A Note on Afghan–Soviet Relations

by Dr. Z. A. Eltezam

EDITOR'S NOTE: **Dr. Eltezam endeavors to point out in the following article the fact that, in spite of any amount of aid given by the Soviet, the people of Afghanistan, by reason of cultural and ethnical differences, could never accept the Soviet doctrine.**

Afghanistan has about 1200 km of boundary with her northern neighbor, the U.S.S.R. Moreover, a significant degree of cultural ties and ethnical similarities exist between many people of northern Afghanistan and those of Soviet Tajiskistan, Turkmanistan and Uzbekistan, since a large portion of these states was once part of the Afghan Empire. At the same time, friendship between our country and the Soviet Union has been both historical and strong. The U.S.S.R. was the first country to recognize our external independence at the conclusion of the Third Anglo-Afghan War, and is perhaps the only country which has vehemently and effectively supported us in our dispute with Pakistan over the fate of our Pashtun brethren. Not only has the Soviet government given us arms, transport routes, technical and economic assistance at times when we needed them the most, but its offers have also been quite generous and without string attached. Ever since 1955, with the first visit of Mr. Khrushchev and Mr. Bulganin to Afghanistan, we have received over $400 million in aid with remarkably easy terms (at less than 2½ percent interest, and mostly payable in soft currency). The U.S.S.R. has also opened a large market for our exports (primarily for wool 40% of which and cotton 80% of which are annually sold there); and meanwhile she has been the supplier of many strategic commodities such as petroleum products, chemicals, capital goods and etc. to Afghanistan. Recently a large number of students are also being sent to the Soviet Union to study science, and at the same time, a sizeable Soviet labor force is working side by side with Afghan workers in building our country. These points and still many more, which have been repeatedly stressed by the officials of both countries in many occasions, illustrate the intimate relationship which exist between the two nations.

Unfortunately, many people, mostly from the West, by observing this intimacy, have drawn baseless conclusions that Afghan sovereignty may be jeopardized by her so much involvement with Russians, and as Dev Murakra points out: "there is (even) a tendency among many people to write off the country in the Communist camp." (See *Eastern World,* June, 1961, p. 18). But, as Dev Murakra writes, "this is a mistaken view if it means that the Afghans will barter away their freedom for Russian aid or under Russian threats. The whole history of the country should warn us against such assumption."

But assumptions of this type, and hasty and precarious conclusions therefrom, which are so common in the Western press, and which are either by-products of skepticism or due to ignorance about the nature and characteristics of Afghan people, are although unwarranted, they may be damaging to Afghan interest. An attempt is made in this note to correct the general misinterpretation of Afghan-Soviet relations, and demonstrate that no observation as yet supports the influence of the Soviet Union in Afghanistan despite her phenomenal economic and technical assistance to the latter. This can be done by portraying the striking dissimilarities which exist between the two countries with respect to their ideologies, politics and economics.

In the first place, Soviet ideology is Marxian dialectical materialism, while Afghan ideology is Spiritualism. In the Soviet Union a man with religion is looked down upon, and in Afghanistan a man without religion is frowned upon. According to Soviet philosophy (Marxism), Religion is the "opiate of society," and should be done away with, and according to the Afghan view (Islam), one should seek the ideal life through Religion.

In the second place, the U.S.S.R. is a republic established through revolution, while Afghanistan is a monarchy and is becoming increasingly stable and immune to revolution. In the Soviet Union the Communist Party is the initiator of all major directives, and is the only lawful party, while in Afghanistan communistic teachings are outrightly illegal. According to Marxian philosophy, as it dominates Soviet minds, politics is "the most concentrated form of economics, its generalization and conclusion," and these two disciplines ought to be fused together. This is why the Soviet politicians determine the national economic activities. In Afghanistan, on the contrary, politics and economics have always been distinct from each other. While major political decisions come from the top, major economic decisions find their roots among the populace. True, in the last decade Afghanistan has embarked upon central economic planning, but one should note that on the one hand, economic planning has now been widely accepted by a great majority of nations as a pivotal means of accelerating economic development, and on the other hand, economic planning in Afghanistan is not a substitute for the private sector as it was the case with the Soviet Union, but rather it is aiming at building the basic infrastructure which is now lacking, and which is necessary for the future development of the private sector.

In fact, it can be reasonably suggested that due to the advent of rising expectations, chronical inflation, increased demand for national defense in the face of political dispute with Pakistan, and demand for more schools, hospitals, courts, roads etc., because of the growing population, the strength of the planned part of our economy should be greater than it is now. Even in the U.S.A. which is supposed to be the symbol of the capitalist camp, the role of the government is more dominating than in Afghanistan. While American government spends billions of taxed dollars on such programs as old age benefit, emergency relief to the destitute, unemployment compensation and direct farm subsidy, none of these have as yet been the concern of our government. In the U.S.A. in normal peacetime, government expenditures range between 20 to 25 per cent of the total national income, and in Afghanistan, public expenditures are less than half of these figures.

A marked distinction also exists between Afghanistan and the Soviet Union concerning the system of ownership. Land in Afghanistan is neither to be nationalized, nor is it to be worked cooperatively. In the U.S.S.R.

(Cont. on Page 8)

Afghan Student News

ARYANA

VOL. 7, NOS. 3 AND 4 DETROIT 2, MICHIGAN JANUARY - FEBRUARY, 1962

Afghanistan: A House With Open Doors

By A. LATIF HOTAKI

Today's formulators of public opinion are addicted to the notion that "image" creation is the essence of selling anything from commercial products to politics. Although they don't bother to explain that a mirror may create another, they have convinced even governments that the "big sell" idea is useful in foreign relations. To some extent they have a point.

No one will dispute the belief that the U.S. ought to make its image abroad a favorable and clear one--more like that of a mirror than a shadowy outline. One place where a true image is needed but somewhat lacking is in the small "buffer" states separating the U.S. from the Communist world.

A state, for instance, like Afghanistan, who shares her borders with not one but two large Communist states, Red China and Russia. Afghanistan is a conservative Moslem nation, and she finds herself in an uncomfortable position in Central Asia. She, too, must maintain a proper "image" of herself before the West. Afghanistan wishes above all to remain neutral and independent between the two great ideologies which are now struggling for supremacy. To begin with, she needs Western aid to avoid being swept away by the tidal wave of undemocratic terrorism in Asia.

To the distress of both America and Afghanistan, the cordiality between these two nations has been fluctuating since 1954. We will try to analyze some of the causes of this unhappy state of affairs and to present some tentative suggestions for both the Americans and the Afghans on what might be done to improve their present relationship.

During this examination let us bear in mind two things: First, that Afghanistan is neither a dictatorship nor a democracy--it is a modified constitutional monarchy ruled by the King, Mohammed Zahir Shah, and his Prime Minister, Mohammed Daud. Afghanistan is greatly attracted by Western political ideals, but the structure of her government is different from that of the United States. Second, even though their government is structured differently, the Afghans share the frame of mind of the American people at the time of thier national revolution, circa 1776: Their feelings are characterized by the same uncompromising patriotism, the same thirst for liberty and independence.

Because of this patriotic fervor, the anti-colonial record of the United States and its long-standing sympathy toward nations with aspirations for independence which America had at the beginning built a tremendous fund of good will for itself in almost all of Afghanistan. Yet this fund of good will was diminished incredibly fast by subsequent action on both sides which caused deep misunderstandings.

Probably the most serious divergence of U.S. and Afghan outlooks has been that concerning Pakistan. To understand Afghanistan's viewpoint, a brief history is in order.

Eighty-five years ago, Afghanistan's holdings were much more extensive than at present. Baluchistan, which was then the southernmost Afghan province, bordered on the Arabian Sea. In 1878 the British carved away this province, leaving Afghanistan landlocked. Britain held Baluchistan (which is now part of Pashtunistan) until 1947, but only under incessant and violent protest from both the Afghans and the local tribesmen, the Pashtuns, who still considered themselves Afghans.

When the British finally withdrew they offered these Pashtun tribesmen a choice of either joining the Hindu state of India or forming the new religious state of Pakistan. The Pashtuns, believing that Pakistan would be in essence an Indian state having only the Moslem faith in common with themselves, requested that the plebiscite include the two following alternatives: (1) They they be allowed to rejoin their ethnic brothers, the Afghans, or (2) that they be offered the choice of forming the independent state of Pashtunistan with their own culture and language held intact. However, the British were adamant, and the plebiscite was not changed. Since only five per cent of the British-occupied area of Pashtunistant was Hindu, the vote was over-whelmingly for the formation of Moslem Pakistan. The majority of voters boycotted the referendum, which was not even offered in the non-occupied area, although two-thirds of the eight million Pashtuns lived in it. Pakistan claimed all of Pashtunistan, both occupied and free.

Since the birth of Pakistan as an independent nation, Afghan-Pakistani relations have been extremely uneasy, particularly concerning Afghanistan's right of transit to the sea and the independence of the Pashtuns in the area between Afghanistant and Pakistan.

About 1950, at the suggestion of her British ally, America started dumping bombing planes and modern weapons in Pakistan to be used against the "spread of Communism." At the same time, America refused military aid to Afghanistan (who had repeatedly requested it) because the Afghans refused the treaty condition that such aid could be used only against Communist aggression. Afghans wanted the right to use such armament against aggression from any source. Thus, with the arming of Pakistan, the balance of power was upset in that area of Central Asia.

As the Afghans had feared, Pakistan, desiring to claim Free Pashtunistan, sent planes to bomb and strafe Pashtun villages. The Afghans, feeling that the Pashtuns should be allowed their independence, were outraged by this action and protested to the government of Pakistan. In reply to this protest, the Pakistanis closed the Afghan consulates and trade agencies unilaterally and imposed an economic blockade by closing the border and cutting off the Afghan transit routes to the sea.

Pakistan was obviously violating her armament treaty in using the arms she had received from the U.S. in attacking

(Continued on Page 4)

EDITORIAL

Democracy and Afghanistan

The system of government in Afghanistan may be called an autocratic monarchy. The King with tremendous constitutional power, free from all responsibility (Article 76) is the supreme authority in the country. The prime minister who is the head of the Executive branch (cabinet) of the government is appointed by the King for an indefinite period of time. Ministers who must be Moslem Afghans and responsible to the National Assembly, are appointed by the Prime Minister without the consent of the National Assembly but subject to the approval of His Majesty.

A number of fundamental differences exist between this type of government and a democracy, one of which is that in the latter the Chief Executive is popular. If he is a president (such as in the case of the U.S.A. or France) he is ordinarily elected by a popular vote; and if he is a prime minister (such as in the case of the U.K. or India) then the Parliament elects him. In a democracy, there are only few direct appointments of officials by other officials at any level of government. In a monarchy such as in Afghanistan, practically all offices are filled with appointments.

The proponents of both systems-democracy and monarchy-(we omit other existing or nonexisting, but possible systems) might have existed from time immemorial. However, it is believed that, after the frequent failures of monarchs to handle the country's important affairs properly, many people hoped for a more suitable form of government in which they could have a voice. The people often manifested their opposition to the monarchy, sometimes openly, sometimes clandestinely. Often their attempts ended in failure, and worse than that the scope of their expression became tighter and tighter the more their opposition was discovered. At the end, however, it is believed again, no matter what the cost incurred, they gained the support of many sympathizers. As a result monarchy became increasingly unpopular and democracy became increasingly favored. This is a historical fact, but only partially verified. For in Afghanistan, at least, both the King and the Monarchy, whatever the reason may be, are overwhelmingly respected.

Nowadays, people in many parts of the world take it for granted that only democracy can give answers to all the problems of administrative corruption, of individual freedom and what not. If a government official appears to be inadequate, it is argued that they will get rid of him in the next election. If an individual is suppressed in any form, under the due process of law, he is guaranteed satisfaction no matter who his opponent is. And if an individual is suspected of a crime, he is innocent in the eyes of both the court and the public until found guilty by a jury of his peers. Then he will be punished only in accordance with the law.

Democracy may be an appropriate system under certain conditions. However, we must bear in mind that its seed does not grow on every soil. Sometimes it is much easier to adjust our existing political system (if other than a democracy) to prevailing conditions than to look blindly for democracy which we have heard has been good elsewhere, yet may not suit us at all. Apparently Mr. Mohammad Daud , the Prime Minister of Afghanistan has suggested that his government will eventually work toward a democracy. I do not think this is the thing which we should emphatically look for at the present time. For democracy may not-and most likely that it will not-satisfy us for all of what we urgently need.

By its very definition democracy means "rule of the majority". And if this is what we should hope to achieve (rule of majority), then our hope boils down to nothing very new and important. The reason for this is that the existing government of Afghanistan is based on majority rule anyway. At least all of the Pashtun tribes which constitute an absolute majority among Afghan people, and to which the Royal family is linked by kinship, provide His Majesty's chief support. The last "Loe Jirga" supports my opinion when all Pashtu and non-Pashtu speaking Afghan tribes showed strong loyality to the government. This means that whether we will have a general election or not the result will be the same.

The Royal family of Afghanistan has apparently been in such a position which either directly or through persuasion successfully introduced itself as the only class which can effectively deal with the country's affairs. The truth is that the Royal family as a class, whatever the reason may be, has more experience and training in politics than the rest of us; and their unilateral decisions concerning public affairs save us a lot of confusion. Should we have general elections, chances are that this family will again be the ruling class. These reasons are sufficient to rule out the importance of democracy in Afghanistan so long as we define democracy in terms of the "rule of majority" and "general election."

But here again we must be careful not to under-estimate democracy. True that democracy may provide dictatorship in favor of the majority, it may provide offices primarily for those who can afford huge sums for campaigning (this is true even in the U.S.A.), it may be likely to give rise to emotion on the part of either party and hence build constraints against that which ought to be done, and it may bring about confusion in the minds of many, but it also brings something else for the poeple which overshadows all of its demerits. This thing is due process of law. But here also we are faced with exceptions. Turkish democracy under the ex-regime was one of them.

Systems other than democracy, when they appear to be in trouble, can be improved not by lending themselves to the "majority rule" and "general election" criteria, but rather by turning to the general public for help. For if a system is to work efficiently it must also rely, at least partially, on the cooperation of individuals other than the government officials. In the society where justice is undefined, usually the channels of communication are kept closed. Even individuals who through their wise suggestions can improve the efficiency of the government's operation are reluctant to do so for the fear that they might be punished instead of rewarded. Yet it is very natural that there are always a number of problems that private citizens live with and the ruling class is still unaware of them. If nobody can attempt to look for their solution, by their cumulative nature they will add up to the people's frustration until a complete lack of coordination between individuals and the State makes the operation of the latter more difficult.

The point I am trying to make is that if the purpose of both people and government of Afghanistan sincerely is to improve our living conditions and the state of our efficiency (and I am sure that it is), then we do not have to bother with the idea of democracy at all. Democracy per se cannot guarantee us any good. Only the ruling class indeed can. I do not think that in the hope of transforming monarchy into democracy we should take the risk of loosing our long-time established political and social stability--leaving aside the fact that we are not yet ready for democracy. We have always been ready to cooperate with our government. However our cooperation becomes automatic and more effective as soon as the people are allowed for the sake of correction to channel their voice in the form of complaint or suggestion without restriction to the higher authorities who have the power to execute. This of course requires "freedom of expression" and government's encouragement to remove all obstacles which are now standing against this freedom. This is the most important condition for better efficiency no matter what system of government there will be.

--Z. ELTEZAM

News In Brief

U.S. Information Agency Made Use of A.S.N.

The Press Service of U.S.I.A. carried news items from Mr. J. Hanifi's article "The Returning Asian Students: Problems and Opportunities", which appeared in the December issue of ASN, in its daily news file which goes by radio-teletype to U.S.I.A. posts in the Middle East and South Asia.

According to Mr. J. H. Simpson (press department of U.S.I.A.) ASN is very informative. ASN hopes that its articles' highlights will be selected in the future also for transmission to Asian readers through the U.S.I.A. services.

Kabul War Academy Graduates at Webb A.F.B. for Flight Training

Included among Webb's newest group of student pilots (Class 62-H) are two officers of the Afghanistan Air Force. They are 2d. Lt. Shairzia Ettebar and 2d. Lt. Pashtonyar Assadulah.

Both officers are 1959 graduates of the War Academy at Kabul.

ASA's Message of Congratulations to His Majesty

A message of congratulations from ASA was sent to His Majesty Mohammad Zahir Shah, King of Afghanistan, on the occasion of His Majesty's birthday.

In reply His Majesty has expressed happiness for our message.

New Iron Discovery in Afghanistan

A new iron deposit called Hajigak Iron Deposit was discovered late last year. The mine is located 140 kilometers to the south-west of Kabul, occupying an area of 10Km. According to some estimates this deposit contains about 250,000,000 tons of 60% iron.

The previous surveys conducted in Afghanistan indicated that the total capacity of iron mines was only 3,000,000 tons which in the same time were scattered in various parts of the country, and the most important among them was the Haji-Alam deposit 73 miles north of Kandahar and which contains 64% iron.

The Ministry of Mines and Industry is attempting to build a sizeable iron foundry during the Second Five Years of planning. This will, of course, be a giant step toward industrializing Afghanistan.

Calendar of Events

12—14 January	Congress, National Union of Greek Students	Athens, Greece
28—30 January	National Student Conference, National Council of University Students of India	Madras, India
8—10 February	5th Congress, Yugoslavian Union of Students	Ljubljana, Yugoslavia
9—12 February	4th Annual Student Editors' Conference on International Affairs, USNSA	New York, United States
23—25 February	Meeting of Supervision Committee of the International Student Conference	Leiden, Netherlands
5—19 March	Conference on Education and Economical and Social Development in Latin America, co-sponsored by UNESCO	Santiago, Chile
12—18 March	14th VDS Congress	Erlangen, Germany
16—22 March	FISU Winter Universiade	Villars, Switzerland
18—24 April	51st Congress, Union Nationale des Etudiants de France	Reims, France
7—11 May	8th Conference of International Non-Governmental Organizations, UNESCO	Paris, France
11—20 August	General Assembly, World University Service	Tokyo, Japan

AFGHANISTAN: A HOUSE

(Continued from Page 1)

the Pashtuns who were struggling for their own freedom.

Afghanistan's apprehension concerning Pakistan's motives has recently increased because Pakistan, who is professedly pro-American and has received approximately two billion dollars in American aid, has requested aid from the Soviet Union to explore the possibilities of developing her petroleum resources--one wonders how the pro-Pakistani lobbyists in Washington would explain this action of Pakistan's President Ayub in view of his stated "absolute" pro-American policy.

At the time of this writing the Pakistan border is again closed to Afghan trade. Another feature of the dispute is the current refusal by the Pakistani government to allow the southern Afghan nomads to pasture their herds around the Indus valley during the winter. They had previously enjoyed this right for centuries. Now, this refusal is being enforced by the military forces--and American arms, mind you. Betwen 200,000 and 300,000 tribesmen are seriously suffering because of this denial.

The Soviet Union has been quick to aid Afghanistan during the Afghan-Pakistani dispute. She has provided Afghanistan with loans of money, air transportation for her agriculatural crops, a proposed tunnel through the Hindu Kush Mountains for a motor transport route to the outside world, and a proposed highway system which will link many of the major Afghan cities.

Reports of Russian aid in some instances have been fallacious, however. For example, the Western press usually gives credit to the Soviets for paving the streets of Kabul. The Afghans resent this inasmuch as the streets were actually paved by the municipality of Kabul. The Afghans did use Soviet loan funds to buy paving equipment and to pay two or three Soviet technicians to teach them how to use the quipment, but the Afghans themselves did the paving.

As we can easily see, there lies a two-fold source of U.S.-Afghan misunderstanding: It may appear to Americans that Afghanistan is leaning somewhat toward Russia instead of the United States; and it may seem to Afghans that the United States is lacking in sensitivity concerning the threat that its military aid to Pakistan represents to Afghan national independence and the Pashtuns' struggle for freedom.

After Afghanistan turned to Russian aid in the face of the Pakistani blockade, the United States, apprehensive about the spread of Soviet influence there, started a "crash program." Feeling that speedy action was of the utmost importance, America sent a sudden influx of personnel into Afghanistan. These people were from all walks of life, and, unfortunately, many of them had little or no knowledge of the country. Some of them could no even locate Afghanistan on the map a scant week before their assignment there, let alone have any knowledge of the language, customs, religion, politics, etc., of the Afghan people.

There were AID people (formerly Point-4 and later ICA) most of whom were too old to carry on the vigorous work, and some people were sent who were too young to understand fully the complexities of the situtions.

Among the embassy staff, there have been, and still are, a few professional diplomats and some amateurs who did not possess a working knowledge of the Afghan language, but who were well versed on the religion, politics, and history of the country--the American version, that is. The whole of their information was acquired from other than Afghan sources. Much of this information has been gravely in error. Some misconceptions about Afghanistan (many of which are still prevalent) have been based on outright error, and some have stemmed from outdated information--sometimes as much as ten, twenty, or even thirty years old.

Another problem is that in some quarters it is felt that the United States is in league with a group of men in Afghanistan who are promoting their private interests at the expense of Afghan national security. The U.S. has thus far done nothing to dispel this belief, and some Afghans interpret this silence as admission. The abortive coup d'etat of 1957 attempted by Brigadier General Abdul Molik Rahimzai, only a few months after his return from a tour of the U.S. is one of the examples given by this group. America should take positive action and reassure the Afghans that she has no such liaison.

These are some of the reasons for the past lowering of Afghan-American good will. But what can be done to repair some of the damage and restore friendlier relations? The following are a few suggestions which, if adopted, would undoubtedly alleviate the situation somewhat.

First, the United States might take a more active role in helping to resolve the Afghan-Pakistani border dispute. Most Afghans feel that America can be vitally influential in the solution to the problem. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that this situation lies heavily on the minds of all Afghans concerned with their national security.

Since 1947 Afghans have supported the emergence of the independent state of Pashtunistan, and they will continue to do so until the Pashtuns are allowed to establish a government which is compatible with their cultural and economic needs. The reopening of Afghan consulates and trade agencies in Pakistan and the re-establishment of a free transit route to the Arabian Sea and the right of transit for the nomadic herdsmen is a problem which must be resolved before the Afghans can be fully satisfied.

Afghanistan welcomes any foreign mediation which has no political conditions or "strings" attached. The U.S. has insisted that she will send technical assistance goods to Afghanistan only through Pakistan. The Afghan Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammed Naim has very recently stated, in an interview with the correspondent of the Times of India, that the Afghans feel that this is an imposition of a political condition, and they therefore find the demand unacceptable--and rightly so.

Second, a closer study by citizens of each country of the customs, language, history, politics, religion and economics of the other nation is necessary. Each nation must seek to achieve a greater amount of empathy for the other's point of view. To facilitate this understanding, most of Afghanistan's government officials are trained abroad, largely in the West--many, in fact, in the United States. At present there are over 200 Afghan students in this country.

Americans who have lived in Afghanistan would agree that the Russian technical assistance personnel who have become familiar with the Afghan people and their language have done much for Afghan-Russian relations. Also, Americans who have lived there and maintained a friendly but unbiased and uncritical attitude have reached out to the hearts of the people and have done much for the prestige of their country--Dr. and Mrs. Christy Wilson have been there for over ten years; Dr. and Mrs. Arnold Fletcher; Dr. and Mrs. Harold Amoss who was head of ASIA Foundation in Afghanistan and now is on the faculty of the University of Colorado; and many others.

Third, since training competent, really useful personnel is an expensive and time-consuming process, it would almost certainly be to the advantage of the U.S. to assign its personnel to a particular country for longer periods of time. At present, it is the practice to transfer men after only two or three years of service--just at the time when they have become sufficiently familiar with the people and their problems to formulate effective courses of action. A case in point is the American Ambassador to Afghanistan, Henry Byroade. Since his assign-

WITH OPEN DOORS

ment there, his views of Afghan problems have changed tremendously. He has been recalled from Afghanistan at a time when he could be of most vital service to his country by remaining. Countries which have assigned their diplimats for longer periods of time have apparently enjoyed success with this policy.

The citizens of both countries must try to become even more aware that there are many ways of living--neither inferior nor superior, but simply different--each meaningful within its own context. America needs to understand better that Afghanistan, in working out its own development program, must go its own way--a way which will conform with its history and cultural nature. Afghanistan desires to communicate with and learn from others, but it must maintain its individuality.

Afghanistan is indeed a house with open doors: she welcomes trade and diplomatic intercourse with all nations. She has already extended an invitation to every nation, including the U.S., to invest in Afghan government. Many counries have accepted the invitation. For example, West Germany, Japan, India and Italy, among others, not only maintain trade relations with Afghanistan but also have made extensive investments in the country.

True, since 1954 Afghanistan's trade with the Soviet Union and with Eastern European and other nations has increased considerably. But in the words of Ambassador Byroade, "To an extent this trend is natural. In fact, prior to 1954 trade with the Soviet Union itself was surprisingly low in the light of the fact that the Soviet economy is somewhat complementary to that of Afghanistan." It must also be remembered that Afghanistan's very proximity to the U.S.S.R. makes trade with her to be expected, just as the United States carries on extensive trade with her geographical neighbors, Canada and Mexico.

The eminent British historian Arnold J. Toynbee says of Afghan trade with Russia at the Oxus River port of Qyzyl Quala:

> The present-day Russian navigators of the Oxus are most unlikely to try to use their command of the river... for making conquests of the old-fashioned military kind. They will try, not to dominate Afghanistan by force of arms, but to attract her as a sun-flower is attracted to the sun.
>
> ...Of course, Pakistan and the Western World have (the) right to compete with the Soviet Union for Afghanistan's custom (trade) by making the Karachi trade-route more attractive...than it is at present. If one chooses, one may call this economic competition 'the Cold War'. But giving it a bad name will not make it a bad thing either for Afghanistan or for the rest of us (the Western World.)
>
> We are living in an age in which the countries of the world have become interdependent. The prosperity of each is bound up with the prosperity of the rest. And Afghanistan is a country that cannot prosper unless she can establish adequate lines of communication for her foreign trade. So more power to Qyzyl Quala!

Afghanistan welcomes and encourages friendly relations, trade and economic aid from any source--as long as there are no "strings" attached. The Afghan government has reiterated this point time and time again. But even though the government is deeply committed to a program of development, the Afghans would prefer their nation to remain rather undeveloped than for Afghanistan to lose her independent sovereignty.

Afghanistan's broadening contacts indicate first that internal changes have begun to shape Afghanistan into a modern state; they also emphasize the Afghan passion for independence for all people and the continuing sense of self-identity which so sharply marks the Afghan character.

The Afghans have a fierce pride in their country--call it a sense of nationality which goes beyond "nationalism" as profoundly as self-confidence transcends egotism. They are at least as apprehensive as the U.S. about the possibility of succumbing to a radical and undemocratic idology. Above all: Afghanistan, like revolutionary America, wishes to insure "liberty and justice for all."

مجروح :

درد دعشق ته شته طبیبه داروکله درمان کله
زه به پاخم له بستر ه که می و لیدجانان کله
ای نرگسه ته سیال نه ئی زمادیار دښکلو سترګو
نازلری میکز لری، ستاشته هسی چشمان کله
که بورا وائی بدلی ګل کاڼه کاندی غوږونه
التفات کا ندی عاشق ته کبر جنه خو بان کله
سعادت یوخوب او خیال دی بی بقا جاه و جلال دی
همیشه دچاپه مراد وی فلك کله دوران کله
لوړ راټیټ شی ټیټ او چت شی داعالم یو انقلاب دی
چه په ځمکه باندی پروت وی شی او چت په آسمان کله
یامی آه یاواویلا ده یاد سروستر ګو ژړاده ـ
د «مجروح» سره بی آهه شته بل سازو سامان کله

قاریزاده:

گنبد چرخ همان چتر جها نست که بود
پشت این پیر جها ندیده کمانست که بود
مهرهٔ خاك ندارد نظر از حقهٔ مهر
نسبت نقطه به پرکار هما نست که بود
دیدهٔ اختر کان از بر این بام کبود
هم بدان گونه سوی ما نگرانست که بود
آمدو رفت شب وروز چنین است که هست
گردش چرخ کهن تو زچنانست که بود
نرگس باغ همان چشم تماشاست هنوز
لالهٔ راغ همان سو خته جا نست که بود
عشوه ازدهر مجوئید که این کهنه عروس
بار ها پیرشد و باز جوانست که بود
تا به نیم نگه خود ننوازد دل کس
چشم ساقی گرو خواب گرانست که بود
عالمی غرق شد و در دل این بحر هنوز
همچنان گوهر مقصود نهانست که بود

Reports From the Chapters of A.S.A.

MICHIGAN CHAPTER --M. Shorish reporting

New Arrival to Ann Arbor

Mrs. Weiss, whose husband is a medical doctor and is now taking further training in medicine at the University of Michigan, has arrived to join her husband in the world of Mossafari. The Michigan Chapter welcomes her arrival.

Arrival of New Junior Member

Michigan Chapter of ASA is happy to add to its membership list the name of Hassibullah, son of Mr. and Mrs. Z. Eltezam. He was born on the 31st of January.

Lecture on Afghanistan's Economic Problems

Mr. R. R. Nathan, a consulting economist, delivered a speech at the University of Michigan on the 21st of February concerning Afghanistan's future prospects. The speech was sponsored by the Center for Research on Economic Development, the Center for Near Eastern Studies, and the Center for Southern Asian Studies.

Mr. Nathan has recently returned from Afghanistan. His firm is engaged in advising the Royal Government of Afghanistan on its economic development planning.

Mr. Etemadi Visits Michigan

In mid-December, our Educational and Cultural attache, Mr. T. Etemadi visited the Afghan students in Michigan. During his visits to Wayne State University, Michigan State University and the University of Michigan campuses, he discussed Afghan students' problems and prospects with the universities' officials.

The most important aspect of his trip, from our point of view, was his eagerness to listen to each of the students' problems individually and suggest ways of solving them. The trip shows the magnitude of his concern to the students' well-being and his interest in their problems. We hope that he will continue to visit Afghan students in the United States in the future.

Mr. Etemadi with a group of Afghan students during his visit to the Michigan Chapter. First row, from left to right are Z. Eltezam, Engineer Rafiq, Mr. Etemadi and Mr. Shakir. Second row, Mr. Hanifi and Mr. Safi.

WYOMING CHAPTER -- Z. Sahibzada reporting

Surprise Package from Educational Office

Miss Anita Brown has been cited for her special contribution to the Afghan Students' programs by Mr. Etemadi, Educational attache in a recent letter:

> "On behalf of my office I express appreciation for your participation in the last convention of our students at the University of Colorado. You, indeed, enriched very much the cultural aspect of the program at the convention.
>
> "As a token of our appreciation, I present you with a long-playing record of Afghan music. I hope that your interest and liking of my country continues in the future."

Miss Brown's record was presented to her by G. W. Arnold, coordinator of the University of Wyoming Afghan program, on behalf of the Educational Office of the Royal Afghan Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The presentation was made at a dinner attended by most of the UW Afghan students and a number of faculty members.

The record is being presented to Miss Anita Brown by Mr. G. W. Arnold (left). The gentleman in the center is Mr. Z. Sahibzada, vice president of ASA.

Three Active ASA Members Receive M.S. Degrees and Go Home

MOHAMMED IBRAHIM: an industrious and likeable person. He has shown admirable talent in playing the rubob and singing native songs.

ABDUL HABIB QURAISHI: an exceedingly versatile musician whose specialty being in the line of stringed instruments, namely, mandolin and tanboor. He has adapted his musical ability to the playing of many Western songs. His native and Western music, played on the mandolin, pleased our Afghan and American friends in the Rocky Mountain area and the ASA conventions.

MOHAMMED ZARIF SALEM: whose singing of native and Western songs and his beautiful accordion playing will not be forgotten.

We truly miss them here at he University of Wyoming and wish them a world of good luck and prosperity.

United Nations Day at Golden, Colorado

The UW Afghan participated in the 1961 United Nations Day held at the School of Mines in Golden, Colorado, presenting slides, speeches, music, songs, and dances. They received the honor of first place in the UN Day celebration. The competition included groups from twelve other countries.

Homecoming Sing at UW

The active members of the Wyoming chapter of ASA participated in the annual University of Wyoming Homecoming Sing, October 1961. Before an audience of about 6,000, the group which included nine Afghan students and seven young American coeds--Miss Anita Brown, Miss Margaret Drury, Miss Joyce Pirrie, Miss Myrna Hart, Miss Dana Vaughn, Miss Sonja Kirkwood, and Miss Teri Laybourne--sang two of our native selections (Man Askaram and Ai Karawan) in competiton with the sororities, fraternities, and independent groups of the campus.

Arrival

Four Afghan students who recently came to the University of Wyoming for graduate and undergraduate work are: 1. Hazrat Mohammed Noorzad, graduate, sponsored by the Institute of International Education (IIE), researching in organic chemistry. 2. Mohammed Hashim, graduate, agriculture, ICA. 3. Ghulam Nasir, graduate in engineering, ICA. 4. Mohammed Yousof, undergraduate in arts and science, ICA.

NEW YORK CHAPTER -- A. Razaq reporting

Five Afghan students participated in the activity which was sponsored by Mr. Schoeman of Manhasset High School, Long Island. The program was arranged on the U.S. Election Day (November 7, 1961), and the Afghan students had the opportunity to observe the election headquarters, and exchange ideas with the staff of the high school.

On November 10, 1961, a group of Afghan students participated in the program sponsored by the Couples' Club of Glen Rock, N.J., which was conducted by Mr. Ford of I.C.A. who gave an introduction to the educational exchange program of the Columbia Team in Afghanistan.

Members of the group were Mr. O. Ghazanfar, chairman; and Mesdames Razaq, Kaifi, Salehi, Sabir and Muslim. Each of them gave a speech on a different topic related to their country. They were very warmly received by the audience.

BERKELEY CHAPTER -- S. Sahiby reporting

During the months of December-February the Afghan students of this area participated in and scheduled the following programs:

1. The movies on Afghanistan-Bamiyan, Jeshen 1960 and Gulbahar Textile works have been shown to five different groups and organizations. At present these movies are scheduled in the Los Angeles area with Miss L. Malikyar.

2. Afghan handicrafts and cottage industry products have been displayed in the International House of the University of California by M.Y. Nassraty from December 10-25, 1961. Also the Berkeley chapter plans to participate in the coming international week activities during April 25-30.

3. Two ASA members, Y. Nassraty and D. Ludwig have participated in the Western Region Dog Show on January 24, 1962. The Northern California Afghan Hound Club gives the honor awarding the winning trophy to an Afghan student. For the past three years Afghan hounds have been the winners in this competitive dog show.

4. Zia H. Noorzoy, during the last two months, has delivered six speeches to local business and service organizations. The proceeds of his talks are contributed to ASA.

5. Hospitality programs and chapter meetings have been arranged for some Afghan students who have visited this area since December 1961.

World Health Organization and World Peace

By Y. M. KOHSAR

The World Health Organization had its origin in April 1945, during the conference held in San Francisco to set up the United Nations. In February 1946, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations instructed the Secretary-General to call such a conference.

April 7, 1948 marked the formal existence of W.H.O. as a specialized agency of the United Nations. That is why April 7th is celebrated annually as "World Health Day."

In 1949, W.H.O.'s regular budget was 5 million dollars. In 1960, W.H.O.'s regular budget was approximately 17 million dollars.

The W.H.O. has 6 regions over the world and the headquarters are centrally located as follows:

1. Africa - Brazzaville
2. Pan-American Office - Washington, D.C.
3. Southern Asia - New Delhi (Afghanistan belongs to this region)
4. European region - Copenhagen
5. Eastern Mediterranean region - Alexandria
6. Western Pacific region - Manilla

The above is a brief history of the W.H.O. and additional information may be found in the official publications of W.H.O.

Now, to give you an idea of how this organization operates, I can demonstrate this best by showing briefly what W.H.O. is doing in Afghanistan. As soon as this organization was formed, Afghanistan joined it.

Their first program was the eradication of malaria, which had affected a majority of the population. This disease is now completely under control.

Secondly, the W.H.O. supplied the necessary personnel, materials and equipment for various projects, among which are:

1. Vaccination for smallpox;
2. Maternity hospitals in the capital and provinces, together with the establishment of a School of Maternity.
3. School of Nursing for both male and female students.
4. Doctors for the Medical Facuty which teaches at Kabul University.
5. Public Health experts to improve sanitation and water supplies.
6. Supplying health personnel in the rural areas.
7. Establishment of the first Public Health Laboratory.
8. Establishment of the Sanitarian School, where boys are trained for Public Health supervision.
9. Preventative Medicine Department.
10. Health Education Departmen.

The above-mentioned programs were the beginning of W.H.O.'s work in Afghanistan. However, every year, more native personnel like myself are being trained and sent out to different countries, for further training in their respective fields.

The W.H.O. has contributed more towards world peace, without any racial or national discrimination. For example, in the Congo, even during the recent crisis, they sent many teams of personnel to take care of the Congolese, which is a very expensive venture. The W.H.O. proves to the people that they are working to improve and save lives and not to destroy them. They have shown by their action that they are willing to help in any health problem in any part of the world. They thereby bring the peoples of the world closer together, strengthening the bond of friendship and brotherhood, which is innate in all peoples of the globe.

Levels of Administrative Centralization in Economic Development

By M. JAMIL HANIFI
Michigan State University

One way by which one may approach the problem of levels of centralization in the administraton of economic development plans is, perhaps, by means of setting up an ideal typical bi-polar model. In this model, two extreme ways by which the economic policy of a country can be executed are described.

On one extreme stands the practice of "perfect" liberalism, on the other, full-fledged authoritarian planning. Now, a "perfect" liberalistic system may be regarded as an ideal type, since it never really existed anywhere in the world. It is a pure construct of thought, a purely theoretical system, which seems to contain the following features: in the sphere of social action, there exists a balance and a separation of powers analogous to that which was developed by Montesquieu and his successors for the fields of political action. In the system of Montesquieu, there is a balance between the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary powers of government. To this has been added a system of mutual checks of these branches of government which is designed to insure that none obtain total power and that freedom of political action be preserved.

At the other extreme from liberalism is a system of full-fledge planning. Again, I do not think that a perfectly planned system actually exists anywhere in its pure form. But in theory it may be described as a system in which, instead of having several social groups, each with its own personnel, checking and balancing one another, there is a totalitarian dictator who makes all decisions himself. Since he is all-powerful and presumably, in the system omniscient, he will in the ideal case make all the "right" decisions. The question which then has to be asked is: what are the ultimate objectives or purposes for which a dictator wishes to make these decisions?

One of the chief problems of the subject under survey here i.e., the problem of levels of centralization and decentralization in developmental planning, is the question of the relationship between central planning decisions and decisions made in implementation of the plan. The former are decisions made by a central planning agency establishing certain targets which are to be met at a specified time. The latter are decisions made by the various individuals who manage the different operating agencies (factories, farms, etc.) through which a plan is carried into reality.

No matter how centralized or well-planned an economy, there inevitably develops mistakes and errors and, what is more important, unforeseeable contingencies. No planning commission anywhere in the world has as yet succeeded in accurately predicting the output of any particular agricultural commodity in a given year. Thus, a plan which provides, for example, for a certain amount of cotton to be produced in a given year, and which on the basis of this estimate allocates men and materials, machines and capital to the further processing of cotton, must also provide for a margin of error in the output estimates. In practice, his may be done--and actually is done--by allowing a set of alternatives to the plants which spin and weave and otherwise fabricate the raw cotton into finished pieces of textile, or finished garments, or other products. But since all eventualities cannot be foreseen, it is imperative to give a certain amount of leeway to the managers of each plant.

This means, however, that the executive of a plan in many of its aspects may affect the further operation of the plan itself. Since it is impossible to foresee all contingencies, a plan, if it is to work smoothly, must provide for certain sectors in which a relatively high degree of discretion is given to the individuals to make adjustments in the execution of the plan, or, in other words, to do some planning themselves. This planning by specialized persons and agencies will, in some way or another, affect the overall plan. One of the most important problems regarding the level of centralization or decentralization in planning for economic development is the question of what rules exist for making these adjustments in given sectors of the plan. These rules can come relatively close to those characteristics in a "liberal" system or in a non-liberal system. In other words, the provisions which are included in the plan and which prescribe what is to be done by a manager of a firm or industry, a plantation or group of villages, may be rules which are fairly rigid or which give a considerable amount of leeway to this particular individual. I think that this is what we should bear in mind when we talk about the degree of centralization or decentralization in economic planning.

The result of this discussion is that in a planned economy, one crucial test as to whether the system is centralizaed or decentralized lies primarily in the manner in which a particular agency is supposed to act in order to meet the targets imposed upon it. If planning is decentralized, in the sense discussed earlier, each executing agency, i.e., each factory, farm, or other operating unit, will have an incentive to use the most efficient methods of production in order to meet its objective. This follows from the simple application of economic theory. Althought the traditional economic theory of the firm is based on the assumption that the objective of each unit, i.e., each firm, is the maximization of private profit, the same economic principles, developed by traditional economic theory, are applicable, if the objective is different: for example, if instead of maximizing profit, it is desired to reach a given size of output, or to meet a given production. Hence, it seems that a decentralized pattern of planning is advisable on sheer grounds of economy and efficiency.

It may also be frutiful to cast a glance at yet another problem, the relationship between centralization in planning and the difference between planning in breadth and planning in depth. It may be explained as follows: by horizontal planning, or planning in breadth (the pattern of economic planning in Afghanistan), is meant an economic policy in which regulatory activity is exercised on a broad basis, embracing a mass of specific rules for many minute transactions and forms of economic behaviour. A good example of horizontal planning is an economic plan in which detailed provisions are made for the outputs of various industries and plants, in which an extensive system of priorities and allocations of materials is instituted, and in which prices and conditions of exchange are minutely prescribed. In contrast, vertical planning, or planning in depth, is an economic policy in which regulatory activity is concentrated in a limited, often rather small number of spots which have crucial significance for a wide range of economic action.

In the present period, economic planning of some form is practiced in all countries, the United States and other economically advanced countries included. But in general, it can be observed that planning in depth is more characteristic of advanced countries, and planning in breadth of the economically less developed countries. In part this is due to differences in

(Continued on Page 12)

Foreign Trade and Foreign Policy in Afghanistan

By ALOYS A. MICHEL

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article which first appeared in "Middle Eastern Affairs" is reprinted here with the courtesy of MEA. Our appreciation is sincerely expressed to Mr. B. Shwadran, editor of the magazine. The author of the article, Dr. A. Michel is an Assistant Professor of Geography at Yale University. He has made an extensive study of regional resources in Afghanistan. His work was published in 1961 under the title of The Kabol, Kunduz and Helmand Valleys and The National Economy of Afghanistan; a study of regional resources and the comparative advantages of development.

Few neutralist or "non-aligned" nations have as difficult a path to tread these days as does Afghanistan. On the north, the landlocked Central Asian kingdom shares a 1500-mile indefensible border with the Soviet Union. To the west, deserts, distance, and water disputes separate it from the economic core of Iran, a member of the Central Treaty Organization. On the south, southeast and east lies Pakistan, another member of the Western alliance. Through West Pakistan to Karachi run Afghanistan's most direct and economical connections with the outside world, but these communications are threatened by a virulent boundary dispute over "Pushtunistan."

This dispute concerns the five million Pushtuns (or Pakhtuns, or Pathans) of the old Northwest Fronteir Province and tribal areas who are blood relations of the Afghans, speak the same language, and occupy territories taken from Afghanistan by the British and their Sikh allies in the 19th century. At the time of India's partitioning, Afghanistan contended that the Pushtun areas should be allowed to elect for independence, which would presumably entail close ties with Kabul, rather than be offered only a choice of union with either India or Pakistan. Pakistan won in the referendum, but over half of the eligible inhabitants of the northwestern areas failed to vote, either through disinterest or in response to the boycott advocated by adherents of Pushtun independence.

For apparent insolubility, the Pushtunistan dispute must rank alongside those in Algeria, Palestine and Kashmir. Like these disputes, Pushtunistan poses awkward problems in both Washington and Moscow, though probably more serious ones in the former. The United States, which has sent millions of dollars worth of military equipment to Pakistan, earnestly desires the friendship of both Afghanistan and India. Hence Washington has never taken an official stand on either Pushtunistan or Kashmir. On his visits to Kabul, Karachi and Delhi in December 1959, President Eisenhower carefully avoided any statement which might be interpreted as endorsing one side or another. He did, however, urge General Ayub Khan of Pakistan to seek rapprochement with Afghan Prime Minister Mohammed Daud on the one hand, and Indian Prime Minister Nehru on the other. Although Ayub Khan has since met with both of these leaders, the talks have brought no apparent progress on the subjects of Pushtunistan or Kashmir.

The Russian position is less inhibited than the American. On both of his state visits to Afghanistan, in December 1955, and in March 1960, Premier Khrushchev came out in favor of Pushtun independence, just as he endorsed the Indian position in Kashmir during his visits to Delhi. It is clear that Soviet advocacy of both causes is designed to embarrass Pakistan.[1]

[1] In an address in Kabus on March 4, 1960, Premier Khrushchev also took the Afghan side of the dispute with Iran over the waters of the Helmand River. *The New York Times*, March 4, 1960.

The ill-will generated between Afghanistan and Pakistan over Pushtunistan certainly redounds to Moscow's benefit. When Pakistan retaliated against Afghan agitation in 1950 by in effect closing the border, land-locked Afghanistan was forced to turn to the Soviet Union for both goods and transit privileges. An Afghan-Soviet trade agreement was concluded in July 1950, and transit facilities across the U.S.S.R. were made available to Afghanistan on a de facto basis. The latter were formalized by a pact signed on June 28, 1955 providing mutual customs immunity for goods in transit, an agreement which benefits Afghanistan far more than the Soviet Union, which has no significant land trade with either Pakistan or India. The Soviet Union gains something in freight and handling charges on shipments between Afghanistan and Europe: Czechoslovakia, Poland, and West Germany. But the major advantage to the Soviet Union is, of course, political: Afghanistan is obliged to maintain cordial relations with Moscow in order to keep open alternate routes to those leading to Karachi.

* * *

There has also been a rapid development of Soviet bloc military, economic and technical assistance to Afghanistan in the last decade, matched, in part, by Western aid along non-military lines. The major features of this "race" between East and West to aid a country whose principal resource is position will be mentioned in the course of the following discussion.[2] But the main purpose of this article is to analyze some of the newly available data on Afghan foreign trade to determine what light it sheds on Afghanistan's ability to maintain her traditional position of economic and political independence.

The last decade has seen a considerable increase in the Soviet Union's share of Afghanistan's foreign trade, from 17 per cent in 1951-52 to 32 per cent in 1956-57; it then fell off somewhat, to 27 per cent in 1957-58.

It should be noted that the increase in the Soviet Union's share of Afghan exports is by no means as clear as that in Afghan imports, but since categories more than doubled in value over the period (even allowing for the accompanying inflation), it is apparent that the Soviet Union has made sizeable absolute as well as relative gains on both sides of the Afghan foreign trade ledger.

In order to counteract Afghanistan's new orientation, the United States brought its influence to bear in the improvement of Afghan-Pakistan relations. By June of 1958, after promising funds for improvement of Karachi port facilities, Pakistan railways, border transfer points, and Afghanistan's highways, the Americans managed to bring the parties around to the point where they, too, signed a transit agreement.

The improved relations which made the Afghan-Pakistan transit accord possible may be reflected in the rise of Pakistan's share of Afghan foreign purchases, from about 14 per cent in 1956-57 to almost 21 per cent in 1957-58. But it would be erroneous to draw any close correlation between this gain by Pakistan and the 5 per cent Soviet loss indicated in Table I. The product mix in the two exchanges is quite different, especially on the import side. Indeed, considering just imports, we find that it is impossible to correlate the fluctuations in the position of the U.S.S.R. as a supplier of

[2] For detailed accounts of these programs, see R. K. Ramazani, "Afghanistan and the USSR," *Middle East Journal*, XII, 144-152, Spring, 1958; Louis Dupree, "Afghanistan's Big Gamble," Parts I-III, in *American Universities Field Staff Reports*, LD-3-'60 (Apr., 1960), LD-4-'60 (May, 1960) and LD-5-'60 (May, 1960).

Foreign Trade and Foreign Policy

Table I — SOVIET SHARE OF AFGHAN FOREIGN TRADE BY VALUE

(in per cent)[a]

Year	Imports	Exports	Total Trade
1951-52	15.5	18.2	17.0
1952-53	13.9	31.9	24.3
1953-54	26.1	12.6	19.7
1954-55	25.2	18.8	21.5
1955-56	29.2	13.8	21.2
1956-57	35.9	27.6	31.9
1957-58	30.9	23.0	26.9

[a] The Afghan year runs from one vernal equinox to the next. Figures for 1951-52 through 1956-57 were calculated from data released to the author by the Ministry of Planning in Kabul in Dec., 1957. Those for 1957-58 were calculated from Ministry of Commerce, Royal Government of Afghanistan, *Foreign Trade Statistics* (Kabul, Government Printing House, July, 1959).

Afghanistan's needs with those of any other individual trading partner.

If we analyze this import trade in commodity terms, however, a clearer picture of its nature emerges. The leading item in Soviet exports to Afghanistan over this entire period was cotton piece goods, which comprised as much as 63 per cent by value of Soviet shipments to Afghanistan in 1954-55 but fell to 32 per cent in 1957-58. Another major commodity was sugar, accounting for only 10 per cent of Soviet shipments in 1951-52 but rising to 31 per cent in 1956-57 and 27 per cent in 1957-58. Cotton piece goods and sugar are basic items in the Afghan economy and are also imported in large quantities from India and Japan. Although these consumer items cannot be considered absolute essentials, the government of Afghanistan has devoted considerable attention to assuring that increasing amounts of each are provided from the domestic "guided" sector of the economy.

Table II — SHARES OF TRADING PARTNERS IN THE IMPORT TRADE OF AFGHANISTAN BY VALUE

(in per cent)[a]

Year	U.S.S.R.	Pakistan	India	Japan	U.S.A.	West Germany
1951-52	15.5	16.2	39.6	9.1	8.9	1.7
1952-53	13.9	9.4	35.5	14.0	12.8	1.8
1953-54	26.1	4.7	25.1	23.3	8.4	4.5
1954-55	25.2	16.5	24.9	14.7	12.2	1.9
1955-56	29.2	16.7	25.5	17.9	2.9	2.0
1956-57	35.9	14.3	31.6	6.2	3.4	3.3
1957-58	30.9	20.7	10.9	18.0	7.7	3.5

[a] Sources the same as those for Table I.

In a somewhat different category are gasoline, diesel fuel, and kerosene, products which Afghanistan is as yet unable to produce for herself and which must be imported to keep the economy running. Except in 1952-53, these petroleum products, grouped together, vied with sugar for second place among Soviet exports to Afghanistan. They started at 18 per cent by value in 1951-52 and 1952-53, and fell off only relatively as other commodities and the total value of Soviet exports to Afghanistan rose.

More indicative of Afghanistan's narrow range of choice of petroleum suppliers is the following tabulation:

Table III — SHARES OF TRADERS IN THE PETROLEUM IMPORTS OF AFGHANISTAN BY VALUE

(in per cent)[a]

Year	U.S.S.R.	Pakistan	Iran	U.S.A.	Others
1951-52	47.2	29.5	19.7	0.0	3.6
1952-53	38.6	42.9	17.5	0.5	0.5
1953-54	39.9	2.4	3.8	43.5	14.2
1954-55	23.5	43.3	1.2	20.6	12.6
1955-56	48.2	51.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
1956-57	50.2	49.6	0.0	0.0	0.2
1957-58	44.4	49.7	0.6	3.1	2.5

[a] Sources same as those for Table I. Lubricants, mineral jellies and petroleum asphalt (from U.S.S.R.) are excluded.

Table III shows how dependent Afghanistan has become on two suppliers, the U.S.S.R. and Pakistan, for her petroleum needs. Only in kerosene, which Iran supplied in large amounts in the first two years of the period (Mossadegh interlude) and the United States in the third and fourth years, was any real competition offered to these two suppliers. And by 1957-58 kerosene, supplied mainly by the U.S.S.R., amounted to only 18 per cent of Afghanistan's petroleum products imports. Diesel fuel, also supplied principally by the Soviet Union, comprised less than 7 per cent. Gasoline made up 71 per cent of the 1957-58 petroleum products imports, and here Pakistan supplied over two-thirds of the automobile fuel, while the U.S.S.R. furnished the bulk of the aviation fuel.

The reader can judge for himself the political implications of the dependence of Afghanistan upon the good graces of her neighbors for the fuel with which to keep her car, truck and recently-expanded plane fleets in operation. (Bear in mind that the country has no railroads.) As a result of political friction between Afghanistan on the one hand and Iran and Pakistan on the other, the Soviet Union has established itself as the supplier of about one-half of the petroleum products of a country which relies on them exclusively for propulsion of its entire mechanical transportation system, for diesel-electric generators in towns and factories not served by the few hydroelectric plants, and for much urban and all rural lighting in the form of kerosene lamps.

To consolidate their position as petroleum suppliers, the Russians have constructed storage facilities at Mazar-i-Sharif, the Afghan highway center nearest to Termez on the Amu Darya, three additional depots (sometimes reported as pumping stations for a prospective pipeline) along the road from the river port of Khelif to Mazar-i-Sharif, and a large tank farm on the outskirts of Kabul. At Qizil Qala on the Amu Darya north of Kunduz, they have built a small river port complete with a floating pumping unit to unload oil from barges into the tank farm on the Afghan shore. Finally, Soviet petroleum products move from the railhead at Kushka south along a Soviet-improved road to Herat, where additional storage is provided. Thus the only region in Afghanistan which now relies on petroleum from Pakistan is that around Kandahar in the south, and it is an open question whether Pakistan will be willing to supply aviation fuel to this area when the new American-built Kandahar International Airport, competing with the airport at Karachi, comes into use. If not, or if the Pushtunistan dispute erupts once more, the Afghans may request the Russians to supply Kandahar via Kushka and Herat over yet another highway which Soviet engineers are now rebuilding as part of their aid program to Afghanistan.

As for the vehicles which use this fuel, all of Aryana Afghan Airlines planes are American-made DC-3s and DC-4s, while the United States is also supplying about half of the road vehicles and parts currently imported by Afghanistan. The U.S.S.R. and Pakistan supply most of the remaining cars, buses and trucks, either complete or in parts. The visitor to Afghanistan soon notes that almost all taxis and city buses are Russian in make, while most of the commercial trucks and intercity buses are American. The Afghans appear to prefer American or Czech trucks and truck chassis (which may be made into buses) because they stand up better than the Russian. But the military vehicle fleet is almost exclusively Soviet or Czech, while the Royal Afghan Air Force has only Russian equipment. As for the small fleet of private cars, one can find almost any make and vintage, but American cars seem most in demand.

Aside from cotton fabrics, sugar, petroleum products, and motor vehicles, the outstanding Afghan imports are silk and artificial silk piece goods, coming predominatly from Japan; and tea, which comes mostly from India, Pakistan and the U.S.S.R. Like cotton goods and sugar, silk, rayon and tea are highly important consumer goods but are not as vital

to the economy as is petroleum. Unlike cotton goods and sugar, these other consumer goods are not produced domestically in any significant quantities (tea cannot be), although a rayon plant is now under construction.

Table IV — PRINCIPAL PURCHASERS OF AFGHAN EXPORTS BY VALUE

(in per cent)[a]

Country	1955-56	1956-57	1957-58
India	40.8	29.5	29.2
U.S.S.R.	13.7	27.6	23.0
U.S.A.	27.0	21.3	16.9
United Kingdom	4.6	8.8	12.8
West Germany	6.9	3.3	5.9
Czechoslovakia	0.04	1.5	5.6
Pakistan	4.2	11.6	4.9

[a] Sources the same as those for Table I.

Turning to Afghanistan's exports, we find a healthy balance among trading partners. Afghanistan's best customer is India. But India's purchases consist almost entirely of fresh and dried fruits and vegetables, plus nuts and condiments. The same is true of Pakistan, which ranked only seventh among 1957-58 customers; it was higher in the two preceding years.

In 1956-57 the U.S.S.R. replaced the U.S. as Afghanistan's second best customer, although this was followed by a year in which the shares of both nations declined. Over half of the Soviet imports from Afghanistan in 1957-58 consisted of raw cotton, and another fifth of raw wool. The Russians are also interested in Afghan sheep and goat skins, broadtail pelts (but not karakul which they produce themselves), sesame seeds and, to a lesser degree, dried fruits and nuts. The most interesting feature of Soviet-Afghan trade is the extent to which the Russians and their East European satellites are coming to dominate the market for Afghan raw (ginned) cotton. In the last four reported years (1954-55 through 1956-57) the Russians took between 56 and 82 per cent of Afghan exported cotton. In the last two reported years, the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia together took 88.6 and 95.3 per cent of the cotton exports, as well as 79.0 and 44.5 per cent of the sheep wool exports.

The United States is the other main purchaser of Afghan sheep wool, taking 46.5 per cent in 1957-58. But the predominant commodity in Afghan-U.S. trade is karakul fur, which comprised 63.0 per cent of Afghan sales to the U.S. in 1957-58, with the U.S. taking 49.0 per cent of Afghan exported karakul. The United Kingdom and West Germany took almost all of the remainder, 46.5 per cent and 2.8 per cent respectively, with karakul comprising no less than 78.9 per cent of Afghan exports to Great Britain.

The importance of this karakul trade cannot be overestimated; although this commodity is second to fresh and dried fruits in terms of value earned, it is karakul that brings in the hard currency--dollars, pounds, and marks--which Afghanistan needs to buy manufactured goods in the West and to meet other international obligations. Furthermore, karakul fur is the one Afghan export of sufficiently high value to withstand the cost of air transportation. During the Pakistan blockade, karakul shipments were flown to Beirut, and now that Aryana Afghan Airlines has a regular service to that city it will be impossible for Pakistan to interrupt these exports, although the surface-transported goods Afghanistan acquires in return can always be halted in Karachi or at the border.

* * *

In summary, then, one can state that the pattern of Afghan foreign trade over most of the last decade indicates the adjustments made by a neutral nation to its position between a sometimes-hostile neighbor to the south and the U.S.S.R. to the north. The data presented indicate growing control by the Soviet Union in Afghan foreign trade, but a control which is by no means predominant. The critical items to watch are Afghan petroleum imports and fresh and dried fruit exports, most of which can be cut off by Pakistan if the Pushtunistan dispute again becomes acute. So long as Pakistan allows relatively unrestricted trade and transit, Afghanistan can maintain a desireable balance betwen suppliers of petroleum products and can reach her principal fruit markets in India. Afghanistan also has a strong position in her ability to fly karakul out to American and British markets--strong so long as Persian lamb remains fashionable and competition from the Union of South Africa does not reduce Afghanistan's share of the market. If necessary, Afghanistan can move imports from Europe (Czechoslovakia, Poland and West Germany are the major suppliers) across the U.S.S.R. under her transit agreement. The Soviet Union has also become a major alternate source of supply. Afghanistan can pay these suppliers with raw cotton under existing barter agreements made in connection with loans, and thus save her hard currencies for more vital purchases. She can even repay some of the Soviet credits in afghanis, although this might have undesirable inflationary effects at home and lower the purchasing power of the afghani abroad.

The net effect of Afghanistan's transit arrangements and closer trade relations with the Soviet Union has so far been quite beneficial and has undoubtedly improved Afghanistan's bargaining position, politically as well as economically. By developing an alternate source of petroleum products and manufactured goods, and alternate land air routes to Europe, Afghanistan has been able to bring pressure on the West, and so on Pakistan, to keep open the routes to Karachi and to her Indian markets. Whether she will ultimately have to "pay the piper" remains to be seen. Should Pakistan cut off fuel imports and fruit exports, Afghanistan would probably be forced into the Soviet orbit, surely a situation more dangerous to Rawalpindi than the Pushtinustan agitation. It seems likely, therefore, that Pakistan will continue to allow transit rights to her landlocked neighbor.

Thus, for the time being at least, it may be said that Afghanistan's foreign trade policy is succeeding and is directly in support of her traditional foreign policy of neutrality. That success is a considerable accomplishment for a nation with Afghanistan's limited resources and very difficult geographic position.

Afghan Student News

Published bi-monthly during the academic year by the Associated Students of Afghanistan in the United States of America.

The Afghan Student News welcomes articles and constructive criticism and other contributions from its readers.

All correspondence should be mailed to: 1111 W. Canfield, Detroit 1, Michigan.

Annual Subscription: $1.00

EDITOR

Zabioullah Eltezam

ASSISTANT EDITOR
S. Rehoie

REPORTERS
Campus Leaders

Executive Committee News Notes

The members of the Executive Committee of ASA is very happy to announce that the Kabul University has granted ASA $1,000 for the first this year. This manifests the combined approval of ASA aims and activities by the staff and students of Kabul University. Through the helpful recommendations and assistence of the Afghan Educational Office in Washington, D.C., much recent recognition has been given to ASA from Afghanistan. The Executive committee will continue to expand its activities in Kabul and expresses its gratitude to Kabul University and the Educational Office.

* * *

The Kabul Press Department has recently started the publication of a daily newspaper in the English language: THE KABUL TIMES. ASA welcomes such a publication in Kabul and wishes for the success of the venture. ASA members and interested concerns can subscribe to the Kabul Times for $15 annually. Subscription inquiries should be addressed to the ASN Editor.

* * *

This year ASA has attempted to gain recognition by the National Unions of Students of the Netherlands. The Supervision Committee of the National Unions is considering an invitation to ASA to participate in the 10th International Student Conference which will take place in the later part of June, 1962. At the present time some seventy-five national student organizations hold membership with he Union. ASA's participation will mark the first phase of Afghan student activitiy in the International Conference.

* * *

Mrs. Robertson, Dr. R. Burns and Mr. G. Arnold of the University of Wyoming have joined ASA as honorary members. Each have contributed $10 to ASA. We welcome all of them.

* * *

The University of Kabul has granted a one year scholarship to Mr. Theodore S. Gochenour of Georgetown University. Mr. Gochenour is a graduate student and plans to study Pushto in Kabul. This is the first time that the Kabul University has granted a scholarship to an American student and ASA hopes that such programs will continue to expand in the future. Mr. Gochenour will be in Kabul with his wife and one child. The scholarship carries a stipend of three thousand Afghanis per month starting April, 1962.

* * *

The following Afghan students have joined ASA as Active members and have paid their membership fees of $10. Mr. Abdul Qader, Mr. Said G. Hazrat, and Mr. Khudaydad Azizi. The Executive Committee welcomes these students to ASA.

* * *

Two Afghan educators, Mr. A. G. Ahmadi and Mr. G. M. Shewa who are visiting the University of India at the present time, are writing an English textbook on the Geography of Afghanistan. The above authors have already written a significant number of publications both in Persian and Pashtu languages.

* * *

On March 6, 1962, The Royal Afghan Embassy in Washington, D.C. celebrated the religious Islamic Holiday of "Eid." Some forty Afghan students, Embassy staff and American guests were greeted by Mr. H. E. Maiwandwal and Madame Maiwandwal at the gathering which marked the end of the month of Ramadan, a religious month of fasting for Moslems.

* * *

On the occasion of "Eid", ASA has received congratulatory telegrams from the Afghan Minister of Education, Dr. Popal; the President of Kabul University, Dr. Anwari; and from Mr. Etemadi, the Afghan Educational Attache in Washington, D.C. ASA has replied to these messages and Eid cards have been sent to Afghan students in the U.S.

* * *

The following students have arrived in the United States. Their work is in the field of education and they are sponsored by the Agency for International Development. M. Y. Iskanderzadeh, S. A. Wadood, G. Nabi, A. Aziz Sultani, M. I. Intezar, G. M. Sidiqi. Likewise, the following students have departed for Afghanistan: Ghulam N. Wasek, A. A. Quraishi, A. Salem, Abdul Kadem.

The Executive Committee of ASA particularly wishes to express its best wishes to Mr. Quraishi and to Mr. Salem who have been outstanding members of ASA.

Levels of Administrative Centralization in Economic Development

(Concluded from Page 8)

the skills, literacy, and educational standards of the populations of different countries, but in part is it also related to the social and political institutions of these countries. Planning in depth relies upon providing a framework in which freedom of action is guaranteed; whereas planning in breadth, by minutely prescribing forms and objectives of economic action, tends to develop in countries in which political and other freedoms are curtailed. Now, although decentralized planning and planning in depth are not identical, there are various similarities between these concepts, just as there are analogies between centralized planning and planning in breadth. This implies that a system of planning in depth, as well as a system of decentralized planning, is more adapted to a country in which democratic political values are appreciated. If the problem is seen in this light, it seems that the path Afghan planning must take is clear. In Afghanistan, agriculture is of relatively great importance, and will be for some time to come. Afghanistan is one of the many countries in Asia in which a traditional, strong oligarchical government is and will be accepted for quite some time. Although the needs for industrialization are great, an understanding of the nature of the Afghan polity would dictate that centralized economic planning, coupled with the elaboration and maintenance of an adequate level of sophistication of planning techniques, based of the fundamental acceptance of planning in breadth, are the most appropriate policies for the Afghan economy and the surest means of warranting the country's prosperous future.

AFGHAN STUDENT NEWS
1111 Canfield
Detroit 1, Michigan