

**Record of Conversation Between Soviet Ambassador A.M. Puzanov and H. Amin
(July 21, 1979)**

Amin transmitted a request to send to Afghanistan 8-10 helicopters with Soviet crews in connection with the disabling of the MI-24s which they have.

[The Soviet Ambassador] told H. Amin that as the Soviet leaders had said repeatedly, and as B.N. Ponomarev had stressed during the most recent meetings in Kabul, the Soviet side cannot embark on the participation of Soviet personnel in combat operations.

Later on Amin provided information about the situation in the country. He lamented that he does not have the authority to run military affairs, and that Taraki, who is concentrating the leadership in his own hands, cannot to a sufficient extent control the execution of commands. The Soviet Ambassador responded that per the experience of the Great Patriotic War it would be possible to create for operational leadership an extraordinary group of 5-6 people, including Amin, the Minister of Defense, the Chief of the General Staff, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Chiefs of the Sarandoy and State Security. It is necessary to find a form which, on the one hand, preserves Taraki's authority, and from the other, facilitates an improvement in operational leadership. Amin agreed.

A ciphered telegram containing the contents of the conversation was sent to Ustinov and Ponomarev.

Based on research notes taken on materials at the Center for the Preservation of Contemporary Documentation (Moscow), Fond 5, Opis 76, File 1045, Pages 94-97.