

**Politburo Session, February 26, 1987**  
**Anatoly S. Chernyaev Notes**

About Afghanistan.

**Gorbachev.** The material assistance to Afghanistan: expenses are huge. But they would be justified if they solved the Afghan problem.

**Shevardnadze.** Once again we made a mistake—did not foresee what was in store for us. And now withdrawing the troops is the only right solution.

**Gorbachev.** And now we are not going to start the discussion who is to blame. Now [we should talk] about the material assistance.

**Gromyko.** But they asked us to introduce the troops eleven times. We kept refusing. Of course, there was a simplified view that the presence of our troops would set Afghanistan on the right track. And now I would not bet a dime that they can create their own Afghan army, no matter how much resources we invest in it. And yet, we have no alternatives but to supply it.

**Gorbachev.** There is an “alternative”! If we send, let’s say, 200 thousand more troops there, but then it would be a failure of our entire course. Therefore, troop withdrawal is the only correct decision. However, at the present moment, some other decisions might be needed too. Let us take some things from what Plyanichko (main Najib’s adviser) is proposing. And [let us] not rush with pulling back the advisers, otherwise everybody will think that we are running away.

[Source: The Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow, Fond 2, opis 1  
Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya for the National Security Archive]