

*Susan #20  
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THE JOINT STAFF

29 December 1979

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE SPECAT~~

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USA/USSR

291607R

Dear Mister President,

In answer to your message of 29 December I consider it necessary to inform you of the following.

It is impossible to agree with your evaluation of what is occurring in the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. We have sent through your Ambassador to Moscow in a confidential manner to the American side and to you personally a clarification based on facts of what is actually occurring there, as well as the

reasons which caused us to respond favorably to the request of the Government of Afghanistan for the introduction of limited Soviet Military contingents.

The attempt taken in your message to cast doubt on the very fact of the request itself of the government of Afghanistan for sending our forces to that country seems strange. I am compelled to note that it is certainly not a question of anyone's perception or lack of perception of this fact, or agreement or disagreement with it, which determines the actual state of affairs, which consists of the following.

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*The leaders who "requested" SU presence were assassinated.*

The Government of Afghanistan during the course of nearly two years has numerous times turned to us with this request. In point of fact one of these requests was sent to us on 26 December of this year. This is equally known by us and by the Afghanistanian Government which sent us these requests.

I want to once more stress that the purpose of the limited Soviet contingent in Afghanistan has only one goal - to provide assistance in repulsing the acts of external aggression, which have been taking place for a prolonged time and have now taken on even greater scale.

It is absolutely impermissible, and not in conformance with actuality, the claim (accusation), which appears in your message that the Soviet Union allegedly did something to overthrow the Government of Afghanistan. I must with all certainty stress that the change in the Afghanistani government was the result of the Afghanistans themselves and only by them. Ask the Afghanistani Government itself.

Also not corresponding to reality is that which is said in your message in relation to the fate of the families of the former leaders of Afghanistan. We have at our disposal information contradicting the information you have received.

I must further clearly state to you that the Soviet military contingents did not take any military action against Afghanistan and we clearly do not intend to do so.

from where?

SU brought in with invasion force the new puppet leader

They're dead or either new SU puppet

?

*We've sent in  
no invasion  
forces*

You have reproached us in your message that we did not consult with the USA Government in reference to the Afghanistani matter before introducing our military contingents into Afghanistan. Permit us to ask you - did you consult with us prior to beginning the massive concentration of naval forces near Iran and in the region of the Persian Gulf, <sup>as well as in many other cases</sup> about which it would have been necessary as a minimum to notify us?

In connection with the content and spirit of your message I consider it essential to again clarify the point that the request of the Afghanistani Government and the satisfaction of this request by the Soviet Union are exclusively a matter for the USSR and Afghanistan, which regulate their mutual relations themselves, by mutual agreement, and naturally cannot permit any sort of interference from without in their mutual relations. They, as any member states of the UN, enjoy the right not only to individual self-defense, but to collective defense as well, which is envisioned by Article 51 of the UN Charter, which the USSR and USA formulated themselves. And this was approved by all member states of the UN.

There is, of course, no basis for your assertion that our actions in Afghanistan allegedly threaten the peace.

In light of all of this, the immoderate tone of certain formulations in your message hit us squarely ~~between~~ <sup>in</sup> the eyes. What is the purpose of it? Would it not be better to evaluate the situation more calmly, keeping in mind the supreme interests of the world rather than, ultimately, the mutual relations of our two powers.

Concerning your "advice", we already informed you, and here I repeat again, that as soon as the reasons which prompted the Afghanistani request to the Soviet Union disappear, we fully intend to withdraw the Soviet military contingents from Afghanistani territory.

And here is our advice to you: the American side could make its contribution toward ending the armed incursion from without into Afghanistani territory.

*The only incursion is from the SU*

I do not believe that the work to create more stable and productive relations between the USSR and USA can be in vain. Unless, of course, the American side wants this to be. We do not. I think it would not be to the benefit of the United States of America itself, either. It is our conviction that the way relations develop between the USSR and the USA is a joint matter. We believe that they must not be subject to vasillation under the influence of some kink of attendant factors or events.

Despite disagreements on a number of issues in World and European politics, which we understand quite clearly, the Soviet Union is an advocate of conducting affairs in the spirit of those understandings and documents which were adopted by our countries in the interests of peace, equal cooperation, and international security.

L. Brezhnev

29 December 1979

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