

July 18, 1980

Information from the CC CPSU to Erich Honecker

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Summary:

Information from the CC CPSU to Erich Honecker regarding Pakistan's wishes for holding talks between Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan and Pakistan's wish to see Karmal removed as head of government

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German

Contents:

Translation - English

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Confidential

DISPATCH

The other day, the President of Pakistan Zia-ul-Haq addressed us with a proposal on holding talks with Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran under the mediation of the Soviet Union. The goal of these talks should be, in his words, the normalization of bilateral relations, the preservation of Afghanistan's status as independent and friendly to the Soviet Union and the assurance of a guarantee not to interfere in its internal affairs.

In the opinion of Zia-ul-Haq, such a meeting could take place in Moscow during the second half of August of this year, first on the level of Foreign Ministers, and then on the level of national and government leaders. The President of Pakistan announced that so far he has not discussed this idea of his with the government of Iran, but he expressed confidence that Iran will lend its support.

From the very beginning we were not sure of the seriousness of Zia-ul-Haq's intentions. Nevertheless, after consulting with the government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, we decided to express, in principle, a positive regard to his proposal.

However, following this, as we suspected, Pakistan essentially went back on their word. Under the guise of additional "explanations" of their proposal their started to put forth completely unacceptable preconditions for these talks.

First of all, Pakistan directly and rudely declares the "unacceptability" of Babrak Karmal as the head of the Afghan government and that he must be replaced by someone else. Secondly, Pakistan declares that it will continue to act on the basis of Pakistan's obligations stemming from the decisions made by the Conference of Islamic Nations. Thirdly, despite Zia-ul-Haq's earlier conviction that Iran will support his proposal for direct talks with Afghanistan, Pakistan is distancing itself from that as well.

Obviously we have no intention to continue the dialogue with Pakistan on the basis of their current position, which constitutes a particularly rude interference in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

[Source: SAPMO, Berlin, J IV 2/202, A. 575; document provided by V. M. Zubok.]