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| On 27th April 1978 the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA, a communist party) overthrew the government of Afghanistan. Taraki became Prime Minister of Afghanistan. | Amin did not want to become too reliant on the Soviet Union for military assistance. He wanted to improve links with the USA. |
| When Taraki became leader in 1978, he impost a communist-style reform programme e.g. changing marriage customs. Thousands of members of the traditional elite (the Muslim religious establishment and intellectuals) were imprisoned. | Following Amin seizing power, Brezhnev was concerned about the growing power and spread of Islamic fundamentalism. Brezhnev did not trust Amin as the secret police claimed he was an American spy. |
| By the spring of 1979, civil war had broken out across the country between the Communist government and Islamic fighters. President Taraki was forced to accept Hafizullah Amin (head of the Army) as Prime Minister. | Between 25 December 1979 and 1 January 1980, more than 50,000 Soviet troops were sent to Afghanistan to restore order and protect the PDPA from the mujahideen. |
| In September 1979 Amin seized power from Taraki but there was continued instability because of the anti-Muslim policies. Thousands of Afghan Muslims joined the mujahideen (a guerrilla movement which proclaimed to be on a holy mission for Allah). The mujahideen declared a jihad (holy war) on the supporters of Amin. | On 27 December 1979, Amin was shot and replaced by Babrak Kamal, who had been in exile in Moscow. His position was dependent on Soviet military support. Many Afghan soldiers deserted to join the mujahideen. |