

September 15, 1979
**CPSU CC Politburo Decision with report by Gromyko,
Ustinov, and Tsvigun**

Citation:

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Summary:

CPSU CC Politburo Decision with report by Gromyko, Ustinov, and Tsvigun on Amin's ultimatums to Taraki, and on how to curtail repression from Amin's supporters of Taraki's supporters

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Central Committee

Top Secret

No. P168/5

To: Coms. Brezhnev, Andropov, Grishin, Gromyko, Kirilenko, Kosygin, Kunaev, Pel'she, Romanov, Suslov, Ustinov, Cher-nenko, Shcherbitskii, Aliev, Demichev, Kuz-netsov, Masherov, Ponomarev, Rashidov, Solomentsev, Tikhonov, Shevardnadze, Gorbachev, Dolgikh, Zimyanin, Kapitonov, Rusakov

Extract from Protocol No. 168 of the CPSU CC Politburo Session
on 15 September 1979

On the Situation in Afghanistan

Agree with the recommendations expressed in the note from Coms. A. A. Gromyko, D. F. Ustinov, and S. K. Tsvigun on 15 September 1979, No. 793/gS (attached).

CC Secretary

Re: Point 6 of Prot. No. 168

Top Secret

CPSU CC

According to information coming in from all channels about the situation in the leadership of Afghanistan, events in recent days have developed along the following lines.

Upon returning from Havana, Taraki was given an ultimatum by Amin demanding that the officials closest to Taraki--the minister of internal affairs, [Aslam] Watanjar, the minister of communications, [Syed] Gulabzoy, the minister of border affairs, [Sherjan] Mazdooryar, and the chief of the security organs, [Asadullah] Sarwari--be dismissed and punished on the pretext that these officials were involved in an "imperialist conspiracy" against Amin.

Taraki's attempts to persuade Amin to drop his demands and normalize the situation in the leadership were of no avail. All evidence indicates that Amin used Taraki's absence to lay the groundwork for ensuring that all real power, including supervision of the army and state security organs, was concentrated in Amin's own hands.

Having discerned this turn of events, Taraki evidently was about to remove Amin from the leadership, but he displayed indecisiveness and hesitation, and it is possible that he lacked sufficient forces to carry out his intention.

The CPSU CC Politburo's appeal calling on Taraki and Amin to join forces in the name of the revolution and to present an outwardly unified position was received positively by them and others, but even so, Amin continued actively preparing to achieve his aims and Taraki, as before, was indecisive and was clearly unable to put an end to Amin's activities. As a result, all the levers of real power by now are essentially in Amin's hands. He controls the leadership of the armed forces, the state security organs, and the internal affairs organs.

In the process, Amin has completely isolated Taraki through the use of force; there is no access to him at all, even for our representatives.

By having seized, in particular, on the episode involving an exchange of gunfire in Taraki's residence, which killed two people, including Amin's bodyguard, Amin has explicitly demanded that Taraki relinquish all his posts.

According to recent information, which was picked up by our representatives during a conversation with Amin, a plenum of the PDPA CC is supposed to be convened on 16 September. Taraki will be advised to give up all his posts voluntarily on the grounds of ill health, and even if he does not agree, a decision to this effect will be adopted.

Amin has ignored the repeated appeals of our comrades warning him that such a step might have dire consequences both for the party and for the country.

In these circumstances, our position at this stage should be along the following lines.

First. Considering the real state of affairs as it has now developed, we must not refuse to deal with Amin and the leadership headed by him. At the same time, we must do everything we can to restrain him from carrying out repressions against Taraki's supporters. We should use our contacts with Amin to get a definitive clarification of his political outlook and intentions.

Second. Our military advisers assigned to the Afghan forces, and also our advisers to the state security organs and internal affairs ministry, should remain in place, carrying out their direct functions connected with the preparation and conduct of combat operations against rebel formations, but without taking any part, of course, in repressive measures against people who have fallen into Amin's disfavor in the event that army units are ordered to carry out such measures.

Third. Shipments of Soviet weapons and military equipment to Afghanistan should be curtailed somewhat, being limited mainly to supplies of spare parts and ammunition needed for combat operations against the rebels.

Fourth. We should appeal to Amin and express our view that if Taraki is removed from his posts, there is no need to exact repressive measures against him or to carry out any sort of trial.

Fifth. On the matter of how the Soviet press organs should treat the ongoing events in Kabul, it would be advisable to limit coverage in coming days to purely factual material, reporting it calmly without expressing any kind of assessments of the situation or commentaries.

We request consideration.

A. Gromyko D. Ustinov S. Tsvigun

15 September 1979

No. 793/gs