CHAPTER VI

THE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP

The return of the Afghan delegation from Mussoorie to Kabul was followed by a temporary eclipse of Mahmud Tarzi's influence and the predominance of General Nadir Khan in the Afghan Council. Tarzi was accused of having been won over by the British just as Sardar Ali Ahmad had been at the Rawalpindi Conference. This, however, was not the case. It will be recalled that Mahmud Tarzi neither signed any agreement with nor gave any concession to the British. Nadir Khan wanted to weaken Tarzi's position as the latter was his major opponent among the nobility of Amir Amanullah's court. Tarzi, being Amir Amanullah's father-in-law and supported by a major faction in the court, was saved from disgrace.¹

The Treaty of Sevres was signed on 10 August 1920, together with the Tripartite agreement between Great Britain, France and Italy, regarding Anatolia. The struggle between the Greeks and Turks continued with fluctuating fortunes until 16 September 1921, when the Greek withdrawal began and eventually resulted in the evacuation of Anatolia.²

¹ Dobbs Report on the Kabul Mission, Memorandum, A 194, L/P&S/18, IOLR.
Relations between the Turkish and Soviet Governments were cemented by the signature of the Treaty at Moscow in 1921. The precise nature of the relations between the leaders of the party of Union and Progress comprising Enver, Talat, Jemal, Khalil, and Nuri Pashas, and the Soviet Government were then not known clearly. In January 1921, Talat was in Switzerland and in touch with Berlin; Khalil was at Tashkent; Jemal Pasha at Kabul; and Enver Pasha at Moscow -- all cooperating with the Bolsheviks in a campaign of anti-British propaganda. It appears from Enver Pasha's subsequent activities and death in Turkistan that the Turkish leaders were in effect pursuing some Pan-Turanian designs of their own, and only waiting for a favourable turn of events to discard Bolshevik friendship. Insofar as the Pan-Islamic movement, promoted by the Committee of Union and Progress leaders, threatened British interest in Asia, it suited the policy of the Soviet Government to support and finance it. The Bolsheviks did not altogether trust either Enver or Jamal, and suspected them of Pan-Turanian designs which threatened Russian predominance in the Central Asian States and Trans-Caucasia. Angoran nationalist leaders and the Soviet Government were thus co-operating in an un-easy association based on their common hostility to Britain and the willingness of the Bolsheviks to finance and promote any intrigue which would damage British interests.3

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3 Ibid.
The Soviet Government continuously engaged in intrigue and propaganda against the British Empire. Lenin, Trotsky and Chicherin openly denounced Great Britain as their chief enemy, and the main obstacle to the spread of their doctrine. 4

In Trans-Caucasia and Turkistan, the Bolsheviks consolidated their hold and the Muslim revolts in these regions were crushed. In August 1920, the Amir of Bukhara was overthrown and fled along with his followers to Afghanistan where the story of their sufferings had a profound impression. It was at this juncture and apparently in a revulsion of feeling caused by the Bukhara debacle that the Amir invited a British mission to Kabul. 5

The Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement, concluded in March 1921, was published with a British note addressed to the Bolshevik Government, setting forth the evidence available regarding their anti-British activities. The British note referred to the alleged activities of the Russian Government and its representatives and agents in Eastern countries directed against British interests. To substantiate the charges, the note referred to the Congress of the Third International where Soviet leaders spoke against Britain. 6

4 Ibid.


6 British Foreign Office note to Soviet Foreign Office, 27 September 1921, L/P&S/10/956, pt. 2, IOLR.
Chicherin, in his reply, undertook to avoid all action or propaganda hostile to Great Britain in the sense provided against by the agreement. The formal reply from the Soviet Commissarate for Foreign Affairs rejected the charges. It categorically stated: "It is quite obvious that all the reports, speeches and utterances quoted in the British Note have been invented, forged and falsified for some purpose."

The internal situation of the Indian Empire also had an impact on external events. During the later half of 1920, the alliance between the Ali brothers and Gandhiji maintained its strength and the non-cooperation movement gathered momentum. During the first half of 1921 sporadic disorders and rioting occurred throughout India, while the speeches of the Indian nationalists became extravagantly inflammatory in tone. Maulana Mohammad Ali, for instance, in a speech at Madras declared that if the Amir of Afghanistan invaded India to free her from the infidel, it would be the duty of Muslims to assist him.

Tribal unrest too continued. In October 1920 raids by Zakka Khel increased, and two British soldiers were carried away; they were returned at the end of November. In the same month a serious outrage was committed by Mirzali, a well known raider. Lt. Col. Foulkes, A.D.M.S. of Kohat was killed, and his wife fatally wounded.

7 Maxim Litvinge to Lord Curzon, 27 September 1921, L/P&S/10/956, pt. 2, IOLR.
8 Maconachie, n. 2, p. 48.
In September the Afridees were invited to attend a jirga at Jalalabad by the Afghan Governor, Hashim Khan, who had succeeded his brother Nadir Khan in August 1920. Shah Mahmud, during his governorship of Khost, succeeded in causing many attacks on the British lines of communication. All these activities were carried out by Haji Abdul Razaq of Kabul. The Wana Wazirs had been responsible for most of the raiding carried out in Zhob. In September 1920, the Waziris with the approval of Haji Abdul Razaq surrounded Drazinda post, and in October attacked Kaur Bridge Camp causing ninety casualties.9

Two events, which occurred during the interval between the close of the Mussoorie Conference and the departure of the British Mission to Kabul, largely determined the Amir’s policy to enter into free and direct diplomatic relations with other countries. General Mohammad Wali Khan, during his visit to Tashkent, conducted preliminary negotiations for a Russo-Afghan Agreement. He was nominally appointed as envoy to Bukhara and he had returned to Tashkent in June 1920. On 25 July 1920, he again left for Moscow where he eventually concluded the treaties with Moscow and Angora. The other Afghan Mission, led by Abdul Karim Khan and accompanied by Raja Mahendra Pratap, left for China. This mission conveyed letters from the Amir, who intended to negotiate a Treaty

9 Ibid.
of Friendship with the President of the Chinese Republic. 10

The Government of India received information in September that the excitement caused in Kabul by the revolution in Bukhara might shortly lead the Amir to press for the conclusion of a formal agreement with the British Government. It was anticipated that such overtures might be directed to secure either a defensive alliance, or a free supply of arms and ammunition. The Government of India was inclined to concede the latter as they considered the first alternative to be impracticable. 11 The Viceroy in his letter of 24 September 1920 to Montague wrote that the Government of India would insist "of course, on immediate signature of friendship treaty on lines already laid down, on sincere co-operation on Indian frontier between Afghans and ourselves, and so long as Bolshevik menace to Afghanistan may subsist, on continuous friendly interchange of views on joint policy". 12

The Secretary of State expressed a preference for a gift of money to one of arms, and concluded: "We must take care to prevent Afghans from manoeuvring into a position of keeping in with both sides, and, while evading corresponding

10 Dobbs Report on the Kabul Mission, Memorandum, A 194, L/P&S/18, IOLR.

11 Foreign Department, F. No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), Notes, p. 29, NAI.

12 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 24 September 1920, Foreign Department, F.No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), NAI.
obligations, deriving material assistance from both."

The British expectation that the Amir would immediately appeal for help on account of the collapse of Bukhara was belied. It may have been that the Bolsheviks had promised enormous amounts of money and munition or that the Afghan pride forbade an absolute confession of political miscalculation and also a reversal of policy. It might be that even distrust of the Bolsheviks, engendered by their successful conspiracy against Bukhara, had been counter-balanced by the terror of their success and by thoughts that the same fate might be in store for Afghanistan. The situation in Bukhara drove the Afghans to take immediate steps towards the renewal of negotiations for friendship with the British.

The Amir did not agree with some of the items contained in the aide mémoire given to the Afghan delegates after the Mussoorie Conference. He explained his objectives in the following words:

Notwithstanding that some of the items contained in the written statement and memoranda have been found in our Supreme Council not to be free from possibility of complaint and objection, I can assure your Excellency that this objection and complaint does not conflict with the basis of the question on which we wish to found the

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13 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 4 October 1920, Foreign Department, F.No. s-F/1923 (Secret), NAI.

14 Amir to Viceroy, 6 October 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS, EUR, E 264/55(0), IOLR.
conclusion of a treaty of friendship, but refers to certain things which are considered to be trivial. 14

The Amir requested the Viceroy to send to Kabul a delegation invested with full powers to negotiate and conclude a Treaty of Friendship. He added: "Afghanistan considers itself ready and prepared for the conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship and in the same way as your Excellency has said that there will be no objection on the part of your Excellency's Government to negotiate a treaty, my Royal Government also have no objection with regard to it." 15 He expressed his desire that the British delegation should not exceed more than twenty persons. At the same time, Mahmud Tarzi wrote a letter to Foreign Secretary to the Government of India to the effect that the Amir would prefer that an Englishman, rather than an India, be vested with full powers to sign the proposed Treaty. 16 The Amir's decision to invite a British delegation to Kabul had been helped by a combination of events favourable to the British both inside and outside India and by internal troubles in Afghanistan. In India the hijrat movement, which at the end of July 1920 had swollen to enormous proportions, had collapsed about the middle of August. The non-cooperation movement had reached its peak of popular support but the British

14 Amir to Viceroy, 6 October 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS, EUR. E 264/55 (0), IOLR.
15 Ibid.
16 Mahmud Tarzi to Dobbs, 7 October 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS, EUR. E 264/55 (0), IOLR.
authorities were able to suppress it. In the Masud country, the tribesmen seemed on the point of accepting British occupation, and had even submitted a petition setting forth conditions on which they suggested that the administration of their country should be carried out. In Afghanistan there was serious disaffection among the Afghan troops in distant stations. In Afghan Turkistan, at Mazar-i-Sharif, there had been a mutiny in August 1920, caused partly by an attempt to pay the troops in kind instead of in cash. In September, the troops in Farah and Chakhansur on the Western Afghan border had also been mutinous on account of the reduction of their pay. On the eastern side of Afghanistan, the Khostwals and Mangals had been giving trouble throughout September, owing to attempts to raise their revenue and to construct a telephone line through their country. These events undoubtedly influenced the Afghan Government towards the decision to ask for the despatch of a British Mission to Kabul. 17

The Viceroy in a private letter to the Secretary of State informed the latter of the Amir's invitation and stated: "You will be glad to hear that the Amir has written me a letter in which he expresses the hope that a Treaty of Friendship will soon be made." 18 He, however, expressed the view that until Afghanistan proved her friendliness, it was impossible to conclude a Treaty of Friendship. 19 In his telegraphic message

17 Chelmsford to Montague, 7 October 1920, Montague Papers, Roll No. 1833, NAI.
18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
of 15 October 1920 to the Secretary of State he weighed the pros and cons of the acceptance of the Amir's proposal. He favoured a bilateral discussion of the problems as also the conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship with the Amir. He gave the additional consideration in favour of sending a British delegation to Kabul:

Owing to ineradicable tendency of delegates to intrigue with Indian Extremist party, presence of Afghan delegation at Mussoorie was found very troublesome. It was possible, owing to geographical position of Mussoorie, to isolate delegates to some extent, but it would be difficult to do so if renewed discussions took place in cold weather in plains. In present circumstances, therefore, we should strongly depurate arrival of another Afghan delegation in India and despatch of British Mission to Kabul is only alternative. 20

The Government of India proposed the following conditions as precedent to the despatch of the British Mission to Kabul:

1. That the British Mission be authorised from the outset to use the title of 'His Majesty' in addressing the Amir.
2. That as the Mission would be sent only on the understanding that the stipulations made in the Mussoorie aide memoire were accepted by the Amir, the latter should be informed accordingly.
3. That no suspension of operations against the Wana Wazirs

20 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 15 October 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E/264/55 (0), IOLR.
could be entertained, and that the fact should be made clear to the Amir.

(4) The British wireless installations and operators should be taken to Kabul, and employed by the mission during the negotiation.  

There were some significant shifts in the position of the Government of India. It was suggested that the contest for influence in Afghanistan between the Bolsheviks and the British was inconvenient and might eventually prove to be embarrassing. The British were in a position either to keep absolutely aloof from Afghanistan, or to participate with the Bolsheviks in financing the Afghan Government. Even if the Bolshevik agreement provided for the payment of an annual subsidy to the Amir, this should not be held to preclude the simultaneous grant of financial assistance to him by the British Government. The Viceroy declared: "The exclusive domination of Afghanistan, which we should doubtless much prefer, has been rendered impossible by development of events, unless we go to war."  

The Government of India felt that it was necessary to obtain accurate information as to the contents of the Russo-Afghan Agreement, before proceeding to negotiate a Treaty of Friendship with Amir. The Viceroy stressed that

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21 Ibid.

22 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 21 October 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E 264/55 (0), IOLR.
it should be ascertained whether the Amir had signed an agreement with the Bolsheviks and that if so, did it include provisions inconsistent with British interests. It was accordingly proposed to the home government to add another condition to those mentioned above, requiring the Amir to disclose the terms of the Russo-Afghan Agreement. The Secretary of State concurred with the Viceroy that a clear statement must be obtained from the Amir as to his position regarding his agreement with the Bolsheviks. No subsidy should be given in case it was revealed that the Amir was getting it from the Bolsheviks. It was not necessary to prevent Afghanistan from having relations of a friendly character with Soviet Russia. The Secretary of State added:

But the pretence of accepting plea of Bolshevik assistance in developing Afghanistan will not serve any purpose, when the fact that Bolshevik policy is inspired solely by the desire to damage us is a matter of common knowledge. Therefore, if it should turn out to be true that an agreement on the lines indicated by evidence now at our disposal, has actually been concluded between Afghans and Bolsheviks, and that the former are not prepared to repudiate it, it would be impossible for us to contemplate Treaty of Friendship with the Amir.

The Government of India, therefore, decided that a Treaty of Friendship was impossible if the Russo-Afghan

23 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 12 October 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E 264/55 (0), IOLR.

24 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 29 October 1920, Foreign Department, F. No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), NAI.
Agreement contained a provision for the establishment of Soviet Consulates at Kandahar and Ghazni. The Viceroy accordingly wrote to the Amir:

We have reason to believe that amongst other clauses the Bolshevists have stipulated for instance for the location of their consulates at Ghazni and Kandahar in return for a subsidy. My friend, I find it difficult to believe that these Bolshevist claims can be found on fact, it would render the conclusion of a friendship treaty between Great Britain and Afghanistan impossible. 25

The Viceroy further pointed out that it was decided at the Mussoorie Conference that if any agreement designed by the Bolsheviks directly or indirectly against Great Britain were made between Afghanistan and the Bolsheviks, this would be considered by the British Government as an unfriendly act. The letter concluded with an intimation that if the Wana Wazirs did not accept the terms offered them, punitive measures would be taken against them. 26

The Amir in his reply pointed out that as the head of an independent State he had the right to enter into relations with other countries. Soviet Russia was Afghanistan's neighbour, and he wanted to have neighbourly and friendly relations with her. Moreover, he wanted to settle the old boundary dispute with her. The Amir accused the British of conspiring and

25 Viceroy to Amir, 7 November 1920, Foreign Department, F.No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), NAI.
26 Viceroy to Amir, 7 November 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E 264/55 (O), IOLR.
designing to keep his country isolated from others and added:

Today the said Government has reached such a stage that it has entered into commercial and even political relations and discussions with Your Excellency's Government, and Afghanistan considers it vitally important to settle and rectify the violations of territory which had taken place on its borders during the time of the Tsarist Government. 27

He assured the Viceroy that the agreement between Russia and Afghanistan would not in any way harm British interests.

Regarding the establishment of Soviet consulates at Ghazni and Kandahar, he assured the Viceroy that the issue had not been decided and would never be used for political purposes. The Amir further proposed that action against the Wazirs should be deferred and requested that no punishment should be meted out to them. 28

Having received the Amir's reply, the Viceroy expressed his views to the Secretary of State. The Amir had "failed to comply with our stipulation that the terms of his agreement with the Bolsheviks should be furnished to us". But on the -

contemplated establishment at Ghazni and Kandahar of Bolshevik consulates, his assurance that final decision has not yet been reached, seems to us to be genuine, and to indicate that he is open to enter into discussion and negotiations on that

27 Amir to Viceroy, 16 November 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E264/55 (0), IOLR.

point... As to Wazirs expedition, it would of course have been impossible to accept suggestion of Amir, but difficulty seems now to have been removed by Wazir's submission. 29

Persistence in the demand for disclosure of the Russo-Afghan Treaty would have dangerous consequences. It was feared that the Amir might refuse the disclosure of the treaty. The Viceroy recommended that His Majesty's Government agree to send a mission to Kabul. 30

The Secretary of State in his private and personal telegram to Lord Chelmsford stated that the matter pertaining to Afghanistan was of vital importance and he could not take an independent decision to send a mission to Kabul. The matter would be decided by the Cabinet. He further remarked: "Your mission will arrive in Kabul to find Turkish and Bolshevik missions and that the Amir will have an opportunity for typical Afghan tactics in playing one against the other." 31

The Secretary of State invited the Cabinet to express their considered opinion as to the expediency of sending a mission to Afghanistan. He reviewed and furnished brief information regarding Anglo-Afghan relations since the Rawalpindi Peace Conference. The Cabinet did not take any

29 Foreign Department, F.No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), Pro. 679, NAI.
30 Ibid.
31 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 2 December 1920, L/F&S/10/1061, IOLR.
decision as its members felt that they could not overrule the considered opinion of the man on the spot. After this Cabinet decision, the matter had to be settled between the India Office in London and the Government of India. An India Office minute, dated 23 November 1920, concurred with the Viceroy's suggestion that the presence of Bolshevik Consulates in Ghazni and Kandahar would render the conclusion of treaty of friendship with Afghanistan impossible. The British had suggested at the Mussoorie Conference that the British and the Bolsheviks should establish their consulates on their own sides - Jalalabad and Kandahar for the British and Herat and Mazar Sharif for the Bolsheviks. It was also decided that the Amir should communicate the terms of the Russo-Afghan Treaty.

The Secretary of State accordingly informed the Viceroy that no treaty of friendship could be signed with Afghanistan in case there were anti-British provisions, such as the establishment of consulates in Eastern Afghanistan, in the Russo-Afghan Treaty. He feared that the dispatch of a mission to Kabul would be a matter of humiliation for the British. He feared that the Turks and the Bolsheviks would create trouble for the British Mission. He went on to say:

32 Cabinet meeting, 6 December 1920, L/P&S/10/1061, IOIR.

33 Minutes by Roos-Keppel, 23 November 1920, L/P&S/10/1061, IOIR.
His Majesty's Government still entertain serious misgivings regarding the proposal which you make. In any case Amir is guilty of deliberate evasion in not replying to our definite requests and, once our Mission is at Kabul, the risk remains that our hands will be forced again and again by consideration that almost any concession on our part is to be preferred to not securing any agreement at all. 34

The Viceroy referred certain points to the Secretary of State for urgent consideration. These were:

(1) Whether the Mission could be authorised to use the title of 'His Majesty' with reference to the Amir.

(2) Whether the Amir should be informed that any treaty concluded would have to be published under Article 18 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

(3) Whether the Amir could be allowed diplomatic representation in London.

(4) Whether a minor rectification of the frontier at Torkham could be granted. 35

The Secretary of State agreed that the last three points may, if absolutely necessary, be conceded and then only in return for an adequate quid pro quo in each case. Regarding the first point the Secretary of State deferred the concession until the conclusion of a satisfactory treaty. 36

34 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 8 December 1920, L/P&S/10/1061, IOLR.

35 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 12 December 1920, L/P&S/10/1061, IOLR.

36 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 19 December 1920, Foreign Department, F.No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), NAI.
The Viceroy, however, thought that the title of the Amir was of vital importance. He pointed out: "Our Mission will be helplessly handicapped if they are not authorised to address Amir by the title which he has assumed, and it is more than likely that the whole negotiations may break down upon this petty matter." The Secretary submitted the question to the King who did not favour the grant of the title of 'His Majesty' to the Amir until he had signed a treaty of friendship with Britain. Further, he was against the employment of the title as something to bargain with in treaty negotiations, for in his opinion: "It ought to be reserved as reward for practical proof of bona fides and friendship of Amir as evinced in a treaty acceptable to British Government." The Secretary submitted the question to the King who did not favour the grant of the title of 'His Majesty' to the Amir until he had signed a treaty of friendship with Britain. Further, he was against the employment of the title as something to bargain with in treaty negotiations, for in his opinion: "It ought to be reserved as reward for practical proof of bona fides and friendship of Amir as evinced in a treaty acceptable to British Government."

After some correspondence the British Mission arrived in Kabul on 7 January 1921. The reception at Kabul, though extremely friendly from the official point of view, was far from that accorded to the Dane Mission in 1904. No high officials came out of Kabul to greet the Mission; there was no Salute (Dane had been accorded a twenty-one gun salute;
and no regiments were drawn up on the parade ground to give a
general salute as the British Mission passed). There was,
however, a magnificent guard of honour to receive the Mission
at the gate of their residence. The mehamander, the officer-
in-charge of guests, explained that the officials could not
travel in uniform all the way through the cold weather out of
Kabul for reception. While this may be one explanation it may
have been that the Amir did not wish to receive the Mission
with a public demonstration any greater than was accorded to
the Bolshevik Mission. Further, the Amir may have had the
intention of according to the British Mission a reception at
par with the reception accorded by the British to the Afghan
Mission. It would be recalled that the Afghan Mission led by
Tarzi had not been given a salute. 40

The first phase of negotiations began on 13 January
1921, with a private meeting between the Amir and Mahmud Tarzi
on one side and Sir H. Dobbs and Sir Shams Shah on the other.
Dobbs communicated the information at his disposal regarding
the Russo-Afghan negotiations, and the objects of Jemal
Pasha's Mission to Kabul and pressed for a statement of
Afghan policy. He explained that the start of negotiations
would be difficult until the Afghans disclosed the terms of
their treaty with Russia. The Amir prevaricated, but offered
an assurance that the Bolsheviks would not be allowed to

40 Dobbs to Chelmsford, 9 January 1921, Montague Papers,
Roll No. 1831, NAI.
undertake any action deemed to be hostile to the British Government. In conclusion the Amir said he would discuss the matter over with his advisers and then take a decision as to whether he could render a definite reply to Dobb's enquiries. 41

On 13 January at a five-hour long conference where the Afghans were represented by Mahmud Tarzi and Nadir Khan and the British by Dobbs and Colonel Muspratt, the Afghan representatives gave definite assurances to the British delegates that:

(1) ratification of the Russo-Afghan Treaty had not yet taken place, and that even if it were ratified by Moscow, the Amir could decline to ratify it;

(2) if the Amir were satisfied of British friendship, he would decline to ratify clauses hostile to the British Government, and

(3) Jemal Pasha's mission was to reorganise the Afghan army, and he would not be permitted to intrigue with the frontier tribes. Nadir Khan pressed for some concession to Afghan pretensions in connection with the British frontier tribes. 42

Regarding Dobbs' request that the terms of the Russo-Afghan agreement may be communicated to him, Tarzi pointed out

41 Dobbs to Denys Bray, 15 January 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

42 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 20 January 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
that at the preliminary stage of negotiations those terms could not be disclosed. Nadir Khan insisted that the tribes should be granted the right to self-determination. He said: "We have made promises to the tribes. They are our co-religionists, and our own flesh and blood. We cannot abandon them. I don't want you to give them to us entirely. Let them be free and let us agree to punish them jointly if they raid either British or Afghan territory." 44

In the first and second official meetings held on 21 and 24 January, an Afghan Draft Treaty was discussed. The principles of the Mussoorie aide mémoire were generally agreed to by the Afghan representative, Mahmud Tarzi, but with various amendments. The provisions of the draft included, inter alia, Afghan independence, the establishment of an Afghan legation in London and consulates in India; the right to import arms and ammunition via India to Afghanistan; the payment of rupees four crores thirty-six lakhs to the Amir as compensation for expenses incurred by Amir Habibullah during the First World War; a plebiscite among British frontier tribes with a view to 'self-determination' as to the form of their future government; and, a British undertaking that the Turkish Treaty would be amended. 45

43 Foreign Department, F.No. S-F/1923 (Secret), Pro. 746, NAI.

44 Maconachie, n. 2, p. 56.

45 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 24 January 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
Dobbs pointed out that the Afghan draft differed fundamentally from the stipulations of the Mussoorie aide mémoire. So great was the difference that Dobbs feared an immediate breakdown of the negotiations. He made it clear that in such an event relations between the two Government would not be those which had supervened on the Treaty of Rawalpindi and warned: "From the day the Rawalpindi Treaty was signed we have exercised the greatest forbearance regarding numerous incidents. In future any measure which we may consider to be necessary for our security or our honour will be taken without hesitation." Secretary of State Montague, on learning of the Afghan Draft Treaty, exclaimed: "Ye Gods! But what is the use of Dobbs listening to all this. As I said yesterday or the day before, he surely ought not to discuss treaty at all unless we are satisfied as to Bolshevik relationship."

The Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province, however, was of the opinion that only two courses were open, either to insist on absolute non-interference with the tribes by the Afghan Government or to offer a concrete concession. He himself favoured the second alternative and

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46 Foreign Department, F.No. 2.F/1923 (Secret), Pro. 767, NAI.
47 Maconachie, n. 2, p. 56.
48 Note, 31 January 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
even suggested an undertaking to be given for British withdrawal from Wana. 49

On 7 February 1921 Dobbs wrote to the Viceroy and informed him about the substitution of the clause drafted as a face-saving device, providing for reciprocal information by the two Governments regarding any measures which might appear necessary for maintenance of order among the tribes on their common border and for periodical exchange of visits between the British and the Afghan frontier officers. 50 The Viceroy was wise enough to agree to a face-saving clause for the Afghans rather than break off the negotiations altogether. 51 The Secretary of State however, took exception to the provision: "The tribes of Afghan origin whose welfare has always been of close interest to the sentiment of the Afghan nation" incorporated in the draft. He wrote to the Viceroy that to recognise formally the right of the Afghans to interest themselves in frontier Pathans, on grounds of common nationality, was of vital importance. It was in effect a vital departure from British attitude on tribal questions. He, however, set aside his reservations and accepted the Government of India's advice. 52

49 Foreign Department, F.No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), Pro. 818, NAI.

50 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 9 February 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

51 Chelmsford to Montague, 14 February 1921, Montague Papers, Roll No. 1931, NAI.

52 Ibid.
Mahmud Tarzi, in a private meeting, assured Dobbs that a settlement on the lines of his draft 'face-saver' would be accepted by Afghanistan, if she were satisfied as to other clauses of the Afghan draft Treaty.\(^53\)

On 18 February Dobbs communicated his first draft of 'pia eller' Treaty aimed to control anti-British elements in Afghanistan, rather than at their exclusion from the country on the lines of the Mussoorie aide memoire to the Government of India when it was communicated to the Secretary of State. This draft recognized Afghanistan's independence. Diplomatic relations would be established between London and Kabul; but the Afghan minister in London could deal with the British Government only through Secretary of State for India. The Consulates of third Powers would be excluded from the Indian border. Afghanistan could import arms via India without paying transit duties. The Afghans would not be allowed to intrigue with the Frontier Tribes. Reciprocal declarations were to be made that neither party had concluded with a Third Power any agreement which affected the mutual interests of the parties. The British would grant an annual subsidy of 25 lakhs of rupees and telegraph material from Landi Kotal to Kandahar via Kabul.\(^54\)

\(^{53}\) Dobbs to Denys Bray, 15 February 1921, Foreign Department, F.No. 2-F/1923 (Secret), NAI.

\(^{54}\) Maconachie, n. 2, p. 54.
The Secretary of State expressed his alarm at the course of the Kabul negotiations. The Afghan tactics of aiming at piecemeal concessions would, he feared, result in spinning out negotiations until receipt of ratification of the Russo-Afghan Treaty. He went on to say that the abandonment of the Afghan request for technical facilities "apparently synchronises with Bolshevik decision, for which it may perhaps be inferred that Afghans on their side intend to ratify. I, therefore, think they should be reminded that His Majesty's Government have no intention of concluding treaty with them unless completely satisfied as to terms of treaty with the Bolsheviks." 55

Dobbs disagreed with the Secretary of State's view that the negotiations be stopped if the Afghan did not disclose the terms of the Russo-Afghan treaty. He thought it unnecessary to demand for a disclosure of the Russo-Afghan Treaty to the point of rupture, if the Afghans accepted his proposals with minor changes and gave guarantees which adequately provided against Bolshevik designs. He added: "If Afghans deliberately intended to deceive, they could always produce bogus or incomplete Russian Treaty, and we should, therefore, be better off from their having pretended to disclose it." 56

55 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 19 February 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

56 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 28 February 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
The Secretary of State was, however, dissatisfied with the 'pis aller' Treaty as a whole. He held that the British had already given more concessions to the Afghans and that nothing had been secured in return. He suggested incorporation of a provision for British 'advice in a friendly way in regard to foreign relations of Afghanistan'. He reiterated that no treaty could be signed unless and until there was an assurance that the Treaty with the Bolsheviks contained nothing against British interest. He went on to say:

In particular it should be understood that any treaty which provides for payment of a subsidy to the Afghans by the Bolsheviks must ipso facto, be held objectionable. It is a question for consideration whether a strong stand might not also be made against supply of aeroplanes and arms to Afghans by Bolsheviks outside their treaty. 57

Dobbs assured his Government from Kabul that he would not make concessions about Torkham or other points unless prevention of Russian propaganda, Afghan neutrality and cessation of intrigues with tribes were assured. After discussing the situation in Kabul, he remarked: "It is not possible to entertain the hope of making Afghans, at any rate by respectable means, discard Russian subsidy or admit any measure of control of their foreign relations by the British." 58

57 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 23 February 1920, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

58 Viceroy to Foreign and Political Department, 28 February 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
The Government of India requested the Secretary of State to modify his attitude and to empower Dobbs to proceed with the negotiations. They proposed that the Bolshevik consulates should be excluded from the frontiers of India, the terms of the Bolshevik agreement should be secured if possible, and that the grant of Russian subsidy to Afghanistan should not be held necessarily to preclude the grant of a British subsidy. 59

The Secretary of State replied to the effect that, (1) if the Afghan Government rejected the proposals prohibiting Bolshevik consulates on the Indian frontier and intrigue, negotiations should be broken off. (2) If they accepted these proposals, they were further required to disclose the terms of the Russo-Afghan Treaty; (3) If the terms were disclosed and considered by Dobbs to be such as to justify continuance of negotiations, the instructions of His Majesty Government should be taken. (4) The idea of a subsidy being paid both by the British Government and Russia were not liked by the British Government. 60

It is apparent that the Secretary of State was forced by circumstances to modify his views. He was no longer quite as definite as he had been in his telegram of 29 October

59 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 1 March 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

60 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 5 March 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
1920, in which he had said that simultaneous subsidies from the British and the Russian Governments were an impossibility while in a telegram of 29 July he had characterised such an idea as absurd and indefensible. 61

On 28 February 1921, the Russo-Afghan Treaty was signed by the Afghan Envoy at Moscow and the Russian Foreign Minister. Dobbs anticipated rupture as a result of the instructions given by the Secretary of State. He, therefore, decided to give first place in renewed discussions to official request for disclosure of the terms of Bolshevik Treaty. 62

The Secretary of State in his telegram of 11 March changed his tone; he insisted on the disclosure of the terms of the Russo-Afghan Treaty. 63 The Government of India now formally requested the Home Government to reconsider their demands; and that disclosure of the Russo-Afghan agreement and Bolshevik subsidy or gift of arms to Afghanistan be eliminated. The Viceroy requested the Secretary of State for a free hand in concluding a treaty of friendship with Afghanistan. 64

The Secretary of State instructed the Government

61 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 29 July 1920, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

62 Minute, India Office, 2 March 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

63 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 11 March 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

64 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 15 March 1921, L/P&S/10/1955, IOLR.
of India not to sign the treaty until the Afghans disclosed the Russo-Afghan Treaty and they were convinced that this treaty contained nothing harmful. The Viceroy as well as Dobbs, on the other hand, held that there was no need for disclosure of Russo-Afghan Treaty. They thought that their draft treaty provided ample safeguards. 65

The Secretary of State, therefore, decided to refer the controversy to the Cabinet. The Cabinet decided that there should be no dual subsidy and that certain passages should be redrafted to bring out this point. On the other hand, it was urged that in view of British military obligations elsewhere, it might be preferable to tolerate a Russian subsidy for the time being rather than incur the risk of the heavy expense of a fresh frontier war. The Cabinet finally decided that Dobbs should not sign the treaty, until the Cabinet had had an opportunity of considering the terms of the Soviet Treaty, particularly the question of subsidies. 66

The Viceroy telegraphically requested the Home Government to set aside their objection to Bolshevik subsidy and arms. It was more important from the British point of view to resist the establishment of Bolshevik consulates in

65 Proceedings of the Cabinet Meeting, 3 March 1921, L/P&3/10/955, IO1R.

66 Ibid.
Ghazni, Kandahar and Jalalabad. He argued that money and arms, even if they were excluded from the Treaty could be given in trade transactions between Afghanistan and Soviet Russia. 67

While these exchanges were taking place the Home Government sprang a surprise at the Government of India. The Secretary of State informed the Viceroy on 16 March that a Trade Agreement had been signed between Soviet Russia and Great Britain. The Government of India had not been kept informed of the progress of the negotiations preliminary to this agreement. They were surprised to find that use had been made, in Sir Robert Horne's note accompanying the agreement, of information regarding which Dobbs had given the Amir an implied undertaking against publication. 68

The Kabul negotiations were seriously affected by the Anglo-Russian Trade Agreement and Sir Robert Horne's note to Krassin, as Britain was now in direct contact with Soviet Russia. Dobbs thought that the British Mission in Kabul could not reasonably ask the Afghans to disclose the terms of the Russo-Afghan Treaty. The matter could now be discussed between the British and Soviet Governments directly. Dobbs went on to say:

67 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 15 March 1921, L/P&5/10/955, IOLR.

68 Sir Robert Horne was Chief British Representative who signed the Anglo-Russian trade agreement with Krassin who led the Soviet delegation.
Crux of the problem is whether Moscow, in response to British pressure, will decline to ratify draft Afghan Treaty and eliminate clauses in which provision is made for subsidy, arms, and Eastern consulates. If trade agreement continues in operation in spite of their refusal to adopt this course, it will greatly weaken our position vis-a-vis Afghanistan, since it will be argued by Afghans that question has now become one of direct negotiation between British Government and Russia. 69

After the conclusion of the Russo-Afghan agreement, Dobbs found himself in a difficult situation and visited Delhi for consultations. His suggestion was that the Home Government should demand from the Russian Government disclosure of the Russo-Afghan Treaty. In the meantime, on 31 March the Manchester Guardian published the text of the Russo-Afghan Treaty. 70

The Afghans, in the meanwhile, prepared an amended draft treaty and submitted it to Dobbs on 5 April. It was accompanied by an official letter indicated that it was an absolutely final draft. The terms included stipulations that the tribes which took part in the Afghan war should be excused from the payment of fines and surrender of rifles; and that the Afghans claim to Arnawai should be recognised. There was no provision excluding foreign consulates in Eastern Afghanistan. This draft treaty was not acceptable to Dobbs who, therefore,

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69 Dobbs to Government of India, 22 March 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOIR.

70 Maconachie, n. 2, p. 59.
prepared for rupture in the negotiations.  

Aware of the impending rupture, Tarzi had fixed 9 April for the final official meeting, and 11 April for a farewell audience with the Amir. In the meantime, the Amir's uncle died, and official business was suspended for three days. The Amir intervened to resolve the deadlock and discussed the problems directly with Dobbs. It appeared from the discussion that the main difficulties were the proposed Russian consulates in Eastern Afghanistan, and the conditions about the imports of arms. Regarding consulates, the Amir conceded that the British objections were just, but pointed out that Dobbs' insistence upon the exclusion of Russian consulates from Eastern Afghanistan forced him to choose between Soviet Russia and Britain. Tarzi admitted that the main consideration given to the Russians in the treaty was Eastern consulates, the sole object of which, he conceded, was to stir up trouble in India. The Amir and Tarzi, however, dwelt on the risk of rupture with Russia, which they would run by exclusion of the consulates from Eastern Afghanistan.

Dobbs realised the Amir's difficulties and suggested that the Home Government "be now moved to press Russians very
strongly regarding consulates and to demand an early reply. If they cannot do this, it is necessary for us to realise that Afghans are precluded from complying with our demands, except at the utmost risk of rupture with Russia, and, unless the support and compensation indicated forthcoming, they will not run the risk."

The Secretary of State thereupon consulted Lord Curzon, the Foreign Secretary who considered it unwise to put pressure on the Russians regarding consulates in Eastern Afghanistan; the Russians might retort by asking the British what right had they to object to Russian consulates in an independent Afghanistan. The Viceroy was told that "Dobbs has at the moment established position which is advantageous from detaching Afghans from Bolsheviks by our making a comprehensive offer of assistance, and I shall be glad to have your further views." 75

For some time the correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy was mainly concerned with the possibility of securing an 'Exclusive' Treaty to eliminate Bolshevik influence from Afghanistan. The Afghans were to be compensated adequately for the loss of the benefits accruing from the Russo-Afghan Treaty, and supplied with the means of repelling Russian aggression, which might be expected to result from

74 Dobbs to Government of India, 10 April 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

75 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 15 April 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
their acceptance of an 'Exclusive' Treaty with the British Government. Dobbs also expressed his opinion that if sufficient inducement were offered to the Afghans, the British could win them over. Regarding Afghanistan's financial crisis he wrote:

Her need of money now is so great, and the discontent of army is so serious, that it was possible that for immediate adequate sum and promise of arms in the event of Russian aggression, she would sacrifice to some extent her power of independent action, would forego her tribal pretensions, and break with the Turkish Nationalists and Russia sufficiently for our purposes. 76

In a subsequent letter to the Government of India, Dobbs was less hopeful of the prospect of success in dealing with the Afghans. Rosenberg, who had a treaty with him for ratification, was announced by Kabul press to arrive in Kabul on 26 April. Afghanistan's relations with Soviet Russia had reduced British freedom of action. As Dobbs put it:

It is impossible for us now to suggest even informal control of foreign affairs, but a mutual promise not to make without consultation agreement affecting mutual interests with a third power...could be made acceptable to Afghanistan. Dismissal of Bolshevik Minister from Kabul could not be demanded by us but we could ask that official or unofficial representatives be strictly limited, and we could possibly secure informally that Jamal's services be politely terminated. 77

76 Dobbs to Government of India, 21 April 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

77 Ibid.
The complexity of the problem was summarized as follows:

(1) Russia wanted a treaty with Afghanistan to secure her position with Muslims in her Central Asian republic on the Afghan border and to threaten the British in India.

(2) Afghanistan wanted a treaty with both Russia and Britain and wanted to escape domination by either power.

(3) Britain wanted a treaty with Afghanistan to prevent Russia's domination and bring Afghanistan under her own sphere of influence.

(4) The North-West Frontier of India was unsettled, partly because of lack of settlement between Afghanistan and Britain and partly because Afghanistan was exercising her influence against the British in order to force concessions from them.78

The Secretary of State preferred an exclusive policy. He feared that the course of action favoured by the Government of India would leave the Amir free to receive money and arms from the Bolsheviks and military assistance from the Turks. He assured the Viceroy that Britain abandonment of consulates in Eastern Afghanistan.79

78 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 27 April 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

79 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 29 April 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
Dobbs could not see any advantages in concluding an exclusive treaty with Afghanistan. He thought that if the Russians were excluded on paper, the Amir would receive Russian money and arms under the guise of commercial transactions. The Viceroy agreed with Dobbs and suggested that a settlement should be made with Afghanistan. He cautioned that rupture would create problems both on the frontier and in India and added:

But I want a settlement at present with Afghanistan, even though we cannot get it on terms we should like. It is in my opinion undesirable that we should come away without a treaty, with probability of serious external and internal consequences and prospect of Afghanistan securing treaty relations of sorts with all important powers but ourselves. 80

Dobbs in his private letter to Lord Reading cautioned him by saying: "We could afford to be dilatory in the old days when we had no vigilant opponents at Kabul. We can no longer afford it now at critical stages of negotiation such as present." 81

The Government of India reviewed the situation and presented three possible courses of action viz. (1) pursuance of the exclusive policy; (2) presentation of the 'pis aller' treaty as a final offer plus a public and formal assurance against aggression by a third power and a demand for the disclosure of all treaties made by the Afghan Government; and

80 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 5 May 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

81 Dobbs to Lord Reading, 26 May 1921, vol. 23, Reading Papers, MSS. EUR. E 238, IOLR.
(3) Modification of 'pis aller' is unessential, but insistence on the disclosure of the Russian Treaty, exclusion of the Eastern Consulates, and an assurance against Russian aggression. 82

The Viceroy, after reviewing the three alternative courses of action, preferred modification of 'pis aller' treaty. He explained his preference due to the changed circumstances as follows:

We should be prepared to go to considerable length, in money and arms to secure a clear sweep of the Soviet Treaty and Soviet influence from Afghanistan were this possible. But we believe that it is not. Our offer, in whatever form it was couched, would be in effect a reversion towards our old control of Afghanistan's foreign relations and would be regarded as such....But the Amir came to the throne as the champion of Afghanistan's independence and has proclaimed it in all his public utterances, and we believe it would be impossible for him to accept this or any similar clause. 83

It was feared that an Exclusive Treaty and withdrawal of Russian legation would be an act of provocation and would lead to a war between Afghanistan and Russia. It was British policy not to encourage Afghanistan to provoke Russia. Moreover, a formal promise that the Russian legation should be excluded from Afghanistan was irreconcilable with Afghan independence. The British wanted to exclude Russia from

82 For exclusive, 'pis aller' and gentlemanly treaties, see Appendix XI.
83 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 27 May 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
Afghanistan and keep it under their sphere of influence, without bearing expenditure and any risk.

The Secretary of State, emphasising his preference for the Exclusive Treaty, agreed, if this were found to be impracticable, in the last resort to sanction the 'pis aller'.

Dobbs decided to inform the Afghans that if they would terminate their Treaty with Russia and undertake not to receive any subsidy or munition directly or indirectly from Russia, the British would give 40 lakhs of rupees. The Afghans could have a Russian legation in Kabul and could make a purely commercial agreement with Russia. Thus the benefits to be anticipated from the 'Exclusive' Treaty were very unsubstantial. It seemed that the Afghan Government could only be asked to give undertakings against acceptance of Russian money and arms. The Bolshevik intrigue in Afghanistan would remain with the unavoidable retention of the Russian legation and consulates outside the prohibited zone. It was evident that an exclusive treaty with these reservations would not be exclusive at all.

At a meeting of the two delegations held on 30 June, Dobbs informed Tarzi of the Secretary of State's sanction of 'pis aller' Treaty. The Afghan delegates pointed out that

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84 Dobbs Report on the Kabul Mission, Memorandum, A 194, L/P&S/18, IOLR.

85 Dobbs to Government of India, 3 June 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
Afghanistan would, by rupture with Russia, lose not only Panjdeh and Russian subsidy, but also other benefits, such as telegraphic lines, a smokeless powder factory, 5,500 rifles, field guns, anti-aircraft guns, and twelve aeroplanes. The British should supply all these immediately and not only in the event of an attack by a third power. Tarzi and the other Afghan representatives professed to be prepared to consider a complete break with Russia involving the exclusion of the Russian legation.

Dobbs at a meeting held on 4 June made the following proposals:

If treaty with Russia is entirely scrapped and Russian Minister withdrawn, British Government will give assurances already mentioned, subsidy of 40 lakhs of rupees, initial grant of 10 lakhs, telegraph material from Kabul via Kandahar to Herat only 160 miles being provided immediately and six aeroplanes after six months, with the contingent gift of munitions already mentioned in the event unprovoked Russian attack.

Dobbs went on to say that if the Afghans received only a Russian legation and Russian Commercial agents outside the prohibited zone, the British Government would give the Afghans 35 lakhs of rupees and telegraph material. In the event of war between Russia and Afghanistan, the British would not give

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86 Dobbs to Government of India, 3 June 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

87 Dobbs to Government of India, 4 June 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
any assurance of military or any other type of help to Afghanistan. 88

Though the Afghans at first seemed somewhat inclined to consider these proposals, they eventually pressed for an offensive and defensive alliance with the British. 89

On 11 June, Dobbs reported to the Government of India that the Afghan Government had decided on a complete break with Russia. At this point the Secretary of State telegraphically reminded the Government of India of their earlier contention that the Bolsheviks, after being expelled from Afghanistan, would still be able, under the Turko-Afghan Treaty, to return in a Turkish guise. 90 In another telegram he insisted for a similar reason on the exclusion of Bukharan consulates from the prohibited zone. 91

At a meeting on 14 July, Mahmud Tarzi intimated that a definite decision had been reached by the Afghan Council that no understanding could be given, as provided for by clause 15 of the proposed Exclusive Treaty, for exchange of views regarding future agreement. 92

The Secretary of State was not ready to accept a

88 Dobbs to Government of India, 4 June 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
89 Ibid.
90 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 11 June 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
91 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 16 June 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
92 Dobbs to Government of India, 18 July 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
'pis aller' treaty and withdrew any authority given to Dobbs to negotiate it. He proposed a treaty as between two civilized nations, by which provision would be made for the reciprocal right to send Envoys and Consuls and for offer of ordinary neighbourly relations. The subsidy could not be paid to Afghanistan. The Treaty thus described came to be known in the correspondence as the 'gentlemanly' treaty.93

During these negotiations the British continued these efforts to retain as much Exclusive control over Afghanistan as was possible. On 17 July, the British Foreign Office objected to a commercial agreement signed between Afghanistan and Italy; it informed the Italian Government that the Amir, by an agreement which he was on the verge of concluding with the British, was about to admit the superior and predominant political influence of Great Britain in his country. The British still considered Afghanistan to lie within the sphere of British political influence.94 News of this British representation regarding Italo-Afghan Treaty reached the Afghan Government on 25 July. Dobbs immediately felt a change in the Afghan attitude. He reported that the British objection —

would amply account for the Afghans extraordinary volte face and their sudden bitter

93 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 5 August 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
94 Dobbs Report on the Kabul Mission, Memorandum, A 194, L/P&S/18, IOLR.
anti-British attitude. We may be sure that French and Italians have made most of the statement that the intention of our contemplated treaty was to reaffirm our predominant political interest in Afghanistan, and that though ostensibly Afghanistan now enjoys independence, she is still regarded by us as within the sphere of our political influence. 95

In a private meeting held on 6 August, Mahmud Tarzi put forward an absolutely final draft treaty. 96 It was accompanied by a note setting forth the disadvantages and dangers which complete rupture with Russia would entail for Afghanistan. 97 The proposed treaty abandoned the exclusive proposals, did not provide for the exclusion of the Eastern Consulates, and demanded an amnesty, not only for the Masuds and Wazirs, but for all the frontier tribes 'from Chitral to South Baluchistan'.

Dobbs in his telegram of 6 August remarked that "to argue further would be useless and humiliating". While the relations between Dobbs and the Afghan Government were strained, the mail bag of the British Mission was lost on its way from Kabul to India. Dobbs suspected the Afghan Government's hand in this and, therefore, suspended the negotiations.

95 Dobbs to Government of India, 27 July 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

96 This draft treaty was prepared by the Amir's Council. They had decided that it either had to be accepted or the British Mission should leave.

97 Dobbs to Government of India, 8 August 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
He planned to wait for a fortnight for the recovery of the mail bag and appropriate explanations from the Afghan Government. He wanted to use the incident to exert pressure on the Afghans: "In view of this robbery of diplomatic post, we shall now be in a position to take up strong position with the Afghans and threaten them." On 20 August two members of the Afghan Foreign Office brought the mail bag along with a letter of apology from Mahmud Tarzi. The interval between the rupture of negotiations and the return of the bag was occupied by discussions regarding the future talks, between the Government of India and the Home Government. Dobbs proposed to place the 'exclusive' and 'gentlemanly' draft treaties simultaneously before the Afghans and allow them to choose. He thought that the Afghans would prefer an ordinary treaty to rupture. They were not ready for war, and would like to avoid confrontation with Russia. To maintain balance between the two powers, the Afghans could not allow predominance of Russian Minister in Kabul.

On 23 August Mahmud Tarzi informed Dobbs that the Russo-Afghan Treaty had been ratified. On 1 September, Tarzi officially intimated a copy of the Treaty to the British Mission in Kabul. The Government of India considered that

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98 Dobbs to Reading, 9 August 1921, vol. 23, Reading Papers, MSS. EUR. E 238, IOLR.

99 Dobbs to Government of India, 21 August 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

100 Dobbs to Reading, 24 August 1921, vol. 23, Reading Papers, MSS. EUR. E. 238, IOLR.
no further insistence on disclosure of secret clauses was needed, and that the way was now clear for negotiations of the 'pis aller' treaty, provided a note was given by Dobbs to the effect that the establishment of consulates in the prohibited zone by a third power would constitute a breach of the treaty. 101

Dobbs was directed by the Government of India to request the disclosure of the Russian Treaty as ratified in Kabul. The Soviet Government had already furnished the British Government officially with a copy of the treaty ratified by them, which contained a provision for the establishment of Russian Consulates at Kandahar and Ghazni and had granted a large subsidy and other help to Afghanistan. In reply to Dobbs' request, the Afghan Government furnished a copy of a portion of the treaty and agreements, omitting the most vital portions relating to the grant of help to Afghanistan by the Soviet Government. 102

While the negotiations between Afghanistan and Britain were at a critical juncture, an Afghan mission to Europe and the United States led by Mohammad Wali Khan had arrived in London and had an interview on 17 August with Lord Curzon. When Mohammad Wali Khan referred to the Kabul

101 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 9 August 1921, L/P&S/10, 1956, IOLR.

102 The Treaty as disclosed by the Afghan Government was an ordinary treaty guaranteeing neighbourly relations between Afghanistan and Soviet Russia. See Appendix XII.
negotiations, Lord Curzon broke off the conversation, saying that the negotiations in Kabul were the affair of Afghanistan and India and not his concern. The Afghan mission wanted to be introduced to the King by Lord Curzon but he declined to do so and referred the matter to the India Office. Mohammed Wali Khan informed the Afghan Foreign Minister of Lord Curzon's attitude. Mahmud Tarzi in his letter of 28 August to Dobbs complained about the treatment of the Afghan Mission in London. 103

Lord Curzon addressed a note to the Soviet Government on 7 September 1921, calling attention to breaches of undertakings entered into under the preamble of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement. The Russian Treaty with Afghanistan was referred to as the most serious charge against the Soviet Government. Reference was made to Stalin's mention of the Russo-Afghan Treaty as an instrument to guarantee friendly relations with a state whose territory was an important channel by which "the Communist International maintained direct contact with India". The note further referred to Articles 4 and 5 of the Russo-Afghan Treaty which provided for the establishment of Russian consulates in Ghazni and Kandahar. 104 This was also interpreted as an unfriendly act.

103 Adamec, n. 5, p. 164.
104 British Foreign Office to Checherin, Soviet Foreign Commissary, 7 September 1921, L/F&S/10/956, pt. 2, IOLR.
The Russians People's Commissariate on 27 September handed over a note to the British representative in Moscow to be submitted to the British Foreign Office. The note denied the charges against the Soviet Government and went on to say:

It is quite obvious that all the reports, speeches and utterances quoted in the British note have been invented, forged and falsified for some purpose. They have appeared some time ago in papers, which have also reproduced a number of other documents, circulars and letters, purporting to come from the Third International, various Soviet institutions or from Mr Lenin, Trotsky, Tchitcherin, Litvinoff.... 105

It was added in the note that strict instructions had been issued after the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement by the Russian Government to its representatives in the East ordering them to abstain from any anti-British propaganda. 106

The Secretary of State advised the Viceroy that full disclosure of any secret clause in the Russo-Afghan Treaty was a condition precedent to the conclusion of a Treaty on 'pis aller' lines.

On 13 September Mahmud Tarzi, without replying to the request for full disclosure made by Dobbs, wrote that the Afghan Government could negotiate only with His Majesty's

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105 Maxim Litvinof, Deputy People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs to Lord Curzon, 27 September 1921, L/P&S/10/956, pt. 2, IOLR.

106 Ibid.
Government and not with the Government of India. This was an obvious counter-action to the attitude adopted by Lord Curzon towards the Afghan Mission in London.

Dobbs repeatedly demanded full disclosure of the Russo-Afghan Treaty, failing which he would soon leave Kabul. On 18 September, Mahmud Tarzi intimated that he could only give a private verbal assurance in regard to the supplementary undertakings with Russia. Dobbs privately asked Mahmud Tarzi whether he would be prepared to accept a 'gentlemanly treaty'. The draft treaty was presented by Dobbs at an official meeting held on 19 September.

On 25 September, the Amir intervened and invited Dobbs to see him privately. He insisted on an Exclusive Treaty and indicated that he was prepared to cancel the treaty with Russia which had been recently ratified. Dobbs suspected the Afghans and thought that the Amir wanted to get the maximum benefits from both the British and the Russians. In a telegram he explained the deeper implications of the Amir's suggestion:

My own feeling is that it is impossible for Great Britain to involve herself in a transaction of such a discreditable nature. If,

107 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 15 September 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

108 Dobbs to Government of India, 19 September 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.
within six weeks after ratification, and after receiving subsidy, Amir tears in pieces Treaty with Russia he could equally well tear up ours. We should never be safe with him. 109

The Government of India agreed with this view and considered the Amir's proposal obviously dangerous.

The Government of India feared that a breach with Afghanistan would have a most serious upsetting effect on the tribes on the frontier, especially if the cry of jehad was raised. Afghanistan had become stronger and had probably received arms from Soviet Russia. It could rely on further Soviet help in a conflict with the British. It was, therefore, proposed by the Government of India that the Friendship Treaty was the best alternative.

After a lengthy correspondence between the Government of India and the home government, the Secretary of State gave his decision as follows:

Dobbs should accordingly reply to Amir that exclusive treaty has been made impossible by Amir's own action in ratifying the treaty with Bolsheviks, even if his proposals were acceptable in themselves; and that since he has not only rejected condition upon which His Majesty's Government were themselves prepared to offer him a treaty of friendship but has now committed himself formally to an alliance with Bolsheviks, it has become necessary to adjourn negotiations until he is in different frame of mind. 110

109 Dobbs to Denys Bray, 25 September 1921, L/P&S/10/955, IOLR.

110 Secretary of State to Viceroy, 28 October 1921, L/P&S/10/960, IOLR.
After a lengthy bargaining by the Amir on tribal question and financial assistance, on 11 November, the news reached Kabul that the British motor transport for the return of the Mission to India had crossed the frontier. On the same evening the Amir granted Dobbs a farewell audience, in which he accepted the 'gentlemanly treaty'. Stressing his own role in finally agreeing to a treaty, the Amir assured Dobbs that Foreign Minister Mahmud Tarzi was not aware of this decision. The Treaty was signed on 22 November 1921, in the Delkusha Palace between Amir Amanullah and Sir H. Dobbs. 111

After the signing of the Treaty Dobbs announced that as a mark of its satisfaction at the establishment of good neighbourly relations, the British Government would make an immediate large gift of telegraph material to the Amir. 112

On 1 December, after a most cordial farewell to the British Mission, the Amir delivered a speech asserting that the Treaty with the British was one of neighbourly relations only and not of friendship. He declared that he would only be prepared to enter into close friendly relations with the British if they showed generosity towards Turkey and the frontier tribes and treated the inhabitants of India with kindness. 113 Most probably the aim of this speech was

111 For the text of the Treaty see Appendix XIII.
112 Dobbs Report on the Kabul Mission, A 194, L/P&S/13, IOLR.
113 Ibid.
to tell the Indian Muslims that he was the champion of their cause and the Khilafat movement and to assure the frontier tribes that he had not deserted them and would struggle for procuring their rights.

The terms of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty were favourable to the Afghans. The Afghans could manage to extract benefit from both of her powerful neighbours. They could manage to stay out of their spheres of influence. The Afghans were congratulated by the Indian paper Zamindar in these words:

The terms of the Anglo-Afghan Treaty, indicate the cleverness of the Afghans in securing very favourable conditions for their country. The English appear to fear the Bolsheviks and have managed to obtain a modification of the Afghan Treaty with Russia, the Amir having agreed not to allow any Soviet agent near the frontier of India. 114

The Bande Mataram of the 23 November 1921 congratulated the Amir on his success in securing his terms from the British. The paper maintained that Afghanistan succeeded in securing many advantageous terms from Great Britain, while the latter country gained nothing solid except the Friendship Treaty with the ruler of Afghanistan. 115

The Yekil in its 27 December issue wrote that signing the treaty was a great success for British diplomacy.

114 The Zamindar (Lahore), 19 December 1921; Punjab Press Abstract, vol. 34, no. 51, p. 582.

It wrote:

No subsidy will be paid to it (Afghanistan) in future from the Indian exchequer, which should satisfy those who used to regard it as an unjustifiable burden upon this country. The provision regarding the establishment of British Consulates at Kandahar and Jalalabad constitutes the great victory for British diplomacy, inasmuch as the arrangement would practically annul the Afghan treaty with Soviet Government. 116

116 The Vakil (Amritsar), 27 November 1921, Punjab Press Abstract, vol. 34, no. 49, pp. 525-26, NML.