

October 1, 1979
**Information from the CC CPSU to GDR leader
Honecker**

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Summary:

Information from the CC CPSU to GDR leader Honecker on Amin's overthrow of Taraki and the situation in Afghanistan

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Highly Confidential

As we have informed you earlier, already for some time now there have been conflicts and disagreements in the party and government leadership in Afghanistan. These were not disagreements over major issues - the question is essentially in the rivalry and the struggle for power between supporters of Taraki and Amin.

After Taraki's return from his visit to Havana and Moscow, the situation of the Afghan government became even more difficult. Amin sharply increased his activities, trying to dismiss Taraki and those close to him and concentrate all real power in his hands, including the control of the army. Despite our persistent calls for both sides to act in concord, in the interests of defending and strengthening the revolution's achievements and not to exacerbate the situation, neither side took any appropriate measures to reinstate unity.

Taking advantage of Taraki's indecisiveness and his inability to take any swift and effective measures, Amin in the end dismissed him from government, replaced the chief administrators of the security and internal affairs organs, and commenced to purge the top ranks of the army. Of course, one cannot be uncritical of many of Amin's methods and activities, in particular his extreme lust for power, ruthlessness in his relations with former colleagues, forming opinions and making decisions singlehandedly. However, it is impossible to ignore the currently existing situation, and we must deal with the new leadership in Afghanistan.

Following his rise to power, Amin made a number of statements from which it follows that he intends to continue the course of expanding the revolution, on strengthening cooperation with the Soviet Union and socialist collaboration. Around him there are a number of honest people, real revolutionaries who support the tenets of Marxism-Leninism and are favorably inclined towards Soviet Union, having received their education in our country. We believe that Soviet-Afghan relations, just as Afghanistan's relations with other socialist countries, will not undergo some sort of momentous change. Amin will be pushed towards this by the current situation and difficulties which the Afghan regime will have to confront for a long time to come. Afghanistan will continue as before to be interested in receiving economic and other types of material assistance from the USSR and other socialist countries.

We think that work will have to be done with Amin, and that this work will be substantial, rather difficult and delicate. As you know, we sent Amin a congratulatory telegram (though without unnecessary praises and overtures). In the future we will continue to examine positively requests from the Afghan government to render them this or that concrete assistance in developing the country and in its fight against counter-revolution. At the same time, our representatives on location will continue to try to influence Amin, in order to avert repressions against Taraki and his circle and in general to prevent various excesses on the part of Amin.

We will continue to follow carefully Amin's activities, observing whether he is keeping his promises and will act as events dictate.

[Source: SAPMO, Berlin, J IV 2/202, A. 575; obtained by V. Zubok; translation from Russian by Carter-Brezhnev Project.]