

AFGHANISTAN

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TO PRIORITY CERTAIN MISSIONS AND DEPENDENT TERRITORIES
GUIDANCE TELEGRAM NUMBER 213 OF 19 NOVEMBER 1982

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AFGHANISTAN: TIME INTERVIEW WITH KUZICHKIN

1. TIME MAGAZINE OF 22 NOVEMBER PUBLISHES AN ACCOUNT OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN IN RECENT YEARS BY VLADIMIR KUZICHKIN, A FORMER KGB MAJOR WHOSE DEFECTION WAS ANNOUNCED IN LONDON IN OCTOBER. KUZICHKIN SERVED AS VICE-CONSUL IN THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN IRAN FROM 1977 TO 1982.

2. HIS ACCOUNT, PREPARED BEFORE BREZHNEV'S DEATH, MAKES THE FOLLOWING MAIN POINTS:

I) BREZHNEV PERSONALLY OVERRULED REPEATED KGB ADVICE NOT TO ESTABLISH A COMMUNIST REGIME IN AFGHANISTAN, AND IN PARTICULAR NOT TO BACK TARAKI IN 1978 AND AMIN IN SEPTEMBER 1979:

II) AMIN, KARMAL'S PREDECESSOR, WAS MURDERED IN HIS PALACE BY A SPECIALLY TRAINED SOVIET ASSAULT GROUP UNDER KGB LEADERSHIP:

III) THE SOVIET POLITBURO DECIDED TO INTERVENE BECAUSE THEY FEARED THAT A SUCCESSFUL MOSLEM REVOLUTION IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD MEAN THE EXPULSION OF THE RUSSIANS FROM THE COUNTRY WITH SEVERE LOSS TO THEIR PRESTIGE,

IV) THE RUSSIANS ARE NOW BOGGED DOWN IN A WAR WHICH THEY CANNOT WIN AND CANNOT ABANDON. THEY OVERESTIMATED THE WILLINGNESS OF THE AFGHAN ARMY TO FIGHT AND UNDERESTIMATED AFGHAN RESISTANCE.

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3. YOU SHOULD NOT DRAW ATTENTION TO THE INTERVIEW AS WE DO NOT WISH TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IT IS INSPIRED BY HMG. THE

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INTRODUCTION TO THE ARTICLE MAKES NO REFERENCE TO HMG INVOLVEMENT IN ARRANGING THE INTERVIEW. HOWEVER, IF IT IS RAISED BY OFFICIAL OR OTHER CONTACTS, YOU MAY DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING:

I) WE BELIEVE THE INTERVIEW TO BE AN AUTHORITATIVE ACCOUNT:

II) WE CANNOT COMMENT ON THE DETAIL PROVIDED BY KUZICHKIN, BUT HE WAS CERTAINLY WELL PLACED TO KNOW THE VIEWS OF THOSE INVOLVED IN SOVIET OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN,

III) HIS TESTIMONY DEMONSTRATES THE HIGH DEGREE OF SOVIET INTERFERENCE IN AFGHANISTAN, EVEN BEFORE DECEMBER 1979, AND GIVES THE LIE TO SOVIET CLAIMS THAT THEY INTERVENED AT THE REQUEST OF THE AFGHANS THEMSELVES.

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