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Working Transcript

MEETING OF THE CC CPSU POLITBURO

January 17, 1980 (excerpt)

Chaired by Comrade BREZHNEV, L.I.

Attended by Coms. Andropov, Iu.V., Grishin, V.V., Gromyko, A.A., Kirilenko, A.P.,
Pel'she, A. Ia., Suslov, M.A., Tikhonov, N.A., Ustinov, D.F.,
Chernenko, K.Y., Gorbachev, M.S., Demichev, P.N., Kuznetsov, V.V.,
Ponomarev, B.N., Solomentsev, M.S., Kapitonov, I.V., Dolgikh, V.I.

8. Re: The Issue of the Situation in Afghanistan

BREZHNEV. You remember, Comrades, that several months ago in relation to events in Afghanistan we tasked a Commission made up of Comrades Andropov, Gromyko, Ustinov, and Ponomarev to inform the Politburo, and if necessary, to prepare corresponding documents and submit them to the Politburo.

I will say that that Commission did its work well. Most recently a whole range of resolutions were accepted and corresponding measures were accomplished.

It seems to me that the situation in Afghanistan is still far from the time when it will not require everyday observation and the acceptance of corresponding operational measures. Therefore, it seems to me that it is not necessary to create any sort of new commission; instead, we will assign the very same Commission to continue its work in the same spirit as it conducted it up until now.

Will there be any objections to that proposal? No.

Then we will consider that the Politburo Commission will act, with its former membership.

GROMYKO. In the leadership of Afghanistan, a consolidation of forces is going on. The often appeal to us for advice. We give it. They make proclamations. There are no essential changes in the military situation. But it also has not worsened. This is a very important element. The Army supports the leadership of Afghanistan.

The international situation around Afghanistan has taken a turn for the worse. The ruckus, which has unfolded particularly broadly in the USA, has also assumed a somewhat weakened form. In NATO there is no unity regarding measures toward the Soviet Union. In any case the Western countries -- in particular, FRG, Italy, Turkey, and other countries -- did not follow the Americans, are not in agreement with the sanctions which the USA is applying.

The General Assembly session ended. Many delegates spoke over the three days. But it is necessary to say, that of the 104 delegations which voted for the resolution, many voted without soul, 48 countries abstained and voted against. That is a full one third. In such a way, the Americans managed to lump together the reactionary regimes and to force them to vote for the resolution.

I think that there will be some kind of momentum in the American press, and in the press of other countries. But at the same time, countries like Argentina and Brazil do not agree with the the Americans, for example, on the sale of grain to the Soviet Union. Canada too.

BREZHNEV. Vance came out against the participation of the USA in the Olympic Games.

GROMYKO. Yes, Vance, it's true, did express such a thought unofficially. But on all types of measures the English are very complacent. Giscard d'Estaing sent a message. It is better. An Islamic conference is meeting in Islamabad. K. Babrak appealed to us for advice, whether he should go to the conference. We advised him that it is best not to go outside the borders of the country.

ANDROPOV. In the last ten days in Afghanistan all the organs of party and state leadership were created; even a procurator was named. The Afghan leaders have started more bravely to [missing one or more lines. --trans]. There is one great difficulty in their work -- ^Vthere are many various groups. Despite it all, the difference between the Parcham and the Khalk is still noticeable. Of course, it is necessary to carefully follow the state of affairs in the party and achieve, in accord with our recommendation, unity. They considered the letter of the CC CPSU in the Politburo and at the CC ^PNDPA plenum, and they prepared corresponding directives for the primary party organizations.

The tribes play a big role there. It is very important to win them over to the party's side. Three very imposing tribes announced their support for the Babrak regime. Babrak is doing great work regarding the strengthening of unity. In particular, there are definite shifts in relation to work with religious officials.

USTINOV reports in detail the military situation in various areas of Afghan territory; he says: overall, the military situation is basically satisfactory, there are now significantly fewer hotbeds of resistance by the rebels.

PONOMAREV speaks about the type of measures which have been taken regarding the creation of the party and the strengthening of unity. He reports that yesterday a group of our advisers consisting of 16 people, with Com. Grekov, L.I. at the head of it, was sent to Afghanistan. Babrak Karmal listens very attentively to the advice of our comrades. The leadership of the party now has a backbone.

BREZHNEV. There is a proposal to accept for consideration the information of Coms. Gromyko, Andropov, Ustinov, and Ponomarev on this issue.

Task Coms. Gromyko, Andropov, Ustinov, and Ponomarev to continue their work on the review and preparation of materials connected with the situation in Afghanistan. Submit to the Politburo issues which require a decision.

ALL. Agreed.

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COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION, CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Top Secret

#P179/USh

To: Comrades Brezhnev, Kosygin, Andropov, Gromyko, Suslov,
Ustinov, Ponomarev.

Excerpt from Protocol #179 of the Politburo CC CPSU session
of January 17, 1980

On the situation in Afghanistan.

1. To take into consideration the information presented by
Comrades A.A. Gromyko, Y.V. Andropov, D.F. Ustinov, and B.N.
Ponomarev on this question.

2. To entrust Comrades A.A. Gromyko, Y.V. Andropov, D.F.
Ustinov, and B.N. Ponomarev with continuing their work on analyzing
and preparing materials related to the situation in Afghanistan.

All questions that need to be considered should be submitted to
the Politburo of the Central Committee.

Secretary of the Central Committee