

September 12, 1978

**Memorandum of Conversation between the Deputy
Minister of Foreign Affairs Dusan Spacil and Soviet
Ambassador Novikov**

Citation:

"Memorandum of Conversation between the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Dusan Spacil and Soviet Ambassador Novikov", September 12, 1978, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Central State Archive, Archive of the CC CPCz, file Husak, unsorted materials, box Afghanistan. Provided by Oldrich Tuma and translated by Francis Raska.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/112469>

Summary:

A discussion of Babrak Karmal's status in Czechoslovakia--as to whether or not he is still the ambassador from Afghanistan--is the primary focus of this document. Additional discussion occurs regarding locations for Karmal's possible defection from Afghanistan.

Original Language:

Czech

Contents:

Translation - English

On 11 September 1978, I informed Comrade Novikov, who monitors problems among diplomats, [that] at a gathering at the Chinese Embassy of the situation that resulted on account of the recalling of the Afghan ambassador 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 doesn't wish to return to Afghanistan because his return as well as that of other PARCHAM comrades scattered throughout the world could result in great social disturbances and an eventual uprising against 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 contacted Karmal, also a Parchamist and a leading Party member who had served as ambassador to Pakistan and informed Karmal 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 will 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.