrow Press, 1996), p. 305.

<sup>17</sup> Gorbachev gave a speech in the Odessa military district on 17 August 1990.

<sup>18</sup> The meeting between Shevardnadze and Baker took place from 31 July – 2 August 1990 in Irkutsk.

<sup>19</sup> Benazir Bhutto was forced to resign in August 1990.

<sup>20</sup> In 6 March 1990 Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Shahnawaz Tanay, with the alleged support of the air force and some divisions of the army, leads an unsuccessful coup attempt against Najibullah's government.

<sup>21</sup> "Basmachestvo" is the term for the anti-Soviet nationalist movement against Soviet rule in Central Asia during this period.

## New Documents Released: "China and the Warsaw Pact in the 1970-1980s" Document Reader for the International Seminar 24-26 March 2004, Beijing/China

Documents have been obtained by Parallel History Project (PHP) associates Oldrich Tuma from former Czechoslovak archives, and Mihail Ionescu from Romanian archives, and Senior CWIHP Scholar Bernd Schäfer from former East German archives, in preparation for the International Seminar on "China and the Warsaw Pact in the 1970-1980s," to be hosted on 24-26 March 2004 in Beijing.

The seminar will be co-sponsored by the Modern History Research Center and Archives and the School of International Relations, both at Peking University, and the Center for Archival Studies of the Institute for the Study of the History of the Communist Party of China.

The documents are available in facsimile on the Parallel History Project website, (<http://www.isn.ethz.ch/php>) and the Cold War International History Project website (<http://cwihip.si.edu>). English translations of some of the documents have been provided by Karen Riechert, through the CWIHP, and by Viorel Nicolae Buta through the PHP.

# KGB Active Measures in Southwest Asia in 1980-82

By Vasilii Mitrokhin

*[Editor's Note: The following materials were presented by former KGB archivist Vasilii Mitrokhin to the participants of the April 2002 CWIHP conference "Towards an International History of the War in Afghanistan, 1979-1989." (See Section introduction above.) Mitrokhin, who became known in the West in 1999 when he co-authored with Christopher Andrew *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB*,<sup>1</sup> brought with him six cases of notes when he defected to Britain in 1992. In these cases were the details of the operations of the KGB and other Soviet intelligence gathering organizations going back to 1918. The 1999 volume provided an overview of some of these materials regarding operations in the United States and Western Europe. In early 2002, CWIHP published Mitrokhin's *The KGB in Afghanistan* (edited by Christian Ostermann and Odd Arne Westad) as Working Paper No. 40, written after he retired from the KGB in 1984.<sup>2</sup> (Mitrokhin revised and rewrote the Afghanistan manuscript in 1986-87; then destroyed the original notes.) Mitrokhin's compilation on Soviet "active measures" in South and Southwest Asia is based on other smuggled-out notes and was prepared especially for the Afghanistan conference.*

Most of the materials Mitrokhin brought to the West consist of notes which he had carefully assembled over several years while working in the archives of the KGB First Chief Directorate (FCD) in Yasenovo outside Moscow. Mitrokhin had moved from the operational side of the FCD to its archives in late 1956, where it was his job to respond to requests by other departments. Influenced by the harsh suppression of the Prague Spring in 1968 and the dissident movement—all of which he could follow through the files he administered as well as Western records—Mitrokhin became increasingly disaffected with the KGB. By the early seventies he had decided to compile his own account of the KGB's foreign operations, a project that became feasible when he was put in charge in 1972 of the movement of the FCD archives from the KGB's headquarters at Lubyanka in central Moscow to Yasenevo southwest of the capital Moscow.<sup>3</sup> In charge of checking, compiling, and indexing the records in the process of the transfer, which began in 1974, Mitrokhin soon conceived of the idea to create his own archive. Starting in 1977, he used every opportunity to take notes of the documents he saw. Proceeding in complete secrecy, he first took these notes in longhand while working in the archives and later, once safely in his dacha, sorted and transcribed them.<sup>4</sup>

Vasilii Mitrokhin, who passed away in January 2004, would be the first to point out that his notes captured only a small part of the totality of documents; his decade-long work in the archive was a "massive filtering exercise," with a flood of documents coming through his hands on a daily basis. The documents he saw were mostly informational cables from the First Directorate to the Politburo and Foreign Ministry, a copy of which went to the archives after a month. By no means is this manuscript therefore a complete record. Though the materials provided earlier by Mitrokhin seem to fit with available documents from other archives,<sup>5</sup> historians and others will continue to assess the significance and authenticity of these materials until the original notes become fully accessible. Mitrokhin's notes on the original documents are clearly not the same as original documents (or copies thereof), but, short of full access to the the archives of the former KGB and other Soviet intelligence agencies, they will remain one of our most intriguing and valuable sources on Soviet intelligence operations.—Christian F. Ostermann]

## A

The intervention of Soviet forces in Afghanistan in December 1979 provoked sharp protests from the world community. The KGB took various measures, including some involving disinformation, to neutralize the negative response and distract attention from the activities of the USSR and its forces in Afghanistan.

The KGB devised a doctrine according to which the choice of means to combat the adversary did not depend on the KGB but was dictated by necessity, by the adversary's conduct; therefore any KGB activities were supposedly legitimate and justified.

[“]Disinformation is regarded as one of the instruments

of CPSU policy; it is an integral, indispensable, and secret element of intelligence work. It not only serves the interests of our own people but also those of working people throughout the world; it represents one of the forms of international assistance to progressive mankind and is radically different in essence from the disinformation to which Western agencies resort in order to deceive public opinion. KGB disinformation operations are progressive; they are designed to mislead, not the working people but their enemies - the ruling circles of capitalism, in order to induce them to act in a certain way, or abstain from actions contrary to the interests of the USSR; they promote peace and social progress; they serve international détente; they are humane, creating the conditions for the noble struggle for humanity's bright fu-

ture.[”]

[“]The main value of all Active Measures lies in the fact that it is difficult to check the veracity of the information conveyed and to identify the real source. Their effectiveness is expressed as a coefficient of utility, when minimum expenditure and effort achieves maximum end results. Forms of disinformation basically fall into three groups—documentary (written); non-documentary (oral); demonstrative.[”]

[“]In KGB Residencies, the Residents are personally responsible for work relating to Active Measures. In large residencies, Active Measures constitute an autonomous direction of intelligence work; specialists in this kind of work are assigned to it. The KGB Chairman’s Order No 0066 of 12 April 1982 required all FCD [First Chief Directorate] departments and personnel to participate in devising and carrying out Active Measures; young officers were to be given a taste for such work; Active Measures were to be regarded as one of the basic forms of intelligence activity. Officers of Service A were to display initiative and ability to act independently when solving both simple and complex questions. Anyone who had to be told day by day what he was to do was unsuitable for this kind of work.[”]

## B

In February 1980, Andropov approved a KGB plan of action relating to Pakistan which specified the following:

1. Through KGB SCD [Second Chief Directorate] assets, a warning is to be conveyed to the Pakistan Mission in Moscow to the effect that if a sensible line does not prevail in [Pakistani leader] Zia-ul Haq’s political course, and Pakistan agrees under pressure from the US and China to turn its territory into a base for permanent armed struggle against Afghanistan, the Oriental Studies Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences will be instructed to study ways of exploiting the Baluchi<sup>6</sup> and Pushtun<sup>7</sup> movements in Pakistan, as well as internal opposition to the country’s military regime, in the interests of the security of the frontiers of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA).
2. Using operational-technical means, 500 copies of leaflets produced at the Center are to be disseminated in Islamabad and Karachi; some of these, issued in the name of a group of Pakistani Army officers, sharply criticize the government’s internal and external policy, which is leading to a constant deterioration of the country’s material situation.
3. Three hundred leaflets codenamed ‘SARDAR’ are to be produced, demonstrating to the administration that there is extreme dissatisfaction with its policy in public and military circles.
4. Information is to be planted in the local press in Pakistan to the effect that the ruling regime is artificially whipping up the atmosphere relating to events in Afghanistan with the object of building up the Pakistani Army,

further increasing its influence in the country, and maintaining the ban on the activities of political parties and organisation for an indefinite period.

5. In Bangkok, information is to be conveyed to the Pakistan Mission to the effect that within the Carter Administration there are doubts about the utility of further increases in military assistance to Pakistan, given the Zia-ul Haq regime’s unpopularity in the country. [US] Secretary of State [Cyrus] Vance and his assistants consider that, in order to avert another major failure of US foreign policy, it is imperative to seek to replace the dictatorship with another regime which would guarantee stability in Pakistan.

6. In India, information is to be conveyed to Prime Minister Gandhi to the effect that Pakistan is not satisfied with the insignificant scope of American military assistance and the condition imposed on it to abstain from exploding a nuclear device while the American assistance program is in force. The leaders of Pakistan intend to continue to whip up hysteria over the events in Afghanistan in order to obtain a significant increase in military assistance from the US and the lifting of restrictions on the development of the nuclear program.

7. Through the UN leadership, information is to be conveyed to representatives of Iran to the effect that, in return for growing military assistance to Pakistan, the US is seeking to be granted military bases on Pakistani territory, including in Baluchistan, in close proximity to the Iranian frontier. The leaders of Pakistan are inclined to make concessions to the Americans on this issue.

8. In various circles in member countries of the Non-aligned Movement steps are to be taken to discredit Pakistan’s foreign policy, emphasizing that it has breached the basic principles of the Non-aligned Movement, as the leaders of Pakistan have allowed the US and China, two of the great powers, to turn the country into an instrument of their policy in Asia.

9. In India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, Jordan, Italy and France, there is to be continued publication of materials about the direct involvement of the Pakistani special services and military servicemen in organizing armed interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.[”]

On 2 September 1980, [KGB chief Vladimir] Kryuchkov approved an extension of the above plan. A Working Group was set up under the Deputy Head of the KGB FCD, V.A. Chukhrov, with representatives from Directorates K and RT, Service 1 and Service A, and Departments 8, 17 and 20. The Group was tasked to devise complex agent measures, coordinate the joint actions of all FCD Sections, and monitor implementation. The Head of the Third Department of Service A, Colonel Yu. V Rykhlov, coordinated and concerted the implementation of Active Measures, as a member of the Chukhrov Working Group.

In February 1981, the Working Group devised a wide-ranging operational plan code-named ‘TORKHAM.’ This was



to be carried out in various countries, in accordance with individual plans which included the following elements: compromise the Zia-ul Haq regime; weaken the positions of the US and China in Pakistan; exacerbate relations with Iran; intensify and deepen disagreements between India and Pakistan on existing disputed issues; inspire new irritants in Indo-Pakistan relations; reinforce the antipathy and suspicion felt by Indira Gandhi and other Indian leaders towards Zia-ul Haq personally; compromise him in the eyes of the Muslims of India and other countries in the world; induce the government of India to seek to secure the end of Pakistan's support for the Afghan rebels; step up the activities of Pakistani émigrés and of the nationalist movement, particularly in Baluchistan; disrupt Afghan émigré organizations; intensify the local population's hostility towards Afghan refugees.

Information was to be conveyed to India and Iran to the effect that by building up its military potential Pakistan was in fact preparing for aggression not only against Afghanistan, but also against India and Iran. India was to be told that Zia-ul Haq was giving Afghan refugees an anti-Indian outlook and using Afghan emissaries to conduct activities favorable to Pakistan in India. The plan also provided for intensified anti-Pakistan propaganda directed at India and other countries abroad, and the setting up of a Committee for the return to India of the Pakistan-occupied part of Kashmir. Disinformation was to be conveyed to Gandhi on joint operations by the US, Pakistan and the People's Republic of China to destabilize the situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

In Bangladesh, the aim was to impede actions by the Zia-ur Rakhman regime in support of the Afghan counter-revolution, and to intensify disagreements between Bangladesh and Pakistan on such disputed issues as the repatriation of Pakistani citizens, the division of banking assets and so on, and the responsibility of Pakistan's ruling circles for the economic backwardness of Bangladesh.

The aim was to impede the activities of the US, Pakistan and the People's Republic of China relating to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. In 1981-82, the following Active Measures were envisaged within the framework of the 'TORKHAM' operation:

[“]I

- Produce a leaflet in Urdu sharply criticizing the Pakistan regime and its cooperation with the US, from the standpoint of local religious (Shiite) circles. Implicate the Iranian authorities in the production of the leaflet by including in the text appropriate comments by Khomeini about Zia-ul Haq. Implementation: posting the leaflet to various establishments, newspapers and foreign missions in Islamabad, and scattering copies in Karachi.
- In the name of a fictitious grouping in the Pakistani armed forces, disseminate leaflets (in English, as part of the 'SARDAR' series) from which it could be concluded that there is growing dissatisfaction among the military about Zia-ul Haq's policy of redirecting Pakistan towards conflict with the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

and India, and subordinating the country to foreign interests—those of the US and China. These leaflets to be disseminated in Islamabad and Karachi.

- Using available models, produce a 'personal letter' from Pakistan's Home Affairs Minister, Mahmud Harun, who represents the Shiite minority in the government, to the Iranian leader, Imam Khomeini. Indicate in the letter that Zia-ul Haq intends to take severe new measures to restrict the activity of Shiites in Pakistan, and that they [the Shiites] appeal to their Iranian brethren for help to avert this threat. Send a photocopy of the letter, with a covering note from 'a well wisher' to one of the leaders of Pakistan's military special service.
- Complete the elaboration of proposals for exploiting the separatist movement of Pakistani Baluchis and Pakistani opposition forces located in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.
- Place compromising material in the press of various countries.[“]

[“]II

- Promote by all means an intensification of the Pakistani population's hostility towards Afghan refugees and the disruption of the Afghan emigration in Pakistan.
- Disseminate disinformation in the Pakistani community to the effect that in reality the Zia-ul Haq regime is not seeking to solve the Afghan refugee problem and would like to turn it into a permanent feature. The presence of refugees from the DRA gives the government the possibility of obtaining substantial material assistance, isolating the Baluchi and Pushtun nationalist movement and increasing the severity of the central authorities' control in districts where they mainly located.
- Convey information to Pakistani government and journalistic circles to the effect that some leaders of the Afghan emigration, such as [radical Islamist mujaheddin (Hizb-i Islami) leader] G[ulbuddin] Hekmatyar and N. Mohammad, who seek to keep Pushtun tribes under their influence, are promising to help them to set up an independent Pushtunistan on the territory of Pakistan and Afghanistan.
- Convey information to the Pakistani special services to the effect that a significant portion of the weapons reaching the Afghan refugees is sold on to activists and officials of opposition political parties who have established permanent undeclared contact with leading personalities within the Afghan counter-revolutionary emigration in Pakistan.
- Through the country's press, disseminate information about growing disagreements among the leaders of Afghan emigration in Pakistan, their dissatisfaction with the Zia-ul Haq administration, and their attempts to develop cooperation with the special services of the US, the People's Republic of China, Saudi Arabia, out of the Pakistani authorities' control.

- To disrupt the Afghan emigration, make use of the DRA [Democratic Republic of Afghanistan]’s special services, with the help of the Afghans themselves. [”]

[“] III

- Carry out Active Measures to expose cooperation between Washington, Peking, and the Zia-ul Haq regime in connection with the development of Pakistan’s own atomic weapon.
- Convey information to India, Bangladesh, and other countries with the object of inducing them to take actions favorable to the USSR. Some measures [are] to be carried out jointly with the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces.
- Convey information to the press of Asian countries, in Dhaka, Delhi, Colombo, and to Pakistani missions in these places, to the effect that the expansion of military cooperation between Pakistan and the US will inevitably entail the establishment of US military bases on Pakistan territory, the influx of military advisers, and the arrival of American ships in Pakistan harbors, all of which can undermine Pakistan’s relations with Islamic and non-aligned countries and further incline the USSR, India, and Iraq against Pakistan, and these can give active support to forces opposed to the Zia-ul Haq regime.
- Through the possibilities of India and of the UN Secretary [General], convey information to the US to the effect that the Reagan administration’s plans to expand military and other assistance to Pakistan will provoke an extremely negative reaction within the democratic opposition to the Zia-ul Haq regime. If the precarious Zia-ul Haq dictatorship is overthrown, the US would be faced with rising anti-American feelings in that country on the same scale as in Iran.
- Through the Hungarians, convey information to NATO weakness of the Zia-ul Haq regime, the growing strength of the opposition, including in the Pakistan Army, and the instability of the situation in the country.
- In Dhaka, inspire parliamentary questions and speeches, declarations by public and political personalities and leaders of the main opposition parties, urging the government to display caution when solving the problem of ‘Bihari’ repatriation and to facilitate the dispatch of a UN mediation commission to Bangladesh with the object persuading Pakistan to repatriate Pakistani citizens most urgently and getting the Zia-ul Haq administration to use the funds provided by Saudi Arabia for the proper purpose, and not for backing the Afghan counter-revolution.
- In Delhi, convey information to the effect that the US and NATO have plans to set up an anti-Indian alliance in South Asia in which Pakistan would plan a key role. Western countries are not only strengthening Pakistan’s military might but also encouraging its subversive activity against India and inciting it to inflame disputes be-

tween Hindus and Muslims, as well as the Sikh aspiration to set up an independent Khalsalistan.

- In Dhaka, convey slanted information to Indian diplomats about the Pakistani leadership’s aggressive intentions against India, the junta’s strategic plans, aroused by the practical actions of the US and the People’s Republic of China which aim to weaken India’s positions in the subcontinent in every way and rapidly build up Pakistan’s military potential.
- In Tehran, regularly supply the Iranian leadership with disinformation about Pakistan’s use of Afghan émigrés to pass arms to Baluchistan and Arab separatists in Iran and to instigate mass disorders and anti-government incidents in the provinces of Khuzestan [in Southwestern Iran], Sistan [in Eastern Iran] and Baluchistan.[”]
- In March 1981, in addition to the above ‘TORKHAM’ plan of action, a plan code-named ‘GVADAR’ [Gwadar] was devised with the object of exploiting the Baluchi problem to influence the policy of Pakistan. The Deputy Head of Service A of the FCD, Colonel M. A. Krapivin, was responsible for carrying out this plan.

‘GVADAR’ specified the following:

- [“] Through the KGB Residencies in Islamabad and Karachi and the Afghan special services, supply slanted information to Baluchi leaders about the Pakistani authorities’ intention to legalize the presence of Afghan refugees on the territory of Baluchistan, giving them the right to erect permanent dwellings and to use the pasture lands to put out their animals to graze.
- Prompt some Baluchi groups to engage in armed clashes with Afghan armed detachments.
- Examine the expediency of making and maintaining contacts with representatives of the Baluchi emigration to Europe, in order to ascertain the situation within the Baluchi movement, exerting influence on it, and giving the impression that the USSR intends to give broad assistance to this movement.
- Consider the expediency and technical possibility of setting up a radio station in Afghanistan which, in the name of the Baluchis, would call on the population of Baluchistan to fight for the establishment of an autonomous state.
- Through the Afghans, carry out a series of leaflet operations designed to exacerbate relations between the population of Baluchistan and the Afghan refugees.
- Convey slanted information to Pakistani leaders about the US’s intentions and specific actions to exploit the Baluchi problem to put pressure on the Zia-ul Haq government in order to secure the further use of Pakistan as a stronghold for organizing the undeclared war against Afghanistan.

- Carry out disinformation operations about the CIA's contacts with individual Baluchi leaders, including some who had emigrated, either directly or through political figures such as [probably Former Iranian Prime Minister Shapur] Bakhtiar and [Former Iranian General Gholam Ali] Oveisi [Oveissi]. For the sake of credibility, compile and send out letters ostensibly from Baluchis to the Pakistan Embassy in the US and some countries in Asia, containing threats against Zia-ul Haq and other military and state personalities in Pakistan. It would be clear from this that the Baluchi leaders are receiving support and financial assistance from the American authorities and special services in pursuit of the idea of establishing an independent Baluchistan.
- Convey slanted information to the Iranian leadership on the Americans' intentions and specific actions, including those of agents recruited by the Americans through SAVAK [the Iranian Intelligence Agency], designed to detach Iranian Baluchistan from Iran and, by arrangement with the Pakistani authorities, set up an autonomous united Baluchistan within Pakistan.
- Convey information to Pakistani diplomats in Colombo, citing the Libyan leadership, to the effect that the leaders of the Pakistani Baluchis have asked Libya for assistance in the struggle to set up an autonomous state, and that senior Libyan officials are studying the request. A Baluchi armed action against the central government of Pakistan can only be averted by democratization of the country's life and repatriation of the Afghan refugees in Baluchistan.
- Consider jointly with the Afghans how to incite the Baluchis to engage in antigovernment actions, and what assistance should be given.
- Convey information to [Palestinian Liberation Organization leader] Yasser Arafat and to the press of various countries to the effect that the US uses Pakistan to deflect the Muslim countries' anger at Israel's annexation of Jerusalem and to undermine their unity on this issue. If an emergency Conference of Islamic States were convened, the Americans have given Pakistan the task of again drawing the Conference's attention to the Afghan question, thereby wrecking the adoption of resolutions on Jerusalem that are unwelcome to the US and Israel.[?]

The Chukhrov Working Group also considered the question of creating a new irritant—the problem of setting up an Azad-Kashmir independent of Pakistan and India, and the notional formation of a Free Baluchistan government-in-exile in Afghanistan. But in view of the extreme complexity and uncertainty of many aspects of the situation, this question was postponed indefinitely.

Many other measures of this kind were devised and the conditions were created for strengthening and consolidating Pakistan's democratic forces. Work was in hand with representatives of the People's Party of Pakistan, of the Tekhrik-i-Istikhlal Party, of all factions of the Muslim League, of the

Mussavat Party, the National Democracy Party, the Pakistan National Party and other national-patriotic forces in the country.

The possibilities of all KGB elements and Residencies, and of the KGBs of Kirgizia, Tajikistan, Turkmenia and Azerbaijan were mobilized to conduct Active Measures.

## C

Many Active Measure pieces on various themes were placed in the periodical 'NIVA,' published in Islamabad, which was controlled by the KGB Residency.

In 1980, 239 articles based on Service A themes were placed; in the first half of 1981, the total was 216 articles. When commenting on the situation in Afghanistan and on Pakistani-Afghan relations, the periodical occasionally slipped into anti-Soviet and anti-Afghan criticism. Issue No 10, quoting the press of the US, included Zia-ul Haq's statement that the USSR was seeking to break through to the Persian Gulf and to twist Pakistan's arm. Issue No. 46 reprinted a 'Novai Vakt' article which criticized people who regard the Soviet Army as a friend and liberator, and scared them and all left-wingers with the idea that the Soviet Army would spare neither them nor their families.

In 1981, much of the material in the periodical dealt with the Conference of the Non-aligned Countries and the UN on Afghanistan.

In 1980, the KR line in Pakistan carried out 12 Active Measures, including some to compromise 'LEO' and some involving the distribution of posters about the CIA. Use was made of a journey to Baluchistan by a US State Department official, the Consul in Karachi, and 'LEO,' where they supposedly had meetings with pro-separatist political leaders of that province. It was from there that the Americans organized the struggle against revolutionary reforms in neighboring Iran, promising in return to help that province to achieve autonomy.

A brief item in a local newspaper reporting that a policeman had stopped the motorcar of a member of the American Embassy was transformed by Chekist scribes into an incident of smuggling by the Americans and confirmation of their link with Pushtunist separatists.

At that time also, a scheme was devised to carry out an Active Measure through the 'loss' of a wallet belonging to a Secretary in the Political Section of the American Embassy. The wallet contained 'documents' of an anti-Pakistan nature. It was supposedly 'found' by a Pakistani in a public place and handed to a policeman. On 5 April 1980, the KGB-controlled 'Patriot' newspaper in Delhi published an article under the heading: 'The American cloak and dagger agency's war against Zia-ul Haq.' This mentioned the CIA's involvement in an anti-government officers plot.

On 4 April 1981, the same newspaper published an item headed 'Mutiny in Pakistani units: 7 executed'. This described disorders in regular Pakistani forces stationed in Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Karachi barracks. Contrary to the expectations of Service A of the KGB FCD, no news agency apart from

TASS reacted to this disinformation.

On 6 July 1981, a Soviet scholar and orientalist who was a KGB agent had a meeting with the Pakistani Chargé d'Affaires in the USSR. In a confidential conversation, he passed on the views of the competent agencies about the reaction of ruling and academic circles to the visit of Aga Shah, the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, to the US. Particular emphasis was given to the theme that the US assisted the Afghan rebels with arms sent through Pakistan; these arms were used not only to kill Afghans but also to kill Soviet citizens; the USSR would be forced, not to reduce, but instead to increase the scale of its military assistance. If Pakistan continued to act as an accomplice of American plans, particularly relating to the situation in Asia, the Soviet side would be unable to stand by idly in the face of such developments. The Charge defended the actions of his government, citing the impossibility of controlling the situation and activities in the Pushtun tribal areas.

"What are we to do?" asked the Chargé.

"I am not authorized and I cannot take decisions for the government of Pakistan, but I should like to draw attention to the matter so that you might give serious thought to the substance of our talk" the agent replied.

"But this is escalation of tensions!" the Chargé exclaimed.

"But is handing over American weapons to the bandits in order to kill Soviet citizens not escalation? Pakistan is being turned into the main base of bandit formations and the channel for the supply of arms! And the Soviet Union is to stand by quietly and watch this happen?" the agent objected.

The chargé concluded: "This information is important. Although I am reluctant to do so, I am compelled to report it to Islamabad."

When giving false information about Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan to the Iranian leadership, the Cheka<sup>8</sup> sought to convince the latter that if elements closely linked to the Americans came to power in Afghanistan, the Americans, in the course of their struggle with Khomeini, would actively use his own weapon - Islam - against him. He should therefore pay attention to the subversive activities of the real enemies of the new regime, namely the West and neighboring Arab countries.

In order to exacerbate Iranian-Pakistani relations and develop the Iranians' negative attitude towards Afghan emigration, use was made of information that, with the support and agreement of the local authorities, the CIA had set up special bases in Oman and in Pakistan to train armed formations and to send them into Iran to carry out counter-revolutionary and sabotage operations against the new regime. The training was conducted by CIA officers, former SAVAK agents and officers, and Afghan émigré organizations in Pakistan.

On 10 November 1980, an Iranian Parliamentary Deputy from the town of Zahedan [in southeastern Iran], made a speech in Parliament exposing the hostile activities of Pakistan, Oman and 'other puppet states in the region' against the Islamic Republic of Iran. He referred to facts in his pos-

session relating to 'the secret involvement of statesmen from so-called friendly Pakistan' in subversive actions against the Islamic regime. The deputy used KGB briefing for his speech and emphasized the part played by Afghan emigration in subversive activities from the territory of He urged the Iranian government to take steps to put a stop to such activities and to define the status of the Afghans on Iranian soil, as they are used for political purposes by forces hostile to Iran.

An Active Measure, code-named 'TOKSIK' [TOXIC], was designed to compromise Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan. It put forward the idea that the Afghan partisans' main problem was lack of funds. Therefore to balance their budget the refugees were extensively engaged in selling narcotics in the West.

In Bangladesh, in January-February 1980 alone, 56 items were planted on the Afghan theme; 12 editorials tending to justify the incursion of Soviet forces in Afghanistan were published. They pointed out that it was only in response to the undeclared war of imperialism against the 1979 Afghan Revolution that the USSR, bound by a friendship treaty with Afghanistan and responding to a request from its legitimate government, was compelled to take this step.

As these articles did not have the desired effect on public opinion and the majority condemned Soviet aggression, the Residency tried, through agents of influence in the parties, to turn the public's attention away from condemnation of the occupation of Afghanistan and towards exposure of the reactionary nature of US and Bangladesh policy, and the US interference in the affairs of Bangladesh. If this also had no effect, then in the light of the situation and of the public mood, the idea was put forward that condemnation of Soviet aggression in Afghanistan had to be balanced with simultaneous criticism of the schemes of American imperialism.

Through agents, covert action was taken in the Central Committee of the RKB, the SARKER wing of the CPB [Communist Party of Bangladesh] and the MOHI wing of the CPB to dampen anti-Soviet attitudes among party members and to turn their attention towards the activities of the US and the People's Republic of China in the northeastern states of India and China's intention to create a buffer state between India and China out of the Chittagong Hill District, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur.

Another argument was deployed: the Americans seek to get young people to focus on the events in Afghanistan in order to distract them and student organizations from their dangerous schemes in Iran which are designed to crush the Iranian Revolution. Leaflets and appeals on this theme were sent out to public organizations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan. Articles were printed in 'Gonokongh,' 'Jonpod,' 'Sansbad,' 'Notun Bangla,' 'Democrat.'

The following is one of the FCD Service A articles designed to be placed in the Bangladesh press:

[“]Despite their evident anti-Russian attitude, recently arrived refugees from Afghanistan say that the majority of the Afghan population is surprised by the correct behavior of the Soviet units, which in no way fits the conception of

how the occupation forces of a foreign power must behave. The impression is that the Russians are determined to make use in Afghanistan of the experience which they gained in the 1920s, when the Soviet regime was being established in the Muslim republics of Central Asia.

The situation in Soviet Central Asia at that time reminds one of the situation which developed in Afghanistan after the April 1978 Revolution: trouble among the frontier tribes, fierce opposition from the large feudal landowners, strong clerical influence over the illiterate peasant masses, active support for the opposition forces from abroad (Iran, PRC) with the active involvement by Britain.

The Russians at times displayed extraordinary flexibility and the ability to combine military and political methods, indeed giving priority to the latter. The presence of Russian military units in Afghanistan has had little effect on daily life. As a rule, they are located in positions far from large centers of population and they do everything possible not to attract the attention of local inhabitants. Evidently, officers and soldiers are forbidden to take leave or go out of their deployment area, or to have any contacts with the Afghan population.

From the Afghan refugees, it has become known that, before being sent to Afghanistan, the Russians were specially instructed not to do anything which might offend the religious feelings of the Muslims or anything contrary to the traditions of various national groups living in the country. Notably, every Soviet serviceman has a special guidance note on the rules of behavior which are to be observed in Afghanistan. It is categorically forbidden to engage in any discussion about religion with the believers; it is recommended to recognize the rule observed by all Afghans on the performance of five daily prayers and not to disturb those at prayer. In the presence of Muslims, it is strictly not allowed to consume substances forbidden in the Koran, and so on. The refugees state that the commanders of Soviet units have been warned that they would be severely punished if the conduct of their subordinates gives rise to justified discontent among the local population or undesirable complications in relations with local inhabitants. On occasions when the Afghans are in contact with the Russians or have an opportunity to observe the life of Soviet troops in military garrisons, they are struck by the modest and undemanding mode of life, not only of the soldiers but also of the officers, their unruffled calm and their discipline.[7]

In the framework of the 'TORKHAM' operation in 1981-1982, disinformation was regularly passed to the Iranian leadership about Pakistan's use of Afghan émigrés to pass arms to Baluchi and Arab separatists and to stir up mass disorders and anti-government incidents in the provinces of Khuzestan, Sistan and Baluchistan.

A leaflet in support of Afghanistan was disseminated, notionally by the organization of Iranian People's Wrestlers, calling for an end to Iran's and Pakistan's provocations against Afghanistan.

In the second half of May 1982, the 'ZAKHAR' leaflet

operation calling for the overthrow of Zia-ul Haq, was carried out in Pakistani Baluchistan. Through agents of the Afghan special agency SGI 990 leaflets were distributed. An SGI agent among the leaders of one of the Baluchi tribes got some of his trusted people to throw out the leaflets along the railway line to Zahedan, in the area between Quetta and the Iranian frontier, paying them in Iranian rials. The agent told those who were carrying out the task that he had been given the leaflets and the money by a 'friend' of his who was the leader of one of the Baluchi tribes in Iranian Sistan, warning them not to say anything of this to their Afghan friends. Another SGI agent, the leader of a small Feda group codenamed 'Mohammad Khano,' sent two of his trusted people to throw out leaflets in the Quetta-Sukkurt area. He gave Iranian rials for expenses and explained that he had taken this on 'at the request of an Iranian, in the clear expectation of earning further reward.' In this way, the cover story for the operation was watertight, even if the executants were detained, as they in fact could not add anything to the fictitious information which they had been given.

In 1980, the following numbers of KGB agents were involved in work against the Afghan emigration: in Pakistan - 8; in Bangladesh -6; in India -12; in Afghanistan -12.

In Britain the KGB was engaged in tracking down one of the leaders of the Pakistani emigration, and in France it was looking for a leader of the Baluchi emigration, with a view to making operational contact with him.

KGB Active Measures designed to impede the improvement of Pakistan- Indian relations contributed to the failure of the Pakistani leadership's attempts to improve relations with India and to reduce tension on the borders with India.

If this had been achieved, it would have enabled Pakistan to participate more freely in Afghan affairs and to carry out anti-Soviet actions on the international stage with regard to the USSR intervention in Afghan affairs. [Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammad] Dost's visit to Delhi in February 1981 [for the 9- 13 February Conference of the Non- Aligned Movement] ended in failure; [Indian Foreign Minister P.V. Nara Simha] Rao's visit to Islamabad in June of the same year did not yield any results. It was important to convince Indian politicians that Pakistan's desire to improve relations with India was only a tactical maneuver, an attempt to gain time in order to rearm and exploit the expected destabilization process in India, and solve the Kashmir issue.

A document notionally entitled 'The Haig Memorandum' was produced. Its main elements were as follows:

- [“] The US considers that Pakistan must be a bastion of the free world on the borders of Iran, the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Indian Ocean, in order to block India's ambitious claims to the leading role in the Indian Ocean.
- The US is ready to help Pakistan to build its Navy (lending it 1 or 2 aircraft carriers), naval bases at Gwadar, and extend anchorages in Karachi harbor.
- The Reagan administration welcomes Zia-ul Haq's at-

tempts to create the appearance of good will towards India, but there can be no illusion about the fact that while Iudiva Gandhi remains in power, Delhi is bound to follow the Soviet political line.

- Consequently, there must be no let-up in joint efforts in the Washington-Peking-Islamabad triangle to destabilize the Indian government.
- The US is prepared to consider Pakistan's request for the supply of AWACS [Airborne Warning and Control System] aircraft for use along the border with India, subject to the subsequent equitable sharing of the data acquired between the US, China and Pakistan.[“]

The KGB Residency in Delhi noted that, at the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Non-aligned Movement in Delhi on 9-13 February 1981, the right wing of the Movement attempted to give the Conference an anti-Soviet slant, artificially whipping up the Afghan and Kampuchean issues. [“]An attempt was made to discredit the thesis that the countries of socialism are the natural allies of the Non-aligned Movement; a slogan proclaimed that the Non-aligned countries have no natural allies, but there are natural enemies – neo-colonization, racism, imperialism and hegemonism. Yugoslavia and North Korea sided with the right wing. The only truly combative progressive forces in the Non-aligned Movement were Cuba and Vietnam. The right wing managed to drag into the text of the Declaration a statement on the need to withdraw foreign forces from Afghanistan (admittedly, without referring to ‘Soviet’ forces). Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia and the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen were ill-prepared and did not display a combative spirit.[”]

The KGB Resident in Delhi, Prokhorov,<sup>9</sup> put forward proposals for Active Measures on his own initiative (in his telegram No 1669 of 5 May 1981). These led to the following sinister conclusion: in order to keep the Babrak Karmal regime in power in Afghanistan, a war between India and Pakistan would be advantageous for the Soviet Union, and they must be steered in that direction. The Department not only failed to rebuke its Resident for his levity, but instead asked Service A, Service 1, and the geographical departments of the KGB FCD and the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their views on the Resident’s proposals.

Any initiative by an operational officer relating to Active Measures was encouraged. The Resident’s approach to the subject was later reflected in requests sent out by the Center to its Residencies in Tehran and Islamabad. Service A asked for their views on the exacerbation of Iran-Pakistan relations. A telegram addressed to Shabrov in Tehran asked him to ‘state his views on existing irritants in Iran-Pakistan relations which could be worked on to lead to an acute worsening of relation between Iran and Pakistan, even to the extent of causing open hostilities against each other.’ The telegram was signed by the Head of Department, Major-General M. K. Polonik. On 12 January 1982, a similar request addressed to Islamabad was signed by the Head of the 17<sup>th</sup> Department,

Major-General Nikishchov (workname: Mishin). This invited suggestions ‘on sensitive points in relations between Pakistan and Iran which could be worked on to lead to an acute worsening of relations between them, even to the extent of causing open hostilities against each other, and which would contribute to achieving the aims of our Service in this region.’

Both telegrams were drafted by Aleksin, a Service A officer.

Through their agents, the KGB Residencies in Delhi and Colombo established channels for conveying FCD Service A information directly to highly-placed officials in India. In Delhi, a reliable agent (codenamed ‘VANO’), who was a journalist, passed information to the Prime Minister, I. Gandhi.

In September 1981, he was sent to Pakistan. Service A prepared themes on the Afghan issue for him, which he was to convey to representatives of the Pakistan administration, and, on his return, convey to the Indian leadership and publish in the Indian press. The Center allowed for the fact that the information might be amended and include some corrections in the light of the results of the agent’s visit, but in any case it had to look like personal impressions and take account of the Indian leadership’s loathing of the Pakistani administration, and of Zia-ul Haq in particular. In his published work, the agent was to stick to more careful and balanced formulations, in order not to rule out the possibility of visiting Pakistan again in the future.

On his return from Pakistan in October, the agent had a meeting with Gandhi and expounded to her the KGB themes on Afghanistan:

[“] From what the Pakistani leadership says, one can see that the presence of the so-called Afghan refugees is useful to the Zia-ul Haq administration, as it enables it to seek additional material and military assistance from the US, China, Saudi Arabia and certain other countries. However, the Afghan refugees are also a source of additional tension for Islamabad, as the indigenous inhabitants of Pakistan are certainly not indifferent to who uses their pasture lands, their water and their grain. In the view of some of the military, there will be continuing tension on the Pakistan-Afghan frontier until such time as Pakistan finally achieves the reorganization of its army and its complete rearmament. There are indications that as early as January 1982 the US will hand over to Islamabad the first batch of F-16 aircraft and patrol boats equipped with M-113 ‘Hawk’ missiles. Thus one can suppose that the tempo and nature of rearmament are designed to speed up the militarization of the country and its conversion into an aggressive state, serving the interests of the US, China and reactionary Islamic regimes...[”]

In Colombo, an agent of the Residency among Sri Lankan journalists had access to the Indian High Commissioner in

Sri Lanka, T. Sri Abraham. He passed on to Abraham information supplied by Service A of the FCD, and the latter expressed unflinching interest in this. Thus, at a regular meeting on 10 January 1981, the agent passed on information on a US plan covering a 20-year period to establish its domination in the Indian Ocean to the detriment of India's interests. Abraham said that he would discuss this information with E. Gonsalvez, the Secretary of the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who was due to visit Sri Lanka on 12 January.

Conveying information in this manner is termed 'the method of special positive influence.' It involves passing slanted information of various kinds and content, and disinformation, in conversations designed to influence governments, parties, individual political, public and state personalities, through agents, foreign confidential contacts, intelligence officers, and agents or cooptees of Soviet nationality. 'Special positive influence' presupposes continuous work for the purpose, constant study of its results and of the reaction to the measures which are taken.

The KGB carried out Active Measures jointly with the Hungarians, who were in operational contact with a prominent Indian journalist in Vienna; they supplied him with KGB disinformation materials, which he published in the press under his own name.

Another agent of the Hungarians, codenamed 'OTTO PALMA,' was used to convey slanted information to government circles of Western countries. Service A themes were sent to the Head of the Disinformation Department of Hungarian Intelligence, Josan, for action.

KGB Residencies in Pakistan, India, and Iran were instructed to react to any press reports of gastric diseases and to inform the Center with a view to discrediting the US as part of a complex Active Measure codenamed 'TARAKANY' [Cockroaches]. This was designed to discredit the American bacteriological laboratory attached to the Lahore medical centre and its personnel, and was a continuation of the operation to compromise the US and NATO over chemical and bacteriological weapons. In 1980-82, items appeared from time to time in the press of India, Iran, Bangladesh, and Lebanon, alleging that preparations were in hand in Pakistan for bacteriological warfare and subversion against Afghanistan, Iran and India, with the involvement of American specialists. ["Cases of intestinal diseases in humans in the area of Pishin, Surkhab, Muslimbagh and adjacent districts of Afghanistan, and of cattle plague and infectious diseases in Western districts of India (in the states of Punjab, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, and Rajasthan) were caused by the migration from Pakistan of people and animals infected by American specialists. Through the seasonal- and often encouraged - migration of cattle-raising tribes from Pakistan to Afghanistan, Iran, and India, carriers of new types of mass infection could be infiltrated into these territories; this, according to the schemes of the Americans and Pakistanis, would promote anxiety, chaos and disorders in these countries."]

["In Iran, a rumor was spread that in Pakistan the Americans were using fellow Shiites as guinea pigs to study

the effects of new chemical and bacteriological products on humans, as a result of which many either died or were crippled. The Pakistani regime's decision to allow the Americans to conduct such experiments on human subjects was evidence that the Pakistani leadership was conscious of the danger which the local Shiites represented, and therefore decided to rid itself of a potential internal enemy."]

["In these same countries, steps were taken to inspire applications to the World Health Organization, urging it to set up a commission to investigate the activities of American specialists who had turned Pakistan into a testing ground for experiments on human subjects and animals, using products which were part of the chemical and bacteriological arsenal."]

["In Kabul, there were press, radio and television references to the exploitation of Pakistan's territory to conduct dangerous experiments to develop methods of bacteriological warfare against Afghanistan, Iran, and India."]

["In Dakha, a number of newspaper articles demanded an investigation into the true nature of experiments conducted by American specialists in the country, under the aegis of the International Center for the Study of Intestinal Diseases and in cholera hospitals in Dakha and other cities."]

The KGB succeeded to mold public opinion against the American bacteriological services in these countries. The head of the bacteriological laboratory was expelled from Pakistan. The Indian government cancelled a joint Indo-American commission on healthcare and an Asian conference on intestinal diseases which were to take place in India.

The Karachi 'Daily News' of 11 February 1982 printed a report from its Washington correspondent about the Pakistani authorities' expulsion of an American, Dr. David Nelin, the leader of a group of scientists from Maryland University attached to the Lahore medical center. Nelin stated that his expulsion was the result of intrigues by his Pakistani colleagues. The American said that his ill-wishers included Professor Aslam Khan and Brigadier M A Choudri. The KGB instigated the dispatch of protest letters to World Health Organization headquarters ostensibly from Pakistani medical scholars, and anti-American articles with fierce condemnations were planted in many countries.

In February 1982, the Soviet 'Literary Gazette' published an article by I. Andropov under the heading: 'An incubator of death.' This replayed KGB disinformation materials about the Lahore research center.

'Pravda' of 27 February 1982 reported that the Indian authorities had cancelled a meeting of the joint Indo-American commission on health care and the Asian conference on intestinal diseases. It linked this with facts about the activities of American specialists in Pakistan and Bangladesh who were studying the effects of new products and conducting experiments related to the development of biological weapons. According to the 'Patriot' newspaper, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs intended to hold an investigation into the activities of American scientists and doctors in India. The Bangladesh authorities were also thinking of examining what the so-called international research institutes, such as the

one headed by Dr. Nelin in Lahore, were up to in the country. (Note: 'Patriot', a weekly journal, was controlled by the KGB Residency in Delhi.)

The Pakistani newspaper 'Dawn' of 23 February 1982 reported a meeting between representatives of the US's National Health Institute, Paul Ahmed and Douglas William, and Pakistan's Minister of Health, Dr. Nasiruddin Jomezai.

This led to the production of the following press release:

[“]In connection with the expulsion from Pakistan of Dr D. Nelin for conducting dangerous experiments on the spread of infectious diseases, an American medical delegation has gone urgently to Islamabad in order to hush up the scandal which has blown up unexpectedly over the Lahore medical research center and to put pressure on Pakistan not to disclose what researches are carried out by the Center. The American delegation is headed by Paul Ahmed and Douglas William. The sudden appearance in Pakistan of a group of American medical specialists provides confirmation that Washington fears that their dangerous experiments with new biological components of weapons of mass destruction will be exposed, and it confirms the conclusion that Pakistan intends to allow the Americans to continue their dangerous experiments, in view of the probable use of the new weapons against India, Iran and Afghanistan.[”]

In May 1982 reports date-lined Islamabad appeared in the Indian press about the deployment of American chemical and bacteriological weapons in Pakistan.

“According to information obtained from local military sources, chemical reagents have recently been brought to Pakistan from American chemical weapon arsenals located on Johnston Atoll in the Pacific Ocean and in Japan; these are to be stored in areas close to Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar. As for the characteristics of these reagents, according to the sources they are similar to those used previously by the Americans during the Vietnam war. According to the same sources, the build-up of US chemical and bacteriological stocks in Pakistan is designed for potential use by American rapid deployment forces in the broad region of South and South-west Asia.

An understanding between Washington and Islamabad on the production of chemical and bacteriological weapons on the territory of Pakistan was reached as far back as August 1980, when the agreement on the activities of the American bacteriological service in Pakistan was officially extended. Item 2 of Article 5 of that agreement in particular gives the Americans the right, through the US's International Development Agency (USAID), to review the results of the work periodically and to put forward proposals for its modification. In practice, this means that the Americans exercise complete control over all aspects of research in Pakistan on the development of new types of chemical, bacteriological and biological weapons. This formulation gives the US the possi-

bility of determining unilaterally that it is essential to stock up and use chemical reagents on Pakistan territory. Clear confirmation of this can be found in the widely known facts relating to the activities of the Lahore Medical Centre, where American specialists were engaged in developing new forms of bacteriological and chemical weapons.”

Published items of this kind were picked up by TASS and reprinted in the Soviet press; the press cuttings were filed with the original disinformation material. To some extent they eclipsed reports in the Western press about the Soviet Army's use of chemical weapons against the Afghan people. The Soviet propaganda services denied such reports, attributed their publication to American pressure on the Western press, and blamed the Americans for the use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan.

The KGB Resident in Pakistan, Akim, was awarded a testimonial by KGB Chairman Yuri Andropov for the 'TARAKANY' Active Measure.

The Active Measures work of the KGB Colombo Residency in 1977-81, and that of the Resident, Grinevich, himself won a positive assessment: the Resident made skillful use of intelligence means and methods, the whole operational staff of the Residency was involved, and the output of agents was substantial. The 'Lanka Guardian' and 'Tribune,' periodicals controlled by the Residency, won high praise.

In 1980, the KGB leadership was told of 13 Active Measures carried out by the Residency. A complex operation to strengthen the international standing of the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan [DRA] and to develop a positive attitude to the work of Karmal within the Sri Lankan government and public won approval. The operations helped to moderate criticism of the USSR by Sri Lankan representatives and by the press with regard to the incursion of Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

In 1980, 5,000 leaflets were disseminated in Colombo in the name of a fictitious organization, the 'Union of Muslim Youth,' in support of the Karmal government and condemning the actions of the US and the PRC against the DRA. The same aim was pursued through meetings, seminars, resolutions and conversations of influence.

Through the possibilities of the 'Sutra' Agency, a session of the Sri Lankan National Center of the Asian Buddhist Peace Congress (ABPC) was arranged to condemn the policy of China and Pakistan, and to press for a nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

Arrangements were made for sending letters of protest to the PRC Embassy, for an operation codenamed 'OMICRON' against the Chinese in Sri Lanka, for leaflets exacerbating the schism between Albania and China, for anti-American posters, and appeals in favor of establishing a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean.

With the help of agents, a Sri Lanka-Afghanistan Solidarity Committee was set up: this was used to organize mass meetings in towns to condemn interference by the US, the PRC and Pakistan in the affairs of the DRA, and to support the revolutionary reforms in that country. It also organized



letters of protest to President Zia-ul Haq and to the Pakistan government's daily newspaper 'Dawn.' The letters condemned the CIA's activities in Pakistan and interference by the US and China in the affairs of Afghanistan.

[“]In Colombo and Kandy, seminars were held to criticize interference by imperialist forces in Afghanistan; many slanted conversations were held in the entourage of President J.R. Jayewardene and Prime Minister Ranasinha Premadasa, in leading circles of the ruling Party and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the criminal activities of mercenary groups sent into Afghanistan from neighboring countries. Conversations of influence were held among political, state and public figures in Sri Lanka with the aim of influencing the position of Jayewardene towards Afghanistan and the surrounding area. Through agents, influence was exerted on trade union and religious organisations to induce them to adopt resolutions and declarations expressing support for the USSR's policy in Afghanistan. Favourable articles on the Afghan issue, based on briefing from Service A of the KGB FCD, were printed in the 'Tribune', the 'Lanka Guardian' and the bulletin of the Sri Lankan Centre of the Asian Buddhist Peace Congress.[”]

In June 1980, the following disinformation was conveyed to Pakistani diplomats in Colombo:

[“]In the view of French diplomats, Zia-ul Haq's policy towards Afghanistan amounts to laying dangerously with fire. Further delay in establishing direct contacts with the new regime in Kabul will have tragic consequences in Islamabad. India views Zia-ul Haq's policy of playing a leading role in the Muslim world with suspicion, and will not put obstacles to a change of regime in Pakistan. The US no longer believes in the durability of the government and seeks to establish undeclared contacts with the opposition.[”]

[“]At the same time, it was suggested to Pakistanis in Delhi that there was a real possibility of normalizing relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan on the so-called Durand line frontier, and that by delaying normalization Pakistan was

missing a favorable opportunity.[”]

[“]Taken together, this all moderated the negative attitude of Sri Lankan representatives and the press towards the actions of the USSR and of its forces in Afghanistan; it helped to raise the interest of government and political circles in the country towards Soviet proposals for settling the situation in Afghanistan and the South-west region of Asia.[”]

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> New York: Basic Books, 1999. See the report by the British Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee, *The Mitrokhin Inquiry Report* (London, June 2000).

<sup>2</sup> Available at <http://cwihip.si.edu>.

<sup>3</sup> *The Sword and the Shield*, pp. 6-8.

<sup>4</sup> Letter from Vasilii Mitrokhin to editor, July 2000.

<sup>5</sup> For Soviet and other East-bloc documentation on the Soviet war in Afghanistan see CWIHP *e-Dossier No. 4: Documents on the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan*, <http://cwihip.si.edu/>; as well as: CWIHP *Bulletin 3* (Fall 1993), pp. 67-69; CWIHP *Bulletin 4* (Fall 1994), pp. 70-75; CWIHP *Bulletin 8/9* (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 124-127, 133-137, 145-184.

<sup>6</sup> *Editor's Note*: Baluchi, also spelled Balochi or Beluchi, group of tribes speaking the Baluchi language and estimated at about 4,800,000 inhabitants in the province of Baluchistan in Pakistan and also neighboring areas of Iran, Afghanistan, Bahrain, and Punjab (India). See "Balochi," *Encyclopædia Britannica* (2004), <http://www.britannica.com>.

<sup>7</sup> Pushtun, or Pakhtun, Hindustani Pathan, Persian Afghan Pashto-speaking people of southeastern Afghanistan and northwestern Pakistan. See "Pushtun," *Encyclopædia Britannica* (2004), <http://www.britannica.com>.

<sup>8</sup> Name of early Soviet secret police agency and a forerunner of the KGB.

<sup>9</sup> Prokhorov was the work name of Gennadiy Afanasyevich Vaumin, the Resident in Delhi, later head of the 17<sup>th</sup> Department of the FCD, with the rank of Major-General.

## Cold War Memory: Interpreting the Physical Legacy of the Cold War

On 8 and 9 September 2003, the Cold War International History Project hosted a pioneering international conference on Cold War commemorative efforts. The meeting was co-sponsored by the Association of Air Force Missileers, the Cold War Museum, the German Historical Institute (Washington, DC), the Harry S. Truman Library, the Kennan Institute; in cooperation with the Norwegian Aviation Museum, the Eisenhower Foundation and Eisenhower Presidential Library, and the National Coalition for History; and with generous financial support from the Boeing Company.

The principle objective of the conference was to foster a dialogue among scholars and those charged with interpreting the physical legacy of the Cold War in the United States and abroad. The conference brought together about one hundred cultural resource specialists, leading international scholars, Cold War veterans, media and foundation representatives, government officials, and other professionals from the U.S. and abroad. For additional information, visit the CWIHP website at <http://cwihip.si.edu>.

# Why Was There No “Second Cold War” in Europe? Hungary and the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979: Documents from the Hungarian Archives

By Csaba Békés

“Our friends will naturally also understand that the development of events did not make a preliminary exchange of opinions possible for us.” This was the closing sentence of the highly confidential communication on the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan forwarded to the Hungarian party leadership by Soviet Ambassador Vladimir Pavlov on 28 December 1979 (Document No.3). Although the Hungarian “friends” never made it public, they did not at all understand why they had to learn about an event of such importance from regular news broadcasts and papers instead of directly from their Soviet “friends.”

In fact, after the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis the invasion of Afghanistan was the first and only case when the East European allies had been faced with a *fait accompli* by Moscow in which it had taken an unexpected step in a serious international crisis situation without either informing them or consulting with them first. Even back in 1962, the Hungarian leadership had been rather upset about that humiliating situation. János Kádár, first secretary of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (HWSP), had not hidden his frustration when, during a meeting with Khrushchev in July 1963 he warned: “the point is that there should not occur such a situation when the Soviet government publishes various declarations and the other governments read them in the newspaper (...) I have thought of preliminary consultation (...) according to our experiences it is better to quarrel before than after the events.” In order to avoid similar situations and to compel Moscow to inform its allies regularly about its intentions Kádár suggested the establishment of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>1</sup>

Although the proposal was turned down on the spot, from early 1964 on, at Soviet initiative, the deputy foreign ministers of the Warsaw Pact member states began to meet regularly, several times a year. Other fora of consultation developed gradually as well and eventually a more or less working mechanism emerged whereby Moscow regularly informed its East European allies at the meetings of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee (after 1956), the Warsaw Pact Council of Defense Ministers (after 1969) and the Council of Foreign Ministers (after 1976) about important international issues. In addition, consultations among the ruling parties’ Central Committee secretaries for international relations regularly took place beginning in the late 1960s.

The history of crises inside the Soviet bloc had also shown to the Hungarian leaders that it was not impossible for Moscow to consult with its allies even at very short notice. Just before crushing the Hungarian Revolution in 1956,

Khrushchev and his comrades had personally visited with the leaders of five countries (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Yugoslavia) in the course of only two days.<sup>2</sup> Additionally the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 had been preceded by six months of very intensive bilateral and multilateral consultations. That precedent was especially memorable for the Hungarian leadership since Kádár had personally played an important role in mediating between the Soviet and Czechoslovak leaders.<sup>3</sup> During the Vietnam War, too, the Soviet Union regularly informed its East European allies about its current position. The CSCE process, starting in 1969 and culminating in the Helsinki Agreement in 1975, produced long and intense cooperation on and the harmonization of a joint position of the Soviet bloc. In the success of that process the East European countries had played a key role that was unprecedented in the bloc’s history.

In the case of Afghanistan, the Soviets regularly provided confidential information to their allies after the “Saur Revolution” in April 1978 (Documents No.1 and 2). To Hungarian leaders this as well suggested that they were taken seriously by Moscow and they had every reason to believe that no important step, such as an invasion of Afghanistan, would take place without Moscow holding preliminary consultations with the members of the alliance. We now know that the CPSU Politburo decision on the invasion was taken on 12 December, so in fact there was sufficient time for such consultations before military operations began.<sup>4</sup>

Since Hungary was a solid member of the group of “closely cooperating socialist countries” (the Warsaw Pact members minus Romania) there was nothing much Hungarian leaders could do other than accept the Soviet explanation and follow the general propaganda line of the bloc. Initially this did not seem to cause too much trouble for Hungary, as the country’s main concern was to maintain its good political and economic relations with the West, especially with Western Europe, relations which had been improving since the mid-seventies. Although the harsh American reaction against the invasion fostered concern about the future of East-West relations, for the Hungarian leaders it was reassuring that both the Soviet leadership (Brezhnev’s speech on 16 January 1980) and key politicians in Western Europe made it clear that there was a strong joint interest in maintaining the results of détente. Therefore it came as a real shock for the Hungarian leadership when the Soviets “requested” in late January 1980 that Hungary freeze its high-level contacts with the West. This unexpected Soviet move was motivated by Moscow’s new attitude towards the international crisis. Moscow had

expected a certain amount of initial criticism from the West but counted on the *fait accompli* being accepted by the world that after a short period of time. Brezhnev had hoped that the crucial matter of maintaining détente would override the problem of Afghanistan. However, after the surprisingly harsh US reaction was made public, Moscow took offense and decided to take counter-measures. Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR were ordered to cancel imminent high-level talks with Western politicians.<sup>5</sup>

The Soviet request created a very serious clash of interest between the Soviet Union and the East European Communist countries since all of these countries were, albeit to different degrees, interested in further developing their relations with Western Europe. In the case of Hungary, the Soviets asked that the visit of the Hungarian foreign minister to Bonn, due to occur in less than a week, be cancelled and that, similarly, the trip by a delegation of the Hungarian parliament to the United States be put off. At the 29 January meeting of the HSWP Political Committee, one of the most dramatic ones in the history of this body, the Hungarian leadership came the closest ever to making a political decision to defy openly Soviet will. During a heated debate, several HSWP Politburo members proposed that the Soviet request should be disregarded due to the extremely short notice and the country's economic interests; there seemed to be a clear majority for this position.<sup>6</sup> It was Kádár's dramatic intervention that prevented the Political Committee from making an "irresponsible" decision. In a rather confused speech he argued that they had to choose between two bad options and declared that the visits had to be cancelled. He also warned the Political Committee that Hungary would, in fact, not lose anything by obeying Moscow (except for that he, Kádár, "would be called a Soviet satellite" in the West). By contrast, there was much to lose by undermining the confidence of the Kremlin leaders. In order to enlighten those who might have had any illusions concerning the nature of the Soviet request, he added: "... what do you think, how long will they be polite to us? Why with us, (...) excuse me for the phrase, with our lousy life and country, (...) how long will they behave politely towards us?"

Eventually the visits were cancelled but, paradoxically, the humiliation that Kádár "suffered" had positive effects. At the same Political Committee session it was also decided that Moscow should be asked to urgently hold a multilateral consultative meeting regarding the impact of Afghanistan on East-West relations. A special envoy, Central Committee Secretary for Foreign Affairs András Gyenes, was immediately sent to Moscow for personal consultation. Kádár himself sent a letter to Brezhnev,<sup>7</sup> arguing that in the present situation the allies had to be consulted regularly on the joint Soviet bloc policy and that the results of détente had to be preserved. This was possible only by maintaining and strengthening the relations of the East European countries with Western Europe. Only in this way could US influence over those countries be warded off.

Moscow accepted the Hungarian proposal. A meeting of the Central Committee secretaries for international rela-

tions of the *closely cooperating socialist countries* took place on 26 February 1980 in Moscow (Document No. 5). At the conference Boris Ponomarev, CPSU Central Committee secretary for international relations, adopted and put forward the Hungarian position *as the current CPSU line*, emphasizing that "the socialist countries should make maximum use of the possibilities contained in existing relations with the Western European countries to counter-balance the United States' foreign policy line" (Document No. 6).

The decision was a significant achievement for Hungarian diplomacy, not in the least because Hungary received the green light to its preserve and even enhance Western relations. Kádár's personal intervention had in fact helped the liberal forces to overcome the hardliners within the Soviet leadership (Document No. 6). This, in turn, contributed to avoiding any further deterioration of East-West relations similar to what happened following the invasion of Afghanistan. It is one possible reason why no "Second Cold War" developed in Europe.

For Hungary, in fact, the period between the invasion of Afghanistan and the rise of Gorbachev in 1985 was rather dynamic and fruitful in the foreign policy arena. Hungary was able to join the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in 1982. As early as 1981 exploratory talks were underway concerning a potential agreement with the European Economic Community. (These discussions eventually failed due to West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's concerns about the potential negative effect of such a step on the Federal Republic's relationship with the Soviet Union.)<sup>8</sup> Moreover, high-level relations with Western countries had intensified during this period. Kádár paid visits to Bonn and Rome in 1977, to Paris in 1978, to Bonn again in 1982, and to London in 1985. Hungary, in turn, received French Prime Minister Raymond Barre in 1977, and was visited by Schmidt in 1979, French President Francois Mitterand in 1982, US Vice-President George Bush in 1983, and Schmidt's successor Helmut Kohl, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi in 1984. As Poland lost the goodwill of many in the West after the introduction of martial law in December 1981 and Romania fell out of favor over its increasingly repressive internal policies, Hungary took on the lead role in promoting East-West dialogue. Only after Gorbachev entered the scene did the situation change: Moscow itself seized the role as the principal proponent of improved East-West relations. Even with its moderating influence on East bloc policy, Hungary now fell back to playing second fiddle.<sup>9</sup>

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**DOCUMENT No. 1**  
**Soviet Communication to the Hungarian**  
**Leadership on the Situation in Afghanistan,**  
**17 October 1978**

[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f. 11/4377.õ.e Translated for  
 CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]

TOP SECRET!  
 Budapest, 17 Oct. 1978

BULLETIN

On 16 October 1978, [Central Committee (CC) Secretary for International Relations] Comrade András Gyenes received Comrade Vladimir Pavlov, the Soviet Union's ambassador to Hungary, at his request. Pavlov who gave the following oral information in the name of the CPSU Central Committee:

“On behalf of the CPSU Central Committee, between 25 and 27 September this year, B. N. Ponomarev, candidate member of the CPSU CC Political Committee and secretary of the CC, stayed in Kabul to carry on talks with the leaders of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan about some questions concerning the political situation of the country and Soviet-Afghan relations. He met Noor Mohammad Taraki, secretary-general of the PDPA, president of the Revolutionary Council and Hafizullah Amin, secretary of the PDPA, vice-premier and minister of foreign affairs.

The main purpose of the trip was to prevent [the continuation of] those tremendous mass reprisals that, after the Afghan revolution, were also aimed against the Parcham group<sup>10</sup> who participated in overthrowing the despotic system.

During the talks we placed special emphasis on these unjustified reprisals. In connection with this, we pointed to the fact that we did so because we had brotherly concerns about the question of the Afghan revolution, even more so as since aspects of the development of events in Afghanistan might affect the Soviet Union and the CPSU as well.

After being the first to recognize the new system in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union expressed its solidarity with Afghanistan before the whole world. This point of view was newly confirmed at the highest level in [CPSU General Secretary] L. I. Brezhnev's speech given in Baku. It is widely known that we provide extensive support and aid to the new leadership. Under such circumstances, both within Afghanistan and over her borders, hostile propaganda is aimed at showing that any development of events within Afghanistan, especially their negative aspects, are directly or indirectly related to the Soviet Union.

We drew the Afghan leadership's attention to the fact that the reprisals had reached massive proportions in the past period, [that] they were carried out without complying with the law, and not only against the class enemies of the new system (“Muslim brothers,” the supporters of the mon-

archy, etc.) but also against people who could be used in the interest of the revolution. This caused dissatisfaction among the population, undermined the prestige of the revolutionary leadership and would lead to the weakening of the new system.

Our opinion was listened to with great attention but noticeable tension. Without questioning it directly, the Afghan leaders tried to justify their politics with the anti-governmental activity of Parchamists.

“We—said Taraki—had no confidence in Parcham even before the revolution, the union with them was only *pro forma*. In reality they did not participate in the armed uprising. But after the revolution, the leader of the Parchamists, B. Karmal demanded that the leading posts in ministries and other organizations should be divided equally. He strove to assume a leading role in party-building. He stated, ‘The army is in your hands, give us party matters.’ Besides, when we rejected his demands, he threatened us with the outbreak of an uprising. We had only one alternative in this situation: either them or us.”

Besides this, N. Taraki tried to prove that the measures taken against the “Parcham” leaders did not have a negative impact on the masses. The people of Afghanistan support the new system and the PDPA Khalq leadership. The leaders of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the government of the Democratic Republic and of the Revolutionary Council—said Taraki—completely understand the worries of the CPSU CC, but they guarantee that the latest events in the country will not disturb the further development of the Afghan revolution and the consolidation of the people's democratic system.

We paid special attention to the questions of party-building, the work of the People's Democratic Party, the direction of the country and the masses. We emphasized the necessity of setting up and strengthening the party on the whole territory of the country, the normalization of the work of the higher and lower level party organizations without delay, setting up the power organs of the people and the need for greater attention to economic issues. The masses must experience in their own lives the real achievements of the revolution. Therefore the improvement of people's lives must be a first rank issue of the new power.

Consistently we moved to the fore the idea that the main tasks were strengthening the people's democratic system, a well-balanced and flexible policy which would isolate the counter-revolution from the people and deprive it of the opportunity to misuse the backwardness of the masses. For the short period of time following the creation of the new system, important measures had been taken to the benefit of the people. At the same time the immense creative possibilities of the Afghan revolution had to be discovered to a greater extent and should be put into practice.

During the meetings, the Afghan party mentioned briefly the question of the relations between Afghanistan and the imperialist countries. “Imperialism”—said Taraki—“puts many hurdles in our way, among others, ‘soft’ methods. The West and the Americans unequivocally strive to divert us

from the chosen path with economic help. At present we do not intend to [act so as to create a] deteriorat[ion] in our relations with the West, although we understand that their offers are not unselfish at all." From the Soviet side, we have underlined we must not allow the West to trap us.

With reference to the Chinese question, N. Taraki by all means disapproved of the Maoist leadership and their activity, remarking that the leaders of China allied themselves with the enemies of communism. The People's Democratic Party has cleared the army and the state apparatus of Maoist elements.

The meetings with Taraki and Amin made the impression that the persecution of Parchamists was mainly motivated by a fight for position and personal antipathy. At the same time, it was clear that the Afghan leadership did not fully understand the negative influence of reprisals on the general situation of the country and the mood of the army and the party.

The talks were carried on in a comradely atmosphere. The generally warm welcome, the attention devoted to the position of the CPSU CC, the readiness to discuss even the most delicate questions with us is witness to the fact that they considered friendship with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries to be of great importance. Taraki requested us to deliver to the CPSU Central Committee [the message]: Afghanistan will always be on the Soviet Union's side together with the socialist countries.

The CPSU Central Committee thinks that, during their further activities, the Afghans will consider our opinion, although—naturally—only the future will tell. Based on our information, repressive actions are being relaxed, and the process of partial rehabilitation of the leaders of the Parcham group has started."

Budapest, 17 October 1978



**DOCUMENT No. 2**  
**Soviet Communication to the Hungarian**  
**Leadership on the Situation in Afghanistan,**  
**28 March 1979**

*[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f. 11/4380.õ.e Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]*

Budapest, 28 March 1979

BULLETIN

On 27 March, [Head of the CC Department for International Affairs] Comrade János Berecz received Comrade Vladimir Pavlov, the Soviet Union's ambassador to Hungary at his request, who gave the following oral information on behalf of the CPSU Central Committee:

"In the past months in Afghanistan the internal political situation has become strained. Counter-revolutionary reactions, which have become stronger and are actively supported and helped by the special services of imperialist powers like China, Pakistan and Iran. The strained internal political situation has been caused by the increasing opposition of the exploiting classes and the reactionary circles [that are] of the Muslim religion. In their activity against the people's democratic government, the Afghan counter-revolutionaries make use of the conservative and reactionary traditions of Islam, the influence of tribal leaders, the deepening class conflicts coming to the surface because of the land reform, the economic difficulties, the lack of experience of party cadres and certain mistakes of the Afghan revolutionary power.

The program of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan is aimed at wide social-economic changes in the interest of the working masses, at the same time, in practice, they are only in the beginning phase of realization. The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan has not yet become a mass party and it has also been weakened by internal conflicts for a long time.

The Afghan leadership has abused its position both in the solution of party and state questions, because it has not only taken repressive measures against the obvious enemies of the republic but also against those hesitating as well, especially the intelligentsia. According to all indications, dissatisfaction affects the army as well, which has always been the main supporter of the fight against the counter-revolutionary forces.

Recently the Afghan reactionary forces have organized armed actions with foreign support. They have managed to draw one part of the population and a unit of the army to their side in the town of Herat. Order was restored in the town on 20 March.

The most active counter-revolutionary force is the organization of "Muslim Brothers," headquartered on Pakistani territory and which has wide-ranging support within the Pakistani government. From Pakistan, Iran, and China an enraged propaganda campaign is aimed at democratic Afghanistan and its government. From Pakistani territory armed subversion units are infiltrated to Afghanistan, they call upon the people to start a "holy war," [carry out] acts of sabotage, and start an armed mass uprising against the government.

Reactionary groups of the Shiite Muslim religion participate in the anti-governmental movement as well. Also a Maoist clique participates in it, many of whose members have received special training in China, and have been deployed in Afghanistan to execute diversionary and terrorist actions with the support of the Chinese authorities.

The Soviet Union has provided wide-ranging political and financial support to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, including [helping her to] consolidate her armed forces and does so even more in the present complicated situation. The Soviet press, the radio and the television reveal to a great extent the intrigues of internal and external reactionary forces [who are fighting] against the revolutionary government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and [the

Soviet Union] fight[s] for the consolidation of the new revolutionary system.

As far as we are concerned, we have drawn the attention of the leaders of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan several times—moreover at the highest level as well—to the mistakes of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the government.

The CPSU Central Committee expresses its hope that friendly countries will also take the necessary steps to provide aid and support to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in this hard period.”



**DOCUMENT No. 3**  
**Soviet Communication to the Hungarian Leadership on the Events in Afghanistan, 28 December 1979**

[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f. 5./ 790.ő.e Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS’ PARTY  
 CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TOP SECRET!

Written in one copy  
 Budapest, 28 Dec. 1979  
 Seen by [First Secretary of the HSWP] Comrade János Kádár

BULLETIN

for Comrades János Kádár, [Central Committee Secretary for Party Organization] Károly Németh, [Central Committee Secretary for Ideology] Imre Győri, [Central Committee Secretary for Administrative Issues] Mihály Korom, János Berecz and [Prime Minister] György Lázár, [Deputy Prime Minister and longtime Central Committee Secretary for Cultural Affairs] György Aczél and [Hungarian Foreign Minister] Frigyes Pujá.

In the name of the CPSU CC Political Committee, Comrade Vladimir Pavlov, the Soviet Union’s ambassador to Hungary, informed Comrade Imre Győri—*giving highly confidential and exclusively private information*—about the following concerning the events in Afghanistan:

“We consider it necessary to inform the leaders of our friends with full frankness about actions we carried out in the face of the heavily strained situation in Afghanistan. Under present circumstances, the foundations of the April 1978 revolution, the democratic and progressive achievements of the Afghan people, are endangered. The rude interference of some powers in the matters of Afghanistan does not cease, moreover its extent is increasing; armed formations are directed to Afghan territory, weapons are sent to counter-revo-

lutionary elements and gangs, whose actions are governed from abroad. The purpose of this interference is quite obvious: to overthrow the democratic and progressive system created by the Afghan people as the result of the revolution.

The danger threatening the Afghan people is increasing, despite the fact that the people and armed forces of Afghanistan have been heroically beating off, for a long time, the military interventions of the imperialist and reactionary forces. All this is closely related to the fact that Amin and the small group supporting him have cruelly and treacherously done away with Cde. Taraki, the leader of the Afghan revolution and many other outstanding personalities; they have subjected hundreds and thousands of communists faithful to the ideas of the revolution, including the Parchamists and Khalqists, to mass repression.

By these means, the external intervention and the internal terror which developed under Amin threatens the destruction of everything given to Afghanistan by the April revolution. Considering all these circumstances, the Afghan forces that are faithful to the cause of the revolution, staying at present within the country or—for known reasons—abroad, are taking steps to get rid of the usurper, to defend the achievements of the April revolution and the independence of Afghanistan. Considering this and the new Afghan leadership, requests for [Soviet] support and aid to beat off the external aggression, the Soviet Union—governed by its internationalist obligations—took the decision to send a small contingent of forces to Afghanistan. These forces will be withdrawn after a solution to the causes which make the action necessary is found.

The Soviet Union would like to make understood to all the countries with which it maintains diplomatic relations, that in executing this inevitable, provisional measure it is obeying the request of the newly establish leadership of Afghanistan, [who has] turned to the Soviet Union for aid and support in the fight against external aggression. Concerning this, the Soviet Union begins with the fact that, in matters of security, the interests of Afghanistan and [the Soviet Union] are identical, [they are established by] what was laid down in the pact of friendship and cooperation of 1978, and the defense of the interests of peace in this area of the world.

The Soviet Union’s affirmative answer to the request of the Afghan leadership results also from the statement of Provision 51 of the UN Charter, which interprets collective and individual self-defense applied against aggression and toward restoration of peace as an inseparable right of states.

Just like our friends, we also count on the fact that both in the West and East there will be circles initiating a propaganda campaign against the support and aid given by the Soviet Union to the revolution in Afghanistan. But, as has happened before, the fault-finding of our class and ideological opponents cannot prevent us from doing our best to defend the global interests of our security and protect our allies’ and friends’ safety, which includes states like Afghanistan, whose people are firm in expressing their will to progress resolutely along the path of cooperation with socialist countries, of revolutionary social changes taking place on pro-

gressive and democratic grounds.

We are convinced that our friends will rightly interpret the reasons dictating the necessity of definite help to Afghanistan in the present situation and fully support this internationalist action of ours. Our friends will naturally also understand that the development of events did not make a preliminary exchange of opinions possible for us.”



**DOCUMENT No. 4**  
**Report on the Talks of Gyula Horn,<sup>11</sup> Representative of the HSWP CC Department of Foreign Affairs in the United States and Canada, 23 January 1980**

*[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f. 5/ 791.ő.e Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]*

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY  
 TOP SECRET!  
 CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
 Written in 44 copies  
 DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Seen by Comrade András Gyenes  
 Inf/ 1363

BULLETIN/2/

for the members of the Political Committee and the Secretariat

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The meetings of the representative of the Department of Foreign Affairs in the United States and Canada

/The record of the Department of Foreign Affairs/

Organized by the HSWP Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Comrade Gyula Horn visited Washington, New York, and Ottawa as a courier between 7 and 20 January. In all three places he participated at the membership meeting of the foreign representation party organization concerning [party] congress guidelines and electing a leadership.

Our ambassadors to Washington and Ottawa informed the American State Department and the Canadian Ministry of

Foreign Affairs about this visit and announced his [Cde. G. Horn] readiness to participate in meetings. In Washington Gyula Horn was received separately by Deputy Secretary of State George West, [Deputy Assistant of State for European Affairs] Robert Barry, the head of the group of European Affairs, Marshall D. Shulman, the Minister Counselor (for Soviet Affairs), James E. Goodby, the head of the group dealing with European security and questions concerning NATO. He had a meeting with [F. Stephen] Larrabee, a leading member of the National Security Council, and the leaders of the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies.

At the initiative of our ambassador to Washington, Rabbi Arthur Schneier, the president of several American foundations and a member of several institutions including the Council of Foreign Relations, organized a meeting in his flat with the leading representatives of [several] great financial and economic monopolies, and religious organizations. A meeting took place with Helen Winter, the international secretary of the United States' Communist Party.

In Ottawa Comrade Horn was received by Klaus Goldschlag, deputy foreign minister and his senior colleagues.

The recurring element of the conversations in the various meetings was that they welcomed the opportunity for an exchange of opinions, which was extremely important in such a strained situation. Without exception, the conversations were centered around the international context of the events in Afghanistan.

The Americans emphasized that the Soviet Union's direct interference in Afghanistan meant a change in the quality of international political relations and especially in East-West relations. The United States could not accept that the Soviet Union use its advantage in the sphere of conventional weapons outside the borders of the Eastern European alliance, especially in an area that was extremely important in providing for the United States' needs for raw material. The event might constitute a significant drawback in the process of détente, and considering the headway made by the Soviet Union in Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen and in the development of their armed forces and the increase in their military power, hopes for détente have become much weaker in the United States.

According to American evaluations, in 1972—that is at the beginning of détente—there was an approximate balance in the armed forces of the two great powers. According to 1979 surveys, the general balance in power changed to the advantage of the Soviet Union. Thus, in the [recent] past period, new conditions have appeared in international strategic relations. But what has caused the biggest problem for the United States has been that it could not assess Soviet intentions: to what extent did Soviet Union has want to increase its power and to what extent did it want to exploit the imbalance in power relations to advantage in the areas that were crucially important to the West [?] Therefore the United States was forced to react to the present situation by [attempting to] scare off the Soviet Union from taking such steps. The American leadership had already received much

criticism for its military inability in Iran and elsewhere while the Soviet Union put in practice those necessary measures that enabled it to protect its basic interests.

Concerning this, during the New York meeting, the leading representatives of the monopoly capitalist groups unanimously emphasized that the Soviet Union had to prepare for an extremely hard fight. Practically all conditions were given for the United States to step forward. In principle, the Soviet action carried out in Afghanistan meant that for the USA and her allies to increase their defensive power have been removed. They [the representatives] also laid out that this type of hardball politics required leaders who could meet the new requirements.

There were positions [taken by some at the meeting] that approached the situation and perspectives on Soviet-American relations from an analytical point of view. Several emphasized that the two great powers had not regulated to the extent necessary the competitive elements present in their relations. The melting pot-like international situation had brought about unexpected events and decisions that would have to be made by the Soviet Union and the United States. The coming decade would have been a hard phase even without the Afghan events. Nor were the two powers successful in regulating military competition either. Both parties blamed the other for their own increase in pace in armament.

The SALT-II [agreement] could not effectively put a stop to continuing the arms race either, but without the agreement the situation would certainly be worse. Besides, the ratification of the SALT-II agreement was expected by the White House by February 1980. According to the evaluations of the government and the senators playing a positive role in the procedure, despite the pressure against bringing the agreement into force, it seemed realistic [to assume that there would be] the two third majority needed to ensure ratification. But events in Iran and Afghanistan favored the opponents of SALT, and in this situation the government considered it better to delay the request for ratification. Restarting the procedure of putting the treaty into force greatly depended on the general international and internal American political situation.

According to Shulman, when looking for a way out of the situation resulting from the Afghan events, the following would be crucially important: the two great powers should define at the very beginning what is meant by the necessary self-restraint and in which spheres it should be applied; to what extent they would manage to reach the appropriate regulations concerning the competition between the two great powers, especially concerning the arms race.

The representatives of the foreign affairs apparatus expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that allies of the USA did not follow the United States in the Iran question and even less in repressive anti-Soviet measures. The Western European countries and Japan supported the United States less and less in the question of an economic boycott against Iran, and they emphasized more and more their position according to which additional diplomatic and political efforts were needed to solve the Iran crisis.

The allies of the USA agreed only not to fill in the gap caused by the economic measures taken by the US in Soviet-American relations, and did not join those American measures that would lead to the deterioration of their economic and trade relations with the Soviet Union.

The Americans were worried about the fact that the allies' behavior did not make it possible to exercise enough influence on the Soviet Union. They calculated that the Soviet Union needed to buy, apart from the 8 million tons of American corn already under contract, factually another 17 million tons of American corn, two thirds of which [would be used as] corn fodder. On the other hand, Brazil had undertaken a large-scale soy-export to the Soviet Union in the past days and similar steps might be taken by several Western-European and developing countries. They also reckoned with the fact that the socialist countries would increase their corn purchases in the capitalist world. It would be difficult for them to prevent this.

They said that the American government had elaborated plans and concepts to ease the military tension, to defend the process of European security and cooperation, to prepare for the Madrid conference, and to continue the Vienna talks. As a consequence of the Afghan events, however, the government was forced to re-evaluate its plans. The experts continued working on the elaboration of newer American positions and, although their preparation was not as intense at present as earlier, they were making new efforts to elaborate and execute a common Western position.

They still attribute great importance to the initiatives concerning European security and in their view, they will serve as a basis for talks in the future too. The 12 December NATO decision outlined the suggestion of the organization about talks concerning the reduction in European armament. In Brussels, NATO experts are presently working on giving a definite form to the suggestions and they trust that the technical problems will be solved by the end of spring. They consider it unfortunate that the Soviet Union has not so far reacted in effect to the suggestions about talks concerning European strategic missiles. They can reasonably count on the fact that progress will be extremely complicated in this matter, and every step depends on the European political situation and on Soviet-American relations.

The Americans studied the proposals of the Budapest session of the Warsaw Treaty concerning measures to increase confidence. They had some reservations concerning the "proclamation-like" proposals, but they did not exclude the possibility of progress.

They emphasized that the United States and its allies had also taken one-sided steps concerning the reduction in armament, such as the evacuation of a thousand nuclear warheads from Europe; the USA's commitment not to increase the number of its nuclear armament above seven thousand in Europe; the declaration of the United States' and the NATO allies' readiness to hold a conference on European disarmament; the support of numerous confidence-building measures.

The American negotiating partners emphasized, without



exception, that the United States was ready to develop Hungarian-American relations. They underlined that the US wished to continue the subtle political discussions with the socialist countries in the same way as before. Several of them suggested that, in the present situation, the relations maintained with the individual socialist countries could ensure the continuity of the politics of peaceful coexistence.

At the same time, they stated that this readiness could not be one-sided, and such Hungarian statements as those concerning the Afghan question were of no help. They made it clear that in the United States there was a substantial number of people who tried to use the given situation to change the positive tendency in bilateral relations. The increase in their influence could result in difficulties concerning the official procedures for the further extension of the most-favored-nation-clause. A lot depended on how far official Hungarian circles would go in their statements criticizing United States foreign policy. They consider it also extremely important that the Hungarians should not make any backward steps in Hungarian-American relations. They underlined the importance of the Hungarian-American foreign political consultations, of further specific economic talks and of the realization of the talks to be carried out with the Hungarian parliamentary delegation visiting the United States headed by Comrade Antal Apró.

The following arguments were generally received with understanding:

The deterioration of the Soviet-American relations did not start with the Soviet support given to Afghanistan. The United States had taken earlier steps endangering the Soviet Union and more generally the East-West relationship both in the spheres of military and politics. The American efforts to upset the balance of strategic power increased the tension, decreasing the mutual confidence between the two world systems. It was the USA who made the change according to which it has tried to show the Soviet Union's behavior in Third World countries in the light of being the preliminary condition for the continuation of détente. This opens up new sources of tension in East-West relations. It was the United States leadership that took strict and direct measures to weaken Soviet-American relations.

Soviet support of the revolutionary forces in Afghanistan is not the concern of the Warsaw Treaty [members] but the internal affair of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan; but all countries have sovereign rights to take a point of view according to their ideological-political convictions. The Hungarian government's official position was born in this spirit. During the talks carried on with the representatives of the Canadian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the interlocutors' evaluation and statements coincided with the American position. At the same time, serious worries were voiced about the increasing international tension; the [Canadian officials] considered it very important to preserve or restore at least a minimal amount of mutual confidence which is indispensable in East-West relations.

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During the meeting with the foreign secretary of the Communist Party of the USA, Comrade Helen Winter expressed her worries about the latest international events, the ever increasing anti-Communist hysteria and hysteria against the socialist countries, which made the party's situation even more difficult in the United States.

Budapest, 23 January 1980

János Berecz



## DOCUMENT No. 5

### Report on the meeting of the foreign secretaries of the closely cooperating socialist countries in Moscow on 26 February 1980, 29 February 1980

[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f. 11/4396.ő.e Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY

TOP SECRET!

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Written in two copies

DEPARTMENT OF

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Budapest, 29 February 1980.

#### INFORMATIONAL REPORT

to the Political Committee

The foreign secretaries of the central committees of the parties of the closely cooperating socialist countries—the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic—held a coordinating meeting in Moscow on 26 February concerning topical international questions.

Representing the CPSU Central Committee, [CPSU Central Committee Secretary for International Relations] Comrade Boris Ponomarev emphasized that in the present international situation it was extremely important to make detailed analyses and to draw correct conclusions. For this the contents of Comrade Leonid Brezhnev's declaration of 16 January and his pre-election speech of 22 February provided a good basis. The CPSU thinks that recently the process of détente has suffered serious losses. The basic causes can be defined as the aggressive endeavors of the USA, the arms race provoked by it and the intensification of attacks against socialism. In the foreign policy steps [taken by] the USA, a role is played by the fight concerning the presidential elections and the internal political and economic problems of the

United States. More and more obvious are the [US] intentions to make the NATO member states line up to support American policy and to increase the influence of the United States in the world.

The dangers threatening world peace are great, but we must see that Carter's "new" policy has not had the expected result. The United States could not turn Afghanistan into a base of operations for American imperialism, and it is of principle importance that the USA did not consider it possible to announce military confrontation. This is due to the substantial defensive force of the Soviet Union and the socialist community. It means that we should develop our economic and military ability in the future too and improve our armed forces within the framework of the Warsaw Treaty.

The Western European allies of the US, with few exceptions, are unwilling to follow Carter's policy unconditionally. The intentions to block the Soviet Union's economy were thwarted; in this the United States was not followed by Europe, moreover not by Latin America. Carter is aware that the formation of an anti-Soviet front is impossible without the active participation of Western Europe. The European capitalist countries are interested in distancing themselves from Carter. Some countries are definite, others are more moderate in demonstrating their faithfulness to the Atlantic Alliance, and in reality the unity of NATO is much less than is seen in the propaganda.

France's opposition to the United States is becoming stronger and stronger. The behavior of the Federal Republic of Germany is of key importance. The FRG government played a decisive role in passing the NATO resolution concerning medium-range missiles, and they express their solidarity with the Carter administration. At the same time, the West German government declares its commitment to the policy of détente. This is strongly emphasized by Schmidt too, in his recent message to Comrade Brezhnev. It is also worth mentioning that, at the session of the leaders of the German Social Democratic Party held in chambers, Schmidt explained that the presence of Soviet troops in Afghanistan served a defensive purpose. The Chancellor expressed his disapproval with the refusal to ratify the SALT II [agreement], and with the fact that Carter has subordinated US interests more and more to his own [personal] purposes. The Chancellor defined explicitly that his country would not participate in the economic sanctions against the Soviet Union, it would not sacrifice its Eastern policy and endeavored to prevent the American president from making other mistakes. But the Americans exercise great influence on Schmidt, who shows less resistance than expected probably because he has to take into consideration [domestic] political requirements for the autumn elections.

The Soviet leadership pays great attention to the points of view of the communist, social-democratic parties and the non-aligned countries. The majority of the fraternal parties represents the right position even in the strained international situation, the evolutionary process started in the leadership of the French [Communist Party] is especially important. At the same time, we have to sum up the negative phenomena too. The wrong position of the Italian and Spanish

communist parties is especially worrying. The Vienna meeting of the parties of the Socialist International in February showed that social democracy does not intend to sacrifice détente on the altar of the adventurous US politics of the USA.

The US puts great emphasis on using the events in Afghanistan to increase her influence on the non-aligned movement and in the Muslim world. The political and economic interests of the developing countries and of existing socialism still coincide but a complicated situation has evolved. Cuba's position has become particularly complicated; the Cuban comrades should receive support to alleviate their situation. We must contribute to the neutralization of the resolutions of the Islamabad conference, and we should prevent the creation of the alliance of hostile Muslim states on the Southern borders on the Soviet Union.

Comrade Ponomarev gave a brief summary of the events in Afghanistan. He said Taraki and Amin had requested that the Soviet Union provide military help 14 times since March 1979. At the definite request of Amin the number of Soviet military experts and counselors was increased in the middle of December. Obeying the express demand by the members of the revolutionary council and the government, Amin himself requested four times in December the strengthening of the Soviet troops stationed there. On the basis of all this it is obvious that the Soviet troops stationed in Afghanistan are complying with the norms of international law. There is no question of occupying the country, the Afghan authorities act independently. The task of the Soviet troops in close cooperation with the Afghan authorities is to ensure the territorial sanctity. The contents of Comrade Brezhnev's pre-election speech confirm that the Soviet Union is ready to withdraw its troops as soon as the United States and Afghanistan's neighbors guarantee non-interference in the country's internal affairs.

In connection with practical problems and tasks, Comrade Ponomarev emphasized that the Soviet Union definitely disapproved of all American attempts aimed at breaking up the unity of the socialist community. At the same time, she endeavors to maintain relations with the USA according to the words and spirit of the agreements in effect. Reacting to the anti-Soviet steps of the American administration, the Soviet Union has suspended trips by cultural groups, the organization of exhibitions and has decreased tourism. At the same time, it maintains connections with some American firms in the sphere of publishing, the protection of copyright, radio and television. If the Americans sabotage the service provided to the planes of the Aeroflot in the future too, the Soviet Union will stop the transportation of supplies of American representations on the territory of the Soviet Union.

The economic and trade relations between the two countries have always taken place on the basis of mutual advantages. It seems reasonable to further maintain normal business relations, but on the other hand, to show that the socialist countries act on the basis of a harmonized policy.

The Soviet Union endeavors to constructively renew or continue the talks concerning disarmament. The Soviet party

is willing to start talks concerning medium-range missiles, independent of the ratification of SALT II and outside the framework of SALT III, demanding to modify or at least, suspend the NATO decision of 12 December and its execution.

In the present situation, the Warsaw Treaty's initiative to summon an all-European conference to deal with the questions of military détente and disarmament is particularly important. It is reasonable to continue the consultations preparing the Madrid meeting, but meanwhile we have to make clear the intentions of the capitalist countries, what character they want to give to the conference.

It was important and timely to cancel the planned political contacts at high level with the United States and the FRG. The Soviet Union's further behavior with the latter depends on whether the West German government will take concrete steps to contribute to détente. It is beyond doubt that the communist community cannot be interested in the defeat of the present coalition government. Taking this as a starting point, according to plan, Chancellor Schmidt's visit to Soviet Union will take place in spring.

It seems right and reasonable to develop political relations further with France and the other member states of NATO in order to prevent Carter's policy from prevailing. By boycotting the Moscow Olympics, Carter wants to diminish the prestige of socialism. His endeavors have been thwarted so far, but the situation is still very complicated. The Soviet Union will hold the Olympic Games and we must ensure that the sportsmen of as many countries as possible take part.

In the present international situation, it is of particular importance to consolidate economic and scientific-technical cooperation between the countries of the socialist community. We must make efforts to specialize production and develop cooperation to reduce our economic dependence on the capitalist world. The competent Soviet organs should study the possibilities of accelerating the process and of elaborating our coordinated activity in the capitalist world market.

We should increase the cooperation between the European communist parties. For this, a good opportunity is the joint French-Polish initiative to hold a conference of the representatives of the communist parties of the continent on the reduction of military tension and the promotion of the issue of disarmament in Paris in April. Although for example the Italian and Spanish parties categorically object to participating in the conference, it is reasonable to organize the event and look for other opportunities to convince those who disagree. The CPSU keeps up the conversation and relations with the socialist and social-democratic parties. It considers it necessary to make relations more active with the Finnish, West German, Belgian and other parties in order to solve tense international problems. To beat off the American government's cold war endeavors, all forces supporting peace and progressive international public opinion should be mobilized.

The representatives of the other sister parties contributing to the meeting unanimously underlined the necessity of more frequent harmonization of positions and ideas concern-

ing tasks between the closely cooperating socialist countries under the circumstances of the deterioration in the international situation. They also thoroughly analyzed the causes of international tensions and their position coincided with the Soviet evaluation.

In his speech, [Bulgarian Communist Party Central Committee Secretary] Comrade *Dimitry Stanishev* put a great emphasis on the Bulgarian evaluation concerning the political situation in the countries of the Balkans. He sharply criticized Yugoslav foreign political endeavors. He underlined the importance of activating our existing relations in order to influence the Western European political circles in a favorable way.

During the presentation of the Polish point of view, [Polish United Workers Party Politburo member] Comrade *Andrzej Werblan* dealt with the behavior of the governments of France and the FRG emphatically. He stressed that we should approach the individual countries of Western Europe differentiated ways. We should treat flexibly the existing political, cultural and other relations and we should strive to make new contacts.

Comrade [Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Central Committee Secretary] *Vasil Bilak* pointed at the extreme danger of American foreign and internal policy, the traditions of anti-imperialist endeavors of socialist countries and the fact that we should make use of the conflicts between the Western states. He stated that we should set up the conditions for the self-sufficiency of socialist countries concerning food and other products.

Comrade [East German Community Party Central Committee Secretary] *Hermann Axen* presented in detail the evaluation of the Party of Socialist Unity of Germany concerning the West-German situation and political endeavors. He underlined the danger of the hegemonic and revenge-seeking endeavors of the right wing in the FRG. This is why it is in our interest to support the present coalition government, we should contribute to preventing Strauss from coming to power.

Comrade *András Gyenes* analyzed the international situation and pointed to the importance of the offensive peace policy of the socialist countries. He presented the point of view of the HSWP concerning the capitalist countries, first of all, the maintenance of political, economic, cultural and technical-scientific relations with the West European countries. He underlined the importance of the consolidation of our relations with the communist parties of the capitalist countries and the social democratic parties.

After the meeting of secretaries, under the chairmanship of Comrade O. B. Rahmanyin, a meeting took place at the level of deputy heads of department. At this meeting, the Soviet side emphasized among other things that greater attention should be paid to influencing Yugoslav foreign policy in a positive direction. According to the CPSU, no "political earthquakes" are expected even after [Yugoslav leader Josip Broz] Tito's death]. Surely, the collective system of government, which has been created by now will prevail.

The Soviet side considers it necessary to make further efforts to hold the Paris communist conference successfully

in order to make our activity concerning the non-aligned countries more active. They also suggested that the closely cooperating socialist countries should start the elaboration and harmonization of their ideas and recommendations concerning the questions of the contents of the [14-15] May [1980] session of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact [in Warsaw].

The report was prepared by Gyula Horn  
Approved by András Gyenes



## DOCUMENT No. 6

**Memorandum of Conversation between Vadim Zagladin, First Deputy Head of the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee [CC] and Gyula Horn, Deputy Head of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party CC Department of Foreign Affairs, on Debates Within the Soviet Leadership on Issues of International Politics, 16 July 1980**

*[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f. 47/ 764.õ.e Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]*

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY  
TOP SECRET!  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
Written in one copy  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
Budapest, 16 July 1980

### RECORD

On 16 July, Wednesday, a private interview took place with Comrade Vadim Zagladin, the first deputy of the head of the International Department of the CPSU CC. Comrade Zagladin said that for several months in the CPSU Politburo, there had been heated arguments about the Soviet Union's specific foreign policy steps, the general evaluation of the international situation and the situation of the communist movement. He emphasized that in this argument Comrade János Kádár's message to the Soviet leadership<sup>12</sup> played an important role, which created a stir and met with different reactions among the individual members of the Political Committee.

The leading personalities of the [Soviet Communist Party] Central Committee apparatus, including Comrades B. N. Ponomarev and K[onstantin] V[iktorovich] Rusakov were of the position that the HSWP's opinion contained many elements deserving attention and consideration, which should be implemented in individual international questions. Mainly

this was expressed in the evaluation of the situation and suggestions presented by Comrade B.N. Ponomarev at the February conference of the Central Committee secretaries of the fraternal parties of the closely cooperating socialist countries. Among these the most important could be considered the fact that the socialist countries should make maximum use of the possibilities contained in existing relations with the Western European countries to counter-balance the United States' foreign policy line.

During the February conference and afterwards the divergence of opinions and arguments increased between the Central Committee and the leaders of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Comrade [Georgy] Kornienko, the [Soviet] first deputy foreign minister accused the CC apparatus of opportunism, of lacking principle because of the concessions made to Western European countries. In the practical sphere this was also expressed by the fact that, following the instructions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Soviet cultural organs, pushing aside all agreements in effect, cancelled the Soviet cultural events scheduled in France, the FRG and other capitalist countries. The determined action of the Central Committee was necessary to revoke this provision.

After Comrade Brezhnev's recovery and return to work, the power relations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Central Committee changed significantly. Comrade [Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A.] Gromyko, against his own and his counselors' opinion, was forced to accept the proposal to meet [US] Secretary of State Muskie in Vienna. [The CC leadership] also managed to change with the position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, according to which [West German] Chancellor [Helmut] Schmidt's visit to Moscow would have been organized so that it could become obvious to the West German government that the Soviet Union would be willing to strengthen partnership relations with the FRG only if certain conditions were fulfilled.

There is a remarkable divergence of opinions between the leaders of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFA] and the Central Committee in military questions too. The MFA leadership categorically objected to making any gesture, or having talks with NATO concerning medium-range missiles. Comrade Brezhnev's personal influence and his direct action were needed for the CPSU Politburo force them to approve the new suggestions regarding talks.

There are arguments concerning the solution of the Afghan problem too. The Central Committee thinks that efforts should be concentrated on the normalization of the internal Afghan situation that they must strive to achieve [normalization] so that the so-called Afghan question does not become a world political question. Several members of the leadership, first of all, Comrade Gromyko and others, still think that this question should be treated as one that shows the Soviet Union's resolution to defend her strategic interests.

Within the Soviet leadership there are debates going on also about what steps are necessary to solve the new problems arising in the international communist movement. Some think the reduction of financial aid, the narrowing of bilateral relations and strict criticism are needed to suppress oppor-

tunist trends. Such opinions are sometimes expressed in different statements, and publications. Comrade Zagladin thinks that there is a need for stating what one thinks, but that it would be a mistake to take steps that would seriously harm relations and thus minimize the possibility of our influencing events.

Gyula Horn



## DOCUMENT No. 7

### Soviet Briefing on the Correspondence between Yugoslav Leader Josef B. Tito and CPSU General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev [ca. 1980]

[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f./11. Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]

Top secret!

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#### The correspondence between Tito and Brezhnev

Maltsev, first deputy foreign minister, informed the leaders of the missions of closely co-operating socialist countries about the correspondence between Tito and Brezhnev:

In his letter written at the end of last month President Tito expressed to his worries concerning the unfavorable developments in the international situation. He thinks one should look for ways to improve the situation. With reference to this, he mentioned Soviet-American relations and that it would be reasonable to find solutions through talks that would make it possible to continue the policy of détente. He disapproved of NATO's decision about American medium-range missiles. He dealt with the march of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, which met with negative reactions both in international and Yugoslav public opinion. Tito thinks one should find a way to withdraw the Soviet troops as soon as possible. He approved of the changes in Iran, of its joining the list of non-aligned countries, and he criticized the American leadership for its interference in the internal affairs of Iran. As for the European situation, he thought it desirable that the Madrid Conference [on Cooperation and Security in Europe] should have positive results in November. Finally, he dealt with Soviet-Yugoslav relations and pointed out that Yugoslavia wished to consolidate them in the future as well.

In his reply, Comrade Brezhnev stated that the CPSU CC had studied the letter and interpreted it as an exchange of experience between the two parties and countries. This was very useful because it provided an opportunity to get to know each other's point of view and excluded the possibility of misunderstanding. We understand the worries that were

expressed by the letter because of the strained international situation. The letter says that we should put end to the practice that certain countries may interfere in other countries' internal affairs. It is unnecessary to prove that the Soviet Union wishes the same, but to realize this, we should, first of all, look for and do away with the origin of negative tendencies that made the international situation strained—wrote Comrade Brezhnev in his reply.

He stated that the present government of the United States does its best to suppress the national liberation movements, that it wants to prevent people from attaining their freedom. It can be understood that a person who loses his head because of his fear of popular revolution and who does not like détente cannot create his own people's right to self-determination and interferes in other countries' internal affairs. The Soviet side regularly informed international public opinion and its partners about the imperialist endeavors, and did its best to safeguard the achievements made in the seventies concerning the extension of relations between countries. The Soviet Union, in agreement with the member states of the Warsaw Pact, took a unilateral step too in the interest of détente, it withdrew one part of her troops from Europe and suggested talks to prevent the deployment of American medium-range missiles in Europe. The US and NATO countries ignored this suggestion. The Soviet Union is ready to carry on talks even now if NATO changed its resolution or at least suspends its implementation. This is the way to achieve talks that should not be carried on from a position of power but should be based on the principle of equal rights.

All this shows that the Soviet Union has a constructive attitude toward the improvement of Soviet-American relations and it is not responsible for the deterioration of these relations. It is not the Soviet Union that delayed the ratification of [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks] SALT II and it was not the Soviets who blocked economic relations between the two countries. Neither this, nor the boycott of the summer [1980] Olympic Games [in Moscow] disheartens the Soviet Union, but it is beyond doubt that these measures have a bad influence on [bilateral] relations, undermine confidence, [bring about a] deterioration in the atmosphere, make the solution of complicated international questions more difficult.

[The US] spreads all over the world [the idea] that the deterioration of international relations was due to the events in Afghanistan. In reality, it was Washington, who exported arms to the enemies of Afghanistan and counter-revolution to Afghanistan. The Soviet Union had always maintained normal, neighborly relations with Afghanistan. It was like that during the reign of the monarchy as well and when Afghanistan stepped onto the path of socialist development. The Soviet side could not but hurry to help when the people of Afghanistan were threatened by outside danger from the US, Pakistan, and China. The Soviet Union also had to consider preventing the appearance of a new flashpoint on its Southern borders. The Soviet Union did so on the basis of the Soviet-Afghan treaty of friendship, which corresponded also to the UN Charter. The Soviet side have never kept it a

secret that it sympathizes with nations fighting for their freedom and socialist development. At the same time, the Soviet Union has also declared publicly that it was ready to start the evacuation of its troops from Afghanistan if the United States and the countries neighboring Afghanistan undertake to guarantee ending their external interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The Soviet Union has no reason to station its troops in Afghanistan in its own interest, but it will not withdraw them until the causes making the support necessary cease completely.

Comrade Brezhnev mentioned in his letter that Yugoslavia had a great amount of prestige in the movement of the non-aligned countries and therefore it could do a lot concerning the Afghan issue. It could influence the Pakistani leadership by persuading it not to support the reactionary forces and not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union approves of the fact that Iran's non-aligned character should be preserved. The Soviet side has supported this endeavor of the Iranian people from the beginning. At the same time, they oppose the idea of American control in the area of the Persian Gulf. The Soviet Union has not forgotten [Iranian political leader Mohammad] Mossadeq [who was overthrown in a CIA-sponsored coup in 1953] yet. The Non-aligned Movement, using all their power and prestige, could do a lot to stop the unlawful demands of the US.

Finally, Comrade Brezhnev's letter touched upon the fact that the present situation in the world was not simple, but the Soviet leadership was optimistic concerning the future because the forces of peace were great and there was no doubt that they would continue to grow in the future, that they would be able to overcome the imperialist endeavors. The favorable development of the world, however, will not take place by itself; to achieve this all countries have to be active. The Soviet Union is preparing for the Madrid conference in this spirit and desires to develop its cooperation with Yugoslavia in the different matters of international life and concerning the bilateral relations on this basis.

Some Western circles try to achieve the deterioration of Soviet-Yugoslav relations. The Soviet side does its best to develop these relations in a favorable direction. The Soviet Union does not disturb the development of the Yugoslav people, it wishes that Yugoslavia become stronger and the union of its peoples be consolidated.

Finally, Comrade Brezhnev expressed his gratitude for Tito's good wishes, wished him recovery to be able to work for a long time to the benefit of the Yugoslav people and for the flourishing of Soviet-Yugoslav relations.

## DOCUMENT No. 8

### Soviet Briefing on the Need to Counterbalance Yugoslav Efforts On the Afghan Question in the Non-aligned Countries [1980]

[Source: MOL M-KS 288 f. /11. Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]

[1980]

Top secret!

001/64!

004/64!

#### The meetings of our ambassadors in the non-aligned countries to counter-balance the Yugoslav endeavors concerning the Afghan question

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs instructed some of our ambassadors working in important non-aligned countries to tell the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the receiving country that they had received news saying that some countries of the non-aligned movement have begun an initiative to summon a conference of foreign ministers or a session of the Coordination Bureau to discuss the Afghan question. Without interfering in the internal affairs of non-aligned countries, we would like to call attention to the fact that in the present situation such a conference would serve the interests of imperialism and most of all, of the United States. The countries of the Non-aligned Movement cannot have an interest in the US drawing the movement into an anti-Soviet confrontation and the US's general campaign against détente. We must see that the security of the Middle East is threatened most directly by the US's political plans and steps: its anti-Arab politics, its arms transportation, its preparations for intervention. The discussion of the Afghan question would distract the movement's attention from its real interests, it would break up its anti-imperialist unity and ability to act. In his electoral speech Leonid Brezhnev put forward a realistic and acceptable suggestion about doing away with the tension surrounding Afghanistan.

Our ambassadors, acting on the basis of the above instruction report the following about the reactions:

Our ambassador to *Algeria* was informed by the Cuban ambassador to Algeria about the fact that Yugoslavia had been the first to officially send a request to Cuba that the Coordination Bureau discuss and take up a position concerning the question of "non-interference in internal affairs." After Cuba's definite refusal, the Yugoslav side repeatedly urged Algeria to bring up the question. Algeria did so but Cuba again refused to discuss the question.

According to the report of our ambassador to Hanoi, the Vietnamese ministry of foreign affairs knows that, during his latest visits to *Bangladesh and India*, the Yugoslav foreign minister suggested a similar idea but it met with no support. The Indian side also informed the Vietnamese ministry of foreign affairs about the fact that the Indian government did

not approve of discussion of either the Afghan or the Cambodian situation at the conference commemorating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bandung [Non-alignment Movement founding] conference to be held at the same place and urged by Yugoslavia.

In the ministry of foreign affairs of *Ghana*, our ambassador received information that the Yugoslav side had not officially suggested the summoning of the conference of foreign ministers of the non-aligned countries or of the Coordination Bureau because of the strained international situation and because of the threats to the movement. Ghana did not approve of this idea even though it was, as far as it knew, approved of by several America-friendly non-aligned countries. Ghana thinks that in this question the Indian position should be followed. According to information received by our ambassador, the US ambassador to Accra attempting to influence the foreign minister of Ghana to make him change his stance and accept the Yugoslav position.

Our ambassador to *Jakarta* was given a definite statement in the Indonesian ministry of foreign affairs: Indonesia has not been approached with this idea and they do not have any information about the fact that any member of the non-aligned movement has dealt with the preparation of such action. Our ambassador to *Baghdad* received the same information from the Iraqi ministry of foreign affairs. Here they also underlined that Iraq in time understood the endeavors of the USA and of imperialism in the area and now the president mobilized the Arab countries by announcing a charter against the USA's Near East policy and the Egyptian-Israeli special agreement.

The acting foreign minister of *Kuwait* told our ambassador that at present there was no specific plan for summoning the foreign ministers of the non-aligned countries or of the session of the Coordination Bureau. Kuwait agrees to take such a step only if the conference does not become an anti-Soviet forum and discusses exclusively the plan of development and what role the movement may play in it. Kuwait does not approve of mentioning "interference," for which "there are more serious examples in the world." They emphasize putting an end to the presence of foreign troops without naming the Soviet Union.

Kuwait carries on vivid consultations about the Afghan question with both the Western and the non-aligned countries. They think that their position coincides with that of India; therefore they encourage India to be active. As their latest step, they told the British undersecretary of state for foreign affairs that they did not approve of the English suggestion about the neutralization of Afghanistan. Together with India, they believe that the most realistic approach to solution is for a national democratic government embracing wide layers to be formed in Afghanistan. The present government having a narrow base cannot achieve national peace. The USA, Pakistan and others have to stop arming refugees and they should help all Afghan refugees return to Afghanistan without arms. Preparing for the event of the fulfillment of the above mentioned conditions, the Soviet Union should work out a realistic and detailed schedule for the withdrawal

of its troops. According to the foreign minister, in connection with Afghanistan, India will become active first of all in the non-aligned movement.



## DOCUMENT No. 9

### **Soviet briefing on the talks between CPSU General Secretary Leonid I. Brezhnev and President of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan Babrak Karmal in Moscow, 29 October 1980**

*[Source: MOL M-KS 11/4391.õ.e. Translated for CWIHP by Attila Kolontári and Zsófia Zelnik.]*

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY  
TOP SECRET!  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

#### BULLETIN

On 28 October 1980, Comrade János Kádár received Comrade V. Pavlov—at his request—who informed him in the name of the CPSU Central Committee about the talks carried on with Babrak Karmal, the secretary-general of the Afghan People's Democratic Party CC, the president of the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, prime minister.

The main political achievements of the talks are reflected in the document signed by L. I. Brezhnev and B. Karmal, 'The Declaration of the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan,' which was published in the Soviet press on 20 October, and with which our friends are already probably familiar.

We would like to give our friends the following complementary confidential information:

B. Karmal and other Afghan leaders have expressed their frank appreciation for the support the Soviet Union is providing to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in the fight against foreign intervention, in defense of the April revolution, in building a new life. B. Karmal emphasized that, without among others, the timely, military help of the Soviet Union, the revolution would have been put down and Afghanistan's existence as a sovereign and independent state would have ceased.

We have confirmed that the Soviet Union has stood up firmly and will do so in the future for the Afghan revolution and we consider it our internationalist obligation to provide support and aid to the Afghan people and government.

During the exchange of opinions about the central questions of the development of the Afghan revolutionary process, we pointed to the correctness of the internal policy

chosen by our Afghan friends, which started from the fact that the April revolution was of a national democratic character. Related to this, it is important not to rush forward, so that they would be able to elaborate from various aspects and ensure the success of the next step in the development of the revolution.

L. I. Brezhnev explained to B. Karmal that such an approach made possible greater deliberateness and flexibility in the solution of several questions of the development of the revolution than had been shown by the earlier leadership of the country for some reason. Here we think of questions like relations with religious circles, tribes and, of course, the execution of agrarian reform.

We also drew B. Karmal's attention to the fact that, besides the tasks of the mobilization of the party and the people to fight against intervention and counter-revolution, the questions of economic activity are being moved more and more to the fore. It is necessary to do everything to revive and develop the national economy, to raise the standard of living of the population and, foremost, of all workers and peasants as it is they who have to form the wide social base of the revolutionary power.

Concerning this, we told B. Karmal that the CPSU CC had made a resolution to provide additional aid to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan having as its aim the realization of comprehensive measures concerning the development of the people's economy and a raise in the standard of living.

Evaluating the military-political situation in the country, B. Karmal said that, on the whole, there were positive changes in the mood of the Afghan people; confidence in revolutionary power was growing. At the same time, it would always remain a task of first-rank importance to defend the security of Afghanistan's territory and to clear it of internal counter-revolution and gangs arriving from abroad, mainly from Pakistan.

In the interest of a more successful solution to the tasks of finally destroying the counter-revolution and to mobilizing across a wide range to fight against it, the Afghan leadership attributes great importance to the creation of a national front with a broad base, which would embrace representatives of all classes and layers of Afghan society, including the patriotic clergy and the tribes, among whom they are carrying on continuous work.

During the talks and the private meeting of B. Karmal and L.I. Brezhnev, special attention was paid to the need of putting an end to cliques among the members of the PDPA and of guaranteeing the unity of the party at each level. We told B. Karmal with full frankness that the still existing controversies within the party had a negative influence on the party's readiness to fight and consequently the situation of the army, the state apparatus and the whole country. We emphasized that the creation of an organic, not a mechanical unity of the party was a key problem. The fate of the revolution itself depended on solving this as soon as possible and on the party's readiness to rise above earlier conflicts. To

what extent the party would be able to carry out its revolutionary mission [depends on this]. We also emphasized that the PDPA bore responsibility for the fate of the revolution not only to its own people. Its responsibility was of an internationalist character just like the aid and support given to the Afghan revolution.

B. Karmal stated that the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee paid special attention to the question of unity and carried on continuous work aimed at improving it. According to his evaluation, the question of the organizational and ideological-political unity of the PDPA can be considered 70 to 75 percent solved.

We discussed questions concerning the political settlement of the Afghan situation based on the recommendations of 14 May this year of the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan [DRA], well-known by our friends. In this respect, we emphasized that the consistent realization and support by other brotherly countries of the policy harmonized between the Soviet Union and the DRA would have its positive results. The plans to change the character of the Afghan revolutionary system would be thwarted and so would be attempts to question the legality of the revolutionary Afghan government and invent plots to prevent its recognition.

The internal and external counter-revolution has not surrendered yet, but time is on the side of the new, revolutionary Afghanistan becoming stronger and stronger with undiminished energy.

As for the evaluation of the international situation and the foreign political initiatives of the brotherly countries, our Afghan friends gave expression to their approval and full support.

During the discussion of the South-Asian situation, we pointed to the activation of the USA's and China's intrigues in this area. B. Karmal put special emphasis on the danger of the Zia-ul Hak regime [in Pakistan] playing the role of the unforgiving enemy of the Afghan April revolution after becoming the obedient means for the politics of American imperialism and the Chinese endeavor for hegemony.

B. Karmal approved of our opinion concerning the fact that the consolidation of relations between Afghanistan and India might contribute to a great extent to the prevention of American-Chinese intrigues in this area. Realizing the need for an improvement of the Near East situation, our Afghan friends also intend to continue work concerning the settlement of their relations with Iran, although this is not a simple task.

On the whole, we think that B. Karmal's visit to the Soviet Union was timely and useful. We hope that the talks carried on with B. Karmal and the other Afghan comrades who do not have enough experience in governing the country will be of help to them in acquiring such experience.

B. Karmal expressed his conviction that his visit to the Soviet Union would have a positive influence on the consolidation of the internal political situation and the strengthening of the system of the revolutionary power in Afghanistan,



just like on the stabilization of the foreign political positions of the DRA.”

Budapest, 29 October 1980.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> János Kádár's account on his visit to Moscow at the 31 July 1963 meeting of the HSWP Political Committee, Magyar Országos Levéltár [Hungarian National Archives, hereafter: MOL], M-KS-288.f.5/309.ő.e. Following Khrushchev's fall, at a meeting with the new Soviet leadership Kádár warned Brezhnev that whatever the Soviet leadership did, it had an important effect on the other socialist countries as well. *Magyar-szovjet csúcstalálkozók, 1957-1965*, [Hungarian-Soviet Summit Meetings. Documents] Évkönyv, 6. 1998 /szerk. Litván György. (Budapest: 1956-os Intézet, 1998): p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution. A History in Documents*, ed. by Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne, János M. Rainer, (Budapest: CEU Press, 2002): pp. XLI-XLII.

<sup>3</sup> Jaromír Navrátil, et al. Eds. *The Prague Spring 1968* (Budapest: CEU Press, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> Odd Arne Westad. "Concerning the situation in 'A': New Russian evidence on the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan" *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 8/9 (Winter 1996/1997): p. 131.

<sup>5</sup> Two visits of FRG politicians were cancelled: foreign minister Hans Dietrich Genscher was to visit Prague, while Chancellor

Helmut Schmidt was to have talks with Erich Honecker in Berlin.

<sup>6</sup> MOL., M-KS-288.f. 5/791.ő.e.

<sup>7</sup>At the same time Kádár sent explanatory letters to SPD Chairman Willy Brandt and Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

<sup>8</sup> István Horváth and István Németh, *És a falak leomlanak. Magyarország és a német egység (1945-1990)* [And the Walls Come Down. Hungary and German Unity (1945-1990)] (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, 1999) 173-176. Eventually, in 1988, the contract was made and diplomatic relations between Hungary and the EEC were established.

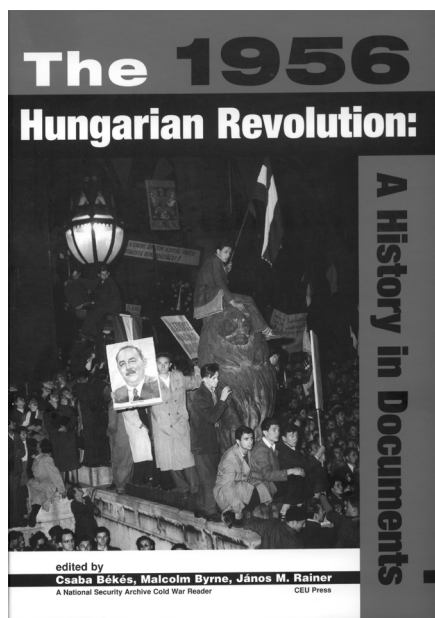
<sup>9</sup>Csaba Békés, "Back to Europe. The International Context of the Political Transition in Hungary, 1988-1990," in: Andras Bozoki, ed. *The Roundtable Talks of 1989: The Genesis of Hungarian Democracy* (Budapest: CEU Press, 2002), p. 237-272.

<sup>10</sup>The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan was founded in 1965. Two years later the party split into two fractions: Khalq (people) and Parcham (banner). The Khalq group was lead by Taraki, while Babrak Karmal was the head of the Parcham group. The two groups were united at the party conference in July 1977.

<sup>11</sup> Gyula Horn, member of the CC Department of International Affairs (1969-1983); head of CC Department of International Affairs (1983-1985); state secretary for foreign affairs (1985-1989); foreign minister (1989-1990); prime minister of the Republic of Hungary (1994-1998).

<sup>12</sup> Following the unexpected Soviet request to freeze high-level consultations with Western politicians, Kádár had sent a letter to Brezhnev arguing that in the present situation the allies had to be consulted regularly on joint Soviet bloc policy and that the results of détente must be preserved.

## The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents



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CWIHP is pleased to announce the volume, *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution: A History in Documents*, edited by Csaba Békés, Malcolm Byrne and János Rainer (CEU Press, 2002, 598 pages). The latest in the National Security Archive's Cold War Reader series, the volume contains 120 top-level items in translation from the archives of 10 countries, along with chapter essays, document descriptions, detailed footnotes, a chronology and glossaries. Introductions to the volume were contributed by Timothy Garton Ash, Charles Gati, and former Hungarian President Árpád Göncz. Among the highlights are once-classified minutes of Hungarian, Soviet, U.S. and East European leadership meetings, ciphered Kremlin cable traffic, CIA studies, and internal RFE reports. Check the Archive (<http://www.nsarchive.org>) or CEU Press (<http://www.ceupress.com>) websites for ordering information.

# Czechoslovakia and the War in Afghanistan, 1979-1989

By Oldrich Tůma

Sometimes a historian runs across documents that cast a revealing light on his research topic in just a few lines. Just so, the Czechoslovak Communist leadership's view of Afghanistan during the 1970's and 1980's is vividly illustrated in a few passages from two documents found in the archive of Czechoslovak Communist Party (CPCz) Central Committee General Secretary Gustáv Husák.<sup>1</sup>

The first document is a report dated 17 February 1970. Submitted by the Czechoslovak embassy in Kabul on the political situation in Afghanistan and the reactions provoked there by the events in Czechoslovakia from the spring of 1968 to the beginning of 1970. The report, detailed and very well informed, characterized the opinions of the country's various political groupings on the events in Czechoslovakia; in some places it was nearly prophetic. According to the report, some Afghans, on the center right of the political spectrum, reckoned that "Babrak Karmal, General Secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), might under certain circumstances invite the Soviet Union to occupy Afghanistan." Even the center left (represented in the report by Muhammad Daud, a former premier who later became head of state after a coup in 1973), was "concerned that if they align themselves any more closely to the USSR, things could end up there like in the CSSR."

The second document was written ten years later almost to the day. During that decade Babrak Karmal lost his position as PDPA General Secretary, went into exile, and reemerged in late 1979 as party leader and head of government. On 27 February 1980, he wrote – now as leader of Afghanistan – "to my respected brother, Comrade Gustáv Husák: Scientifically speaking, history never repeats itself. But according to the laws of peace and socialism, and the law of the downfall of imperialism, and in view of the fact that international reaction is still capable in various areas of disrupting peace, freedom, and socialism, the crisis in the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan is notably similar to the events of 1968 in heroic Czechoslovakia."

Babrak Karmal was certainly not the only one reminded of 1968 by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Zbigniew Brzezinski, in 1979 national security advisor to President Carter, writes in his memoirs how he attached a short memorandum to a proposed American reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, explaining how President Johnson had reacted to the invasion of Czechoslovakia. He felt that the American reaction in 1968 represented the minimum of what the United States had to do in response to the new intervention.<sup>2</sup> As we now know the American reaction ended up being much more forceful—to the unpleasant surprise of the Soviets.

Comparison of the two invasions is almost obligatory in

the historical literature on the war in Afghanistan, which swarms with the phrase "just as in the case of Czechoslovakia in 1968." Similarities cited are both military (use of airborne troops and occupation of key buildings in the capital) and political (use of pro-Soviet communists to help carry out and justify the invasion), as well as similar ideological and propaganda rationalization (the Brezhnev Doctrine).<sup>3</sup> There is a noticeable similarity in terminology used—the infamous 1968 phrase "healthy forces" [i.e., orthodox Communists] to describe the corresponding faction in the PDPA that cooperated in the intervention,<sup>4</sup> and some key individuals filling the same roles on the Soviet side (the commander of the invading forces was as in 1968 General Pavlovskij; General Yepishov's role was also similar to the one he played in Czechoslovakia).<sup>5</sup> Some episodes are almost grotesquely similar. The famous scene in which Alexander Dubcek, when informed of the invasion, wept in disbelief that the Soviets could do such a thing, saw a repeat on 27 December 1979 in Kabul, only with a somewhat more passionate script: When KGB special forces began their attack on Tadj-bek palace in Kabul and shooting was heard within, PDPA General Secretary and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Afghanistan Hafizullah Amin ordered that Soviet units be called in to assist. When he was told the Soviets were the ones doing the shooting, he threw an ashtray at his aide, shouting "You lie! That's impossible!"<sup>6</sup>

More importantly, however, the Soviet leadership itself drew analogies between 1968 and 1989. They assumed that the action in Afghanistan would go over relatively calmly on the international scene, with verbal protest from the West at most, and that the situation would be quickly stabilized. Although it had been a difficult decision for Brezhnev, in Moscow's view the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 had strengthened both the position of Brezhnev himself, as well as that of the USSR as a world power.<sup>7</sup>

The historical analogy was reflected upon in Prague as well. The similarities, which were pointed out by Karmal, made the CPCz leadership particularly sensitive to the situation of the Afghan comrades. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan seemed to confirm once again the correctness of the orthodox view of 1968, adopted by the "normalization" leaders of the CPCz in 1970, which accepted the invasion of Czechoslovakia as necessary and justified. The Afghan communists were likewise eager to point out this similarity; in fact, Karmal went so far as to personally translate the CPCz's "Lessons of Crisis Developments in the Party and Society" into Farsi.<sup>8</sup> In its search for support, the PDPA appealed to the Czechoslovak comrades on the basis of shared fate and experience.

Czechoslovakia had maintained relatively close ties with

Afghanistan during the monarchy, and later with the Daud regime, who took power after the coup and overthrow of the king in 1973. (Incidentally, Afghan King Zahir Shah had made a long visit to the Karlsbad spa, for reasons of health, in the early 1970s, inadvertently adding his name to the curious list of foreign statesmen who lost power at home soon after their stay in Czechoslovakia.) Czechoslovakia provided Afghanistan with economic assistance, loans, and weapon deliveries, including L-39 training jets.<sup>9</sup> The relationship grew even closer after the April 1978 coup brought the Marxist PDPA to power. In the spring of 1979, after a visit to Afghanistan by CPCz chief ideologist Vasil Bilak, the Presidium of the CPCz Central Committee (CC) discussed a general plan for future cooperation and assistance for Afghanistan. Bilak had been in Afghanistan in March; where he observed, among other things, the bloody suppression of an anti-Communist uprising in Herat, the country's second largest city, during which several Soviet advisors lost their lives.<sup>10</sup> Bilak submitted a report and extensive materials on the situation in Afghanistan, along with proposals for future Czechoslovak political, economic and cultural cooperation with the new Afghan regime; the report was approved by the CPCz CC Presidium in May.<sup>11</sup> The document concluded that "the fundamental changes in Afghanistan create new politico-economic and ideo-propagandistic conditions for participation by the community of Socialist countries. Therefore the policy of the CSSR will be to focus on further consolidation of the progressively-oriented regime in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan [DRA] and its foreign policy." This report suggested various types of assistance and cooperation, much of which was gradually carried out in the following years.

The close relations between the two governments and the two Communist parties were illustrated by a number of top-level visits. In addition to Bilak, Foreign Minister Bohumil Chnoupek (June 1980<sup>12</sup> and April 1987<sup>13</sup>), Chairman of the Slovak National Council Peter Colotka (May 1983<sup>14</sup>), and Federal Vice-premier Josef Kempný (April 1988<sup>15</sup>) visited Afghanistan. Equally frequent were trips by high-level Afghan officials to the CSSR; the reception of Karmal in June 1981 was especially opulent.<sup>16</sup>

Divisions within the ruling Afghan party, however, posed certain problems for the CPCz. In 1966 the party had split into two factions, the Parcham and the Khalq. After the April 1978 Revolution, the two factions worked together. The highest offices in the party and state were held by Nur Muhammed Taraki, leader of the Khalq. His deputy was Karmal from Parcham. Conflict soon broke out, however; officials of the Parcham were relieved of their posts, some were shipped off on diplomatic missions abroad.<sup>17</sup> The most important of these, Karmal, took up the position of ambassador to Prague in August 1978. Thus the factional conflict within the PDPA affected the CPCz directly and more so as the struggle deepened. After being removed as ambassador by Kabul in September 1978, Karmal feared for his life and decided to remain in Czechoslovakia. The leadership of the CPCz waffled somewhat before, apparently at the recommendation from Mos-

cow, it permitted Karmal to remain in the country on the pretext that his health required long-term treatment.<sup>18</sup> The decision, of course, was not well received in Kabul. After a meeting at which he informed Taraki of the decision to let Karmal stay in Czechoslovakia, the Czechoslovak ambassador reported to Prague that his "send-off, unlike my reception, was notably brisk."<sup>19</sup>

There is no indication at all that the Soviets were at the time considering a future use for Karmal. On the contrary, at the time Karmal was traveling to Prague, Soviet ambassador to Kabul Puzanov informed Czechoslovak ambassador Karmelita that the poor relations between Khalq and Parcham within the PDPA were mainly the result of personal rivalries. Puzanov let it be known that the USSR supported Khalq and took a very reserved stance toward Parcham officials and Karmal in particular, recommending that Prague show great circumspection in dealing with him.<sup>20</sup>

What Karmal did from September 1978, when he began his "treatment" in Czechoslovakia, until he appeared in December 1979 as head of state in Afghanistan calling for Soviet troops and "fraternal assistance," is not clear from the available Czechoslovak archival record. According to Col. Morozov, then head of the KGB in Afghanistan, the Kabul regime decided in May 1979 to send a hit squad to Czechoslovakia to kill Karmal. According to the source, the Czechoslovak Secret Police (StB) uncovered the plot and neutralized the group.<sup>21</sup> However, none of the accessible Czechoslovak documents mention this episode. According to a Western intelligence source, Karmal was said to have stayed at a Party hotel in Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad) and was still in Czechoslovakia in September 1979.<sup>22</sup> The official Soviet version claimed that Karmal had left Czechoslovakia in October 1979, two months before the invasion, and worked along with other Parcham exiles organizing underground resistance in Afghanistan against Amin, who had overthrown and murdered Taraki that September.<sup>23</sup> Karmal actually seems to have reentered Afghanistan only a few days before 27 December, under the protection of Soviet units that were moving into the country upon the request of Amin. Prior to his arrival in Kabul, Karmal had apparently spent some time in the USSR, probably somewhere in one of the Central Asian republics.<sup>24</sup> Precisely when he really left Czechoslovakia remains unclear.

Documents from the papers of Gustáv Husák chillingly illustrate the struggles and changing fortunes within the Afghan Communist Party. Found next to one another in the files are heartfelt greetings to Comrade Muhammed Nur Taraki on Afghanistan's national holiday, dated 19 August 1979; then heartfelt congratulations to Comrade Hafizullah Amin upon his election to the highest Party and state offices, dated 18 September of that same year (by then Taraki had already been murdered); and, again, equally heartfelt congratulations to Comrade Karmal upon the same, dated 28 December 1979 (by then Amin was dead, too).<sup>25</sup>

The Czechoslovak regime gave its unequivocal support to the Soviet actions in Afghanistan. Its letter of congratulations to Karmal, drafted on 28 December, was released the

following day. The Bulgarian press agency issued a similar statement the very same day, followed two days later by East Germany. The positions of Hungary and Poland were much more reserved: they did not send their congratulations until almost two weeks later.<sup>26</sup> In January, *Rudé právo* published a long interview with Brezhnev in which the Soviet leader defended the Soviet position, and in the following days the paper printed the favorable responses of its readers.<sup>27</sup>

From early 1980 on, the Czechoslovak involvement in Afghanistan increased. Documents show that Czechoslovakia was second only to the Soviet Union in providing extensive aid to Afghanistan (a fact for which the Soviets expressed appreciation, while not failing to call upon them to take a greater part).<sup>28</sup> During the period from 1980 to 1985, Czechoslovak grants and loans to Afghanistan were triple those of the GDR, and fifteen times those provided by Bulgaria.<sup>29</sup> Czechoslovakia signed a number of agreements with Afghanistan (including a treaty for cooperation between security services) and trained hundreds of Afghan students, technicians, soldiers, journalists, security personnel, and PDPA activists. Afghanistan was given a loan of USD 120 million and humanitarian aid, including equipment for entire hospitals. Economic support was extensive: for example, Czechoslovakia took part in building cement factories in Polichomri and Ghorī, a thermal/fossil fuel electric power plant in Herat, an irrigation system in Helmand, etc.<sup>30</sup> Large arms deliveries were a matter of course. The lists of materials delivered also contain some strange entries: in 1980 the Czechoslovak ministry of culture sent to Afghanistan books, films, and television serials (including the famous “Major Zeman of the StB”), and musical instruments worth 25,000 CZK. It would also be interesting to know how the Afghan comrades, in their struggle against counterrevolution, made use of the 133 wigs worth 15,000 CZK, also obtained from Czechoslovakia.<sup>31</sup> The Presidium of the CPCz Central Committee approved its last assistance to Afghanistan in October 1989. They agreed then to the presence of a PDPA secretary in Prague, covering his office expenses for 1990 and 1991 from CPCz funds. The CPCz’s assistance was not overly generous: the Afghan embassy asked for 500,000 CZK, but only 325,000 CZK were approved.<sup>32</sup> It is unlikely that the CPCz was able to deliver on its promise.

Strange was the fact that from early 1989, when both regimes were facing acute crises, Prague’s interest in Afghanistan actually seemed to increase. In prior years, the Presidium of the Central Committee had only irregularly received reports at long intervals on the situation in Afghanistan, usually in the context of important visits. When Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan in February 1989, Prague began getting more frequent and extensive reports on the Afghan situation (two in February, then again in April, May, and in September).<sup>33</sup> The agony of a distant Communist regime, and the alarming fact of Soviet disassociation with it, perhaps drew an irresistible, foreboding fascination.

The documents from the Czechoslovak archives are interesting not only as sources on the history of relations be-

tween Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan, but as a source on the situation in Afghanistan itself, and they broaden our understanding of Soviet policies. The situation in Afghanistan is covered in a large number of documents – records of conversation with Afghan officials, reports and letters from PDPA officials, or reports made by the Czechoslovak diplomats in Kabul. Their content is relatively mundane: much on the defeat of counterrevolution and the approaching final victory; requests for increased assistance, and the obligatory criticism, by whatever faction of the PDPA held power at the time, of its rivals in the other faction. Among the more interesting documents is a letter dating from March 1980, from the PDPA Central Committee to the Communist Party of China (CCP) CC, explaining the situation before and after the Soviet intervention.<sup>34</sup> Significant records include materials related to top-level meetings during Karmal’s visit to Prague in June 1981,<sup>35</sup> or minutes of an April 1987 meeting in Kabul between Chnoupek and PDPA General Secretary Nadjib, who replaced Karmal in 1986.<sup>36</sup>

Documents casting light on the Soviet side of the issue are few. I have found four: the above-mentioned report of the Czechoslovak ambassador to Kabul about the opinions of Soviet ambassador Puzanov on the situation within the PDPA in August 1978;<sup>37</sup> a Soviet evaluation of the situation in spring, 1987;<sup>38</sup> a report by Soviet ambassador in Kabul Vorontsov for embassy officials of the other socialist countries in Afghanistan, (26 January 1989);<sup>39</sup> and the official position of the CPSU CC sent to the CPCz CC after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan (17 February 1989).<sup>40</sup>

The spring 1987 position paper signaled a change in Soviet policy. There was still talk of full support for the Kabul regime, and of the necessity for Czechoslovakia to provide increased support; yet, the emphasis was no longer on the unconditional defeat of counterrevolution but instead on a policy of national reconciliation and the necessity for a political, not military, solution. The two documents from early 1989 in particular show the efforts of the USSR to extricate itself from the problem of Afghanistan. The Soviet position paper stated explicitly: “...we withdrew our forces regardless of the fact that the other participants in the Geneva agreements broke the agreement arrived at. Under these circumstances Soviet troops could, and had the right to, remain in Afghanistan. Even so, the Soviet side, in the interests of Afghan reconciliation, and regional and international security, has fulfilled its commitments.” But under these circumstances the assurances, expressed by Kabul leadership, of complete understanding for the Soviet actions, as well as for the broad material and propaganda assistance that would allow the Kabul regime to survive militarily and eventually make peace, somehow lack conviction. The Soviet leadership put the CPCz on notice toward the end as well (the passage has a somewhat apologetic tone): “We would emphasize that we are not indifferent to what happens in Afghanistan. We will make broad efforts to achieve a peaceful and comprehensive settlement to the Afghan problem. We

trust that you understand our thoughts and feelings, our effort to achieve peace for the Afghan people, for them to live their lives as they see fit, with the right to determine their own fate.” The document also reported in detail on Soviet negotiations with Iran, Pakistan, and various groups of muhajadeen. But despite every assurance that Kabul was sufficiently capable of defending itself militarily, the concern kept reappearing that conflicts between individual opposition groups might break out in full force. One can hardly avoid the impression that this was the eventuality on which Soviet leaders placed their hopes, that might allow the Kabul regime to survive.<sup>41</sup>

The CPCz leadership gave its unreserved support to Soviet policy in Afghanistan. It involved itself in many ways in political and economic assistance to the Afghan communist regime, and made greater efforts and spent more money doing so than the other Soviet allies. The CPCz followed the same policy in other cases such as Cuba and Vietnam. It would seem that this consistent willingness on the part of Czechoslovakia, in the case of the war in Afghanistan, to involve itself on behalf of Soviet interests, may have reflected a certain feeling of mutual affiliation. This affiliation existed on other levels as well. After August 1968 in Czechoslovakia, the question was posed by many: who’s next? When the answer turned out in late 1979 to be Afghanistan, perhaps few guessed (least of all the “normalizers” of the CPCz) that that this time would be the last Soviet intervention, and that the episode in history that started on 27 December with an attack on the presidential palace in Kabul would, instead of creating the conditions for creating a socialist society, would become one of the decisive factors in the extinction of that society, and its political regime.

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## DOCUMENTS

*Editor’s Note: Four documents from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia Archive are published below. They are located in the Central Archive in Prague. The documents depict the situation in Afghanistan during the last years of the Soviet intervention. The first document contains the minutes of the meeting between Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Bohumír Chnoupek and Najib, Secretary General of the Afghan People’s Democratic Party on the occasion of Chnoupek’s visit to Afghanistan between 26 and 30 April 1987.*

*The second document gives the Soviet account of the situation in Afghanistan; the memo was submitted to the members of CPCz Politburo with other materials on their*

*meeting on 6 May 1987.*

*The third document contains information for ambassadors of other Eastern bloc countries delivered by the Soviet Kabul envoy Yuri M. Vorontsov on 26 January 1989.*

*The last document presents the official CPSU CC position following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. This memorandum was handed to Jozef Lenárt, CPC CC Secretary, by Deputy USSR Ambassador Marat Kuznetsov on 17 February 1989.*



### DOCUMENT No. 1

#### **Report on Meeting between Czechoslovak Foreign Minister Bohumír Chnoupek with the General Secretary of the Afghan People’s Democratic Party Central Committee, Comrade Najib [1987]**

*[Source: State Central Archive Prague, File 02/1, CC CPCz Politburo 1980-1989, 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 6 May 1987, in Czech. Translated by Todd Hammond and Derek Paton.]*

Najib warmly welcomed Comrade Chnoupek in Afghanistan in the name of the Afghan People’s Democratic Party. Najib then spoke of the main goals of the national reconciliation policy. First, he emphasized guaranteeing the peace and security of the country. Most importantly, it is important to mobilize political forces in the struggle for state sovereignty and to gain the support of wide segments of the population for the revolutionary process. The main goal is to lay the groundwork for the ongoing realization of the April National Democratic Revolution. He characterized the present situation as follows: 100 days had passed since the national reconciliation policy was declared. 80 days remain until the passing of the first phase, namely the validity of the declared ceasefire. Much has been accomplished over the past 100 days. However, even more work still awaits us. First of all, a great organization of labor is to take place. The Party is undertaking widespread massive propaganda activity in order to realize the new policy. At the present time, the Party is taking energetic strides in the economic sphere. The first year of the current Five-Year Plan represents the effective beginning of a national resolution of the country’s economic difficulties. A pan-Afghan conference of national private businessmen took place for the first time in Afghan history. The goal here is to develop cooperation with the private sector, which accounts for eighty percent of the national economy. Najib expressed his appreciation for the speech by the Czechoslovak ambassador at this conference, in which he stated basic Czechoslovak support for the reconciliation process. At issue is finding common ground with businessmen.

The Afghan leadership is also undertaking a new offensive on the international scene. It is defending the new policy more dynamically, which has yielded positive results, such as diplomatic relations with Cyprus and Zimbabwe. The Afghans are approaching the Geneva discussions with generous and courageous policies aimed at solving the Afghan situation. Relations with India are being consolidated. Unfortunately, Pakistan has completely disregarded the local interests of its population by not adopting a constructive approach at the Geneva discussions. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, there is an overall concurrence with all present aspects of Afghan policy.

The realization of national reconciliation policy is no easy task. Najib likened it to overcoming an unknown mountain where there is no smooth path, but where it is necessary to find an alternative way to overcome obstacles.

The Party is realizing national reconciliation policy with the burden of economic tasks that have gone unfulfilled over the past eight years. It is paying the price for past negligence and dilly-dallying in economic policy. The revolution brought with it many broken promises. It was like water dissipating in sand. The Party thus recognized the need for fundamental change. For this reason a special session of the Afghan People's Democratic Party Central Committee took place, resulting in the declaration of the national reconciliation policy. The idea of national reconciliation had existed previously. For example, the 16<sup>th</sup> Plenum of the People's Democratic Party Central Committee had presented a ten-point plan concerning this policy, but the concrete mechanisms and methods for realization were accepted later by the special session of the Afghan People's Democratic Party Central Committee. This policy does not represent some theoretical experiment, but rather it is a concrete reaction to a concrete situation, that is, a reaction to the needs of the people. This is a people's policy. Slogans expressed earlier had not gained the support of the wide masses.

Ever since the new policy was announced, certain pre-assumptions have been created according to which the Party must intensively work. At present, the Party has 180,000 members in 5,600 organizations. The task of the Party is to remedy past mistakes, formulate new plans, and to consider matters from a long-term perspective. Thus far, the Party has not achieved a qualitative change in the country. In spite of this, it is possible to point to some significant results over the past 100 days. A mechanism to realize the new policy has been created, namely national reconciliation commissions. About 1,300 of these commissions sprang up, which is not an insignificant number when considering the circumstances. The commissions are comprised of a large number of activists, including 3,000 former opponents of the Party.

Najib cited other tangible results. 25,000 counterrevolutionaries surrendered to government forces, in all 1,100 armed groups. An additional 100,000 members of the armed opposition are in contact with state organs. Another 30,000 have adopted a wait-and-see approach. Between 25,000 and 30,000 counterrevolutionaries continue to wage an armed struggle. However, their social base is dwindling, which is largely the

result of their irrational, mad policy of terror. This will only increase their isolation. There are great disagreements among the opposition inside the country.

On the international scene, the United States administration continues to hold a hard, uncompromising position towards Afghanistan. The same holds true for Iran. In addition, China has not changed its position and continues to provide assistance to the extremists.

Overall, it is fair to describe the international response to national reconciliation policy in Afghanistan as favorable. The fact that the empty seat at the Islamic Conference was not given to the extremists can be described as a success. On the contrary, the Conference resolution recognized the good will of both Afghanistan and the Soviet Union. An appreciation of the new policy has also been expressed in two United Nations resolutions. Twelve out of fourteen opposition parties in Pakistan support national reconciliation policy. This leads the Party to believe that its new policy has not only local, but also international significance. The relationship to refugees has also been favorable. In the last six months, 44,000 refugees have returned compared with 35,000 over the past seven years. The number of repatriated refugees could be higher if obstacles were not placed in their way by the Pakistani and Iranian bureaucracies. 5,500 political prisoners have been released as a result of amnesty. 1,100 villages have been peacefully liberated. The second round of local elections is taking place. These results are greater than those over the course of seven years.

National reconciliation policy does not signify an end to the Party's struggle against extremists who still oppose the Party with arms in hand. This struggle continues with the difference that the Party no longer has to contend with 175,000 counterrevolutionaries, but rather a mere 35,000.

The national borders are being secured. Even the armed forces are being strengthened with 40,000 new fighters called up. In addition, the salaries of soldiers and officers have risen.

The backbone of support for national reconciliation policy remains the assistance provided by the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Among the supporters is also Czechoslovakia. This year the Soviet Union provided especially significant assistance.

In other news, Najib expressed his heartfelt gratitude for assistance provided by Czechoslovakia and described in detail the quantitative nature of this support in individual economic sectors. Najib requested that Minister Chnoupek convey the Afghan leadership's sincere gratitude to Comrades G. Husák and V. Bilak.

There is a long tradition of relations between our countries, which precede the revolution and the founding of the Afghan People's Democratic Party. The diplomatic relations established in 1937 turned into brotherly relations after the revolution.

Najib recalled his conversation with the Czechoslovak ambassador two weeks before and just prior to the present gathering, in which he openly expressed the pressing need for Czechoslovak assistance to Afghanistan in the struggle

against international imperialism so that the burden of such assistance would not be solely on the Soviet Union. Difficult tasks await the Party in its attempts to implement the national reconciliation policy. A new initiative will need to be developed after the initial six-month period in a manner such that this policy will become irreversible and influence the masses both inside and outside Afghanistan and keep the opponents of the Afghan regime forever divided. The main organizer of this activity must be the Afghan People's Democratic Party. One of the main aspects of the new policy is the creation of a coalition Government of National Unity. The Afghan People's Democratic Party has decided that it must correct its past mistakes by relaxing its power monopoly. The Party must be a mobilizing, guiding force in society. The Party must get Afghanistan out of its present international isolation. Therefore, the Party's policy must be alive and realistic, conducted in new conditions and in cooperation with new forces. The Party can no longer rely solely on itself. Its policy must be open, patient, and enjoy the confidence of other social forces. The main aim is to achieve the unity, united character, and mobilization of the Party. At the same time, the Party must actively pursue social policy both in Kabul and in the countryside.

In order to achieve these goals, the Party is organizing a large gathering of all its members in Kabul as well as in the countryside. The accepted resolutions express full support for national reconciliation policy. In this, the Party sees a confirmation of its mandate to lead society and strengthen the Party through Leninist-style labor.

In his conclusion, Comrade Najib emphasized the need for close consultations with allies regarding the most effective implementation of national reconciliation policy on both a bilateral and multilateral basis where allied countries can provide significant assistance to those with whom they enjoy friendly relations.



## **DOCUMENT No. 2**

### **Soviet Memorandum on the Present Situation in Afghanistan [6 May 1987]**

*[Source: State Central Archive Prague, File 02/1, CC CPCz Politburo 1980-1989, 35<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 6 May 1987, in Slovak. Translated by Todd Hammond and Derek Paton.]*

The leadership of the Afghan Democratic Republic attaches special significance to expanding cooperation with socialist countries at a time when the situation there is complicated. For example, some days ago a working meeting between Comrade Najib and diplomatic representatives of socialist countries took place in Kabul. During this meeting,

Najib informed the others of Afghan domestic and foreign policy.

In these circumstances, the need for a common approach by socialist countries to aid Afghanistan is becoming more significant. This was discussed at a gathering of Warsaw Pact foreign ministers in Moscow. A new situation, however, has emerged in Afghanistan. A path to national reconciliation has been followed, bloodshed has been curtailed, and a political solution is being sought. The first tangible domestic and foreign policy results have been achieved. Some bands are laying down their arms, refugees are returning, and the international community is taking an active interest in Afghan events.

At the same time we realize that the basic struggle for national reconciliation in Afghanistan still awaits us. The imperialist and reactionary forces cannot reconcile themselves with the pacification of this tense flashpoint and are thus doing all they can to prevent a solution to the Afghan problem. It is sufficient to recall the new supplies of modern weapons to the counterrevolutionaries, the sending of hundreds of millions of dollars, and attempts to stifle discussions between Afghanistan and Pakistan in Geneva. The terror continues and the already weak Afghan economy is being further undermined. Naturally, without the overall support by socialist countries to our Afghan allies, it would be difficult to imagine victory in the struggle for a peaceful, non-aligned, and peaceful Afghanistan. It is obvious that the absence of a solution to the Afghan problem is being used to harm the interests of all socialist countries.

In this trying time for our Afghan comrades, it is crucial that they be firm in their pronouncements so that they can overcome their enemies' attempts to hinder national reconciliation.

Over the last months, the Soviet Union has decided to provide substantial, non-returnable aid to Afghanistan. In fact, Soviet assistance is increasing by several times. Out of humanitarian considerations, the Soviet Union has provided large quantities of basic needs for the poor in Afghanistan as well as for returning refugees. The Soviet side considers this to be important because many ordinary Afghans have lost their property and even the roof over their heads as a result of counterrevolutionary activities. Other significant assistance being prepared for the Afghan people includes education, health care, and the training of national cadres. When taking into account the issue of national reconciliation, great attention is devoted to the private sector and the creation of "mixed" enterprises. Also, significant aid is oriented towards the bolstering of the Afghan armed forces, whose role it will be to safeguard to stability of the national reconciliation process. The Soviet Union is strengthening its political and diplomatic support for Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union appreciates the benefits provided by the solidarity of socialist countries with the Afghan people. In the current situation, it is crucial once again to reconsider possibilities of expanding cooperation.

Concretely, it is important to activate political contacts with Afghanistan, particularly on a high level, and delega-

tions on various levels should be exchanged more frequently. It is quite clear that there exist serious reservations regarding a more active and involved approach to Afghanistan in the United Nations as well as other international gatherings between uninvolved countries. It is definitely worth considering looking into possible measures in the areas of propaganda and counterpropaganda with the aim of disseminating truthful information about the situation in Afghanistan. For the sake of brevity, we must do everything in our power so that nobody can doubt our support for the present policies of the Afghan leadership.

The Soviet Union is aware that its Czechoslovak friends, guided by an internationalist approach, are providing economic assistance to Afghanistan. Nevertheless, it would be good for us to consider how to make this assistance more effective and how best to suit the needs of Afghanistan.

The Soviet side believes that its Czechoslovak friends will correctly interpret this call to action, which involves our common goals, and that the Czechoslovaks will do everything in their power to further the goal of national reconciliation in Afghanistan.



### DOCUMENT No. 3

**Report by the Soviet Ambassador Y. M. Vorontsov, Concerning the Current Political Situation Inside Afghanistan and the Possibilities of Solving the Afghan Question, sent to the Heads of the Embassies and Legations of the Countries of the Socialist Commonwealth in Kabul, [3 February 1989]**

*[Source: State Central Archive Prague, File 02/1, CC CPCz Politburo 1980-1989, 103<sup>rd</sup> Meeting, 3 February 1989, in Czech. Translated by Todd Hammond and Derek Paton.]*

Y. M. Vorontsov reported on his talks with representatives of the Afghan opposition in Tehran and Istanbul. In Tehran he met with a representatives of the alliance of “Eight.” It was a very unusual group of people; only one person spoke on its behalf—[spokesman of the seven-party mujaheddin alliance Yunus] Khalis [Khales]—who talked mainly about the French Revolution. He said that once an Islamic state was created in Afghanistan there would be full equality and freedom in the country. Vorontsov replied that it was first necessary to bring about an end to the fighting in Afghanistan and establish a coalition government. Khalil did not reply to that.

According to Vorontsov the leading Iranian representatives took a pragmatic, matter-of-fact approach in talks with him. They had directly asked him what had to be done to solve the Afghan problem. Vorontsov replied that the war had to be stopped and all the representatives of all the forces

in Afghan society had to be brought to one table. They replied in a matter-of-fact way that they were looking into what could be done to that end. Unlike earlier talks, they avoided talk about the ideology of the Islamic revolution.

It was agreed that Vorontsov would meet again with representatives of the “Eight” (according to Vorontsov they are not at all independent, and are run by Iran).

In Pakistan, according to Vorontsov, [Pakistani Prime Minister] Ms. Benazir Bhutto is not in charge; power is in the hands of the generals. In Islamabad he had been told openly that the country supported the Mujahadeen on the basis of Islamic commonality and the fundamentalist principles established in the country by Zia-ul Haq. The generals had come out particularly hard: [Pakistani General Mirza Aslam] Baig and [Hamid] Gul, the Head of Military Intelligence (who runs the mujahaddin).

The meeting with Vorontsov was attended by [National Liberation Front of Afghanistan leader Sebgatullah] Mudjaddidi [Mojaddedi], [National Islamic Front leader Pir Sayyid Ahmad] Gilani and representatives of [radical Islamist mujaheddin (Hizb-i Islami) leader] Gulbuddin [Hekmatyar] and [“Islamic Society of Afghanistan” leader Burhanuddin] Rabbani. Rabbani himself was abroad. Also in attendance was the head of the pro-Iranian “Eight,” Khalis. During the talks there were clearly also sharp differences between participants, and mutual hatred. The talks took place in an extremely tense atmosphere; the partners stated that they did not want to hear anything about the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan.

At one point Mudjaddidi said that he wanted elections to be held in Afghanistan to make it appear that the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan had the support of the masses. Vorontsov agreed that there should be elections, but pointed out that this would be the first test of the position of members of the “Alliance of Seven,” which so far had never that appeared before the Afghan people. Gilani immediately declared that he did not want any elections.

Vorontsov demanded that the talks should focus on two main tasks: the ceasing of hostilities and the creation of a provisional organ. A sort of “consultative council” was discussed, which was to comprise between fifty and sixty members. Vorontsov expressed his agreement with the condition that the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan would also be suitably represented in it. The Pakistanis then proposed a council comprising between five hundred and six hundred persons; their reasoning was that all the leading armed groups operating in Afghanistan also wanted to be represented in it (because they did not believe the “Seven,” and wanted to be alone at all talks). Vorontsov pointed out that such a large assembly could not decide anything. He then, however, agreed again to the condition that the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan would be appropriately represented. The Pakistani Foreign Minister Jaqub Khan promised that they would try to see to that. Now, however, [Benon] Sevan ([UN envoy Diego] Cordovez’s political representative) said that he was considering providing the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan with twelve places (out of



five hundred to six hundred places); that, however, is unacceptable. The pro-Iranian opposition (the “Eight”) also refused to take part in this “council,” because it had been assigned only sixty places, though it had demanded twice as many. Vorontsov feels that it is necessary to return to the variant of a council with fifty to sixty members, in which the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan should hold twelve places and the other groups would also have twelve places each.

What was important, according to Vorontsov, was that everybody should be very interested in the creation of some sort of “consultative council” (including representatives of Iran and Pakistan; and there were also signals of interest from the USA). Ms. Bhutto asked Vorontsov when such a council should begin to operate; Vorontsov replied, that it should be as soon as possible.

Vorontsov said that everybody (from both the “Seven” and the “Eight”) wanted to negotiate, but only with him. At the same time, the most irreconcilable men, in his words, wanted to have highly private talks with him (so that none of their partners finds out).

The main problem, however, is what Vorontsov called the “Pakistan Game:” to turn these ideas about “councils” into a reality only after 15 February [the deadline for Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan]. On 15 February they want to test their strength, to see whether they can manage to overthrow the Kabul regime militarily; if they do not succeed, then they would negotiate about “councils” and compromises—that is Plan B. The politicians do not discuss that publicly. The generals speak more openly about this. They (Baig and Gul) told Vorontsov that their primary effort would be to find a military solution to the Afghan question; if they didn’t succeed, it would be the turn of the diplomats. This position is also taken by the US, and one cannot expect another approach even from the new [George H. W.] Bush administration.

Concerning former [Afghan] King Zahir Shah, Vorontsov said that in his talks with him, Zahir Shah complained at great length about his having been deposed. He expressed sorrow over the suffering of the people of Afghanistan as a result of the many years of war, and stated that he was prepared to do everything to end this war and bring peace back to Afghanistan. He did not support the condition that Nadjibullah and the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan had to leave the political scene; yet he was aware that Nadjibullah could not stand at the head of a broad coalition based on all the political forces of Afghan society. At the same time he knew he could not return as king. But he did openly say to Vorontsov that his activity in this sense would be possible after the Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan. Vorontsov’s personal view was that Zahir Shah himself was not particularly interested in this activity, but was being forced into it by those around him (his relatives). The Czechoslovak titular head reported on his talks with Minister Pazhvak and about the latter’s proposal that Czechoslovakia use its good name with Zahir Shah and send its emissary to him for talks (see my 010/89). Vorontsov very much welcomed the proposal and

recommended it be carried out, especially if we found somebody who had once talked to Zahir Shah in the past.

The Soviet representatives stated clearly to the leading actors of the Kabul regime that they had to withstand the initial assault from the side of its enemies. Vorontsov added that contacts would continue (with the “Seven” and the “Eight”) and other groups and actors (though only after 15 February; likewise, Najibullah and members of the Kabul leadership would also negotiate intensively with the opposition along their lines.)

The aim of the recent visit of E. A. Shevardnadze in Kabul was to negotiate with the Kabul leadership about what assistance they still required in order to withstand the assault from the side of the armed resistance after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. After Shevardnadze’s departure members of the delegation remained, and discussed details related to this assistance. Vorontsov reported that other Soviet actors (such as Defense Minister [Dmitri] Yazov) would soon be flying to Kabul with this end in mind.

Vorontsov reckons that the first assault from the side of the armed resistance against the Kabul regime would last about one month (that is to say, till about 15 March). The Kabul regime had to hold out, and had all the necessary conditions for that. The opposition was at a disadvantage, because it would be fighting both against the Kabul regime and amongst itself. Each part of the opposition wanted to be the first to enter Kabul; heavy fighting was already taking place among them. The strongest forces among them are those of Gulbuddin and Rabbani, but they hate each other more than they hate Najibullah and the Kabul politicians.

The Soviet Union is giving the Kabul leadership everything necessary—including powerful new weapons—so that they have enough of everything to fight for a year. In conversations with leading Kabul politicians, E. A. Shevardnadze emphasized that their unity was essential to drive back the enemy, and that was a life-and-death question for them.

To relieve the military situation of the governing forces, the Soviet Union would any day now also provide assistance in the form of heavy weapons and aircraft: places where enemy forces, ammunition dumps, etc. were concentrated had been destroyed. These strikes, carried out together with the Afghan government forces, were very effective and caused the enemy great losses. At present a lethal operation was underway against the strongest of the native leaders of the armed opposition, Ahmad Shah Masoud, whose divisions had occupied the Panshir Valley, a territory in the north-east provinces, and operated particularly in the region of the Solang pass, where they disrupted traffic on the Kabul-Hairaton highway.

Even though talks had been held with him for several years now (both from the side of the Kabul leadership and from the side of the Soviet forces in Afghanistan), he has turned out to be insincere and is the first to prepare an attack on Kabul after the departure of Soviet forces. According to Vorontsov the Americans have won him over to their side and have recently (not through Rabbani, as was the case in the past) provided him with money and arms, and sent their

emissaries to him. Masoud is Tajik and the [ILLEGIBLE–Tajiks?] want to make him the leader of the northern part of Afghanistan and thus, through him, complicate the situation between the Tajiks and other peoples in the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union. Devastating strikes with rockets and air raids, followed by artillery fire, have caused heavy losses to Massoud in terms of men and material, decimating his units. Evidently units of other leaders of the armed opposition (particularly Gulbuddin) are taking part in this campaign against Masoud.

Vorontsov confirmed that the Soviet divisions would leave Afghanistan by 15 February. The most important situation will be on the Kabul-Hairaton highway, where Soviet and Kabul units are now conducting a mopping-up operation. That must then be assured by the government forces themselves. In the same way the government forces are taking over the protection of Kabul airport. Vorontsov emphasized several times that the Kabul leadership had everything needed to that end, but must demonstrate strong resolve.

According to Vorontsov, a large war over Kabul, a concentrated attack on the city, is not anticipated. He is convinced that the Soviet Union will thwart the attempt to blockade the city, and will ensure the necessary foodstuffs for the inhabitants of the city (an airlift has been made). It is necessary, however, to be prepared for terrorism within the city and rocket attacks on it. The Afghan security forces have discovered hundreds of rockets prepared for use against the town; Vorontsov noted that this means that the mujaheddin have moved thousands of rockets into the proximity of the city. The rockets should be of the same strength as those that were fired on the town; only their range may have been extended to 35–40 km. A basement shelter ought to provide sufficient protection.

It is also necessary to be prepared for bandit attacks, explosions and provocations in the city.

For employees of our offices in Kabul that means the following:

(1) A reduction in the number of employees to the bare minimum. In accordance with the latest decision, the Embassy of the USSR has sent all women home. There are now about three hundred persons on the Embassy grounds – Vorontsov was trying to reduce this number even more. Employees sent to the USSR shall continue to remain in the employ of the Embassy; they should take their vacations and possibly work for a short period in the Foreign Ministry of the USSR. He expects that they will return to Kabul within one and a half to two months.

(2) The preparation of basement shelters in case of rocket attacks.

(3) Expecting terrorist attacks in the city; one should therefore not leave the city unless it is absolutely necessary, and then only together with other vehicles. In the event that Embassy buildings are at-

tacked, one should not defend oneself (or return fire); one should try to hide and immediately request the assistance of the Afghan security organs (the Ministry of the Interior and the State Security). One should also immediately signal other embassies of the socialist countries by radio, informing them that they should also try and get the Afghan security forces to take action. To that end it has been agreed that the radio operators of all the fraternal embassies would meet to work out permanent contact and codes; the Embassy of the USSR will obtain the same kind of transmitters for everybody.

Vorontsov stressed that the socialist countries should not close their embassies in Kabul. At the present time it is very important to support the Afghan leadership politically and morally, to bolster its self-confidence. Vorontsov stated that the Soviet leadership is convinced that the leadership of the Afghan Republic would hold out, would resist the assault by the enemy forces, and would thus force the opposition to negotiate with them about the future organization of the country. The USSR was continuing to develop economic relations with the Afghan Republic. In his opinion, it was necessary to activate the relations between the socialist countries and the Afghan Republic, to develop contacts with private entrepreneurs and with intelligence, among others. In contacts with the leading Afghan figures (both with the representatives of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the SAZA [Toilers of Afghanistan Party], as well as other political forces), to emphasize the necessity of their unity, so that they concentrate all their forces on repelling enemy assaults and only then should they work out their personal differences.

It will also be necessary, according to Vorontsov, to develop a big political and propaganda campaign after 15 February, in which the following should be emphasized: it is said that the main cause of the fighting in Afghanistan is the presence of Soviet troops in the country; and yet, though Soviet divisions are now leaving, fighting continues and is even intensifying. The cause of that is the personal ambition of representatives of the Peshawar alliance and their support and instigation on the part of the US and Pakistan. This campaign must therefore be focused on condemnation of the approach of the US, Pakistan and the Peshawar leaders. In developing this campaign the USSR will request the assistance of the socialist countries and their mass media, as well as other members of the progressive, peace-loving public throughout the world.

Prague, 3 February 1989

**DOCUMENT No. 4****Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU on the Current Situation in Afghanistan, 17 February 1989**

[Source: State Central Archive Prague, File 02/1, CC CPCz Politburo 1980-1989, 106<sup>th</sup> Meeting, 22 February 1989, in Russian. Translated by Todd Hammond and Derek Paton.]

Report on the Current Situation in Afghanistan  
(Comrade J. Lenart)

In connection with the completion of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan we wish to share several views with you. First, we are grateful to you for the assistance and support you have provided both unilaterally and as part of the coordinated policy of the countries of the socialist commonwealth in solving a difficult problem we inherited in this difficult period of international relations, a period of growing tension and conflicts in the world arena.

Practical implementation of the line of a political settlement of the Afghan problem became possible only in the conditions of perestroika, new political thinking, the course of the fundamental recovery of the international situation, of unbiased, realistic approaches to the resolution of regional conflicts. We are firmly convinced that a solution by force to the situation that has arisen in Afghanistan is not only impracticable but also dangerous for the country and its people.

That is why the Soviet Union, in strict compliance with the Geneva Agreements, has completely withdrawn its troops from Afghanistan by the assumed date. Together with the Republic of Afghanistan the USSR has gone its share of the Geneva road with honor and dignity. We have withdrawn our troops regardless of the fact that the other participants in the Geneva Agreements broke the arrangements that had been reached. Under these circumstances the Soviet troops could have remained in Afghanistan, indeed even had the right to do so. Nevertheless, the Soviet side, in the interest of an Afghan settlement as well as of regional and international security, has met its obligations. At the same time, its principled positions and activities have been fully understood by the Afghan leadership.

The political line of the USSR is, as before, oriented towards achieving a general Afghan settlement, towards resolving the intra-Afghan conflicts by peaceful means, at the negotiating table. After the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan, the Soviet Union expects that the absence of foreign troops on Afghan territory will stimulate the peace process in Afghan society, and activate efforts to find mutually acceptable solutions to problems. For our part we believe that the road to an internal Afghan settlement consists in the creation of a broad-based representative government, with the participation of all mutually belligerent Afghan groups. The Soviet Union fully supports the efforts of the Afghan Republic in this sense. Nevertheless, to form a government

that would truly reflect the will and interests of all strata of Afghan society is obviously possible only in a situation where fighting ceases in the territory of Afghanistan, thus ensuring the truly free expression of the will of the Afghan people. Concerning the future of this country, the Soviet Union, as we have stated on more than one occasion, supports the idea of an independent, neutral, non-aligned, demilitarized Afghanistan.

The situation in Afghanistan is at present very complicated; there is even a danger that military operations will intensify, at least in the initial period, as a result of the irreconcilable positions of individual extremist groups of the armed opposition. The future development of the situation, either along the path of national concord and the formation of a broad-based coalition government or along the path of an escalation of hostilities and tensions within the country and around it, will depend in many respects on how the other parties to the Geneva Agreement—the USA and Pakistan, who have direct access to, and influence on, the armed opposition, whom they support with supplies of arms and financial assistance—and on how actively the world community contribute to the implementation of the Resolution of the 43rd Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly of the UN on Afghanistan.

The constructive line promoted by the Soviet Union and the Afghan Republic, which corresponds in spirit and letter to the Geneva Agreements, has created all the conditions for a cessation of the bloodshed in Afghanistan, so that the future course of events could extricate itself from a military solution and move to a solution along the path of peaceful negotiations and the search for mutually acceptable compromises.

The government of the Afghan Republic starts from the only correct assumption, that is, that attempts by anybody to take all power in the present conditions condemns *a priori* the Afghan nation to a long, bloody, civil war, to further victims, material losses, and the ruin of the country. It is precisely to ward off such a course of events that the proposals of the Afghan government—for the commencement of an intra-Afghan dialogue, the creation of transitional structures for the eventual formation of a broad-based representative government and a general, complete cease-fire—are to serve. It is characteristic that these proposals point the way to the free self-determination of the Afghan people, which has been so vehemently demanded by the opposition, and enables the solution of problems facing the Afghan talks, without force and the use of arms. The call for peace is not a sign of weakness of the leadership of the Afghan Republic; rather it is the voice of political reason, an admission of the priority of nation-wide interests over all others. It would be absurd, however, to assume that the Afghan leadership, which is giving up its monopoly on power, is prepared to capitulate, to leave the state structures and political life of the country voluntarily. If the extremist part of the opposition tries by force to gain advantage from the present situation, the Afghan Republic and its armed forces will have all they need, including the most effective modern weapons, to repel its forces, which

will be counting exclusively on a military solution.

The Soviet Union has provided, and will continue to provide, great assistance to the people of Afghanistan. The traditional friendly relations, good neighborliness, and co-operation between the USSR and Afghanistan has in recent years been supplemented with a whole series of treaties and agreements, whose aim has been the provision of continuous, long-term assistance to Afghanistan in the development of its national economy and in healing the wounds suffered in the long war.

Afghanistan now requires the general assistance and support of the world community. We are determined to do everything necessary to develop our bi-lateral collaboration even more effectively in the interest of the Soviet and Afghan peoples, both in the current phase, with efforts to restore peace on Afghan soil, and in future, after the achievement of national reconciliation and a political solution in the country.

We are prepared to share in the manifold assistance to Afghanistan, along the lines of the United Nations, and hope that everybody who cares about the future of the Afghan people will provide assistance and support in this difficult period for Afghanistan.

At present the Soviet Union is particularly disturbed by attempts of extremist parts of the armed opposition to stifle the Afghan people and starve out Kabul; that is why the USSR considers it its duty to do everything possible to ensure that humanitarian aid is delivered to the Afghan people on time and to the designated places.

We turn to you at a time when the USSR, in good will and after agreement with the Afghan leadership, is leaving Afghanistan, and we emphasize that we are not indifferent to what happens in Afghanistan. We shall make an all round effort to achieve a peaceful and comprehensive settlement of the Afghan problem. We are convinced that you understand our thoughts and feelings, our efforts to attain peace for the Afghan people so that they can run their lives as they see fit and with the right to determine their own fate.

Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU, conveyed by Comrade Marat KUZNETSOV, Deputy to the Soviet Ambassador to the CSSR, 17 February 1989.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Both are on deposit at the State Central Archive (SÚA), fond Gustáv Husák, unsorted materials, Afghanistan file.

<sup>2</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle. Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (New York 1982), p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> See e.g. J. Bruce Amstutz: *Afghanistan. The First Five Years of Soviet Occupation*. (Washington 1986), p. 42; Joseph J. Collins: *The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan. A Study in the Use of Force in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Lexington, Ma. – Toronto 1986), p. 77; Pierre Allan – Dieter Klay: *Zwischen Bürokratie und Ideologie. Entscheidungsprozesse in Moskaus Afghanistankonflikt* (Bern –

Stuttgart – Wien 1999), p. 30ff., 46ff., Henry S. Bradsher, *Afghanistan and the Soviet Union*. Durham 1985, p. 137f., 160f., 170f.

<sup>4</sup> In official Soviet literature of the period such as Genrich A. Poljakov: *Afganistan revoljucionnyj*. (Moscow 1981), p. 42f.

<sup>5</sup> See for example H. S. Bradsher, p. 100, 108.

<sup>6</sup> Alexander A. Ljachovskij, *Tragedija i doblest Afgana*. (Moscow 1995), p. 149.

<sup>7</sup> Besides the literature mentioned in footnote 3, see also Henry S. Bradsher, *Afghan Communism and Soviet Intervention*. (Oxford 1999), p. 75ff., N.I. Nikov et al., *Vojna v Afganistane*. Moskva 1991, p. 211ff., Jiri Valenta, *Soviet Decisionmaking on Afghanistan, 1979*. In: J. Valenta – W. C. Porter (ed.), *Soviet Decisionmaking for National Security*, (London 1984), p. 165-184, and several reports in the collection Heinrich Vogel (ed.), *Die sowjetische Intervention in Afghanistan. Entstehung und intergrunde einer weltpolitischen krise*. Baden-Baden 1980 (Astrid von Borcke, pp. 119-180, Helmut Dahm, pp. 181-245, Gerhard Wettig, pp. 247-271).

<sup>8</sup> This was the official pamphlet of the CPCz that laid out the party line to be adhered to in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of 1968.

<sup>9</sup> See documents on deposit at the State Central Archive (SÚA), f. Gustáv Husák, unsorted materials, Afghanistan file. See also H. S. Bradsher, p. 27f.

<sup>10</sup> See for example Jacques Lévesque – Gilbert Labelle, *La mémoire du siècle: l'USSR en Afghanistan de l'invasion au retrait*. Bruxelles 1990, p. 47f. or J. J. Collins, *Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan* (c.d. in note 3), p. 59ff.

<sup>11</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ [Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia], 1976-1979, 104<sup>th</sup> (30.3.1979.) and 108<sup>th</sup> meeting (16.5.1979).

<sup>12</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 144<sup>th</sup> meeting, 15.8.1980.

<sup>13</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 35<sup>th</sup> meeting, 6.5.1987.

<sup>14</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 70<sup>th</sup> meeting, 27.5.1983.

<sup>15</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 69<sup>th</sup> meeting, 6.5.1988.

<sup>16</sup> On preparations and course of visit, see SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 8<sup>th</sup> (29.5.1981), 12<sup>th</sup> (19.6.1981), and 14<sup>th</sup> (10.7.1981) meetings.

<sup>17</sup> See e.g., Anthony Arnold – Rosanne Klass: "Afghanistan's Divided Communist Party". In: R. Klass (ed.), *Afghanistan. The Great Game Revisited*, (New York 1990), pp. 135-160, or Barnett R. Rubin, *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan*, (New Haven-London 1995), p. 111.

<sup>18</sup> See record of conversation of head of diplomatic protocol Tucek, on conversations with Karmal, 29.8.1978 and 11.9.1978; and record of conversation with deputy foreign minister Spácil with Novikov, Soviet embassy attaché in Prague, 11.9.1978; SÚA, f. Gustáv Husák, unsorted materials, Afghanistan file.

<sup>19</sup> Telegram from ambassador Karmelita from Kábul, 4.10.1978, SÚA, f. Gustáv Husák, unsorted materials, Afghanistan file.

<sup>20</sup> Letter from ambassador Karmelita to minister Chnoupek, 16.8.1978, SÚA, f. Gustáv Husák, unsorted materials, Afghanistan file.

<sup>21</sup> Alexander Morozov, "Our man in Kabul." In: *New Times* 1991, no. 38; pp. 36-39, no. 39, pp. 32-33; no. 40, pp. 38-39; and no. 41, pp. 32-35: history of a plan for murder no. 39, p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> See Bradsher, p. 173f.

<sup>23</sup> See e.g. Rauf T. Rasidov: *Sovetsko-afganskije otnošenija i ich bur'uaznyje fal'sifikatory (1978-1983)*. (Taškent 1986), p. 77ff.,

or pro-Soviet Indian journalist D. R. Goyal: *Afghanistan. Behind the Smoke Screen*. (Delhi 1984), p. 277.

<sup>24</sup> See David Gaj – Vladimír Snegirev: *Vtor•enije. Neizvestnyje stranicy neobjavljennoj vojny* (Moskva 1991), p. 98f., H.S. Bradsher, p. 77, or A – K, p. 189.

<sup>25</sup> SÚA, f. Gustáv Husák, unsorted materials, Afghanistan file.

<sup>26</sup> See. Christian Meier: “Die sowjetische Intervention in Afghanistan und die Reaktion im Warschauer Pakt” In: H. Vogel ed., *Die sowjetische Intervention in Afghanistan* (see note 7), pp. 273-289.

<sup>27</sup> Bre•nev gave the interview on 12 January; *Pravda* published it on 13 Jan., *Rudé právo* a day later: *Sovetský svaz nic neodradí od mírové politiky*, p. 1 and 6.

<sup>28</sup> See e.g. [compilation report on the realization of resolutions by party and government organs on cooperation with developing countries], SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 94<sup>th</sup> meeting, 25.11.1988, or Soviet memorandum on the current situation in Afghanistan, SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 35<sup>th</sup> meeting, 6.5.1987 (see doc. no 2 below).

<sup>29</sup> See Bradsher, p. 293.

<sup>30</sup> There are dozens of documents about this in the papers of G. Husák, the Presidium and Secretariat of the CC CPCZ and the office of the government presidium on deposit at the State Central Archive. See for example a report from ambassador Karmelita of 10. 6. 1981 from Kabul on Afghan requirements before the visit by Babrak Karmal to the CSSR, SÚA, f. 02/1, Presidium CC CPCZ 1980-1989, 12<sup>th</sup> meeting 19.6.1981, or correspondence from Feb.

1984 between the foreign trade minister and premier Štrougal, SÚA, f. ÚPV, sv. 315, a.j. 69/1. On economic cooperation see also John F. Shroeder- Abdul Tarab A SSIFI: *Afghan Mineral Resources and Soviet Exploitation*. In: R. Klass (ed.), *Afghanistan*, pp. 97-134, or J.B. Amstutz, p. 254ff.

<sup>31</sup> SÚA, f. ÚPV, sv. 402, a.j. 69/7.

<sup>32</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1 Presidium CC CPCz 1980-1989, 117<sup>th</sup> meeting 19.10.1989.

<sup>33</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1 Presidium CC CPCz 1980-1989, 103<sup>rd</sup> (3.2.1989), 106<sup>th</sup> (24.2.1989), 112<sup>th</sup> (14.4.1989), 116<sup>th</sup> (12.5.1989) and 130<sup>th</sup> (14.9.1989) meetings.

<sup>34</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1 Presidium CC CPCz 1980-1989, 137<sup>th</sup> meeting, 18.4.1980.

<sup>35</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1 Presidium CC CPCz 1980-1989, 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, 10.7.1981.

<sup>36</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1 Presidium CC CPCz 1980-1989, 35<sup>th</sup> meeting, 6.5.1987 (see Document No.1 below).

<sup>37</sup> See note 19.

<sup>38</sup> See note 27.

<sup>39</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1 Presidium CC CPCz 1980-1989, 103<sup>rd</sup> meeting 3.2.1989 (see doc. no 3 below).

<sup>40</sup> SÚA, f. 02/1 Presidium CC CPCz 1980-1989, 106<sup>th</sup> meeting 24.2.1989 (see doc. no 4 below).

<sup>41</sup> On the history of the Soviet withdrawal of Afghanistan, see for example Diego Cordovez – Selig S. Harrison, *Out of Afghanistan. The Inside Story of the Soviet Withdrawal*. (New York-Oxford 1995).

## The George Washington University Cold War (GWCW) Group

The George Washington University Cold War (GWCW) Group promotes research and scholarship on this critical period in international affairs and strives to elucidate the ways in which Cold War legacies (economic, political, psychological, military, and environmental) affect public policy in many parts of the world. GWCW encourages multi-lingual, multi-disciplinary, and multi-national explorations of the Cold War experience and serves as a meeting place for scholars and graduate students by hosting a seminar series to showcase recent books and ongoing research. A key focus of GWCW is to support graduate students working on dissertations concerning the Cold War. To that end, GWCW each spring co-organizes with U.C. Santa Barbara an annual graduate student conference designed to support the work of the next generation of Cold War scholars. And in June 2004, GWCW will host its second annual Summer Institute on Conducting Archival Research (SICAR), designed to train graduate students in the use of American and non-American archival materials. With a three-year grant from the Luce Foundation, GWCW has built additional programs on the Cold War in Asia, including organizing an annual workshop, the most recent of which was held in Budapest, Hungary, and featured new documents from Central and Eastern European archives on such topics as the Sino-Soviet rivalry and the Vietnam War. With a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, GWCW has also worked with the CWIHP to train high school teachers on the Cold War and to develop an online resource for teachers and their students. GWCW resides in the Institute for European, Russian and Eurasian Studies (IERES) of the Elliott School of International Affairs at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. More information is available at <http://ieres.org>.

## More East-Bloc Sources on Afghanistan

### **Memorandum of Conversation between the Czechoslovak Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dusan Spacil and Soviet Ambassador Novikov (written by Spacil), 12 September 1978**

*[Source: Central State Archive, Archive of the CC CPCz, file Husak, unsorted materials, box Afghanistan. Provided by Oldrich Tuma and translated by Francis Raska.]*

On 11 September 1978, I informed Comrade Novikov, who monitors problems among diplomats, at a gathering at the Chinese Embassy of the situation that resulted on account of the recalling of the Afghan ambassador [former People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) leader] Babrak Karmal. Comrade Novikov then had a long discussion with Karmal and his report is as follows:

Karmal had requested an audience with Comrade Mackevitch in order to resolve his personal situation. Comrade Novikov replied that Mackevitch was terribly busy and that he (Novikov) would be of assistance. Karmal said that he was at a loss as to what to do. The Afghan leadership had recalled him from the post of ambassador. He cannot return to Afghanistan because he would be arrested, perhaps even executed. He also does not wish to return to Afghanistan because his return as well as that of other [PDPA faction] Parcham comrades scattered throughout the world could result in great social disturbances and an eventual uprising against [PDPA Khalq faction leader and Afghan President and Prime Minister Nur Mohammad] Taraki, who is losing the support of the people. Under no circumstances does Karmal wish to leave Czechoslovakia for some capitalist country because that would be used by imperialist countries against the Revolution in Afghanistan. At the same time, he is aware that he cannot remain in Czechoslovakia. Not long ago, a relative, also a Parchamist and a leading Party member who had served as ambassador to Pakistan, contacted Karmal and informed him of his request for asylum in Yugoslavia. Karmal considers even this solution to be problematic. Therefore, he had sent forth his request for assistance to Novikov and he is waiting for a recommendation from his "older brother" as to what to do. Comrade Novikov informed me that he would immediately pass on this information to Moscow. I told Comrade Novikov that our Communist Party representative had already informed Moscow about the situation and looked forward to the disclosure of Moscow's position.

Comment:

The head of the diplomatic protocol, Comrade Tucek, spoke with Karmal that very day and stated that, according to Kabul, Karmal is no longer the ambassador. Despite this, Karmal showed up at a cocktail party hosted by the Chinese

ambassador. It remains unclear whether he came in order to meet someone or whether he is not considering departing for China.



### **Minutes from Conversation between Former Afghan Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Babrak Karmal, and the Head of the Diplomatic Protocol Tucek, 12 September 1978**

*[Source: Central State Archive, Archive of the CC CPCz, file Husak, unsorted materials, box Afghanistan. Provided by Oldrich Tuma and Translated by Francis Raska.]*

Babrak Karmal visited the head of the diplomatic protocol on 11 September at 3 p.m. He introduced the discussion by stating that he had been informed that his diplomatic activities in Czechoslovakia were at an end. The head of the diplomatic protocol replied that the Foreign Ministry had learned news to this effect through the Czechoslovak Embassy in Kabul.

Karmal said that he realized that, officially, his function in Czechoslovakia was over, but that as a member of his Party's leadership, he would like to meet with [Communist Party of Czechoslovakia chief ideologist] Comrade Bilak and inform him of the situation in his country as well as his own situation. Karmal also declared that he would not return to his homeland under the present circumstances, but that he had no desire to move to any capitalist country. He stated his intention to ask for political asylum in Czechoslovakia.

When Karmal asked what his status in Czechoslovakia was after he ceased to be the ambassador, the head of the diplomatic protocol replied that as an Afghan citizen, he was under the care and protection of the Afghan Embassy.



### **Dispatch from the Head of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPCz) Central Committee's International Relations Department M. Stefanak to the Czechoslovak Embassy in Kabul, 28 September 1978**

*[Source: Central State Archive, Archive of the CC CPCz, file Husak, unsorted materials, box Afghanistan. Provided by Oldrich Tuma and Translated by Francis Raska.]*

Comrade Kouba

Foreign Ministry-Kabul

Visit the Afghan representative and inform him that Babrak Karmal was accepted in Czechoslovakia as the ambassador of a friendly country. While in office, Karmal asked for permission to undergo treatment. This request was granted and treatment was administered. It became evident that Karmal suffers from heart problems, which require long-term treatment. After the Afghan government's decision to recall Karmal, he asked that his treatment be continued. In consideration of his poor health, we could not refuse Karmal's request. He stated later that he could not return to Afghanistan. He has not requested asylum. He is in Czechoslovakia for necessary treatment. We believe that a stay for treatment in a socialist country is more appropriate than in a Western or other country because his activities can be better controlled.

M. ŠTEFANAK



**Telegram from the Czechoslovak Ambassador in Kabul, Karmelita, to Prague, 4 October 1978**

*[Source: Central State Archive, Archive of the CC CPCz, file Husak, unsorted materials, box Afghanistan. Provided by Oldrich Tuma and translated by Francis Raska.]*

Telegram from Kabul  
Arrived: 4.10.78 at 10AM  
4.10.78 at 12:15PM

#059.236[...]

To your 072 516 [note from 28 September 1978]

I was received today, 4 October, by the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party [PDPA], Nur Mohammad Taraki, whom I informed of the contents of the dispatch mentioned above. He listened to the information attentively and calmly. He said that Karmal's illness was fictitious and that he should be returned as a warrant had been issued for his arrest.

Taraki said in a somewhat unpleasant tone that Czechoslovakia is an independent country, which can act on the basis of its own judgment. He added that he had expected a different reply. Finally, Taraki requested that we convey the information in writing to Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hafizullah Amin.

In case you concur that we should indeed make this confirmation, send the text in English.

In contrast to previous times, the parting of ways was

rather terse. (Ka)

Karmelita 0354



**Information About the Visit of the Afghan Party and State Delegation, Headed by the Secretary General of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, Chairman of the Revolutionary Board and Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, Nur Mohamed Taraki, to the USSR [December 1978]**

*[Source: Diplomatic Archive, Sofia, Opis 35, File 335. Obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Kalina Bratanova and Baev.]*

On 4-7 December [1978], an Afghan Party and State delegation, headed by Nur Mohammed Taraki visited the Soviet Union.

The delegation included many of the members of the [PDPA] Politburo of the Central Committee—Hafizullah Amin, Shah Wali, and Comrade Suma, the ministers of industry, agriculture, energy and communications, deputy-ministers of commerce, culture and housing.

At the request of Nur Mohammad Taraki, the delegation visited only Moscow.

Top-level talks were held at two of the meetings. The Soviet Party was represented by comrades [CPSU General Secretary Leonid] Brezhnev, [Soviet Premier Aleksey N.] Kosygin, [Foreign Minister Andrei A.] Gromyko, [CC Secretary Boris] Ponomarev.

Twenty-four meetings took place between the Afghan delegation and the top-level Soviet party and state leaders.

Hafizullah Amin met the following comrades: Kosygin, Gromyko, [KGB Chief Yuri] Andropov, [Soviet Chief of Staff Marshal [Nikolai] Ogarkov and [Minister of Defense Marshal Sergei] Solokov.

[...]

The visit was initiated by the Afghan Party.

Its objectives were:

1. To make face-to-face contacts with the Soviet Union's party and state leaders;
2. To specify the major trends of the development of the cooperation between the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union;
3. To share opinions on the most topical issues of international affairs.

This is Brezhnev's official statement on behalf of the

Soviet delegation:

“The coming to power of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan, [...] is an event of historical importance for Afghanistan. We are sincerely happy that the Afghan people have succeeded in defending the revolution and the revolutionary achievements from all internal and international predators within such a short period.” Comrade Brezhnev pointed out that the relations between the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan were assuming a completely different nature. These relations are now based on class belonging; they are imbued with the spirit of friendship and revolutionary solidarity.

Comrade Brezhnev assured Taraki and all delegation members of the assistance and support they can firmly rely on; all activity towards the revolutionary transformation of the Afghan society will be backed up.

Cde. Taraki pointed out that the Afghan Party attached prime importance to their visit to the Soviet Union. All talks and meetings will contribute to the strengthening of the revolutionary regime in Afghanistan; they will enhance the support from within the country and abroad.

In its domestic policy PDPA has adopted a program of radical revolutionary socio-economic reforms to the benefit of the working class; these reforms will help abolish any remains of feudalism and semi-feudal social relations; they will provide for the non-capitalist development of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and the building up of a society free from exploitation, based upon the progressive ideology of the working class and scientifically-grounded socialism.

Taraki emphasized the following about foreign policy: “The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has been conducting a policy targeted at strengthening the brotherly relations with the socialist countries; this policy is also aimed at non-alignment as a form of struggle against imperialism and colonialism, protecting world peace, favoring détente and disarmament, and providing support for the national liberation movements.

A joint communiqué emphasizes the policies adopted by the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan; this policy was outlined in Taraki’s speech at the dinner given by the CC [Central Committee] of the CPSU, the Supreme Council of the USSR and the Soviet government.

An important result of the visit of the Afghan Party and State delegation to the Soviet Union was signing the Treaty on the establishment of friendly relations and close cooperation between the two neighboring countries.

The latter was drawn up upon the Afghan Party’s initiative.

Both parties pointed out that this treaty was of considerable political significance in terms of strengthening the relations between the two countries, and supporting peace and security throughout the world. This treaty enhances

Afghanistan’s image and authority in international affairs; it guarantees its national independence, territorial integrity and security. This treaty will have an impact on all opponents of the revolutionary regime in Afghanistan and prevents their action towards undermining the revolutionary process. The documents agreed upon state the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan’s initiative to join the movement of non-aligned countries at present, since the April Revolution the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has adopted the correct stance on many of the movement’s major issues. Together with the [Democratic People’s] Republic of Korea, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and other progressive member-countries, the movement will contribute to the consolidation of the anti-imperialist positions.

Taraki informed the Soviet comrades of the actions against Afghanistan launched from the territory of Pakistan. He pointed out that the two countries had different attitudes towards the Pushtuns and the Baluchis.

Soviet leaders Brezhnev and Kosygin stressed that it was inappropriate to take any measures. Such measures would provoke anti-revolutionary action by both internal reactionary forces and external enemies; thus the situation in the region will be complicated. The Soviet party shares the concern about the future of the Pushtuns and the Beluchis; it is of the opinion that only negotiations with the participation of these two groups can contribute to reaching a solution of the problem.

[...]

The Soviet leaders laid down their opinion of the necessity that the party’s unity be strengthened and all progressive forces to take part in the revolutionary restructuring of Afghanistan.

They suggested that the USSR assume the responsibility to carry out many of the projects on Afghanistan’s development. The projects, talks about which have already been held, are to become part of an agreement in the field of economics, science and technology. All newly proposed projects are to be a matter of further negotiations between the Soviet and Afghan ministers; following preliminary consultations, these must become an integral part of the agreement on economic cooperation.

The following was agreed upon: an increase in the oil supplies to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan; setting up a link between the Soviet energy network and that of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan; refurbishment and reconstruction of the oil-processing plant.

The establishment of a joint commission for economic cooperation on the level of ministers was agreed upon.

All Afghani members of the delegation made a statement about the successful visit. Useful and fruitful talks were conducted. The Soviet leaders, and comrade Brezhnev in particular, expressed their interest towards Afghanistan, their warm and cordial attitudes. Comrade Brezhnev drank to the health of Taraki, Amin, and other members of the Politburo of the PDPA Central Committee.



The major conclusion finally arrived at was that the April Revolution is a crucial historical moment for Afghanistan. Under PDPA's leadership, Afghanistan was to abolish the centuries-long backwardness in its development; it was to carry out deep social and economic reforms to bring feudal social order to an end; it was to start establishing a society free from any exploitation. Most views of contemporary foreign affairs issues were shared.

Hence there are sufficient grounds to claim that all necessary conditions to develop relations with the socialist countries, and coordinate all efforts in the struggle for peace, co-operation, détente, disarmament between the peoples in Asia and throughout the world, are present.

Upon the delegation's return from the Soviet Union, the politburo of the Central Committee of PDPA considered all results of the visit.

Taraki pointed out the attentiveness and interest by both the CC of the CPSU, and comrade Brezhnev in particular.

The visit and its results were highly appreciated. All members of the delegation, the Afghan State and Party functionaries were satisfied with these results.



### **Diplomatic Note of Afghan Embassy in Sofia, 13 March 1979**

*[Source: Diplomatic Archive, Sofia, opis 35, file 361, p. 58-60. Obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Albena Stefanova and Baev.]*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC  
OF AFGHANISTAN EMBASSY  
SOFIA

13 March 1979

To the Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
of People's Republic of Bulgaria

The Embassy of D[emocratic] R[epublic of] Afghanistan in Sofia has the honor to inform about persons who are not returning to their homeland. They are dismissed from diplomatic work and by the government decision their diplomatic passports have to be considered as invalid. We are requesting any application for a visa from their part to be rejected. Furthermore we are requesting this decision of the Afghan government to be forwarded to all Bulgarian diplomatic missions abroad.

Please find next the list of mentioned above persons, which citizenship is rejected:

1. Dr. Mahamad Rahim Sherazui – former Ambassador in Czechoslovakia;

2. Hamidula Enayat Serdajh – former Ambassador in India;
3. Eng. Bashir Ahmad Ludin – former Ambassador in Federal Republic of Germany;
4. Dr. Abdul Vahed Karim – former Ambassador in Washington;
5. Abdulla Maliqiar – former Ambassador in Iran;
6. Mohhammad Jussuf Meherdal – former Ambassador in Saudi Arabia;
7. Babrak Karmal – former Ambassador in Czechoslovakia;
8. Nur Mohammad Nur – former Ambassador in the USA;
9. Dr. Anahita Rotebzad – former Ambassador in Yugoslavia;
10. Abdul Wakil – former Ambassador in London;
11. Mahmud Barakyal – former Ambassador in Pakistan;
12. Dr. Nadjib – former Ambassador in Iran;
13. Halilula Halili – former Ambassador in Iraq;
14. Zalmay Mahmud Gazi – former Ambassador in Egypt;
15. Mohammad Hakim Sarboland – former Consul General in Karachi;
16. Golam Faruk Torabaz – former Counselor in Washington;
17. Dr. Sadulla Gausi – former Counselor in Japan;
18. Poyanda Mohammad Kushani – former Counselor in India;
19. Mohhammad Faruk Farhang – former Counselor in Iran;
20. Mohammad Ali Amir – former Counselor in Federal Republic of Germany;
21. Nazar Mohammad Azizi – former Counselor in Italy;
22. Valid Etemadi – former I Secretary in Paris;
23. Mohammad Atila Acefi – former I Secretary in Poland;
24. Mohammad Ali Suleyman - former II Secretary in the USA;
25. Mohhammad Omar Malequiar – former II Secretary in the USA;
26. Abdul Hadi Vaydi – former II Secretary in London;
27. Mohammad Akmal Rani – former II Secretary in Iran;
28. Ruhula Tarzi – former II Secretary in Pakistan;
29. Abdulla Bahar – former II Secretary in Czechoslovakia;
30. Abdulla Laamir – former III Secretary in Pakistan;
31. Mohammad Junus Farman – former attaché in Washington;
32. Homajunshah Acifi – former attaché in Federal Republic of Germany;
33. Enajatolla Madani – former attaché in India;
34. Dr. Nangjalay Tarzi – official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Afghan Embassy in Sofia

**Telephone Conversation between Soviet Premier Alexei N. Kosygin and Afghan Premier Nur Mohammed Taraki, 18 March 1979<sup>2</sup> [Excerpt]**

[Source: Boris Gromov, "Ogranichennyy Kontingent" ("Limited Contingent") *Progress, Moscow, 1994*, pp. 34-40. Translated by Gary Goldberg.]

*Top Secret  
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KOSYGIN. Tell Cde. Taraki that I would like to pass on to him warm greetings from Leonid Il'ich [Brezhnev] and from all members of the Politburo.

TARAKI. Thank you very much.

KOSYGIN. How is Cde. Taraki's health, is he very tired?

TARAKI. I'm not tired. There was a meeting of the Revolutionary Council today.<sup>3</sup>

KOSYGIN. This is good, I am very glad. Ask Comrade Taraki, perhaps he will outline the situation in Afghanistan.

TARAKI: The situation is bad and getting worse. During the last month and a half about 4,000 servicemen in civilian dress have come from the Iranian side and infiltrated the city of Herat and military units. Right now the entire 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division is in their hands, including the artillery regiment and an air defense battalion, which is firing on our aircraft. Battles are continuing in the city.

KOSYGIN. How many people are in the division?

TARAKI. Up to 5,000. All the ammunition and depots are in their hands. We're carrying food products and ammunition by air from Kandahar to our comrades who are fighting with them now.

KOSYGIN. How many people do you have left there?

TARAKI. Five hundred men. They are at the Herat airfield headed by the division commander. We have sent an operations group there from Kabul by air as reinforcements. They've been at the Herat airfield since morning.

KOSYGIN. But have the division's officers or the part located with the division commander at the airfield also betrayed you?

TARAKI. A small part is on our side; the rest are with the enemy.

KOSYGIN. Do you have support among the workers, city petty bourgeoisie, and the white collar workers in Herat? Is there anyone still on your side?

TARAKI. There is no active support on the part of the population. It is almost wholly under the influence of Shiite slogans – follow not the heathens, but follow us. The propaganda is underpinned by all this.

KOSYGIN. What is the population of Herat?

TARAKI. Two hundred to two hundred fifty thousand. They are behaving in accordance with the situation. They will go where they are led. Right now they're on the side of the enemy.

KOSYGIN. Are there many workers there?

TARAKI. Very few – between 1,000 and 2,000 people in all.

KOSYGIN. What is the outlook in Herat, in your opinion?

TARAKI. We think that Herat will fall this evening or tomorrow morning and be completely in enemy hands.

KOSYGIN. What are the prospects?

TARAKI. We are convinced that the enemy will form new units and will develop an offensive.

KOSYGIN. Do you have the forces to rout them?

TARAKI. I wish it were the case.

KOSYGIN. What, then, are your proposals on this issue?

TARAKI. We ask that you extend practical and technical assistance, involving people and arms.

KOSYGIN. It is a very complex matter.

TARAKI. Otherwise the enemy will go in the direction of Kandahar and on in the direction of Kabul. They will bring half of Iran into Afghanistan under the flag of the Herat division.

Afghans are returning who had fled to Pakistan. Iran and Pakistan are working against us, according to the same plan. Hence, if you now launch a decisive attack on Herat, it will be possible to save the Revolution.

KOSYGIN. The whole world will immediately get to know this. The rebels have portable radio transmitters and will report it directly.

TARAKI. I ask that you extend assistance.

KOSYGIN. We must hold consultations on this issue.

TARAKI. While we consult Herat is falling, and there will be

even greater difficulties for both the Soviet Union and Afghanistan.

KOSYGIN. Now, can you possibly tell me what forecast you can give about Pakistan and then about Iran, separately? Do you not have connections with Iran's progressives? Can't you tell them that it is currently the United States that is your and their chief enemy? The Iranians are very hostile toward the United States and evidently this can be put to use as propaganda.

TARAKI. Today we made a statement to the Iranian government and transmitted it by radio, pointing out that Iran is interfering in [our] internal affairs in the area of Herat.

KOSYGIN. But do you not consider it necessary to make any announcement to Pakistan?

TARAKI. We will make such a statement about Pakistan tomorrow or the day after.

KOSYGIN. Do you have hopes for your army? What is its reliability? Can you not gather troops to make an attack on Herat?

TARAKI. We think that the army is reliable. But we can not take troops from other cities to send them to Herat, since this would weaken our positions in other cities.

KOSYGIN. But if we quickly gave you aircraft and weapons could you not form new units?

TARAKI. This would take some time and Herat is falling.

KOSYGIN. You think that if Herat falls then Pakistan would attempt the same actions from its border?

TARAKI. The probability of this is very high. Pakistani morale is rising after this. The Americans are giving them suitable aid. After the fall of Herat the Pakistanis will also send soldiers in civilian dress, who will begin to seize cities, and the Iranians will begin to actively intervene.

Success in Herat is the key to all the remaining issues connected with the fight.

KOSYGIN. What foreign policy activities or statements would you like to see coming from us? Do you have any ideas on this question, propaganda-wise?

TARAKI. Propaganda help must be combined with practical assistance. I suggest that you place Afghan markings on your tanks and aircraft and no one will be any the wiser. Your troops could advance from the direction of Kabul.

KOSYGIN. They still need to get to Kabul.

TARAKI. It's much closer from Kushk to Herat. But troops can be delivered to Kabul by air. If you send troops to Kabul and they go from Kabul to Herat then, in our view, no one will be the wiser. They will think these are government troops.

KOSYGIN. I do not want to disappoint you, but it will not be possible to conceal this. Two hours later the whole world will know about this. Everyone will begin to shout that the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan has begun. Tell me, Cde. Taraki, if we deliver weapons to you by air to Kabul, including tanks, then will you find tank crews or not?

TARAKI. A very small number.

KOSYGIN. How many?

TARAKI. I do not have exact figures.

KOSYGIN. But if we quickly airlift tanks, the necessary ammunition, and make mortars available to you, will you find specialists who can use these weapons?

TARAKI. I am unable to answer this question. The Soviet advisers can answer that.

KOSYGIN. It means, to put it another way, that there are no well-trained military personnel or very few of them. Hundreds of Afghan officers were trained in the Soviet Union. Where are they all now?

TARAKI. Most of them are Muslim reactionaries, Akhvanists [*akhvanisty*], or what else do they call themselves, the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>4</sup> We are unable to rely on them, we have no confidence in them.

KOSYGIN. What's the population of Kabul?

TARAKI. About a million people.

KOSYGIN. Can't you recruit a further 50,000 soldiers if we quickly airlift arms to you? How many people can you recruit?

TARAKI. We can gather a certain number of people, primarily from among the youth, but it would require a lot of time to train them.

KOSYGIN. But is it impossible to recruit students?

TARAKI. One might talk about pupils and 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade secondary school students.

KOSYGIN. But is it impossible to recruit from the working class?

TARAKI. The working class in Afghanistan is very small.

KOSYGIN. But what about the poor peasants?

TARAKI. The core can only be formed by older secondary school pupils, students, and a few workers. The working class in Afghanistan is very small, but it is a long affair to train them. But we will take any measures, if necessary.

KOSYGIN. We have decided to quickly deliver military equipment and property to you and to repair helicopters and aircraft. All this is for free. We have also decided to delivery to you 100,000 tons of grain and to raise gas prices from \$21 per cubic meter to \$37.82.

TARAKI. That is very good, but let us talk about Herat.

KOSYGIN. Go ahead. Can you not form several divisions right now of progressive people on whom you can rely, not only in Kabul but in other places? We could give [them] suitable weapons.

TARAKI. There is no officer personnel. Iran is sending military men to Afghanistan in civilian dress. Pakistan is also sending their people and officers in civilian dress. Why can't the Soviet Union send Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Turkmens in civilian clothing? No one will recognize them. We want you to send them.

KOSYGIN. What else can you say about Herat?

TARAKI. We want you to send us Tajiks, Uzbeks, and Turkmens. They could drive tanks, because we have all these nationalities in Afghanistan. Let them don Afghan costume and wear Afghan badges and no one will recognize them. It is very easy work, in our view. If Iran's and Pakistan's experience is anything to go by, it is clear that to do this work, they have already shown how it can be done.

KOSYGIN. You are, of course, oversimplifying the issue. It is a complex political and international issue, but irrespective of this, we will hold consultations again and will get back to you. It seems to me that you need to try to create new units since it's impossible to count only on the strength of numbers that are coming from elsewhere. You see from the experience of the Iranian revolution how the people threw out all the Americans there and everyone else who tried to paint themselves as defenders of Iran.

We'll agree to this: we will talk it over and give you an answer. And you, for your part, consult with your military and our advisers. There are forces in Afghanistan who will support you at the risk of their lives and fight for you. These forces need to be armed now.

TARAKI. Send us infantry combat vehicles by air.

KOSYGIN. Do you have anyone to drive them?

TARAKI. We will find drivers for between 30 and 35 vehicles.

KOSYGIN. Are they reliable? Won't they flee to the enemy, together with their vehicles? After all, our drivers do not speak the same language.

TARAKI. Send vehicles together with drivers who speak our language – Tajiks and Uzbeks.

KOSYGIN. I expected this kind of reply from you. We are comrades and are waging a common struggle and that is why we should not stand on ceremony with each other. Everything must be subordinate to this.

We will call you again and give you our opinion.

TARAKI. Give our respects and best wishes to Cde. Brezhnev and the members of the Politburo.

KOSYGIN. Thank you. Send greetings to all your comrades. And I wish you firmness in deciding questions, confidence, and prosperity. Goodbye.



**Telegram from East German Embassy in Kabul to Socialist Unity Party (SED) General Secretary Erich Honecker, 17 September 1979**

[Source: Bundesarchiv—Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen Berlin, DY30/J IV 2/20/175, n.p.. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.]

Nur Mohammad Taraki who until recently held both functions [General Secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and President of the Revolutionary Council] has "retired on age and health grounds." We know nothing about his present location. [...]

Yesterday's state funerals were orderly, with military honors and a relatively great participation for comrade Taraki's former military adjutant Taroom as well as four other high security officials, who were supporters of comrade Amin and were shot on Friday in connection with the Cabinet meeting.

In contrast to Friday, the situation on Saturday and Sunday was completely calm, although politically tense. There is no reliable information on the location of the deposed three ministers and security chief. Unconfirmed rumors say that the former post and telegraph minister was shot and the others arrested.

Maeser  
17.9

**Soviet Foreign Ministry Circular [27 December 1979]<sup>5</sup>**

[Source: Published in Boris Gromov, Ogranichenny Kontingent (*Limited Contingent*), (Moscow: Progress, 1994), pp.88-89.]

*Top Secret*  
*Special Folder*

TO ALL SOVIET AMBASSADORS

(except Berlin, Warsaw, Budapest, Prague, Sofia, Havana, Ulan Bator, and Hanoi)

Immediately visit the head of government (or the Minister of Foreign Affairs or the person acting for him) and, referring to instructions of the Soviet government, announce the following:

As is well known everywhere in the world, including the government of (...) for a long time there has been outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, including the direct use of armed force. It is completely evident that the purpose of this interference is the overthrow of the democratic system established as a result of the victory of the April Revolution of 1978. The Afghan people and their armed forces are actively repelling these aggressive acts and giving a rebuff to assaults on the democratic achievements, sovereignty, and national dignity of the new Afghanistan. However the acts of external aggression continue in ever wider scale; armed formations and weapons are being sent from abroad to this day.

In these conditions the leaders of the government of Afghanistan have turned to the Soviet Union for aid and assistance in the struggle against foreign aggression. The Soviet Union, proceeding from a commonality of interests between Afghanistan and our country on security issues which has also been recorded in the 1978 Treaty of Friendship, Neighborliness, and Cooperation, and in the interest of preserving of peace in the region, has responded to this request of the Afghan leadership with approval and has decided to send a limited military contingent to Afghanistan to carry out missions requested by the Afghan government. The Soviet Union thereby proceeds from the corresponding articles of the UN Charter, in particular Article 51, which stipulate the right of states to individual and collective self-defense to repel aggression and restore peace.

The Soviet government, in informing the government of (...) of all this, considers it necessary to also announce that when the reasons which prompted this action of the Soviet Union no longer exist it intends to withdraw its military contingent from the territory of Afghanistan.

The Soviet Union again stresses that, as before, its sole wish is to see Afghanistan as an independent, sovereign state conducting a policy of good-neighborliness and peace, firmly respecting and carrying out its international obligations, including those according to the UN Charter.

The text of this announcement can be left with the interlocutor.

Report by telegraph when these instructions have been carried out.

**Soviet Foreign Ministry Circular [27 December 1979]<sup>6</sup>**

[Source: Boris Gromov, Ogranichenny Kontingent (*Limited Contingent*), (Moscow: Progress, 1994), pp. 91-95. Translated by Gary Goldberg.]

*Top Secret*  
*Special Folder*  
*Flash [precedence]*

TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR

Meet with the representatives of the leadership of friends and inform them in the name of the CC CPSU of the following:

Dear Comrades!

Following the tradition which has developed in relations between our Parties, the CC CPSU would like to share with the leaders of your Party our views and an assessment of recent events in Afghanistan.

As you well know, a new progressive national [political] system was created in Afghanistan as a result of the April 1978 Revolution. Much work was done in the country to eliminate the despotic monarchy by enlisting the broad popular masses on the side of the Revolution; land reform has been carried out, and a large amount of land has been transferred to the working peasantry; the payment of *kalym* (compensation) for a bride has been abolished; and other reforms have been carried out in the interests of the people.

However the revolutionary events in Afghanistan have met with fierce opposition on the part of hostile foreign reactionary forces. Constant subversive activity from Pakistan, Iran, and China has been unleashed. In turn, the reactionary remnants of the old regime, landowners deprived of land, the former minions of the monarchy, and part of the Muslim clergy have unleashed a struggle against the revolutionary order.

To this was added the mistaken, it must be frankly said, dictatorial, despotic actions of H[afizullah]. Amin, violations of elementary norms of legality, widespread repression of everyone who did not agree with him, including those who for many years fought against the monarchy and actively participated in the April Revolution.

Having eliminated the former General Secretary of the People's Democratic Party and President of the Republic N[ur]. M[ohammad]. Taraki, H. Amin has recently hypocritically talked of humaneness and legality, given ultra-revolutionary speeches, etc., but in fact has carried out massive

repression and undermined the foundations of the revolutionary order.

Thus external intervention and terror against honest persons devoted to the cause of the Revolution and the interests of the people has created a threat of liquidation of what the April Revolution brought the Afghan people.

As a result of the harmful and impermissible acts of H. Amin and his closest associates enormous discontent and protests against the policy of H. Amin have arisen in the country and at the same time subversive activity of reactionaries has revived and attacks of armed formations sent from abroad have intensified.

All this has been exploited by foreign reactionary forces. They have intensified the infiltration of sizable armed groups (mainly from Pakistani territory), they have supplied various military formations with weapons and money, etc.; in a word, they have worked towards establishing the previous reactionary regime and subordinating Afghanistan to imperialism. American imperialism and the CIA, and also the Beijing leadership, have acted as the main force in carrying out this policy.

However in Afghanistan there have been found forces which have risen decisively against the regime of H. Amin, removed him from power, and created new governing bodies for the Party and the country. Those who for many years fought against the monarchy and brought about the April Revolution together with Taraki have been brought into them. Karmal Babrak has become the head of the Party and the government. His speeches and appeals to the people of Afghanistan are directed at ensuring the national independence of Afghanistan; rallying the people together; carrying out a progressive, democratic policy; observing legality; establishing firm law and order; and [having] a humane attitude toward people. The new leadership is setting as its task the assurance of civic peace in the country. All of this gives reason to say that such a leadership will facilitate the strengthening of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan and a progressive republican system.

The new government and Party leadership has turned to the USSR with a request to give it political and material aid, including military support.

The Soviet Union has decided to give this support. In this matter the Soviet and Afghan governments have relied on an international treaty concluded between the USSR and Afghanistan on 5 December 1978. Chapter 4 of this treaty says: "The High Contracting Parties, acting in the spirit of the traditions of friendship and neighborliness and also the UN Charter, will consult and with the consent of both Parties undertake the appropriate measures to ensure the security, independence, and territorial integrity of both countries. They will continue to collaborate in the military field in the interests of strengthening the defensive ability of the High Contracting Parties."

The Soviet Union has given consent to the Afghan government to the introduction of a small military contingent for a period of time. Its very presence in Afghanistan will serve as a guarantee (barrier) against sudden armed attacks of hos-

tile foreign forces (mainly from Pakistan) and from the actions of internal counterrevolutionary forces.

The Soviet armed formation will be withdrawn from Afghanistan as soon as the situation there stabilizes and the reasons which prompted this action no longer exist.

In taking this decision, the CC CPSU considered the possible negative reaction of imperialist states and their mass media. But the political attacks of class and ideological enemies should not deter the CPSU and the Soviet Union from granting the request of the Afghan leadership.

The CC CPSU expresses confidence that your Party will well understand the motives which dictated the need to give this kind of aid to democratic Afghanistan and will support these measures.

With Communist greetings

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY  
OF THE SOVIET UNION

LIST

of Communist and workers' parties  
of non-socialist countries  
who are being sent the CC CPSU letter

The Communist Party of Austria  
The Party of the Socialist Avant Garde of Algeria  
The Communist Party of Argentina  
The Communist Party of Bangladesh  
The Communist Party of Belgium  
The Communist Party of Bolivia  
The Brazilian Communist Party  
The Communist Party of Venezuela  
The Communist Party of Great Britain  
The German Communist Party  
The Communist Party of Greece  
The Communist Party of Denmark  
The Communist Party of Israel  
The Communist Party of India  
The Iraqi Communist Party  
The People's Party of Iran  
The Communist Party of Ireland  
The Communist Party of Spain  
The Italian Communist Party  
The Communist Party of Canada  
The Progressive Party of the Working People of Cyprus –  
AKEhL  
The Communist Party of Colombia  
The Lebanese Communist Party  
The Communist Party of Luxembourg  
The Communist Party of Malta  
The Mexican Communist Party  
The Communist Party of the Netherlands  
The Communist Party of Norway  
The Peruvian Communist Party

The Portuguese Communist Party  
 The Reunion Communist Party  
 The San Marino Communist Party  
 The Syrian Communist Party  
 The Communist Party of the USA  
 The Communist Party of Turkey  
 The Communist Party of Uruguay  
 The Communist Party of the Philippines  
 The Communist Party of Finland  
 The French Communist Party  
 The Communist Party of Chile  
 The Swiss Party of Labor  
 The Workers' Party – Communists of Sweden  
 The Leftist Party – Communists of Sweden  
 The Communist Party of Sri Lanka  
 The Communist Party of Ecuador  
 The Communist Party of Japan



**Record of the Main Content of a Conversation of Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko with DRA [Democratic Republic of Afghanistan] Minister of Foreign Affairs Shah Mohammad Dost, 4 January 1980<sup>7</sup> (Excerpt)**

[Source: Boris Gromov, *Ogranichennyy Kontingent (Limited Contingent)*, (Moscow: Progress, 1994), pp. 99-104. Translate by Gary Goldberg.]

GROMYKO [...] It is good for us to hear that the present DRA leadership regards the advice and good wishes of the Soviet side with attention. Moreover I would like to stress that the final decision regarding one or another issue will be left to the Afghan side, to you, and only you.

Comrade Minister, I would like to share some thoughts regarding the situation which has now developed in the Security Council and also about the nature of your statements at the upcoming meeting.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, these thoughts are not anything conclusive, but they reflect the point of view of our country and the Soviet leadership about events occurring in and around Afghanistan.

First. The Western powers, chiefly the US, have unleashed a broad hostile propaganda campaign against the Soviet Union and revolutionary Afghanistan, which has firmly embarked on the task of building a new society. Imperialism has decided to “let off steam.”

There is nothing surprising in this malicious propaganda. It would be surprising if imperialism took a benevolent position toward the revolutionary reforms being carried out in Afghanistan. Then you and we would have to think about what we had done wrong that the imperialists commended us for. Consequently there is nothing surprising in the propa-

ganda fuss raised by the West about the events in Afghanistan.

Second. Regarding the tone of the speech of the head of the Afghan delegation at the Security Council meeting.

Comrade Minister, you have every grounds to speak not as the accused, but as the accuser. It appears there are enough facts for this. Thus, it is quite important not to be defensive but to vigorously attack and vigorously expose the imperialist intrigues.

Third. It is necessary to especially stress that the introduction of the limited contingent of Soviet troops into Afghanistan was done by the Soviet Union in response to the repeated appeals of the DRA government to the leadership of the USSR. These requests were made earlier by both N[ur]. M[ohammad]. Taraki, when he was in Moscow, and by H[afizullah]. Amin.

[US President Jimmy] Carter wants to create the impression that the Soviet Union received a request for the introduction our limited contingents into Afghanistan only from the new Afghan leadership. However it would decisively refute this idea and, possibly to show by reference to dates, that it was forced to turn repeatedly to the Soviet Union for aid, including military [aid], in connection with the incessant interference of external forces in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

In this part of the speech it would be appropriate to remind the participants of the Security Council meeting of Article 51 of the UN Charter, and also the provisions of the existing Treaty of Friendship, Good-neighborliness, and Cooperation between the USSR and the DRA.

Fourth. It ought to be clearly stressed that the limited Soviet military contingent was introduced into Afghanistan only to aid it in repelling the incessant aggressive acts of external forces, in particular from Pakistani territory where camps of refugees, through the efforts of the US, other Western countries, and China, have been turned into a center for training and infiltration into Afghanistan of numerous armed groups.

Fifth. The change in the leadership of the DRA is a purely internal problem of Afghanistan and the business of the Afghans themselves. No one has the right to point out to the Afghan people what they ought to do or how to proceed.

Representatives of Western countries, particularly [British Prime Minister Margaret] Thatcher, are trying to draw a parallel between the change of the Afghan leadership and the introduction of the Soviet military contingent into Afghanistan, talking of a supposed inherent connection between these two events. However, it ought to be especially noted that there is no causal relationship here. This is simply a coincidence.

It would be desirable to direct attention to the fact that even in the time of N. M. Taraki and H. Amin the official representatives of the US and other Western powers shouted to the whole world about the introduction of our two combat battalions into Afghanistan. This means that they themselves contradict the words of “reliable information” that the introduction of the Soviet military contingent began before the

events of 27 December 1979, which led to the change of the Afghan leadership.

Sixth. It can be stated again that the limited Soviet military contingent will be completely withdrawn from the DRA after the need for their presence in Afghanistan ceases, as soon as armed incursions and aggressive provocations from without cease and the security of Afghanistan is accordingly assured.

Seventh. Voices ring out in the West about continuing mass repressions in Afghanistan involving prominent Muslims and that the Islamic religion is being scorned in this country. These "condolences" are expressed not in connection with the acts of Amin and the victims of his repression and despotism, but about the removal of this executioner of the Afghan people from power.

Considering this, the positive policy being followed by the new government of the DRA headed by Babrak Karmal regarding Islam and Muslim believers ought to be firmly and vigorously stated in the speech of the head of the Afghan delegation.

Eighth. It is obvious that the nature of H. Amin as a dictator possessed of the ideas of carrying out repression and mass terror against the population of the country in general ought to be revealed. Give examples and facts. There are many of them.

Ninth. It is useful and important to say that the new leadership of the DRA has announced its firm intention to establish normal good-neighborly relations with its neighbors Iran and Pakistan. This DRA government announcement is being made when interference from Pakistan into the internal affairs of the Afghan people is unceasing and when the infiltration of armed groups from Pakistan into Afghanistan is occurring, that is, aggression is occurring.

Tenth. In connection with the decision of the US to expand the quantity of weapons deliveries to Pakistan, it is necessary to state an opinion that some external forces, in particular the US, are interested not in establishing peace, but on the contrary, in aggravating the situation, in inflaming a conflict situation in this region. It ought to be firmly stated that the arming of Pakistan to the teeth by the Americans can not leave the government of the DRA indifferent inasmuch this could create a constant threat of an armed invasion of Afghanistan from Pakistan. The DRA would be forced to be concerned about its security in these conditions.

Eleventh. It is well known that attempts are being made to set Afghanistan against other Muslim countries. In this regard it ought to be stated that Afghanistan holds out the hand of friendship to all Muslim countries, even those who put their signatures to the letter demanding the convening of the Security Council. It is necessary to stress that the new DRA leadership in fact is ready to show respect toward Islam and constant solidarity with the Non-Aligned Movement. It is advisable to say that not one clergyman will be punished if he does not oppose the legal government of Afghanistan with a weapon in his hands.

Comrade minister, I can confidentially inform you that we have information about Saudi Arabia's intention to con-

vince six countries bordering it to break off diplomatic relations with the DRA.

Twelfth. It is important to stress that the governments of the countries whose signatures are on the letter to the chairman of the Security Council have embarked on a path of hostile activities against the Afghan people. Afghanistan is firmly traveling along a path of revolutionary reforms and there is no power which can force it to turn from this path. At the same time it is necessary to state that the new DRA government sincerely wishes to cooperate with all countries, even with those who signed the letter. The DRA government will continue to participate in the Non-Aligned Movement.

DOST. It remains for me to cordially thank you, comrade minister, for the advice which is very useful and valuable to me regarding the nature of the speech in the Security Council.

I did not only listen to it closely but recorded it in detail. All the wishes you expressed to me will be the core of my speech in the Security Council. Again, my thanks for the open comradely conversation.

GROMYKO. For my part, there were expressed thoughts which, in my view, could be useful to you in preparing the speech. Of course, because of limited time it was done in condensed abstract form. However the comradely advice and wishes expressed give a clear idea of the Soviet point of view about the issued touched on.

As you have requested, we have prepared for you a number of materials, in particular concerning American military bases. These materials will be sent to New York with [Soviet diplomat and adviser to the DRA government] V[asily]. S. Safronchuk, who is going there to assist you as you have requested earlier.

When you are assaulted concerning the deployment of a Soviet military contingent in Afghanistan, you can parry this by exposing the aggressive policy of the US. In Cuba, the US, despite the constant demands of the Cuban government and people, continues to maintain its military base in Guantanamo. This is an example of open and gross interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation.

On a comradely level I would like to wish you and the members of your delegation a cheerful spirit, confidence, and firmness in defending your positions. Meet more often with representatives of countries taking part in the meeting and fearlessly explain to them the essence of the events occurring in Afghanistan, since the truth is on your side and our side.

Concerning contacts with Safronchuk and your conversations with him, it is desirable to use discretion and certain caution during conversations in New York, especially inside premises. Meetings and exchanges of opinions can be realized in turn on the premises of the Soviet UN mission or in the buildings of the Soviet consulate general. It is desirable not to advertise that Safronchuk arrived in New York to render you assistance. Officially, he is going in the capacity of a member of the UN General Assembly, which, as is well known, is still carrying on its work.



4 January 1980



**Telegram from GDR Embassy in Moscow to Socialist Unity Party (SED) Central Committee Secretary Hermann Axen et al., 10 January 1980**

*[Source: Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen DY30 IV 2/2.035/70, p. 39. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.]*

10 January 1980

Telegram from Moscow  
Urgent Flash

To [SED Central Committee members] comrades Axen, [Joachim] Hermann, [Werner] Krolikowski, Mahlow and Ziebart

From conversations in the USSR Foreign Ministry

6. The Soviet comrades consider that in Afghanistan successful measures to stabilize the internal situation are being carried out. The creation of a new party and state apparatus is progressing. The distribution of information must be completely renewed, since progressive forces in the media were removed by the [Hafizullah] Amin regime.



**Memorandum, "Some Ideas About Foreign Policy Results of the 1970s (Points)" of Academician O. Bogomolov (Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System) sent to the CPSU Central Committee and the KGB on 20 January 1980 (Excerpt)**

*[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, Plamy Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran) (Moscow: Iskon, 1999) pp. 202-203. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

The introduction of Soviet troops did not lead to the abatement of armed struggle by the opposition against the government. The Islamic fundamentalists have sharply stepped up their propaganda activity among the population using a new slogan: fight against foreign troops. Attempts have been stepped up at joining all Islamic groups into a single anti-government and anti-Soviet front.

After the introduction of the Soviet troops the United States, their allies, some Arab and Muslim countries, and also China announced their support and aid to the opposi-

tion. This aid had been given earlier, but now it has grown considerably. Afghanistan ended up isolated at the international level and relies only on the socialist camp, mainly the Soviet Union.

With the introduction of troops into Afghanistan our policy [...] crossed the permissible bounds of confrontation in the "Third World". The advantages of this action turned out to be insignificant compared to the damage which was inflicted on our interests:

1. In addition to the confrontations on two fronts – in Europe against NATO and in East Asia against China – a third dangerous hotbed of military and political tension on the USSR's southern flank has arisen for us in unfavorable geographic and sociopolitical conditions [...]
2. A considerable expansion and consolidation of the anti-Soviet front of countries surrounding the USSR from west to east has taken place.
3. The influence of the USSR on the Non-Aligned Movement, has suffered considerably, especially in the Muslim world.
4. Détente has been blocked and the political prerequisites to limit the arms race have been destroyed.
5. Economic and technological pressure on the Soviet Union have risen sharply.
6. Western and Chinese propaganda have received strong trump cards to expand a campaign against the Soviet Union in order to undermine its prestige in Western public opinion, developing countries, and also the socialist countries.
7. The Afghan events have eliminated the preconditions for a possible normalization of Soviet-Chinese relations for a long time.
8. These events have served as a catalyst to overcome the crisis relations and for a reconciliation between the Iran and the US.
9. Mistrust toward Soviet policy has been intensified and Yugoslavia, Romania, and North Korea have distanced themselves from it. Even in the Hungarian and Polish press signs have been observed of a restraint in connection with Soviet actions in Afghanistan. Evidently they reflect the sentiments of the public and the fears of the leaders of these countries of being drawn into the global actions of the Soviet Union, for which our partners do not have sufficient resources to participate.
10. The nuanced policy of the Western powers has been intensified and it has switched to a new tactic of active intrusion into the sphere of relations between the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, openly playing on the contradictions and incompatibility of interests between them.
11. The burden of economic aid to Afghanistan has rested on the Soviet Union [...]

**Memorandum on Information Given by [Soviet Ambassador] Comrade Pyotr A. Abrassimov to Comrade Erich Honecker about a Conversation between USSR Foreign Minister Comrade Andrei Gromyko with US Secretary of State Edmund S. Muskie, 27 May 1980**

*[Source: Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30 IV 2/2.035/70 pp.40-42. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.]*

27 May 1980, Berlin, 3 Copies

Memorandum

On information given by comrade P. A. Abrassimov to Comrade E. Honecker about a Conversation between USSR Foreign Minister Comrade A. GROMYKO with the US Secretary of State, E. MUSKIE<sup>9</sup>

MUSKIE: President Carter is for an improvement in Soviet-American relations. He was always very balanced towards the Soviet Union. But the Afghanistan events have created hindrances.

GROMYKO: The American side scratched the agreement made with President [Gerald] Ford in Vladivostok [in 1974]. SALT II was signed in Vienna [in June 1979], but not ratified; that is breaking your word. Then there was the discovery of the Soviet rocket brigade on Cuba. After the US lost Iran, they tried to compensate for this loss through Afghanistan. The USSR's intervention prevented this. As is well known we hesitated for a long time before we agreed to the request to send troops. Since the danger became extremely great we couldn't just watch any more and sent a limited troop contingent at the express wish of the Afghan government and in accordance with the treaty.

MUSKIE: It's a matter of finding a way out. Maybe the USSR could help liberate the American hostages in Iran.

GROMYKO: We have expressly declared ourselves against the hostage taking at the UN. But we are against any foreign intervention in the affairs of Iran. The US has gathered a large fleet in the Persian Gulf that is not only aimed at Iran and the Arab countries. But we also have a large Soviet fleet [three illegible words].

MUSKIE: We must, however, solve the Afghanistan matter.

GROMYKO: You know our position. Once there is no longer any foreign interference from Pakistan or [infringements on] the sovereignty and independence of the government of Afghanistan, then we are ready, at the request of the Afghani government, to withdraw our troops.

MUSKIE: We want to go back to normal relations between the US and USSR. But public opinion in the US must be taken into account.

GROMYKO: We are ready to normalize relations. You must stop boycott politics.<sup>10</sup> Maybe you can find a way so the American athletes can participate in the Olympic Games. Maybe they will find a solution that smoothes the way.

MUSKIE: President Carter has made his decision.

GROMYKO: The President decides sometimes this way and sometimes that way.

MUSKIE: Participation at the Olympic Games is impossible. I consider this meeting very useful. He [Muskie] is interested in further meetings with such an experienced diplomat as Gromyko. Gromyko has been in diplomacy for 20 years and Muskie only 20 days.

GROMYKO: We agree to continue contacts and talks between us.

MUSKIE: I would like to assure [you] that I took over my position on the condition that the Secretary of State must be absolutely independent to conduct foreign policy and not Carter's retinue.



**Memorandum of Conversations between Socialist Unity Party General Secretary Erich Honecker and Sultan Ali Keshtmand, Member of the Politburo of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), 23 October 1980**

*[Source: Stiftung Archiv der Partei- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/2367, pp. 66-7. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.]*

23 October 1980

Conversation of Erich HONECKER, General Secretary CC SED with Sultan Ali KISHTMAND, Politburo member of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan<sup>1</sup>

Comrade Keshtmand unfortunately provided only a short evaluation of the present situation in the DRA: since the extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee of the PDPA in August of this year at which wide-reaching decisions were taken on destroying the counter-revolution, good conditions for the fighting off of the counter-revolution have come about. The fighting spirit of the party, mass organizations, and the people has increased. Naturally, in this connection, it must be mentioned that the USSR provides help in every

area and in every matter. [...]

Comrade Erich Honecker responded to the greetings of Comrade Babrak Karmal in the most heart-felt manner. Comrade Babrak Karmal's visit to the Soviet Union is being followed very attentively in the GDR [German Democratic Republic].<sup>12</sup> The party and state leadership are happy with its positive outcome. They hope that Comrade Babrak Karmal will visit the GDR soon.

It is good that the internal situation in the DRA is stabilizing. Both from an international standpoint and keeping in view that a contingent of Soviet military forces are stationed in the DRA, a political settlement of the Afghanistan problem is necessary. Such a settlement requires appropriate guarantees. In view of the policies of Pakistan and Iran, reactionary Arab states and the Islamic Conference, this will not be an easy task. The party and state leadership of the GDR assume that the Soviet troop contingent will stay in the DRA as long as necessary.

The GDR understands Afghanistan's position well. The GDR had many enemies after 1945. Without the armed defense by the Soviet Union, she could not have existed. Only after twenty years did the GDR have her international breakthrough. Today she is recognized worldwide, a member of the UN and the Security Council, and many other international institutions. The inner stability of the DRA will be strengthened on the basis of the policy of the party and the government under the leadership of comrade Babrak Karmal. Imperialism will have to accept that Afghanistan is a sovereign and independent state. The DRA and the USSR were in the right when they invoked their international treaties. The Chinese can be indignant and make trouble, but no more. The strength of the USSR and the other states of the socialist community is great. The SED and the people of the GDR will support all measures for the reinstatement of the sovereignty of the Afghani people on a revolutionary basis.



### **Working Record of CPSU Central Committee Politburo Meeting of 30 July 1981**

*[Source: Published in Krasnaya Zvezda, 15 February 2000. Translated by Gary Goldberg for CWIHP.]*

(Top Secret)  
SPECIAL FOLDER  
Only copy  
(Working record)

CC CPSU Politburo meeting of 30 July 1981

Chaired by [Chief Soviet Ideologist] Cde. M[ikhail]. A. SUSLOV. Present were [KGB chief] Cdes. Yu[ri]. V. Andropov,

M[ikhail]. S. Gorbachev, A. P. Kirilenko, A. Ya. Pel'she, [Premier Nikolai] A. Tikhonov, V. V. Kuznetsov, [CPSU Central Committee International Relations Secretary] B[oris]. N. Ponomarev, M[ikhail]. S. Solomentsev, I. V. Kapitonov, V[ladimir]. I. Dolgikh, M. V. Zimyanin, [Party Secretary] K[onstantin]. V. Rusakov

SUSLOV has the agenda. I would like to consult about one issue. Cde. Tikhonov has submitted a note to the CC CPSU and a draft instruction regarding perpetuating the memory of the soldiers who have died in Afghanistan. It is proposed to allocate a thousand rubles to each family to put an epitaph on the headstone. The matter is not the money, of course, but whether if we perpetuate the memory of soldiers who died in Afghanistan, what will we write about this on the epitaph of the headstone; in some cemeteries there could be several such headstones, so from the political point of view this would not be entirely correct. What do you think, comrades?

ANDROPOV. Of course, I think we need to bury soldiers who died in Afghanistan with honors, but it seems to be that it is a bit early to perpetuate their memory right now.

KIRILENKO. I think that it would be inadvisable to erect epitaphs right now.

PONOMAREV. Many letters are coming to the CC CPSU and other organizations; parents of the dead especially complain that their children and relatives died in Afghanistan. We need to consider this.

TIKHONOV. Of course, they always need to be buried. It's another matter whether inscriptions ought to be made.

ANDROPOV. Two questions arise from this. First, the issue of burial with honors and, second, about perpetuating the memory. I think we ought to accept this proposal to bury dead soldiers with honors, but regarding perpetuating the memory, we need to wait a while.

TIKHONOV. It's good that together with the Ministry of Defense we will submit new proposals on the basis of an exchange of opinions.

SUSLOV. Comrades, we also ought to think about replies to the parents and relatives whose children and friends died in Afghanistan. We should not take liberties here. The replies should be brief and, moreover, standard. We could charge Cdes. Zimyanin, [General of the Army and Chief of the Main Political Directorate A. A.] Yepishev, [N. I., Chief of the CC CPSU Administrative Organs Department, which oversaw the military] Savinkin, and [possibly General of the Army and Chief of the Main Directorate of the Border Troops V. A.] Matrosov with thinking about this.

**CPSU Memorandum, “The Position of the PRC on Afghanistan,” 12 May 1982**

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/vorl. SED 31955, n.p. Obtained and translated from Russian by David Wolff.*]

12 May 1982  
CPSU Material  
Strictly Confidential  
The position of the PRC on Afghanistan

[...]

The policy of the PRC [People’s Republic of China] towards Afghanistan proceeded, from the very beginning, from great-power, hegemonic ambitions and [Chinese leader] Mao Zedong’s and the Beijing leadership’s efforts. Already during the Chinese government delegation’s first official visit, headed by Zhou Enlai, [there was] direct pressure on Afghanistan regarding Pushtunistan in the disagreement with Pakistan.<sup>13</sup> The Chinese also underlined more than once that the whole Pamir [area], so they say, is ancient Chinese territory. Current maps published in Beijing present the Wakhan area [corridor] as “lost” Chinese territory. [...]

As early as 1978 Chinese specialists left Kandahar (from the hospital construction) and Bagram (from the textile factory construction [site]). In 1979, the remaining Chinese specialists left the country. The construction of a secondary irrigation system in Parvan province was discontinued. [...] The diplomatic personnel at the PRC embassy was cut in half.

The Chinese leaders at various levels announce their support for the anti-governmental forces in Afghanistan, encourage their subversive activities. The PRC Premier Zhao Ziyang announced on 3 June 1981 in Islamabad that the government of China” will provide active support – political, moral and material – to all who fight the hegemonic policy of the USSR in Afghanistan.” [...]

Beijing’s subversive action takes place mainly from Pakistani territory, where a broad net of camps, bases and special schools with Chinese instructors (in Peshawar, Chitral, Badzhaur, Miramshakh, Quetta) are preparing bandit formations to be sent into the DRA [Democratic Republic of Afghanistan]. In Peshawar for example, a group of Chinese specialists is working on counterintelligence, helping to reorganize the counterintelligence apparatus of the northwest province of Pakistan, smoking out agents from among the Afghan refugees.

Analogous bases are active in the Xinjiang-Uighur autonomous area bordering the DRA and since 1981 also in the town of Linzhou (Tibetan autonomous area). The base at Linzhou has given special training to more than 3,000 diversionaries. Separate Chinese instructors act directly in Afghanistan.

[A list of weapons provided by China follows.]

The Chinese embassy maintains a conspiratorial contact with the Afghan counter-revolutionaries. [...] The Chinese embassy’s workers have several times exhorted Afghan citizens to counter-revolutionary attacks. [...]

The PRC embassy in Afghanistan coordinates its subversive actions against the DRA with the governments of the USA, England, West German, and Italy by attending weekly meetings in Kabul with the personnel of these embassies to trade information of a political intelligence nature.

Based on materials of the Scientific-Research Institute (NII) and foreign information.

**Memorandum of Conversations between SED General Secretary Erich Honecker and Afghan Leader Babrak Karmal, 19 May 1982**

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/2420, pp.90-1, 93-94, 97-98. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.*]

19 May 1982 (15:00-17:50 hours)  
(uncorrected version)

[...]

KARMAL: When I talk about imperialism, I mean US-Imperialism and its allies, reactionary Arab lands, the reaction in the region, reactionary forces in Pakistan, right-wing forces in the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially SAVAK, the former secret service of the Shah of Persia, and the hegemonists. They got together three years ago to start an undeclared war against Afghanistan.

Before the newest phase of the April [1978] Revolution there were 80 bases in Pakistan, 10 to 12 in Iran, 8 in Xinjiang in China. Counterrevolutionaries are being trained by specialists from the PRC, the US, and Egypt. These countries I have named have publicly announced that they support the counterrevolutionary elements of Afghanistan.

[...] The imperialist and reactionary forces have plans not only to end the Afghan Revolution, but also to end Afghan territory as a free country. The second stage of the April Revolution of 27 December [1979] put an end to that.

These plans called for regions such as where the Pushtuns, one of Afghanistan’s largest minorities, live as well as the western part of the country to be given to Iran. The northeast would go to China and in the center of Afghanistan, they would create a government against socialism, obedient to American imperialism, directly linked to the CIA.

Since the existence of Afghanistan and its territorial integrity were in danger, the revolutionary government and the

People's [Democratic] Party of Afghanistan asked the Soviet Union for help under our treaty of friendship. The Soviet Union gave this help at just the right moment. It was a matter of days.

The imperialists were even ready to let loose a regional war. But the timely help of the Soviet Union not only saved the Afghan Revolution and territorial integrity, but also blocked the imperialist powers' advance. The danger was that Amin, who had had the legal president of the Republic murdered, was in on the plans of American imperialism and that the forces against the party had won influence inside the party. [...]

In the last two years and some months, the national army, the security forces, and the People's militia have not doubled or tripled but quadrupled, and now with our own security forces we can eliminate large groups of counter-revolutionaries who are filtered into our country from Pakistan and Xinjiang, China. They can not make any frontal attack on us, rather they are organizing terror bands of 5 to 10 men to blow up schools, public buildings, hospitals, and other government institutions. They blackmail the farmers and other classes. This kind of counter-revolutionary battle creates problems for us.

We are in the position to remove counter-revolutionary forces in our country this or next year. But the main problem is that when we succeed in bringing over the counter-revolutionary elements through promises and offers, then new forces are slipped in from Pakistan...

HONECKER: In our view, it will be a very difficult process to go from a feudal society to a new democratic and socialist system, while there are open borders with Iran and Pakistan.

BABRAK KARMAL: 2,340 kilometers of border with Pakistan, 800 kilometers of border with Iran, and 96 kilometers of border with China. And they are all adversaries!

HONECKER: We understand it this way: the imperialists want the borders with Iran and Pakistan open, as well as with China, but the border with the Soviet Union should be closed. But not everything follows the will of the imperialists and the development of the world has its own law.

[...]



**Memorandum of Conversations between Socialist Unity Party (SED) General Secretary Erich Honecker and Afghan President Babrak Karmal, 21 May 1982**

*[Source: Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/2420, pp. 128-9, 133, 140-3, 147. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.]*

21 MAY 1982 (10:00-12:20 HOURS)

[...]

HONECKER: ... I don't need to emphasize that we are most closely allied with Vietnam, Kampuchea, and Laos. We have a friendship and mutual aid treaty with Vietnam and the same treaty with Kampuchea and now we are about to conclude one with Laos.

BABRAK KARMAL: And now with Afghanistan.

HONECKER: Yes. That takes place today. But I wanted to consider now the Indochinese countries which are threatened by the Chinese hegemonists. This is clearly our main thrust in this region; otherwise, we wouldn't conclude these treaties. We know how complicated the situation is in Southeast Asia. I had a chance to see it on the spot with [GDR premier] Comrade [Willi] Stoph and other comrades. We've supported Vietnam with over 2.5 billion marks. We've trained tens of thousands of specialists in our higher schools and even our manufacturers are organizing workshops for manufacturers...

As an expression of our alliance and solidarity I would like to present you, Comrade Babrak Karmal, as a complement to the print-shop already at work, with a photo laboratory as a present from the GDR communists. A photo laboratory can help to reflect reality and we know that image plays an important role in the fight for peace. We are deeply convinced that on the basis of the measures we have agreed on today, on the basis of our treaty of mutual aid and friendship, the cooperation between our countries in political, scientific-technical, economic and cultural areas will become closer.

In our view, we could also expand the education of your cadres in higher education and popular education as well as with experts in this area. Together with all these measures that we agreed on today, we will expand considerably the spectrum of our cooperation...

BABRAK KARMAL: [...] We put the emphasis on the fact that Afghanistan is confronted with Pakistan, Iran and the People's Republic of China. But our policy principles are based on peaceful coexistence and our foreign policy follows.

Naturally, one can add that after Pakistan, Iran, China, and several Arab lands, the Federal Republic [of Germany] is one of the most important centers of the counter-revolution against Afghanistan and here we have almost the same positions.

HONECKER: Do you still have a German Federal Republic school in Kabul?

BABRAK KARMAL: It is good, comrade Honecker, that you are bringing up this problem, since we were planning to talk with you about it. Aside from the [West] German school, we have... [Cut off]

HONECKER: They're all agents.

BABRAK KARMAL: [continuing] ... the Goethe Institute and both institutions are very conspiratorially active in Afghanistan.

HONECKER: They send all the bad reports to Bonn. That is why [West German Chancellor Helmut] Schmidt said [to me that] he is better informed about Afghanistan than I.

BABRAK KARMAL: But the reports they send are not true.

HONECKER: That is clear [...]

BABRAK KARMAL: Regarding Pakistan, as you said, comrade Honecker, the US intends to use Pakistan as a gendarme. This is naturally a danger for the neighboring countries, such as Afghanistan, friendly India, and Iran, if it comes to a progressive line there.

In Pakistan power is basically limited to the military. They have a half million soldiers. They are professional soldiers. Although there are differences, they are directed by the Americans. The US can put anyone in power at any time.

The Pakistani military government has naturally tried to exploit the so-called Afghanistan problem with reactionary Arab countries, with the US, and also with China and to get as much help and support as possible. I do not want to leave unmentioned that the People's Republic of China is also supporting the Pakistani military government with large quantities of weapons and munitions. But the conflict is very hard in Pakistan as well as the ethnic conflicts, since there are several nationalities.

With regard to the Pakistani population, all the forces of the illegal parties are for the Afghanistan revolution. We have received many telegrams from leaders of these parties in which they fully support our revolution and reject the position of Pakistan.

It is a fact that the reactionary forces of America, China, Pakistan and the NATO countries have an interest in the limited Soviet contingent remaining in Afghanistan. In this way, these countries can use their help as a pretext for their dirty goals [...]

BABRAK: There is a matter that I'd like to raise. I don't know if it has been raised here to say that Afghanistan has labor and also mineral resources, and we will be in a position in the near future to take care of the needs of our friend the GDR. The riches of Afghanistan are enough to guarantee 50 million men the best living standard, if there was developed, socialist industry.

The main problem is the lack of energy [resources].

**CPSU Memorandum, Information on Talks between Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko and US Secretary of State George Shultz, 13 October 1982**

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30 IV 2/2.035/70 p.106. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.*]

13 October 1982

Secret!

Information on talks between A. A. Gromyko and G. Shultz<sup>14</sup>

[...]

No new American thoughts on Afghanistan to signal. In general terms, Shultz supported a dialogue between Kabul and Islamabad, but we're not convinced of the sincerity of his statement. We presented our principled views on Afghanistan and demanded that the Americans end their interference and subversive behavior and seriously consider if it would not be better to move in the direction of a political solution.

[...]



**Note on Conversation between East German Ambassador Kurt Krueger and People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) Politburo Member Anahita Ratebzad, 13 February 1983**

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30 vorl. SED 30273. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.*]

13 February 1983

Ambassador Kurt Krueger (GDR) meets with Politburo member Anahita RATEBZAD

Towards the end of a three-hour talk, she asks about Afghan employees at the embassy. Krueger mentioned a driver...

She interrupted me and said: But you don't travel with that driver. I explained to her that I only go with a GDR driver and am sufficiently secure. She warned me again not to go with an Afghan driver since the counterrevolution pays large sums for abductions. She added that in this way 15 Soviet specialists were abducted near Mazar-e-Sharif and finally after long research found hidden in a mountain fortress on 1 February and then 10 were freed alive by parachutists. Five specialists had already been shot. The counterrevolution planned to take these specialists to Peshawar, but were pre-

vented when the roads were blocked in time by the armed organs.



### East German Memorandum Information on the Situation in Afghanistan, 8 September 1983

[Source: Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30 vorl. SED 30273. Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.]

8 September 1983

Foreign Department Information on the Situation in Afghanistan

Consolidation continues [...] Increasing cooperation of the revolutionary power with tribes, in particular with the main tribe on both sides of border, the Pashtuns, has had a noticeable influence on the change in power relations. Approximately 80% of the Pashtuns live on the Pakistani side. After decisions of the Elder Councils (Jingahs), they agreed with the Afghan government not to let counter-revolutionary bands have passage through tribal areas.

Forming tribal militia. Providing arms, money. Offer education in USSR to chiefs' children. 220 already in USSR.



### Report of a USSR Ministry of Defense Operations Group Headed by Marshal of the Soviet Union S. L. Sokolov about the Results of Operations, June 1984

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 284-5. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

The military situation as a result of conducting a whole series of operations against counterrevolutionary forces has notably improved.

During the five months there were 85 operations, of which 51 were joint operations of the 40<sup>th</sup> [Soviet] Army and Afghan army units, and 34 independent operations by Afghan units.

The Panjshir operation and combat operations in Herat had especially great importance for the improvement of the military situation...

A serious defeat was inflicted on the enemy in the course of combat operations in the Panjshir and Andarab Valleys and to the north. His main base was destroyed... Secret documents seized in Panjshir by our forces on 18 May 1984 per-

mitted us to uncover and destroy a broad IOA agent network existing in Kabul (in the central Party and government bureaucracy, including in the SGI [Government Information Service], *tsarandoy* [police], and Ministry of Defense) and other regions of the country...

In May and especially in June the number of groups entering into talks ready to recognize the DRA government and cease armed combat increased and the surrender of a number of groups occurred (in Panjshir and Andarab not counting the band of the leader Jumakhan (700 men), 8 groups totaling 600 rebels surrendered)...

At the present time in accordance with the decision approved by you, measures are being taken in the Panjshir and Andarab valleys to consolidate government authority. To this end, pressure has been put on the DRA government to increase its activity...

Recently the enemy has displayed activity in the south-east and the south of the country in the areas of Khowst and the provinces of Kunar, Kandahar, and in individual sectors of lines of communications.

Considering this, besides Panjshir and Andarab, at the present time troop combat operations are being conducted in the area of Khowst (25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, 666<sup>th</sup> Regiment "K", 2<sup>nd</sup> PGBR [trans. note: some kind of brigade; note that these are all Afghan units]; in the area of Kandahar (70<sup>th</sup> Independent Motorized Rifle Brigade, 15<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and the 466<sup>th</sup> Regiment "K" of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Army Corps); in the area of Farah (21<sup>st</sup> Motorized Infantry Brigade with the 4<sup>th</sup> Tank Brigade); in the area of Gurian, west of Herat (17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division with the 5<sup>th</sup> Tank Brigade).

Combat operations will soon begin in the area of Jalalabad and Asadabad, in the provinces of Nangarhar and Kunar [with] the 66<sup>th</sup> Independent Motorized Rifle Brigade, and the 11<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions.

The closing of possible routes for the movement of caravans and groups from Pakistan continues using three "*spetsnaz*" [special forces] battalions...

The 40<sup>th</sup> Army continues to remain a decisive factor in stabilizing the situation in the DRA and takes on itself the main burden of the fight with the counterrevolutionaries [...] The Army is combat ready. Combat operations in the Panjshir and Andarab valleys have shown the capability of the troops of the Army and aviation to carry out combat missions in difficult mountainous conditions without special equipment at altitudes of 4,000-5,000 meters and where there are glaciers.

The personnel have operated selflessly and bravely. The overwhelming majority of combat mission carried out by aircraft have been at low altitudes. The Su-25 ground attack aircraft have displayed their good combat capabilities...

The operations of the troops permit several conclusions to be drawn about further improvement of their combat training and technical supplies not only of the 40<sup>th</sup> Army, but of the Armed Forces as a whole...

Several individual conversations have been held with DRA Minister of Defense Cde. [Abdul] Qadir and Chief of the Main Political Directorate Cde. Sadeki. In them the need

was stressed for greater activity and regular visits to the troops to analyze the results of combat operations and to take steps to increase their effectiveness; to step up political educational work with personnel, combat desertion; and to give other necessary aid to the formations and units of the Afghan army...



### CPSU Memorandum, 24 October 1986

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/2383, p.122* Obtained and translated from German by David Wolff.]

24 October 1986

Secret

4 Copies

In keeping with our common practice, we would like to inform you of the most important results of the Sino-Soviet political consultations that took place in Beijing on 6-14 October [...]

In connection with the beginning of the withdrawal of six Soviet regiments from Afghanistan, the Chinese side was told that we await corresponding steps from their side, they who are participating in an undeclared war against the DRA.



### GRU [Soviet Military Intelligence] Dossier on Najibullah (Excerpt)

Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: *Iskon*, 1999), pp. 369-70. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Muhammad Najib (Najibullah) was born in 1947 in the province of Paktia into a prosperous family. He is a Pushtun and a Sunni Muslim. His father Akhtar Muhammad was the leader of a tribe and maintained relations with the former president of Afghanistan, M. Daud. Najibullah's roots are from the Ahmadzai, part of the Gilzai union of Pushtun tribes.

In 1964 Najibullah entered the medical school of Kabul University. He joined the "Parcham" faction of the PDPA in 1965. He was twice arrested in 1966 for active participation in anti-government demonstrations [*vystupleniya*]. He followed B[abrak]. Karmal after the Party split in 1967. He was imprisoned in 1969 for political activity. In 1970 he was elected Secretary of the underground PDPA City Committee in Kabul from the "Parcham".

Nevertheless, in 1975 he graduated the University and

began his profession as a gynecologist; he worked several years in a number of provinces. He joined the united CC PDPA in 1978. After the coup in April 1978 he became a member of the DRA Revolutionary Council. In June of that year (when N[ur]. M[hammad]. Taraki and H[afizullah]. Amin were in power) he was sent to Iran as DRA ambassador.

But he was removed from the post of ambassador in the summer of 1979 and emigrated to Yugoslavia. In the process he appropriated \$100,000 from Embassy funds. He returned to his homeland after the entry of Soviet troops into the DRA. In 1980 he headed the state security organization and was again elected to the Revolutionary Council. He has been a member of the CC PDPA Politburo since 1981 and since 1985 he has been the Secretary of the CC PDPA for Ministry of Defense [MO], Ministry of State Security [MGB], and Ministry of Internal Affairs [MVD] issues.

He is an intelligent, clever, and a vicious politician. He is vain and ambitious.

A Pushtun nationalist, he is one of the motivating spirits of the policy of "Pushtunization" of Afghan society. Within his closest circle he speaks only in Pashto. He is inclined to select colleagues not for their professional qualities but for their personal devotion to him, predominantly relatives and fellow-villagers [*zemlyaki*].

He knows English, is married, and has three daughters. His wife is from a wealthy family. [From the dossier of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate on M. Najib]



### Memorandum from KGB Chief Viktor M. Chebrikov, USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, USSR Defense Minister Marshal Sergei L. Sokolov, and CPSU Central Committee International Relations Secretary Anatoly Dobrynin to CPSU Politburo, 13 November 1986<sup>15</sup>

[Source: Boris Gromov, *Ogranichenny Kontingent (Limited Contingent)* (Moscow: *Progress*, 1994), pp. 230-233.]

Secret

Special Folder [*This notation omitted in the Gromov book*]

CCCPSU

Some positive movement in the activity of the Afghan leadership and the PDPA [People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan] noted after the election of Najib as General Secretary of the CC PDPA continues to develop. The party organs have begun to work more actively, the forms and methods of propaganda are being reexamined, and new ways are being more intensively sought to influence broad sectors



of the population. There are certain positive changes in the condition of the Afghan armed forces and the level of their combat ability.

Nevertheless no noticeable improvement in the military-political situation in the country has been achieved. Cde. Najib is objectively assessing the situation and understands the complexity of the problems which lie before him.

Najib described his assessment of the situation in the country in conversations in Kabul with [First Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister] Cde. Yu[li] M. Vorontsov from 18 to 22 October 1986 (telegrams from Kabul N° 1179, 1182, 1188, and 1190).

In particular, Najib noted that of the 31,000-35,000 villages in Afghanistan the government has only 8,000 formally under control and they managed to hold elections to local bodies in a still smaller number of villages near cities, in only 2,000. In Najib's words, the urban population actively supports the Revolution, but there is no such support in the villages and the PDPA itself it at fault for not having explained the essence and the goals of the Revolution to the population. Cde. Najib thinks that at the present time the mission of the Party is to go from the city to the village.

Cde. Najib noted that the military activity of the counterrevolutionaries is not slackening. He said that at the present time 5,017 rebel groups are operating on DRA [Democratic Republic of Afghanistan] territory, which include 183,000 men, eighty thousand of which comprise the active combat force of the counterrevolutionaries. The tactics of the counterrevolutionary forces are changing and improving. Part of the caravan routes along which the supplies of the counterrevolutionaries travel are generally not covered at all. This requires a further stepping up of efforts to close the border.

Cde. Najib stressed that if we proceed from the position of solving all problems by military means then it will take 20-30 more years to normalize the situation at the present rate of strengthening and expanding government authority. In this regard he considers the stepping up of efforts directed at achieving national reconciliation as a pressing task.

In the opinion of Cde. Najib, they ought to enter into talks with those Islamic parties and organizations inside Afghanistan and beyond its borders who are ready to compromise and do not bear responsibility for bloodshed to such a great degree. A dialogue could also be held with monarchists. Cde. Najib thinks that they will never compromise with the aristocracy, feudal interests, large private landowners, and reactionary mullahs – the “fundamentalists.” Nevertheless it is possible to establish contacts with representatives of some of these individuals. When the PDPA achieves national reconciliation he considers it necessary to keep the posts of Chairman of the State Council, Chairman of the Council of Ministers; the Ministers of Defense, State Security, Internal Affairs, Communications, and Finance; the management of banks, the Supreme Court, the procuracy, and military justice bodies. Representatives of the other side could get the posts of Deputy Chairman of the State Council and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and also the

posts of Minister of Agriculture, Health, Irrigation; Deputy Minister of various ministries, and governors. The former king, Zahir Shah, could be given the post of Chairman of the National Patriotic Front or Chairman of Parliament. The political organizations of Islamic groups could become collective members of the National Patriotic Front and legitimize their activity on this basis. Cde. Najib expressed the completely reasonable opinion that they ought not to be hasty in adopting the DRA constitution, keeping in mind that much contained in it will depend on how the process of national reconciliation develops.

Cde. Najib is considering the possibility of a public announcement concerning questions of national reconciliation with a simultaneous proposal to the counterrevolutionaries for an armistice, let's say, for six months.

Cde. Najib views the issues of a political settlement and the withdrawal of Soviet troops as linked with national reconciliation. He said that he considers a reduction of the period of Soviet withdrawal from the DRA to two years is possible after a settlement is reached and expressed several ideas about the number of troops to be withdrawn during the first and second years. In connection with the other aspects of the settlement, he expressed an opinion about the advisability of international monitoring within the framework of a settlement without UN involvement; he suggested several versions of Iranian involvement in the settlement; he has a favorable attitude toward a possible increase in our contacts with the Pakistanis regarding the issues concerning the situation around Afghanistan.

Cde. Najib understands that until the present time little has been done in practice toward national reconciliation. It is evident that he is inclined to search for real approaches to this problem. He needs our support in this, especially since indeed far from everyone in the PDPA accepts the idea of reconciliation. Of great importance in this regard would be the organization of an official visit to the USSR by Cde. Najib before the end of this year in the course of which the questions of national reconciliation and a political settlement around Afghanistan could be discussed. The visit could further facilitate the strengthening of the position of this energetic, can-do Afghan leader.

Cde. Najib thinks that several personnel questions need to be decided to increase the effectiveness of the activity of the Afghan leadership.

In conversations with Cde. Yu. M. Vorontsov and also in other conversations in Kabul in the last few days he has especially stressed that [former Afghan President] B[abrak] Karmal ought to be removed from the PDPA Politburo and the position of Chairman of the DRA Revolutionary Council as soon as possible. Cde. Najib said that B. Karmal has abandoned Party and government work, occupies himself with faultfinding, and speaks against the policy of national reconciliation. Cde. Najib is afraid that B. Karmal's ambitiousness, aggravated by illness and alcohol abuse, could lead him to unpredictable acts. Quiet actions could remove him from his present posts if he were first convinced to do this.

For Cde. Najib's part, he raised the issues of replacing

Minister of Defense N[ur] Muhammed with Politburo member [and former Public Works and Defense Minister Col.-Gen. Muhammad] Rafi and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sh[ah] M. Dost with [PDPA Politburo member and former Finance Minister Abdul] Wakil (Dost would meanwhile continue to handle questions of national reconciliation but as a Minister for Special Assignments and simultaneously DRA Permanent Representative to the UN).

Najib's ideas concerning personnel issues are well-founded. The observations of Soviet representatives in Kabul, in particular, confirm that B. Karmal has not drawn the necessary conclusions on his own and his selfish opposition and lack of self-control displayed in ever more abrupt forms are paralyzing the activity of Cde. Najib and seriously impeding his work in the CC PDPA Politburo and the Party as a whole.

13 November 1986



**Memorandum of Conversation between CPSU Secretary for International Relations Anatoly Dobrynin and Socialist Unity Party (SED) General Secretary Erich Honecker in Berlin, 20 January 1987**

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/2384, pp. 32-33; translated from German by David Wolff.*]

20 January 1987

[...]

DOBRYNIN: The Soviet Union's relations with India are developing to a new level after the meeting with [Indian Prime Minister Rajiv] Gandhi.<sup>16</sup> There was a very open one-on-one talk between the two leaders. We can even jokingly say that in some matters, he [Gandhi] had positions like a member of the Warsaw Pact.

HONECKER: We evaluate highly the results of M. Gorbachev's trip to India.

DOBRYNIN: Two words on Afghanistan. Najib wanted to come to Moscow alone.<sup>17</sup> M. Gorbachev suggested meeting with the whole Politburo and to have a private meeting. Now Najib has understood that that is the correct step. He says it took him a half year to convince the others that Gorbachev had said just that. Two thirds of the Politburo were in Moscow. Comrade Gorbachev expressed a very simple thought: the Soviet Union has always been for friendship with Afghanistan. But now is the time for the Afghans to take power into their own hands, not to count on the Soviet troops,

looking on as they fight. The CPSU assumes that the Afghans must put themselves into play in order to let the Soviet troops leave soon. This could happen in about two years. The Afghan comrades were at first hurt. Najib knew about it in advance, but not the others.

He agreed with M. Gorbachev and said: it will be hard, but we can do it. Now Afghanistan is in a difficult phase. Najib suggested the solution of a national reconciliation and the Soviet side agreed. To his question as to who could be brought back from the emigration, we answered that he knows best. If someone is to be brought into the government, just do it, except for the key posts. Now practically everything is agreed except for the timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. With [UN Special Envoy Diego] Cordovez, we have been talking about three-and-a-half years. Pakistan demands a period of four months. The Soviet side advised him not to even talk about such a period. He suggested 18 months. He received the reply that he should speak with Afghanistan.

The solution of a national reconciliation was a surprise for the bandits. Their leaders want to have four weeks to think about it. They don't want to take advice from anyone in this period. [US Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Michael H. ] Armacost was sent to [Pakistani President] Zia Ul-Haq<sup>18</sup> to say it was a Russian trick. Comrade [Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly G.] Kovalev was also sent to Pakistan to explain the Soviet position.



**Memorandum by the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) Central Committee (CC) Department of "Foreign Policy and International Relations" on Activating the Relations with the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and Increasing the Assistance to Afghanistan with View to Promoting the National Reconciliation Process, 18 May 1987**

[Source: *Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 1-B, Opis 68, File 87. Obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Kalina Bratanova and Baev.*]

To  
Politburo of the CC BCP  
Reg. No. 00.41-78/20.5.87

MEMORANDUM  
By the CC BCP Department of Foreign Policy and International Relations

Re: Activating the relations with the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan [DRA] and increasing the assistance to Afghanistan with view to promoting the national reconciliation process.

Comrades,

Our Soviet comrades have proposed that the People's Republic of Bulgaria, together with the other countries of the socialist community, provide additional help to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan with view to promoting the national reconciliation process.

The Secretary General of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [PDPA] Najib at a meeting with the ambassadors of the socialist countries to Kabul, held on 12 April this year, declared that the PDPA and the DRA are in favor of strengthening and accelerating the relations with the fraternal socialist countries; more initiatives are expected on the latter's part, including initiatives in terms of an increase in the socio-economic assistance provided to Afghanistan.

The relations between the People's Republic of Bulgaria and DRA, and between the BCP and the PDPA, have been improving since December 1981, when the treaty on the establishment of friendly relations and close cooperation was signed in Sofia.

The summit meetings held and treaties signed between the two countries have been of particular significance for the further development of our bilateral relations. In this respect an invitation to undertake an official friendly visit to the P[eople's] R[epublic of] Bulgaria has been made to comrade Najib, Secretary General of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, on comrade Todor Zhivkov's behalf. Afghanistan suggests that this visit take place from 18 to 20 July or from 12 to 14 August. The BCP and the PR Bulgaria have been actively supporting the PDPA's policy and that of the Revolutionary Council and DRA government towards national reconciliation and normalizing the overall situation both within Afghanistan and in its neighboring countries by peaceful means; they firmly back up the friendly Afghani people's struggle to build a new, peaceful and independent and non-aligned Afghanistan.

Exchanges of delegations are being carried out on a broad scale. In 1986 our country was visited by the PDPA CC Politburo member and DRA Prime Minister of Sultan Ali Keshtmand, the PDPA CC Politburo member and DRA Deputy Prime Minister Mohammed Rafi, three ministers and other important politicians and state officials from Afghanistan. There have been several visits on the Bulgarian part since the beginning of 1987, including those of Krastyo Trichkov, vice-president of the National Council of the Fatherland Union, and Rumen Serbezov, chairman of the Central Cooperative Union. There has been exchange visits of other party, state or public delegations. A sustainable legal framework, within which bilateral relations may develop, has been established.

So far our country has been providing and still provides significant socio-economic assistance and aid to the DRA. This aid may be divided into the following items:

- a government credit of \$31.3 million has been extended to fund the establishment of cattle-breeding farm, a chicken-breeding farm, a fishery, a pottery and leather-processing works, and other properties

on Afghanistan's territory; the agreements already signed in this respect total \$31 million.

- a new government credit of \$30 million has been extended in 1986 to fund the designing of a brick works, the delivery and installation of its equipment, supplying with electricity villages throughout the country, building medium-size and small water-power stations, a mixed-type fodder plant, the expansion of a chicken-breeding farm, a fruit and vegetable-processing technological line;
- a credit line of 3 million exchange leva granted by the Central Cooperative Union in 1986;
- aid amounting to over 1.5 million exchange leva for telephone stations of the CC of PDPA and other organizations and agencies, textbooks, medicines, foods, footwear, clothing and special equipment;
- experts sent to work in various industries of Afghanistan's economy
- covering fees and other expenses for the education of about 100 students annually at the universities and the Academy of Social Sciences and Economic Management (the ASSEM) at the CC of the BCP;
- covering fees and other expenses for an 11-year education of 20 Afghan orphans at boarding-schools in Bulgaria;
- covering all expenses, including travel and accommodation of all Afghans visiting Bulgaria.

A sign of our solidarity with the people of Afghanistan and our support for the PDPA and the DRA are the wide range of events organized in our country such as meetings, rallies, press conferences to honor such important historical events as the anniversary of the April Revolution (27 April), the Day of Independence (18 August), the International Day of Solidarity with the people of Afghanistan (25 October).

We suggest that our country accept the Soviet comrades' proposal, and respond to the PDPA's appeal to provide assistance to the PDPA's policy of national reconciliation in Afghanistan.

We are therefore tabling a draft resolution of Politburo of the CC of the BCP, drawn up after considering the remarks and suggestion made by the following Politburo members: comrades [Prime Minister] Georgi Atanassov, [Party Secretary] Grisha Philipov, [Defense Minister] Gen. Dobri Dzheurov, [Foreign Minister] Petar Mladenov and [Economics Minister] Ognian Doinov. The financial aid for designing a new hospital in Kabul has been considered with the chairman of the Bulgarian Red Cross, K. Ignatov.

18 May 1987

First Deputy Head, CC BCP Foreign Policy and International Relations Department  
/K. Atanassov/

**Report to Soviet Minister of Defense Gen. Dmitri T. Yazov from Gen. Valentin Varennikov in Kabul, January 1988**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 397-98. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

(Secret)

To the USSR Minister of Defense  
General of the Army, D. T. Yazov

I report:

...after the visit of [Soviet Foreign Minister] Cde. E. A. Shevardnadze Cde. Najibullah asked to meet with Cde. Layek for a conversation. It ought to be noted that there are very close relations between Najibullah and Layek. They often meet together to discuss various questions, chiefly to submit them to the Politburo or the Defense Council. For the last year and a half Najibullah has repeatedly sent Layek to me for frank conversations, the content of which was doubtless transmitted to Najibullah.

On 10 January the meeting with Layek took place. He arrived under the pretext of discussing the situation in the Gardez – Khost region, [but] in fact he was interested in the opinion of Soviet representatives about the results of Cde. Eh. A. Shevardnadze's visit to Kabul.

At the beginning of the conversation I shared with Layek our estimate of the influence of the meetings with Cde. Eh. A. Shevardnadze on the Party and government bureaucracy of the country. In this regard Layek confirmed the conclusion that the Afghan leadership has finally understood that Soviet troops would soon begin a withdrawal from Afghanistan and this predetermines the necessity for decisive steps to strengthen the position of the PDPA regime and further stabilize the situation in the country.

I further described to Layek the most important problems which should be solved in the shortest possible time. He agreed that it is quite necessary:

1. To speed up the elections to local governments (villages, rural districts, provinces). During the elections the people themselves will decide whom to elect. Fearlessly start to involve the heads of local [rebel] groups in government bodies...
2. Consolidate the positions of government authority. The main figure in the province should be the governor. Examine the leadership echelon at the provincial level and remove people who do not enjoy authority among the population...
3. Strengthen the Party. At the upcoming CC PDPA plenum determine the role and place of the PDPA in the new conditions (a multi-Party system, coalition, the upcoming withdrawal of Soviet troops) and the tactics of their

future activities right now and for the long term...

4. Accelerate the strengthening of the bloc of leftist forces and its active inclusion in the political processes in the country...

5. Concentrate efforts in 8-9 key provinces (Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, Paktia, the Khost district, Nangarhar, Jowzjan, Balkh, and Kunduz), firmly holding the west, south, and some of the east of Afghanistan.

6. Start creating a coalition government now while Soviet troops are in the country. For this, it is necessary to look for nontraditional means, make contacts, and use all the possibilities for work with the most influential group leaders such as Ahmad Shah and Jelaluddin.

Regarding the question of strengthening the Party, Layek assured me that this would not be difficult to achieve. It is enough to stop factionalism at the highest level and everything will be in order. In his words, the differences at middle and lower levels of the Party bureaucracy are not sharp and easily eliminated. It is necessary to achieve Politburo unity [by] removing 3 or 4 people who are strenuously pursuing factional activity. Layek did not name who these people are.

...Layek noted that the policy of national reconciliation is the only correct way to solve the Afghan problem. Afghan leaders should not scare off the opposition while carrying it out – “the doors to talks should be open.”

I said to Layek that the opposition will not crawl to these doors itself. They need to be assiduously invited, moreover, into talks as equals so that the opposition can maintain their political face. Only in this case can you count on anything. For a long time only one method was used regarding the intransigent leaders – active combat operations. Now the time has come to again reexamine the attitude toward authoritative [rebel] leaders and make a decision about each one personally. The main this is to draw them into contact, into talks, and into participation in coalition government bodies and offer [them] prestigious positions in the provinces and in Kabul. At the same time, decide the problem of reducing the influence of important leaders by splitting away small detachments.

Not all Afghan leaders correctly understand this issue. The DRA Special Revolutionary Court has not yet revoked the sentence which in 1986 handed down a death sentence in absentia to seven important and authoritative leaders, including A. Shah and Jelaluddin. Threats are directed against them on Afghan television. All of this is obviously not going to help establish contact with them.

Layek agreed with these conclusions. However he expressed doubt that A. Shah and those like him would sit at a negotiating table (although the Afghan comrades still have not tried to propose this) since they hope that the absence of unity in the PDPA will lead to the destruction of the Party, which would facilitate the seizure of power...

Varennikov

January 1988

**Note by USSR Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov to Mikhail Gorbachev, Attaching State Planning Committee (Gosplan) Memorandum on Soviet Expenditures in Afghanistan, January 1988**

[Source: Published in *Istochnik* (1995), vol. 3, p. 156. Translated by Gary Goldberg.]

SPECIAL FOLDER

Dear Mikhail Sergeyeovich,

I am sending you USSR Gosplan information about our material expenses in Afghanistan, including about the level of average daily expenses\*

N. Ryzhkov

N° 92-op (2 pages)

MEMO

about Soviet expenditures in Afghanistan

Total financial expenses (millions of rubles):

1984–1578.5

1985-2623.8

1986-3650.4

1987-5374.0

including:

**I. Military aid (millions of rubles)**

	1984	1985	1986	1987
1. Maintenance and support of the Soviet Army	1196.8	2023.5	2341.6	3955.0
2. Maintenance and support of the DRA Army	381.7	600.3	703.8	
3. USSR MVD expenses	-	-	144	150
4. USSR KGB expenses	-	-	8	11
Total Military Aid	1578.5	2623.8	3197.4	4116

**II. Economic aid and other expenses (millions of rubles)**

	1986	1987
	<b>actual</b>	<b>granted</b>
1. Free aid	203	950
2. Economic assistance through GKEhS {State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations} channels	152	166
3. Through Ministry of Foreign Trade channels, export above import	28	67
4. Aid through preferential prices for Afghan goods delivered to the USSR: natural gas, wool, etc.	70	65
5. Deliveries within the framework of sponsored aid	-	10
Total economic aid		

**III. Average daily expenditures (millions of rubles per day)**

1984	1985	1986	1987
4.3	7.2	10.0	14.7

\* - There is a note: "Cde. M. S. Gorbachev has been informed. V. Boldin. 17.01.88"

APRF. Packet N° 3 (88). Original



**Information about the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Multilateral Group for Current Information of the Warsaw Pact Member Countries, January 1988**

*[Source: Diplomatic Archive, Sofia, Opus 45-10, File 28. Obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Kalina Bratanova and Baev.]*

C-93.00.1

For official use only!

**INFORMATION**

About the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Multilateral Group for Current Information of the Warsaw Pact Member Countries

On 19-20 January 1988, the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Warsaw Pact Multilateral Group for Current Information was held in Warsaw.

[...]

The following information was provided by the delegation of the USSR under the third item on the agenda:

[...]

2. On settlement of the situation in Afghanistan:

There are completely new trends in terms of the policy for national reconciliation and the further progress of the negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan in Geneva.

The material and legal framework, within which a national dialogue was to be initiated, has been established. The coalition structure of state authority was being firmly established. Many of the ministerial positions, among which that of prime minister, have been proposed to the opposition.

The unilateral ceasefire by the government has been extended to 15 July 1988. The economy has incorporated the capital of private Afghani, whose interests are legally protected.

Peace zones have been established in many regions of the country; over 120,000 refugees have come back, 35,000 former counter-revolutionaries have ceased armed struggle.

The military power of the Afghan army has been enhanced; the latter became quite obvious in the successful operation for the de-blocking of Khost.

During his visit to Moscow [UN Special Envoy] Diego Cordovez claimed that he hoped that the negotiations that are to start in February would end successfully. Afghanistan's and Pakistan's positions on the period within which the Soviet troops are to start withdrawing from Afghanistan have become closer. The former's position remains 12 months, whereas the latter's [is] 8 months.

Iran is not to join the Geneva process yet; it claims, however, that it will make an official statement about its support for any further agreements reached.

[Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard] Shevardnadze's visit to Kabul at the beginning of January has been highly appreciated by the leaders of Afghanistan; this visit was considered a sign of significant support for Afghanistan in one of the most important moments of its historical development. [...]



**Joint Report by USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
and USSR Ministry of Defense and KGB  
Representatives in Kabul, February 1988**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 403-04. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

REPORT FROM KABUL

(Secret)

[...] Detailed conversations conducted in recent days with Cde. Najibullah and other Afghan comrades and an analysis of the information arriving through various channels allows certain conclusions to be drawn about several features of the current military and political situation in Afghanistan.

With the publication of the announcement by M. S. Gorbachev and Najibullah an important period in the policy of national reconciliation is ending for which, as they note here, considerably more has been done to restore peace in Afghanistan than in previous years. At the same time a qualitatively new phase in the development of the situation is beginning, [but] by no means all of its constituent elements could be discerned right now. However the main thing is

clear – the point is coming when Afghans must identify and solve their problems themselves by those means which best correspond to their historical traditions. The forms of clarifying relations will be varied – in some places associated with armed struggle and in other places with negotiations - with the need for serious concessions, obviously mainly on the part of the government. But this will be an Afghan solution of an Afghan problem.

The comrades understand that the first period after the withdrawal of Soviet troops will be the most crucial when the armed opposition, judging from everything, will try to unleash massive pressure on government forces. As Cde. Najibullah thinks, it is important to hold out for two or three months, after which the opposition will begin to dissipate and different circumstances will present themselves which will weaken it. Most likely, government forces will have to retreat in several sectors, for in the opinion of Chief of the General Staff Sh[ahnawaz]. N. Tanay, [they] ought possibly to abandon in advance those places where the opposition has obvious military supremacy. This needs to be done so that the opposition can not then paint each local success as a great military victory.

...With the withdrawal of Soviet troops the opposition is deprived of the capability of using anti-Sovietism as a unifying factor. The conflicts between the commanders of the internal counterrevolution operating in Afghanistan itself and the leaders of their own parties outside the country have a very bitter nature...

In the opinion of Cde. Najibullah two outcomes are possible. The first: serious, prolonged battles with the counter-revolutionaries; the second – more favorable, where issues are decided not so much by military means as by various combinations, compromises, and talks using clan, ethnic, and local [*zemlyacheskiye*] relations.

Cde. Najibullah himself is inclined to think that the situation will not develop according to the worst outcome. He returned repeatedly to these thoughts and every time his statements expressed optimism.

The situation in Afghanistan, as it seems at the present time, confirms that the election of Cde. Najibullah as President is already bringing tangible results. In particular, recently a number of important figures of the domestic opposition are trying to make contact with Cde. Najibullah. Judging from their statements, they attach much importance just to the fact that they do not have to do business with a Party leader but with a President. Such a policy is being observed in the provinces where the commanders of armed groups prefer to do business with governors.

Of course it is not possible right now to foresee all the twists and turns of the situation. But it is very important for the Afghans to travel their own path, finally shedding attitudes of dependency and making decisions themselves. Doubtless here there might be and even will be unavoidable miscalculations and delays. But the main thing is not to commit big political mistakes.

Practice has confirmed the correctness of the main thrusts of future work which were outlined during the meetings be-

tween Cde. Gorbachev and Cde. Najibullah and specified during the working visit of Cde. E. A. Shevardnadze to Kabul in January of this year...



### **Soviet Gen. Valentin Varennikov's Proposals on How the Afghans Should Use Their Forces after the Soviet Withdrawal, March 1988 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 407-09. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

The armed forces today are in condition to independently counter opposition pressure only in instances where they constitute large units. Small subunits (posts, outposts) and small garrisons, to battalion level, are extremely unsteady.

The leaders of the opposition, the US, and Pakistan are counting on the overthrow of the current regime and the seizure of power in the country under all alternatives of the development of events after the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Thus, if the Geneva Accords are signed, when Afghanistan receives certain guarantees of non-interference, rebel operations will to a considerable degree be fettered by the responsibilities of the Pakistanis and the Americans, and will not be of an open nature, let's say, by shipping weapons and ammunition across the border. Accordingly, the counterrevolutionaries will be forced to operate in an atmosphere which is more difficult for them.

It is important to keep in mind that the counterrevolutionaries will obviously start to place their main reliance not on large-scale actions of armed groups but on infiltrating agents into the Party and government bureaucracy. Occupying responsible official positions, they can demoralize and recruit. At a certain time the counterrevolutionaries will try to occupy suitable positions in the government bureaucracy with these forces and support their operations with rebel detachments, which could sneak in with refugees (there are weapons in each population center)...

The military doctrine of the Republic of Afghanistan, with the proclamation of a policy of national reconciliation, has been completely subordinated to the mission of stopping the war. It has a peace-loving nature, having as its main idea ensuring the security of the government and the relative stability of the situation in the main regions of the country.

But in achieving the designated strategic goals and, in addition, tactical missions, the leadership of the Republic has still been relying not only on their own forces but on the international aid of the Soviet Union and the troops of the 40<sup>th</sup> Army.

...The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan will fundamentally change the military and political situation and considerably reduce the opportunity for the Afghan leader-

ship to stabilize it. If measures are not taken in advance then many critically important regions and facilities can end up beyond the control of government forces in enemy hands.

Considerable men and equipment are required to protect such regions and facilities. Considering the low combat reliability of Afghan units in comparison with Soviet troops, one can make the conclusion that only bold and decisive steps in the use of actually available forces can allow [them] to count on success in holding important facilities.

In this regard it is advisable:

1. To examine critically the current dispersal of the troops of the RA [Republic of Afghanistan] armed forces throughout the entire country (especially the army troops, including border troops). Try not to hold all the main regions, as was ensured by the presence of the 40<sup>th</sup> Army, but concentrate efforts only on the selected areas ensuring the daily activity of the government and stability for the situation in key regions.

To create a concentrated grouping of armed forces. All garrisons which even now, when our troops are here, are difficult to provide for and support when they conduct combat operations are to be eliminated. Withdraw the subunits of these garrisons to troop basing areas. This chiefly affects garrisons in the areas of Barikot, Panjshir, and Badakhshan...

Such activities preclude the possibility of the defeat and occupation of these small garrisons by the rebels, which would cause political damage to the government and negatively influence troop morale.

The abandonment of small garrisons is to be carried out by holding a preliminary meeting with local authorities and concluding an agreement with them about handing over this area to local authorities for protection who, for their part, would be obligated not to take actions harmful to government bodies.

2. To carry out similar operations regarding those "nuclei" [*orgyadra*] of government authority in a number of districts and rural districts (totaling 17) which were at one time established by force.... These "nuclei" are to be removed and agreements signed with local authorities that they will hold elections for administrative bodies themselves without displaying hostility to government bodies.

3. At the present time and also after the withdrawal of Soviet troops the Afghan armed forces (in addition, the 40<sup>th</sup> Army) are not to organize large-scale combat operations and not to exacerbate the military and especially the political situation. When necessary, launch small, but effective, strikes only on targets which pose a direct threat (outside population centers).

4. Concentrating the main efforts on holding the most important areas and facilities of the country, the main



cities and highways of the country, the armed forces are to be used to carry out the following fundamental missions:

The Army. The main forces are to be in constant readiness to maneuver in order to inflict defeat on counterrevolutionary formations presenting a special danger to the existing regime – in the regions of Kabul, Herat, Kandahar, and Jalalabad. Part of the forces are to be used to cover the main lines of communications, pipelines...

MGB. The main mission is the timely identification of the counterrevolutionary underground, both in the capital and in provincial centers and also, and especially, in the armed forces.

Sarandoy. Its main forces are to be sent to protect and defend security zones, the most important cities, economic facilities, sectors of lines of communications, and also to support public order in Kabul and its suburbs...

5. Considering that the fate of the present regime mainly depends on holding the capital and the Kabul-Termez highway, bring up additional troops to Kabul, its suburbs, and also to the main airbase, Bagram...

6. Make a fundamentally new decision about border troops. The border troops of Afghanistan do not actually perform routine protection of the state border but wage combat operations the same as army troops to hold specified regions or population centers and also to cover sectors of routes from Pakistan into Afghanistan via which weapons and ammunition are delivered to the rebels.

At the present time the border troops, having a considerable manpower level (more than 60%) and complete (up to regulation) supply of combat equipment and weapons (from 80 to 100%) have been making a combat contribution for a year now. However they cannot provide guaranteed protection of the state border from penetration by enemy caravans even if they are reinforced manifold. It is impossible to do this without the complete involvement of the free tribes in the problem of protecting the border. The latter are even interested in the passage of the caravans since they get considerable reward from this.

A situation is developing in which there is no sense in having the border troops located right at the border. But considering that their maintenance and support is already a large problem even now, the need arises to transfer the majority of border subunits to the main lines of communication of the country, putting them at the main population centers.

...All the issues described have been tentatively discussed with Najibullah with the exception of the border troops, and has found his full support. As regards suggestions regarding the use of border troops he has for now only a gen-

eral idea. The Supreme Commander-in-Chief needs some more time to recognize the need for such a step...

Varennikov

Kabul, March 1988



### **[Soviet Military Intelligence] Report on US Aid to the Rebels, March 1988 (Excerpt)**

*[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran) (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp.410-411. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

Memo

About US aid to the counterrevolutionaries

The US Administration, in spite of the prospect of achieving mutually advantageous agreements at the indirect Afghan-Pakistani talks in Geneva, continues to give broad military, financial, and political support to the Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

The policy and practical activities of the US on the Afghan question are directed first of all at achieving the withdrawal of Soviet troops in the shortest possible time, the failure of the implementation of the program of national reconciliation, and the preservation of the military potential of the counterrevolutionaries at a level sufficient to support a struggle for power in the new conditions – that will arise in the event of a successful conclusion of the Geneva talks. Under pressure of extremist forces in Congress several representatives of the Administration are trying to prevent an end to the aid to the antigovernment forces, from being dependent on the withdrawal of Soviet military contingent. The demand is advanced that aid is not to be stopped right after the signing of the corresponding documents in Geneva, but it is to be maintained proportionate to a reduction in the numbers of Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The root goal of the American policy is to establish a pro-Western reactionary regime oriented mainly towards Washington.

At the present time the CIA, the State Department, the Department of Defense, and other US agencies are active in planning anti-Afghan actions. The amount of official American aid to the counterrevolutionaries has exceeded two billion dollars. In 1988 the planned aid amounts to more than \$700,000,000. Recently the Americans have been emphasizing deliveries of modern anti-aircraft weapons to the rebels. In 1987 about 600 “Stinger” portable surface-to-air missiles were sent to the counterrevolutionaries and more than 100 rebels have been trained, having completed an expanded course for instructors in the use of this weapon in US armed

forces training centers and military bases in Texas and California. American military aid is being implemented directly via the headquarters of the rebel parties. The main part of the military cargo intended for the rebels is initially delivered to the port of Karachi. Subsequent operations – storage, transshipment to regions bordering Afghanistan, and transfer of the weapons to the rebels – are done as a rule with the participation of Pakistani armed forces subunits and special services.

Since the beginning of 1988 intensive deliveries of military cargo from the US to ports and airbases of Saudi Arabia, Oman, and several other countries have been noted. Weapons and ammunition are stored with the expectation of future [use].

With the participation of the Americans measures are being implemented to convert the rebel groups to a regular troop structure. As of 1 March 1988 22 so-called regiments have been formed on Pakistani territory and in Afghanistan, 43. New fire bases are being created for the counterrevolutionaries and the system of command and control is being improved.

The number of American advisers training rebels in military training centers in Pakistan and active in organizing combat operations and engineering works on Afghan territory has reached 250. The presence of American advisers has been noted in specialized centers situated in the region of the Pakistani cities of Barsak, Kohat, Parachinar, Quetta, Peshawar, Jamrud, Sadda, and Miram Shah. Their presence (the advisers) in rebel groups was confirmed by chairman of the “Alliance-7” [Islamic Party of Afghanistan leader Muhammad Yunus] Khalis at a press conference in Peshawar when he reported the death of one of the military advisers in December 1987.

With the active participation of Washington a broad psychological offensive has been organized against the Republic of Afghanistan which has the goal of discrediting the policy of national reconciliation being pursued by Kabul and preventing the formation of coalition government bodies. More than 50 radio stations overseen or run by the CIA and USIA make subversive transmissions in the various languages of the peoples of Afghanistan. More than \$1,000,000 was allocated by the CIA for the training of propagandists from among the rebels in 1988.



**[CPSU] Memorandum on the Results of the Negotiations between USSR Central Committee (CC) Politburo member and USSR Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze with US President Ronald Reagan and US Secretary of State George Shultz in Washington on 22-24 March of this year [1988].**

[Source: *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien- und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, DY30/*

*2389, pp. 224, 228. Obtained and translated from Russian by David Wolff.]*

Confidential (Doveritel'no)

The results of the negotiations between CC USSR Politburo member and USSR Foreign Minister E. A. Shevardnadze with US President R. Reagan and Secretary of State G. Shultz in Washington on 22-24 March of this year.

[...]

On Afghanistan. We firmly put the question on the necessity of the speedy completion of the Geneva process and the signature of an agreement with the participation of the US. In principle, announcing the desirability of a successful completion of the negotiations, the Americans are again raising additional conditions that can only be considered an attempt to slow or even disrupt the solution of the Afghan problem. In particular, under the excuse of “symmetry” of US and USSR duties as guarantors of the future agreement, the American side tried to get an interpretation of the agreement on non-interference that would have meant the legalization of Washington’s and Islamabad’s armed interference in the affairs of Afghanistan. Warding off these attempts, we suggested to the President and Secretary of State that they weigh the consequences of the Americans quitting the peace process.

[...]



**Report from General Valentin Varennikov to Soviet Defense Minister Dmitri T. Yazov, August 1988 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 450-52. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

REPORT FROM KABUL

(Secret)

to the USSR Minister of Defense

General of the Army Cde. D. T. Yazov

I report.

... Recently, especially in August of this year, among the Afghan leaders, mainly and including Najibullah, a tendency

has been displayed toward possibly receiving as much material and other resources as possible from the Soviet Union and also forcing the Soviet military to use maximally the men and equipment of the 40<sup>th</sup> Army. In this regard the favorable solution of these problems does not cause a feeling of gratitude from the Afghan friends but on the contrary, induces them to still greater demands, even complaints...

And what is more, if the Afghan army, MGB, and MVD units displayed unreliability then Najibullah initially indirectly, and now even more directly, says that this is explained by insufficient assistance from the 40<sup>th</sup> Army. At the same time he is trying to reduce the negative aspects in the operations of Afghan army units.

Here are several examples of such operations.

1. Constant unfounded inquiries about additional deliveries of weapons and combat equipment for the RA armed forces. At the present time there only exists an objective need to increase deliveries of combat transport helicopters. It is necessary to note in this regard that the organization of the combat employment of helicopters remains extremely poor in spite of measures taken by Soviet advisers. This leads to an unjustifiably large number of losses (in just the last month the RA Air Force lost four fixed-wing aircraft and eight helicopters). As regards other types of weapons, there should not be issues here. On the contrary, it has been repeatedly reported to Najibullah that the available combat equipment and crew-served weapons are not completely employed since they are very badly supplied with specialists (from 20 to 40% of tanks, BMPs [infantry combat vehicles], BTRs [armored transport vehicles], field guns, and mortars do not have crews, and many vehicles do not even have drivers) and accordingly are not being used.

In varied form and constantly (for the third year) insistent desires are expressed that military draft work be improved... Only in this case can they count on the maximum use of the potential which the army and the other branches of the armed forces already have through their own supply of technical equipment...

The Ministers of Internal Affairs and State Security are carefully concealing the situation of their troops, even their authorized strength; however, in these conditions it is known that the level of technical supply of the troops subordinate to them is normal (considering their possible missions) and there are even reserves of several kinds of weapons. For example, in the MGB arsenal alone there are 425 82-mm mortars.

As regards ammunition, Najibullah is carrying out a policy according to which there are to be no norms or procedures for expenditures; the phrase is simply used, "The enemy is shelling us but we are sticking to some kind of norms there." This incorrect judgment leads to irresponsibility in performing combat missions. The troops are, in general, shooting, but not at targets.

Such actions, in turn, will lead after the withdrawal of Soviet troops to the Afghan combat units not being in

a condition, even minimally, to ensure the supply of troops with ammunition and fuel (right now the transport of the 40<sup>th</sup> Army has been put in operation for the needs of the Afghan army). It costs the military (the MO, MVD, and the MGB) nothing, with Najibullah's knowledge, for example, to consume a large amount of equipment, ammunition, fuel, and other material valuables at previous deployment areas when redeploying units from one point to another and while carrying out combat missions.

Examples: when withdrawing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division from Panjshir in the 64<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment there were lost: four 76-mm guns, nine 82-mm mortars, two anti-aircraft machinegun mounts [ZPU], 1 heavy machinegun [DShK], and 180 assault rifles [AKM]; large reserves of material resources were thrown away by MVD and MGB battalions in Kunduz...

Many such examples could be given.

The Afghan leadership has constantly demanded additional deliveries of weapons, equipment, and ammunition, but does not show any frugality in this regard. It probably knows that any of their requests will be met by the Soviet side...

2. The attempt to gloss over the actual situation of the reliability of the troops of the RA armed forces. On 7-8 August Afghan troops abandoned the cities of Kunduz, Khanabad, and Taloqan.

The Khanabad garrison consisted of two MVD battalions and one MGB battalion and in Kunduz, three MGB battalions and two MVD battalions. The enemy, having one-third to one-fourth the forces, seized both population centers without a battle. During all this part of the garrisons went over to the enemy side right away and the rest were disarmed or fled to the area of the Kunduz airfield.

The Afghan leaders were initially indignant at the events. They remarked that all this was a surprise to them. Then they began to look for reasons to substantiate what had happened. Finally to an increasing degree they began to point out the bravery and courage of the combat units which had fled the cities without a defense.

On 18 August at a meeting of the Supreme High Command Najibullah stated that a majority of Afghan units which had participated in combat operations in the area of Khanabad and Kunduz had displayed heroism. I was forced to present a memo noting that the President had been deceived. Indeed, on 12 August I personally looked into the situation in detail which had developed when Kunduz and Khanabad had been abandoned on the scene. Even the leader of the combat operations, Lieutenant General Atsak, and member of the CC PDPA Politburo Karwal' sharply criticized the representatives of the former garrison which had been present at the meeting and the leaders of the province's Defense Council who had themselves displayed cowardice. Units of

the garrison surrendered the city without a battle, had no wounded, not to mention killed. He noted that if these units subsequently comprise a Kunduz garrison then the disgrace which had already occurred would be repeated. In this situation the President was forced to change his opinion and partially replace the units of the Kunduz garrison, putting army subunits in them...

3. There are attempts in a number of cases to shift responsibility for failures to the Soviets. North of Kabul is the district of Shakardara. A surface-to-air missile battalion was deployed within this district.

The situation around the battalion with time developed not in its favor; therefore, in July of this year it was proposed to withdraw the unit to a suburb of Kabul and thereby not create a conflict situation among the local population which is completely under the influence of the rebels.

However the proposal was not adopted. At the beginning of August the enemy blockaded the battalion. In connection with this they were forced to carry out massive strikes by artillery and aircraft (mainly Soviet) on all areas adjoining the battalion. Combat operations by Soviet troops were not envisioned since at this time they were supporting the withdrawal of troops of the 40<sup>th</sup> Army to Soviet territory in accordance with the approved schedule, and Afghan units of the Kabul garrison were occupied with battles in the provinces of Wardak and Logar along with other units of the 40<sup>th</sup> Army.

Having held out for four days, the personnel of the battalion threw away their weapons and combat equipment and fled. The enemy, exaggerating their victory, reported by radio to the leaders in Peshawar about their great success. This report was intercepted by an Afghan communications intelligence [unit] and reported to Najibullah, who stated harshly at a meeting of the RA Supreme High Command that "all this happened because the 40<sup>th</sup> Army did not use ammunition which would have more effectively destroyed the enemy." In connection with this I had to turn to the leadership of the Soviet Union so that it could give orders about the use of such ammunition; moreover, I said that here (in Shakardara) everything was wiped from the face of the Earth.

I explained to Najibullah that Soviet artillery had expended more than 9,000 shells and mortar shells on this area and 169 ground attack aviation sorties were conducted; any garrison could confidently hold out for months with such support. The battalion fled under pressure of rebel propaganda...

Analyzing both the above and the other actions of Najibullah one can conclude the increasingly tense situation in the country is making him less reliable.

At the same time a constant striving to solve all problems by military means is leading to a repetition of the mistakes of the past – to an aggravation, and not a rapprochement [in the relations] of the sides. The desire to hold on to all regions of the country by force and not

seek a compromise with the opposition cannot lead to favorable results in Afghanistan in general, primarily including the regions where the situation is heating up: Kunduz, Takhar, and Bamian...

Varennikov

August 1988



**Decision "A", No. 130 by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, 12 August 1988**

*[Source: Central State Archive, Sofia, fond 1-B, opis 68, file 130-88. Obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Kalina Bratanova and Baev.]*

Decision "A", No. 130 by the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, 12 August 1988

In connection with the new situation in Afghanistan following signing the Geneva Agreements, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party finds it necessary to widen the political, economic and moral support to the Republic of Afghanistan. In view of that aim [the Politburo]:

1. Suggests that the Council of Ministers adopts a comprehensive decision for further activating the economic and scientific-technological cooperation and the preparation of cadres for the Republic of Afghanistan, including the private sector.
2. Does not object to the Council of Ministers offering free of charge to the Republic of Afghanistan clothing, shoes, tents, blankets, medicines, food and other things amounting to two million leva, including transport expenses for the returning refugees.
3. Offers that the National Council of the Fatherland Front, the Central Council of the Bulgarian Trade Unions, the Central Committee of the Dimitrov Communist Youth Union and the Committee of the Movement of Bulgarian Women organize a campaign for collecting clothes and other means to help the returning refugees in the Republic of Afghanistan.
4. Offers free of charge to the Central Committee of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan a small enterprise amounting to 1 million leva and 100 thousand currency leva.

The help should be implemented through the Ministry of Foreign-Economic Relations.

Enclosure:

Memorandum from the International Relations Department of the BCP CC to Politburo of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, 3 August 1988

Regarding: widening the political, economic and moral support to the Republic of Afghanistan

Comrades,

In connection with comrade Mikhail Gorbachev's letter to comrade Todor Zhivkov regarding Afghanistan, in view of the new situation in that country after signing the Geneva Agreements, the Politburo of the BCP CC entrusted the Foreign Affairs Commission at Politburo and Secretariat of the Bulgarian Communist Party with the preparation of an offer for the further widening of the political, economic, and moral support of the Republic of Afghanistan (Protocol No, 72 of 17 May 1988).

Additionally a letter was received by comrade Georgi Atanasov from Afghanistan's Prime-Minister Mohammad Hassan Sharq with an appeal for help at this difficult moment.

We are proposing a draft for decision, worked out by the Commission for Foreign Affairs at the Politburo and the Secretariat of the CC BCP with the participation of the "International Relations Department" of the CC BCP, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations.

The draft of a resolution has been coordinated with the "Organizational", "Economic and Scientific-technical policy" and "Financial Economic" Departments of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

3 August 1988

First deputy-head of the "Foreign Policy and International Relations" department of the CC BCP:/K. Atanasov/



**Report from General Valentin Varennikov to Soviet Defense Minister Gen. Dmitri T. Yazov, August 1988 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 485-86. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

(Secret)

to the USSR Minister of Defense

General of the Army Cde. D. T. Yazov

I report.

Concerning Ahmad Shah Masoud... At the present time

A. Masoud is a figure who enjoys undisputed authority among the population and has powerful detachments with high combat [*boytsovskiy*] and propaganda qualities. The well thought-out social policy he follows and the agitprop work (construction of mosques, schools, hospitals, roads, providing the population with essential goods) enjoy the wide support of the people. A. Shah has categorically prohibited his formations from waging combat operations against Soviet troops, which they rigorously observe. At the same time he continues to speak out as an irreconcilable opponent of government authority, although he refrains from using force if government troops do not shoot (which is in accord with the policy of national reconciliation).

However, in our opinion, the existing roadblocks in the way of rapprochement between Najibullah and A. Shah can be overcome, although the President also thinks that Masoud will not now enter into any contact.

On 24 August of this year at a meeting of the Supreme High Command Soviet military representatives in the RA made the latest (in 1987-88) attempt to direct the attention of the Afghan leadership toward the need for an immediate resolution of this important problem. Fundamental measures are necessary regarding Ahmad Shah, primarily political ones. Najibullah, who agreed, said that it is Ahmad Shah Masoud, not the "Alliance-7," that is the real threat to the regime right now. At the same time he said: "Comrades E. A. Shevardnadze and V. A. Aleksandrov [the pseudonym of V. A. Kryuchkov] during their visit to Afghanistan at the beginning of this year were disposed toward the necessity of holding talks with Ahmad Shah, but if he refused them, then his groups need to be decisively smashed." In the presence of the ministers of the RA armed forces Najibullah let it be known in this regard that the main role in the solution of this problem (that is, smashing A. Shah) should be left to the 40<sup>th</sup> Army. He further noted that he (the President) had reliable information about A. Shah's ties with the CIA. Considering this, Najibullah continued, the strategic intention of A. Shah could be clearly imagined: to split off the 14 (although there actually are 12) northern provinces of Afghanistan, put the Americans in, and present this to the Soviet Union as a fait accompli. I replied to the President that nothing is excluded, but the problem [he] touched on needs to be studied (I have given information on these issues to Soviet Ambassador Cde. N. G. Yegorychev and the USSR KGB representative, Cde. V. A. Revin).

In our view, the adoption of the proposal of the President about involving the 40<sup>th</sup> Army in battles with A. Shah could place our troops in an extremely serious situation during the second stage of their withdrawal from Afghanistan. Doubtless there will be additional large losses; in general, their organized withdrawal at the set times could be disrupted. It is impossible in this matter to achieve the goal – namely the destruction of A. Shah – since it is necessary to know where he is and this has been ruled out – the agent network of Afghanistan has not been able to handle such a mission for eight years now. In addition, the operations of our troops would become a direct violation of the Geneva Accords. This

step would inflict damage to the prestige of the Soviet Union from which it would be difficult to recover [*trudnovospolnimyy*] and would also provoke a negative reaction inside our country...any violations of them [the Geneva Accords] would negatively reflect on the authority of the USSR.

...The following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The main danger for the current regime in the present situation is the domestic opposition (the so-called “second echelon”), but among all of its leaders it is Ahmad Shah Masoud. This conclusion is not new and has been made for the last two years, but the political steps regarding this figure remain unchanged (and they even often slip into military measures).

At the concluding stage and after the withdrawal of Soviet troops one ought to expect that Ahmad Shah will step up operations to seize the northern provinces. He will primarily concentrate them on the Kabul-Hairaton highway.

2. The time when a rapprochement was possible with A. Shah, dictating conditions to him, has actually long since been lost and he has become practically invulnerable. However opportunities to establish contact with him have not been exhausted. Therefore the Afghan leadership needs to offer the maximum possible concessions to him and make any compromises. He should know that all his conditions will be satisfied, including granting autonomy to the northern provinces, etc.

3. In the future Ahmad Shah might grow into an important political figure with whom the Soviet Union, in all probability, will have to cooperate and it would be to our advantage to have him as an ally and not an enemy.

Considering this, Soviet operational services [*operativnyye sluzhby*] should establish direct contact with him as quickly as possible; especially since, as A. Shah himself acknowledges, because he has no special objections to this...

Varennikov  
August 1988



**Report from USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MID) and USSR Ministry of Defense (MO) and KGB Representatives, October 1988**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 492-493. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

(Secret)

On 4 October we met with RA [Republic of Afghanistan] President and General Secretary of the PDPA [People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan] CC [Central Committee] Najibullah.

...During the discussion of urgent domestic political problems we noted that the time had come now for active operations by each one of us. Something has already been undertaken – letters to Ahmad Shah [Masoud] and also the dispatch of RA government and USSR KGB representatives to Hazarajat.

The Soviet Ambassador expressed readiness to personally contact Ahmad Shah, if required, keeping in mind that the Soviet Ambassador does not have the burden of the past and is free in his contacts with the opposition.

...President Najibullah noted that... there is little time left, the four remaining months need to be used as if it were four years; therefore we need to follow the principle of military-political specificity; that is, proceeding from the situation on-site, employing force or negotiating and compromising. The key object of employing this policy, in his opinion, is the situation with Ahmad Shah. Only after deciding the issue with Ahmad Shah can the security of the highway be ensured...

N. Yegorychev (MID), V. Varennikov (MO), V. Zaitsev (KGB)

October 1988



**Memorandum by Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Yuli Vorontsov, General Valentin Varennikov, V. Zaitsev, V. Yegorov, November 1988 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Tragediya i Doblest’ Afgana (Tragedy and Valor of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1995), pp. 463-65. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

(Secret)

On the Situation in Afghanistan

The military-political situation in Afghanistan has a tendency toward further deterioration and exacerbation.

...The RA leadership is implementing measures of a military-political nature within the framework of the policy of national reconciliation to counter the extremist part of the opposition. The process of the transformation of a single-party regime into a multi-party one and the restructuring of the state political structure of the country on the basis of political pluralism and coalition rule continue. Of course, to successfully carry out the policy of national reconciliation

Najibullah's regime should ensure, from a position of strength, not of weakness, that the most irreconcilable opposition factions are driven back which, relying on the aid and support of Pakistan and the US, are rejecting peace initiatives of the Afghan government to reach compromise agreements and are increasing military pressure on government positions in a majority of provinces of the country.

At the present time the rebels control four of the 32 provinces of the country (Takhar, Bamian, Paktika, and Kunar), and have sealed off the provincial capitals of Kapisa, Wardak, Laghman, Uruzgan, and Ghazni. Rebel activities in the provinces of Herat, Farah, and Nimruz, which border Iran, have recently been stepped up.

The rebels are whipping up tension and trying to undermine the population's faith in the viability of the current regime by increasing the shelling of administrative centers, military and civilian facilities and attacking them; sealing off roads and seizing automobile convoys with freight; penetrating the Party and government bureaucracy and the RA [Republic of Afghanistan] Armed Forces to demoralize them from within; and disrupting VS [Armed Forces] conscription and increasing desertion.

Along with the incitement of malicious activity by the rebels in the central provinces of Kabul and Parwan, the armed opposition has recently increased attempts at setting up an economic blockade of the capital. The rebels are trying to impede the delivery here of freight to here via the roads from Soviet-Afghan border to Kabul and [from] Kabul to Jalalabad and to interrupt the power supply of the Afghan capital.

...Against the background of a systematic increase of activity by the armed opposition, with the start of the withdrawal of the OKSV [Limited Contingent of Soviet Troops] from Afghanistan the passivity and declining morale of the RA Armed Forces have become distinctly clear, which has found its reflection in their incapability in many instances of organizing effective resistance to the rebels. The events in the provinces of Kunduz, Takhar, Baghlan, and Kandahar (the capture of areas south of Kandahar, including the population center of Spin Boldak) are witness to this. The Afghan military leadership has not taken decisive and effective measures to increase the level of military, psychological, and morale reliability of the Armed Forces. The capabilities of existing training centers and courses for the training of military specialists are being poorly used. This negatively reflects on departmental attitudes and the lack of coordination of the activity of the military ministries.

The remaining partisan and factional differences in the PDPA leadership, which, although some were muted after the recent PDPA CC plenum, have not yet been permanently removed and are also leaving a serious negative imprint on the political morale and military condition of the RA Armed Forces.

...Many representatives of the Party and state bureaucracy in the provinces [*na mestakh*] are all the more often taking passive, temporizing positions, ignoring orders and demands coming from Kabul to strengthen government positions and implement the policy of national reconciliation,

and in a number of cases, under the influence of demoralizing propaganda, are entering into deals with the opposition to capitulate to ensure their personal security.

...The measures recently carried out to reorganize the governmental structure of Afghanistan in accordance with the principles of coalition government and a multi-party system have not yet had a serious stabilizing influence on the domestic political situation. The activity of the government of M. H. Sharq to a certain degree is hampered by the CC PDPA staff, but governors without party affiliation among local authoritative figures, for example, in Nangarhar province, [are being hampered] by the heads of several PDPA provincial committees. The national council (parliament) of Afghanistan, the majority of whose members are without party affiliation (more than 70%), are still pursuing a waiting game and not seriously looking for ways to more actively transform the policy of national reconciliation into reality, although they have declared it to be their main task. The activity of the bloc of leftist democratic parties as before does not go beyond the bounds of formal episodic meetings of their representatives and declarations of support for the policy of national reconciliation.

Taking the above into account, Soviet military aid continues to remain the most important stabilizing factor in the development of the situation in Afghanistan and largely thanks to it the armed opposition has not managed to seize key positions in the country, in spite of their efforts.

...Objectively, the present RA regime has considerable military and political potential (superior to the forces of the opposition). The task of the leadership of our Afghan friends is to ensure its maximum effective use. Special attention in this regard needs to be paid to organizing political propaganda work by all RA organizations...

Yu. Vorontsov, V. Varennikov, V. Zaitsev, V. Yegorov

November 1988



**Letter from Ahmad Shah Masoud to the Soviet Chief Military Adviser, 26 December 1988**

[Source: Boris Gromov, "Ogranichenny Kontingent" ("Limited Contingent") (Moscow: Progress, 1994), pp. p. 327, A.A. Lyakhovskiy, Plamya Afgana (Moscow: Iskon, 1999, pp. 499-500.)]

Mister Adviser!

I already wanted to go to the place to meet the Soviet representatives when I received your latest letter. I should say for the sake of clarity: we have endured war and your presence of 10 years. God willing, we will endure it a few more days. But if you begin combat operations then we will give you a fitting rebuff. That's all. From this day we will assign our detachments and groups the mission of being in full com-

bat readiness.

With respect, Ahmad Shah Masoud  
26 December 1988



**Memorandum of Conversation between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Najibullah and other Afghan Leaders on 13-14 January 1989, 14 January 1989 (Excerpt)<sup>19</sup>**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Tragediya i Doblest' Afgana (Tragedy and Valor of the Afghanistan Veteran) (Moscow: Iskon, 1995), pp. 485-87. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

[President of the Republic of Afghanistan (RA)] NAJIBULLAH. An Afghan brigade of 900 men and an MGB regiment are hardly capable of holding out against the rebels in Ahmad Shah's zone of influence in a proper manner. In this regard I request that the Soviet leadership examine the issue of the possibility of placing Soviet military units in the Salang area on a temporary basis; their functions would consist only of guarding the road.

The survival of the government itself depends on ensuring deliveries of cargo via the Hayraton-Kabul highway. The opposition cannot seize Kabul by military means but it will gamble on an economic blockade, fomenting discontent among the population and instigating it to act against the government. Therefore it is extremely important right now to create a sufficient reserve of food, fuel, and other essential goods in Kabul. However it will be possible to ensure the organization of shipments by ground or air only with the direct assistance of the Soviet side.

In this context I would like again to request the creation of an "air bridge" from Soviet territory to Kabul.

We think it desirable for a certain number of aviation resources [*aviasredstva*] to be at Soviet airfields in direct proximity to the Afghan border on continuous duty which could act quickly against the rebels in case a threatening situation arises in one or another area of the country.

The problem of creating the necessary reserves in Kandahar has remain unresolved until now. It seems that the situation right now permits [us] to try to send a column with freight to that city. The Afghan side can provide part of the subunits of the 4<sup>th</sup> AK and 2<sup>nd</sup> AK totaling 2,000 men. However, without the participation of Soviet troops it is impossible to escort the column.

EH. A. SHEVARDNADZE. As far as I know, the provision of considerable military forces is required to escort a column. A danger of armed conflict with the enemy is not precluded but at the present stage [we] would not want to suffer unnecessary losses.

On the preliminary level we would say that the idea of creating an "air bridge" to Kabul is completely doable.

The issue of carrying out air strikes from the Soviet Union has a very delicate nature. We understand that it will be difficult for you to do without the support of Soviet aircraft but it is one thing to launch strikes when Soviet troops are present and another after their withdrawal...Such measures could unavoidably provoke countermeasures from the US and Pakistan and an unfavorable international reaction.

We also consider it necessary to urgently study the issue of providing security for the Hayraton-Kabul highway. It is clear that without the use of the road it would be practically impossible to solve the problem of supplying the capital...(Kabul, 13.1.1989)...

[RA Prime Minister] M. H. SHARQ. Earlier we thought that all the damage which our motherland had suffered was connected with the war; however now we are convinced that the current administrative system has done us no less harm... We have a completely unrealistic budget which is based not so much on domestic sources of income but on free aid from the Soviet Union... You are giving us across-the-board aid but we have not justified your trust. The people ask why this happens... Our armed forces cannot provide security for freight shipments. At the transshipment bases bordering the USSR there is a three-month reserve of food for Kabul but we cannot deliver the food to the capital.

EH. A. SHEVARDNADZE. Understand, it is not so simple for us to give aid to Afghanistan. The butter, sugar, and flour which we are delivering to you is taken from the Soviet people but it doesn't reach those for whom it is intended. Therefore providing security for the Hayraton-Kabul road and the possibility of organizing an air bridge to supply the capital get top priority. (Kabul, 14.1.1989)...

[RA Minister of State Security] G. F. YAKUBI. As long as Ahmad Shah Masoud lives the Kabul-Hayraton route will be closed and consequently the problem of delivering freight and special equipment not only to the capital but to other regions of the country will remain acute. Whether or not this regime stands or falls depends on the solution of this problem...

EH. A. SHEVARDNADZE. Will there be a coup, if we admit such a possibility, supported by the population of the capital if the city is supplied with everything necessary, in particular kerosene, bread, etc.?

G. F. YAKUBI. I think they will not support one since the residents of Kabul are confident that in case of a coup G. Hekmatyar, who does not enjoy popularity in various social strata in the capital, will come to power...(14.1.1989, Kabul).

[RA Minister of Defense] SH[AHNAWAZ]. N. TANAY. The rebels are carrying out active operations directed at disrupting the Geneva Accords and demonstrating their power in



the hope of overthrowing people's power. In my opinion, the military and political situation in the country is in a crisis and this crisis will grow. (14 January 1989, Kabul).

[RA Minister of Foreign Affairs] A[BDUL] WAKIL. It is necessary for the Soviet side, considering the provisions of the Geneva Accords, to continue to help our armed forces by launching rocket, bombing, and strafing attacks, especially after 15 February.<sup>20</sup> [...] It is vitally important for us to maintain control of the airfields at Bagram and Kandahar and also the port of Hayraton. After the conclusion of the Soviet troop withdrawal Ahmad Shah Masoud will doubtless try to close the road through the Salang [Tunnel pass] [...]



### **Najibullah Assessment of the "Ahmad Shah Problem," January 1989<sup>21</sup> (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 500-501. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Switching to more important and urgent problems, I would like to especially stress the following. At the present time no one has any doubt that the priority area should be the implementation of peaceful, political measures in the name of achieving a settlement. But at the same time it appears evident that in conditions of continuing interference in the affairs of Afghanistan by Pakistan, the US, and other countries and the opposition's rejection of a cease-fire, it is also impossible to forget military means. As it appears that right now it is exceptionally important as before to launch powerful missile, artillery, and air strikes on the bases, storehouses, and gatherings of enemy personnel in order to preempt his attempts to unleash a large-scale offensive after the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

In this context the issue of fighting the group of Ahmad Shah Masoud, who belongs to the Islamic Society of Afghanistan, holds special importance. Considering that his forces are capable of cutting the strategic Hairaton-Kabul highway in the area south of Salang right after the withdrawal of [Soviet] troops, blockading Kabul, and thereby creating a catastrophic situation for the capital, Ahmad Shah should be viewed as the main enemy of the government at the present stage.

The problem of Ahmad Shah has been around a long time but, in spite of measures taken, it is a very critical one, as before. In our view it is unwarranted to delay its resolution.

[...] For the last four years practically no large operations have been conducted against him with the exception of small individual strikes. As a result he has managed to create a powerful grouping totaling about 11,000 men and 2,500 [of them] right in the Panjshir. It needs to be recognized that

Ahmad Shah is also skillfully using the advantages arising as a result of our passivity.

At the present time a joint operation of Soviet and Afghan forces against Ahmad Shah has been planned, but it will be of a local nature, essentially limited to a cleaning out of adjoining road sectors and the replacement of Soviet posts with Afghan ones. We say that such an operation cannot inflict notable damage on the enemy and change the fundamental nature of the situation [...].



### **Minutes of CPSU Central Committee Politburo (excerpt re measures in connection with the upcoming withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan), 24 January 1989 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 462-63. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

(Top Secret)

SPECIAL FOLDER

N°P 146/VI

To Cdes. [CPSU General secretary Mikhail S.] Gorbachev, [Soviet Premier Nikolai] Ryzhkov, [Party Secretary and Head of Social-Economic Policy Commission Nikolai N.] Slyun'kov [former KGB chief Viktor] Chebrikov, [Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard] Shevardnadze, [Head of CPSU International Affairs Commission Alexandr N.] Yakovlev, [State Planning Commission Chief Yuri D.] Maslyukov, [Soviet Defense Minister Dmitri T.] Yazov, [State Committee for the Agro-Industrial Complex Chairman and First Deputy Prime Minister Vsevolod M.] Murakhovskiy, [KGB chief Vladimir A.] Kryuchkov, [CPSU General Department head Valery] Boldin, and [Valentin] Falin – everything; [Soviet Finance Minister Boris] Gostev – points 2 and 6; Volkov – point 5; [Soviet Foreign Trade Minister Konstantin F.] Katushev – point 6.

Excerpt from Minutes N° 146 of the CC CPSU Politburo meeting of 24 January 1989

Measures in connection with the upcoming withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan

1. Agree with the ideas described in the note of Cdes. E. A. Shevardnadze, V. M. Chebrikov, A. N. Yakovlev, D. T. Yazov, V. S. Murakhovskiy, and V. A. Kryuchkov of 23 January 1989 (attached)<sup>22</sup>

2. Proceed from the need to ensure the functioning of the Kabul-Hairaton highway and give the Afghan comrades

comprehensive assistance to organize security for this highway using their own forces, even as far as assuming the provisioning of these Afghan subunits [vzyatiye...na nashe dovol'stviye] for a certain time. USSR Gosplan and the USSR Ministry of Finance together with the USSR MID [Ministry of Foreign Affairs], the USSR Ministry of Defense, and the USSR KGB are to present suitable proposals by 1 February 1989.

3. Cde. D. T. Yazov is charged with making a trip to Kabul for an additional evaluation of the developing military situation and to give practical assistance to the Afghan Side in the resolution of defense issues, including those affecting the security of the Kabul-Hayraton highway.

4. The USSR Ministry of Defense is to help the President of the Republic of Afghanistan work out various arrangements to declare martial law in Afghanistan.

5. The USSR Ministry of Defense and the USSR Ministry of Civil Aviation are to study the issue of the possibility of using Soviet pilots on a voluntary basis and with appropriate material rewards on Afghan transport aircraft or Soviet transport aircraft which would be leased to the Afghan Side.

6. The USSR Gosplan, the USSR Ministry of Finance, and the USSR Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations are to present ideas about granting additional economic aid to Afghanistan in the prescribed manner by 10 February 1989.

In this regard, provide for a trip to Kabul by Cdes. Yu. D. Maslyukov, B. I. Gostev, and K. F. Katushev.

7. Protocol. The CC CPSU Politburo Commission on Afghanistan with the participation of the CC CPSU General Department is to submit material on a documentary basis to the CC CPSU regarding all stages of the development of events in Afghanistan, beginning with the decision to introduce troops into this country and also ideas about possible alternatives of the future development of the situation in Afghanistan and the consequences for us ensuing from them.

CC SECRETARY M. GORBACHEV



**Letter from Ahmad Shah Masoud to Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister and Special Afghanistan Envoy Yuli Vorontsov, 2 September 1989 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), p. 523. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Mister Vorontsov!

In reply to your letter of 31 July 1989 I want to say that the past support of the PDPA [People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan] by your government has been the reason for the deaths of more than 1,500,000 citizens of our country. About 5,000,000 people have left their homes, become refugees in neighboring and other countries, and Afghanistan

has been turned into ruins. In exchange for this support you have received only shame and thousands of young Russian men have been killed in the mountains and deserts. As a result you have suffered a military defeat and considerable economic loss.

With the ascension of a new leadership in the Soviet Union and the admission of past mistakes it was expected that the USSR would pay attention to the incorrect policy and reject a continuation of a similar policy in regard to Afghanistan, as a result of which peace and quiet would be restored in a country exhausted by war.

However, an analysis of the actions of the Soviet Union during the last six months forces us to conclude with regret that it has not changed its position in regard to the Afghan conflict and intends to attain its goals only by another means, that is, by using Afghans to murder Afghans.

Recognizing the Soviet Union as the chief culprit in the continuation of the war and the bloodshed in Afghanistan we would like to again stress the fact that in the first stage of the revolution a majority were thinking as though the Afghan people were in no condition to resist in the face of the tanks and aircraft of the Soviet superpower and that the Red Army would resolve all the issues in several days. However with the passage of time it has turned out that it was impossible to break the will of the people by force of arms. And before still more blood is shed, before the burden of responsibility on the Soviet leadership before God and history grows even more, and the fissure which has arisen between the Muslim people of Afghanistan and the Soviet people becomes wider, we would like to again remind you that the war in Afghanistan will not fade out until Soviet interference in Afghan affairs ends completely and the PDPA, which is impeding the implementation of the just aspirations of our Muslim people, leaves the political arena. As I believe, you and all the peoples of the world are again witnesses to the intensification of the fire of war on this Earth, which is not in accord with the interests of either the freedom-loving Muslim people of Afghanistan or the Soviet people.

Respectfully, Ahmad Shah Masoud  
2 September 1989



**Letter from Afghan President Najibullah to CPSU General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev, 5 November 1989 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999); pp. 524-25. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

Dear Mikhail Sergeyeovich!

Bearing in mind the recommendations you repeatedly made to turn to you personally if the need arose or to ex-

change ideas, I decided to use this opportunity to describe questions troubling me at the present time...

As the experience of combat operations of recent months shows, we are managing to contain the enemy mainly by air, artillery, and missile strikes. Meanwhile, there is a shortage of various kinds of ammunition for various reasons. The ammunition delivered by the "air" bridge is being used up literally in only a few days. To supply the combat requirements of the troops it would be extremely desirable to maintain the functioning of the "air" bridge for the next half year, raising the number of sorties to 30-35 a day. This would permit the delivery of the necessary amount of ammunition and equipment to be ensured. And I would again like to stress the special importance for us of a resolution of the issue of daily delivery of 10-12 R-300 missiles...

On the basis of available information there are grounds to state that in the autumn and winter period the enemy is becoming more active around Kabul and also in several sectors of the Kabul-Hairaton highway. In order to wipe out the groups it seems advisable here (I talked with Soviet military consultants) to use the "Smerch" and "Tochka" missiles, which have increased accuracy. It is also extremely important to us to restart as quickly as possible the deliveries of the "Luna-M" missiles which were stopped unexpectedly, as a result of which the problem of hitting the enemy at great distances from Kabul became quickly aggravated.

Urgent aid is also required to restore the technical resources of the Air Force inasmuch as they lost about 70 aircraft and helicopters this year. It would be desirable to provide delivery to us of MiG-29, Su-27, and Mi-35 attack helicopters to increase the power of the Air Force.

Before the approach of winter we are creating the necessary reserves of food, fuel, and essential goods for the population and the troops in large administrative centers, and in view of its active use the technical condition of transport has long left much to be desired. Many vehicles are idle because of a lack of spare parts or generally are not subject to repair. It is desirable to accelerate the delivery from the Soviet Union of trucks and fuel trucks in accordance with prior agreements.

These are our most vital problems in the military field. I am confident that their resolution, together with the accumulation of the experience of independently waging combat operations and the improvement of military policy as a whole, will give the armed forces of the Republic of Afghanistan yet more confidence and increase their fighting spirit.

In conclusion, permit me, Mikhail Sergeevich, to assure you of the constancy of the feelings of friendship and appreciation which Afghans feel toward the Soviet people and you personally. The CC PDPA plenum which was held recently vividly demonstrated that the policy which we are following today is correct and that it enjoys broad support. I express to you heartfelt gratitude for the deep understanding of Afghan problems which you have displayed at all stages of our struggle. I hope that if you agree to this you will also agree to a personal meeting, the need for which is already apparent, in my opinion.

I will use the occasion to congratulate you, dear com-

rade, on the 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution and wish the Soviet people success in carrying out broad revolutionary reforms in the Soviet Union under your leadership.

[...]



**Letter from CPSU General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev to Afghan Government, 11 December 1989 (Excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 525-26. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

It is absolutely obvious that while the irreconcilable opposition, warmed and encouraged by the US, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia holds to an extremist policy, military measures will remain an important method of action to "persuade" the enemy of the evidence of the truth: there is no alternative to an intra-Afghan dialogue and peace talks.

At the same time the positive aspect in the military field already achieved opens new domestic and foreign opportunities to step up the political process...

Retaliatory missile strikes doubtless have great importance in the matter of repelling the barbaric acts of the opposition with respect to cities and the peaceful civilian population and disrupting its attacks. The Soviet Union decided some time ago, as you know, to allocate an additional 500 R-300 missiles for our Afghan friends. In this regard it is extremely desirable that the R-300 missiles being delivered be used in the most rational manner. I want to stress that we have done this by removing missiles from Soviet military subunits. Deliveries of such effective equipment such as the "Luna-M" have been restarted. One hundred such missiles will be sent to the Afghan side between the end of November and the new year, 1990.

We confirm our readiness to deliver modern MiG-29 aircraft to you...

Mi-35 [attack] helicopters will be delivered in the first quarter of 1990. Other issues are being examined regarding the deliveries of weapons which you raise in your message... (The text of the letter was approved at a CC CPSU Politburo meeting, Protocol N° P175/5).

**Memorandum, “An Analysis of the “Islamic factor” in the Afghan Situation,” by A. Belousov, Deputy Chairman of the Tajik SSR KGB, July 1991 (excerpt)**

[Source: A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afgana (Flame of the Afghanistan Veteran)* (Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 591-93. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

[...] The entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan in December 1979 against the background of the victorious conclusion of an “Islamic Revolution” in Iran was evaluated by the US and their allies as a large-scale expansion aimed at a fundamental change of the balance of forces in a strategically important region; a considerable part of the world’s energy providers [*ehnergonositeli*] are concentrated here.

As followed from materials of the Republic of Afghanistan MGB, at the suggestion of the US CIA this country where there was already a civil war underway was selected as a proving ground for a decisive countermeasure to the “Soviet expansion”; its failure would not only bring defeat to the Soviet troops in Afghanistan and the fall of the “pro-Communist Kabul regime”, but also destabilize the situation in the Central Asian republics of the USSR.

The plan of actions prepared jointly by the CIA with the special services of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia which received the codename “Program-M” was predicated on the wide use of the Islamic factor, mainly by the armed Islamic opposition in Afghanistan.

“Program-M” provided for coordinating the activity of all mujaheddin detachments, equipping them with weapons, organizing the training of guerillas at special centers, creating an agent network in the DRA and the southern regions of the USSR, and enlisting various Islamic centers and fundamentalist organizations operating in Islamic countries in carrying out planned measures.

To destabilize the situation in the republics of Central Asia the special services intended to carry out propaganda directed at these republics and, with the aid of Afghan fundamentalist organizations, create underground religious structures along the lines of Egyptian “Islamic Brotherhood” and the “Militant Wahhabi” cells in Tajikistan and other republics of the USSR.

In accordance with “Program-M” coordination to exploit the capabilities of the Afghan Islamist groups in directing a “shakeup” [*raskachivaniye*] of the situation in the Central Asian republics and to transfer them to the territory of “holy war” (jihad) was directly entrusted to the Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence agency...

However this did not mean that the CIA withdrew from the direction and coordination of the activities of the participants in the implementation of “Program-M”. American intelligence sort of pushed the Pakistani special services to the forefront for political reasons. The CIA “legal” residency, functioning under American Embassy cover in Kabul, conducted energetic activity in this direction...

According to available information special caravans have

been organized on Pakistani and Afghan territory to smuggle weapons into northern border regions from where it is to be transshipped to Soviet territory in small lots. Information has also arrived that Masoud’s detachments have been preparing to illegally ship a large amount of explosives and pistols to the USSR...

Great importance in “Program-M” has been devoted to the ideological influence of Muslims and nationalistic sections of the population in the republics of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. The special services of the US, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia and also leaders of Islamic armed opposition groups in Afghanistan have participated in carrying out measures in this direction.

According to statements of American Sovietologists the revival of nationalism in the USSR was directly associated with an increase in religiousness of the population. The awakening in the part of the Soviet people who profess Islam and nationalist feelings is considered by Sovietologists as a “special mixture of political and economic discontent and cultural and linguistic difference which could mobilize Muslims against Russian and European dominance.”

Radio broadcasts were given a special role in promoting Islamic ideology in Muslim regions of the USSR. Broadcasts in the languages of the Central Asian peoples were made both by Western countries and a number of Muslim states. At that time the Afghan opposition itself had only several small radio stations on Pakistani territory broadcasting to Afghanistan and the bordering Soviet republics.

In individual cases broadcasts were made to Central Asian republics with the aid of field radios. They were at the disposal of several mujaheddin formations operating in the northern regions of Afghanistan.

Radio propaganda from Islamic groups was marked by a harsh anti-Soviet, anti-Russian orientation. It contained open calls for the unity of Muslims of all countries; transferring “jihad” to Soviet territory; splitting off the republics of Central Asia from the Soviet Union; and support for the ideas of Pan-Islamism. The leaders of the Islamic opposition and the Western special services thought that the attainment of these goals would facilitate the wide distribution of propaganda materials of a religious and anti-Soviet nature in Soviet republics. They made efforts toward the delivery and distribution in the southern republics of the USSR of various printed material, audio, and video cassettes propagandizing Islamic ideas and, in particular, “holy war against the infidels”... (from an analysis of the issues of an increase of the Islamic factor made by the USSR KGB)

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The following documents were compiled for the international conference, “Towards an International History of the War in Afghanistan,” organized in April 2002 by the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) in cooperation with the Woodrow Wil-

son Center's Asia Program and Kennan Institute, George Washington University's Cold War Group, and the National Security Archive. Special thanks for their documentary contributions to Jordan Baev (Sofia), A. A. Lyakhovskiy (Moscow); Oldrich Tuma (Prague) and David Wolff.

<sup>2</sup> Excerpts of this conversations were previously published in *CWIHP Bulletin* 8-9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 145-146. The conversation was conducted through an interpreter.

<sup>3</sup> Taraki was also president of the Revolutionary Council of Afghanistan.

<sup>4</sup> The Society of Muslim Brotherhood (Jam'iat-I Ikhwan al-Muslimin), founded in 1929 in Egypt by Hasan al-Banna was a religio-political organization, pan-Islamic in outlook and aimed at imposing Islamic law on all aspects of the social and political life of the Muslim nation.

<sup>5</sup> This circular is an implementation of Attachment 2 of the document agreed upon at the 27 December 1979 Politburo meeting, "Our Steps in Connection with the Development of the Situation Around Afghanistan"; the Politburo decision also carries the notation "Regarding Point 151 of Minutes N° 177" and the classification "Top Secret"]

<sup>6</sup> This circular is an implementation of Attachment 8 of the document agreed upon at the 27 December 1979 Politburo meeting, "Our Steps in Connection with the Development of the Situation Around Afghanistan"; the Politburo decision also carries a "Flash" message precedence, the designation "Special", the notation "Regarding Point 151 of Minutes N° 177" and "Special Folder", and the classification "Top Secret."

<sup>7</sup> Excerpts of this document were previously published in *CWIHP Bulletin* 8-9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 161-2.

<sup>8</sup> Dost traveled to New York on 4 January 1980 to participate in the United Nations Security Council meeting on Afghanistan. On 3 January 1980, the United States, Pakistan and other countries had requested the Security Council to debate the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan; the Security Council started discussing the crisis on 5 January. Afghanistan's deputy permanent representative to the UN, Abdul Hakim Tabibi, resigned from his post in protest against the Soviet intervention.

<sup>9</sup> The first high-level Soviet-American meeting since the Soviet invasion took place on 16 May 1980 in Vienna on the occasion of the anniversary celebrations for the 1955 Austrian State Treaty that

had provided for an end to the occupation of Austria. Muskie and Gromyko conferred for three hours at the Hofburg Palace.

<sup>10</sup> In response to the Soviet invasion, President Carter had threatened to boycott the 1980 Olympic Summer Games in Moscow. The US Olympic Committee voted on 12 April 1980 to endorse the president's call for a boycott.

<sup>11</sup> This conversation took place in the wings of the international scientific conference that took place in Berlin from 20-24 October 1980 and was called "The mutual battle for social progress of the workers' movement and the anti-imperialist peoples' liberation movement." See DY30/2367, p.43.

<sup>12</sup> Babrak Karmal's visit to the Soviet Union took place from 15 October –5 November 1980.

<sup>13</sup> In March 1965, a Chinese government delegation led by Foreign Minister Chen Yi visited Afghanistan to confer with King Zahir Shah.

<sup>14</sup> Gromyko met with Shultz in New York on 28 September and 4 October 1982 during the UN General Assembly session in New York.

<sup>15</sup> See the reference to this document in A. A. Lyakhovskiy, *Plamya Afghana* ( Moscow: Iskon, 1999), pp. 371-2. See also Chernyaev's Notes from Politburo Meeting, 13 November 1986, in this *Bulletin*.

<sup>16</sup> Gorbachev visited India from 25-28 November 1986; he and Rajiv spent nearly 10 hours in talks. See "Rajiv and Mikhail," *Christian Science Monitor*, 2 December 1986, p. 27; and "Gorbachev in India," *New York Times*, 1 December 1986, p. A12.

<sup>17</sup> An Afghan government and party delegation visited Moscow in December 1986.

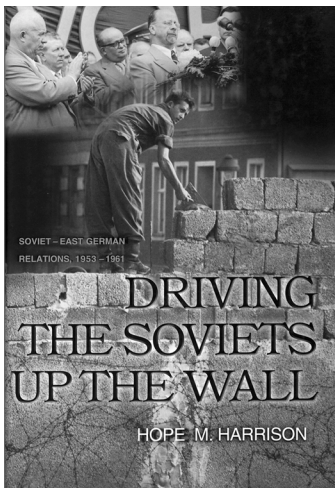
<sup>18</sup> Armacost visited Pakistan in mid-January 1987.

<sup>19</sup> Shevardnadze visited Kabul 13-15 January 1989 to shore up the moral of the Afghan leadership in anticipation of the Soviet troop withdrawal by 15 February.

<sup>20</sup> The deadline for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan.

<sup>21</sup> Provided by Najibullah during Shevardnadze's visit in January 1989. See "Memorandum of Conversation between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Najibullah and other Afghan Leaders on 13-14 January 1989," 14 January 1989, above.

<sup>22</sup> See *CWIHP Bulletin* 8/9 (Winter 1996/1997), pp. 181-84).



**CWIHP congratulates Senior Fellow  
Hope Harrison on her new book  
*Driving the Soviets Up the Wall:  
Soviet-East German Relations, 1953-1961*  
Princeton University Press, 2003**

## The Road to Helsinki: The Early Steps of the CSCE

On 29-30 September, the Machiavelli Center for Cold War Studies (CIMA) organized an oral history workshop at Villa Finaly, in Florence, on “The Road to Helsinki: The Early Steps of the CSCE.” Co-organizers were the National Security Archive and the Cold War International History Project in cooperation with the Parallel History Project.

The workshop brought together key diplomats who took part in the lengthy negotiations that led to the conclusion in 1975 of the Helsinki Final Act for a moderated discussion with leading scholars in the field. The first of several conferences that the organizers envisage to hold in relation to the approaching 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Final Act, the Florence meeting focused on the significance of the preparatory period in the evolution of East-West détente, the eventual dénouement of the Cold War, and the growth of multilateral diplomacy that later became the foundation of a new European security system.

The discussants addressed the crucial question of how much the CSCE was the result of a deliberate design rather than of an evolution often with unexpected turns. A former Soviet participant described the CSCE as “Brezhnev’s dream,” pursued with the support of “liberals” around amid skepticism of the largely conservative Soviet establishment. Western participants agreed on the skepticism that initially had to be overcome on the Western side. A veteran US diplomat testified that “if Kissinger had been secretary of state in 1969-72 the CSCE would have never started.”

The relative contribution of different actors to overcoming the initial skepticism was extensively debated in Florence. There was a dispute about what appeared to many as an ambivalent policy of the United States, reflecting discord among the key US agencies and personalities. Another former US diplomat, however, argued that there was a “hierarchy of policies” rather than different policies in Washington.

European participants were inclined to credit Western European actors, particularly Italy and France, with playing the main role in overcoming the initial skepticism by being the first to push for “movement of ideas and people”—from which developed the dynamic “Basket Three,” with the explosive issue of human rights. Several participants gave credit to the countries of the European Community acting for the first time as a group.

The Florence meeting led to deeper appreciation of the distinct roles that smaller countries in the CSCE, other than the superpowers, were able to assert, often far out of proportion to their geopolitical weight. This applied not only to the smaller NATO members and the neutrals and nonaligned but also, much more than had been known thus far, also to the junior members of the Warsaw Pact. And among them, it was not only the maverick Romania that stood out but, more surprisingly, also Poland and East Germany, asserting their own interests with rather than against the Soviet Union.

The scholars at the Florence meeting were impressed by the “esprit de corps” of the CSCE veterans, from both East and West, mostly junior diplomats in the early 1970s for whom the CSCE was the formative experience of their professional lives. The audience seemed quite prepared to believe that the “Helsinki process” was effectively invented by these diplomats “on the spot,” acting on their best instincts without too much guidance from their governments.

*This report was written by Vojtech Mastny, CWIHP Senior Fellow, for the 2003 Annual Report of the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact (PHP).*