

Information from the Central Committee of the CPSU to Erich Honecker, September 16, 1979. Source: Stiftung Archiv der Partaien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, Berlin, J 2/202, A. 575.

Highly Confidential

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In connection with the well-known events in Afghanistan, we would like to inform our friends on several aspects in the development of events in that country.

Already for some time now, there has been conflict and disagreement in the party and government leadership in Afghanistan, in connection with Amin's effort to remove all persons close to Taraki by concentrating in his hands all real power, including the command of the army.

In the last few days the situation among the leadership of Afghanistan has been sharply compounded and the conflict has taken on an open and highly charged character. Amin, alleging that during Taraki's trip to the conference in Havana a number of individuals in the Afghan leadership attempted to discredit him, Amin, demanded their dismissal and punishment.

Taraki's efforts to convince Amin to withdraw his demands and normalize the situation obviously were not successful. Amin, though he did verbally voice his support for Taraki, took a number of steps to isolate Taraki almost by use of force.

In connection with the latest events, a few days ago we urgently appealed to Taraki and Amin, in the name of the CC CPSU Politburo and L.I. Brezhnev personally, with an urgent call to unite and in the name of saving the revolution act in concord and with unity. We warned them directly that a split in the leadership would be disastrous and that it would be immediately taken advantage of by internal counter-revolution and foreign enemies of Afghanistan. We called on the leaders of Afghanistan to demonstrate a high degree of responsibility to the revolution.

Both Taraki and Amin at the time welcomed positively our appeal. However, in actuality, judging by incoming intelligence, Amin continued his activities to realize his plans, while Taraki demonstrated a high degree of indecisiveness in suppressing these activities. You know today's results. The near removal of Taraki from government is unlikely to have relieved tension, given that he continues to enjoy the support of a certain segment of members of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan. All in all, the situation continues to be highly tense, and right now it is difficult to say in which direction events will lead. We, on our part, continue to follow the situation carefully.