

**December 10, 1987**  
**Conversation between M. S. Gorbachev and US Vice  
President George H. W. Bush**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

Gorbachev asks Bush to halt US aid to opposition forces in Afghanistan to assist Soviet troop withdrawal.

**Credits:**

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**Original Language:**

Russian

**Contents:**

Translation - English

(...)

M. S. GORBACHEV. Yesterday, when we met with you, I did not see optimism from your side about how the Afghan problem could be unknotted, for a suitable solution could be found in Afghanistan, Central America, Cambodia, and the Persian Gulf right now. However, I felt that the United States had no special desire to solve these problems.

G. Bush. When I was talking with Dobrynin he said that in his view Pakistan did not want to halt aid to the Afghan rebels and was very much afraid of losing aid from the US.

With regards to Afghanistan, we frankly do not know what contribution we could make to help the Soviet side get out of the current situation...

M. S. GORBACHEV. Regarding the Afghan problem, I think your administration could contribute to a search for its solution. If you would say that you are halting aid to the opposition, the rebels, with the start of the Soviet troop withdrawal, we would name a specific time. If this does not happen, if the US acts according to the principle "you got yourself in, you can get yourself out," then the entire problem will be deferred.

If we were to begin to withdraw troops while American aid continued then this would lead to a bloody war in the country. I don't know what we would do then. The Soviet Union does not intend at all to tie Afghanistan to a particular political system. Let it be independent.

G. Bush. And we are not in favor of installing an exclusively pro-American regime in Afghanistan. This is not US policy.

M. S. GORBACHEV. And we are not in favor of a pro-Soviet regime. Let Afghanistan be independent. However, the American side should not continue deliveries of weapons and the financing of aid to the rebels. We ought to take this up seriously in order to ensure the establishment of a coalition government in this country which would suit both you and us, and all domestic political forces in Afghanistan. Right now there is a chance for practical results.

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