CHAPTER V

THE MUSSOURIE CONFERENCE

When the Rawalpindi Peace Treaty was signed between the British Indian Government and Afghanistan, the political predominance of Great Britain from Constantinople to Meshed seemed almost unchallenged. British forces were in occupation of Constantinople and the Straits, Batum, the Antolia Railway, Cilicia, Syria, the whole course of the Euphrates from Deiras-Zor southwards and the fringes of Kurdistan from some 50 miles north of Mosul. A day after the Rawalpindi Peace Treaty was signed, it was followed by the Anglo-Persian Agreement of 9 August 1919.¹

The White Russian allies of the British, Admiral Kolchak, General Denikin and General Judenitch, supported by British advisers, munitions and supplies, were hemming the Bolsheviks into an ever-contracting circle in the centre of Russia. The fall of Petrograd and Moscow seemed imminent, the Caspian was held by the Counter-Revolutionary Volunteer Fleet, General Lazareff and his white guards occupied Krasnovodsk and the Transcaspian Railway up to Askabad, and the weak Bolshevik administration in Turkistan was cut off from Russia both on the west and the north. By April 1920

¹ Dobbs to Maffey, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.
the counter-revolutionaries had been defeated, and the Orenburg-Tashkent railway and Krasnovodsk recaptured by the Bolshevists. They were expanding their areas of influence in northern Persia, the Caspian Sea, Turkistan and Afghanistan and were trying to foment unrest among the tribes of the North West Frontier Province.²

In August 1919, the Allies appeared to have the future of Turkey at their mercy. The Greeks, with the support of the Allies, landed troops at Smyrna on 15 May 1919, acting as agents for Allied interests and had subsequently advanced into the interior. Mustafa Kamal had been outlawed on 11 July by the Ottoman Parliament, and there was as yet little indication of his eventual triumph. On 13 September, the Nationalist Congress met at Sivas, and formulated a programme for the new party. On 13 January 1920 the National Pact was adopted by the deputies of the Ottoman Parliament at Constantinople and subsequently it was followed by success against the French at Harash of Urfa. In April a provisional government was set up by the Nationalists at Angora, and in the same month a military Convention, supplemented in June by a political understanding, was concluded with the Soviet Government.⁴ The situation in

² Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Notes, p. 78, N.I.
Egypt, Arabia and Mesopotamia had deteriorated, the Caucasus was threatened, British influence was waverling in Tehran and the maintenance of British troops in Persia was becoming increasingly difficult. The troubles the British were having in Ireland were producing a profound effect on the peoples of Asia.⁵

The Soviet and Angoran Governments, owing rather to the bond of a common danger from the Allied power than to any natural sympathy of ideas, had drawn together, and come to military and political understandings preliminary to the conclusion of a formal treaty. There remained, however, inherent in their relations and policy, several elements of antagonism. Both, for instance, aspired to form a federation of Muslim states under their own hegemony, while the 'Pan-Turanian' movement directly threatened Soviet predominance in Turkistan and Azerbaidjan. At this time, however, the rift was scarcely apparent, and both Governments were working together in outward amity on lines hostile to British interests.⁶

The Boulogne Conference was held on 21-22 June and at its close it was announced that military action by the Greeks in Anatolia had been sanctioned. On the same day the Greek offensive began. The effect of these occurrences on

⁵ Dobbs to Foreign Secretary, 6 August 1920, Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, NAI.
⁶ Political and Secret Department, Memoranda, A 190, L/P&S/189, IOLR.
Asian opinion was important. Turkey at this time still held in her hands the standard of the Khilafat, and the action of the Allies in encouraging the Greeks to attack her was bitterly denounced throughout the Muslim world. The anti-Ottoman policy of the Allies was also denounced in the Muslim countries, particularly in India, where the Khilafat movement gathered force, and in June developed into 'hijrat'.

The Punjab disturbances and the Khilafat agitation in combination, resulted in a wave of anti-British sentiment. The agitators attacked many government offices and railway stations. Gandhiji's alliance with the Khilafatists was another important event. When the preparations were made for official peace celebrations on 13 December 1919, Gandhiji announced that the Hindus would observe a hartal and a day of mourning, in support of the 'Khilafat' movement. The delay in the publication of the peace terms for Turkey greatly agitated the public. 19 March was fixed as a day of fast and mourning in sympathy with the Turkish cause, and Maulana Shaukat Ali announced that if the peace terms were not satisfactory, Muslims would be forced to withdraw their allegiance to the British throne. Gandhiji declared his

7 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 137, NAI.
9 Political and Secret Department, Memoranda, A 190, L/P&S/18, IOIR.
intention of leading a new non-cooperation movement. With the publication of the draft Turkish peace terms and the Hunter Committee report, seditious agitation grew even more intense than before, and was followed by the 'hijrat' movement. In June 1920 the movement began and in the North-West Frontier Province it was intense; during the months of June and July about 18,000 persons decided that it was an Islamic duty to perform 'hijrat' and left their homes and migrated to Afghanistan. The Indian unrest made the Government of India anxious to ensure that their dealings with the Amir should give no cause for a further alienation of Muslim sentiment. 10

The situation on the Frontier varied from place to place and from time to time. At the end of August 1919 the local Afghan Commander received orders for the disbandment of Lashkars, and the situation remained normal until 23 April 1920, when Lambarbat was occupied by an Afghan force. This was one of the incidents which delayed the convoking of the Mussoorie Conference. At the end of April this force was withdrawn. The terms of settlement with the Afridis, which included a fine of Rs. 50,000 and the return of all Government arms and property taken since 1 May 1919, were announced in November 1919, but raids continued. 11

On 17 December Nadir Khan arrived in Jalalabad, and

10 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 31.
11 Ibid.
on 31 January 1920, held a jirga at Hada. On this occasion he distributed black standards to the Afridis, Mohmands and Ningarharis and warned them to be prepared for war. In March he began the formation of a tribal battalion, but in spite of these intrigues satisfactory progress was made with the settlement, and with the enlistment of the Khyber Khassadars. 12

Raiding by Wazirs of Wana and Tochi, Masuds and Sheranis continued after the signature of the Peace Treaty. Colonel Shah Daula who had been appointed administrator of Wana after its occupation by Nadir Khan was still in Wana and tried to raise tribal levies. In January 1920, he was joined by Haji Abdul Razak. The Masuds were also informed of terms of settlement with them in that month. They refused the terms, and the Derajit Column started active operations in December. After heavy fighting the leading Masuds submitted but failed to carry out the obligations imposed upon them. In May 1920, some Masud families migrated to Afghanistan and received land in Khost and in the Logar valley. 13

The gradual re-establishment of British authority among the tribes was a severe blow to the Amir's plans for maintaining his influence over them as a means of diplomatic leverage. This was realised by the Afghan delegates to the Mussoorie Conference, as is evident from the tone of their representations on the subject, and particularly from their


13 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 31.
repeated requests for a cessation of British frontier operations. 14

In the meantime, there had been a notable strengthening of relations between the Bolsheviks and the Afghan Government. Amir Amanullah had, during the Third Afghan War, appealed for Bolshevik help, and an Afghan Mission was sent to Moscow. The Bolsheviks of Turkistan had also despatched a mission under Bravin, which reached Kabul on 3 September 1919 and was well received by Amir Amanullah on 4 September 1920. 15

In due course, the official organ of Soviet Russia announced the arrival in Moscow of an Afghan mission and was received by the Bolshevik's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. During the course of this visit there was much talk of Afghanistan as the "only Ally" of the Soviet Republic and of Britain as the common enemy. 16

The Afghan mission under Mohammad Wali Khan left for the Soviet Union and reached Kagan on 25 May en route to Moscow. The Mission comprising of nineteen members including interpreters was received on 10 October by a large deputation at the Moscow railway station. Comrade Karimov, the Director of the Near East Department, welcomed the first Afghan mission to

14 Ibid.
15 MSS. EUR. E.263/55 (N), Notes, p. 149. Chelmsford Papers, IOLR.
16 The Pioneer (Allahabad), 18 January 1920.
the Soviet Union on behalf of the Soviet Commissariat for
Foreign Affairs. In his welcome address Narimanov declared
that the welcome proved that: "In the name of my Government I
purposely greet you in the Turkish language, in the Red Russian
capital, in order to prove that the workers and peasants
Government treats all people and languages with sincere
respect." 17

Comrade Sultan Galiev welcomed Ambassador Mohammad
Wali Khan and the mission in the name of the Revolutionary
Council of the Republic and said:

Your small but heroic country is fighting for
its emancipation from the age-long oppressors
of the East-British Imperialism. We know that
you need help and support, and that you expect
this support from Soviet Russia. In the name
of the Revolutionary Council, and in the name
of the Revolutionary organisations of the many
million labouring Muhammadan masses of Soviet
Russia, I declare to you that Soviet Russia
will give you that assistance as she herself
is fighting against International imperialism
and for the rights of the oppressed nations of
the whole world. 18

In his reply to the welcome address of Sultan Galiev, Mohammad
Wali Khan said that the Mussalmans of the Soviet Union were
free and hoped that with Soviet assistance, Afghanistan would
be emancipated.

Mohammad Wali Khan was received by Lenin on

17 Political and Secret Department, Memoranda, A 184,
L/P&S/13, IOLR.

18 Ibid.
18 October 1919. He appealed to Lenin thus: "I hope you will assist the whole East to emancipate itself from the oppression of European Imperialism." He handed over to Lenin a letter from Amir Amanullah which Lenin accepted with great pleasure, promising an early reply. The interview lasted for about an hour.

Bolshevik activity was also increasing towards India via Afghanistan. In Moscow there was a special institute at which courses were held for the training of agitators in Asian countries. It was rumoured that 400 Hindus had already completed their training at this institute and that they had been dispatched to India, along with money, to overthrow British Imperialism. Secretary of State for India Montague, while replying to a question in the House of Commons, stated: "India is notoriously the object of the Bolshevik propaganda, but I know of no reason to anticipate an armed Bolshevik attack on the North West Frontier Province of India."

The British, on their part were arming and financing counter-revolutionaries in Central Asia. Thus Trotsky, in his order of 6 November to the Army and Navy, said:

---

19 Some sources record 14 October 1919 as the date on which Wali Khan met Lenin. See History of Soviet Foreign Policy, 2 vols., ed. by A. Gromyko B. Ponomaryov and V. Khrostov (Moscow, 1969), vol. 1, p. 151.

20 Political and Secret Department, Memoranda, A 134, L/P&S/18, IOLR.

On every front we encounter the intrigues of England. English guns are firing against us. The prisoners whom we take are dressed in English uniforms, English dynamite is killing women and children at Astrakhan and at Kroustadt, English ships are bombarding our coasts. English wireless telegrams are poisoning the whole world with lying accusations.

On the occasion of the Anglo-Persian agreement G.V. Chicherin, the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, expressed the hope that the time would soon come when the Persians would be delivered from the yoke of British imperialism.

By the middle of November 1919, a preliminary understanding had been sketched out under which the Bolsheviks were to offer to Afghanistan a strip of territory north of the Herat frontier together with money, arms, munitions and technical instructors, in return for an undertaking from Afghanistan to facilitate the despatch of Bolshevik arms, emissaries and anti-British propaganda to the Indian frontier tribes and to the Indians. It was reported in some quarters that though the Amir was outwardly treating the Bolshevik Mission with great kindness, he had in fact appointed a police guard to prevent people from visiting the Mission. The Amir ordered the Kotwal of Kabul not to permit Indians to mix with the Bolsheviks: "Warn all the anti-British refugees to see the

22 The Pioneer, 18 January 1920.
23 Ibid.
24 Dobbs to the Government of India, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.
Bolsheviks and tell them that their connection is with me and not with the Bolsheviks." The negotiations at Kabul were, however, interrupted by the virtual revolution in Turkestan which followed the restoration in November of communications between Moscow and Tashkent. Bravin, who had been a representative of the semi-Independent Turkistan Bolsheviks was made subordinate to Suritz, a new Bolshevik emissary from Moscow, who reached Kabul via Herat and Kandahar on 24 December 1919.

As a result of disputes between Suritz and Bravin, the latter left the service of the Soviet Government but stayed in Kabul as an Adviser to the Amir. In the meanwhile, negotiations had begun tentatively at Copenhagen between the British and the Bolsheviks trade representatives and the hope of an accommodation with British made the Afghan Government suspicious of the sincerity of Russian overtures. At the same time there was tension between the Bolsheviks and the Afghans, caused by Afghan intrigues among the Turkomans in the Kushk area and in Bokhara and Ferghana and by Bolshevik intrigues among the Jemshedis, a Herat tribe of whom many had migrated into Russian territory. This tension was a further factor in the suspension of the Bolshevik-Afghan negotiations for some time.

Suritz tried to avoid any sort of formal alliance between Great Britain and Afghanistan. He wanted Afghanistan

25 MSS, EUR. E.264/55 (N), Notes, p. 172, Chelmsford Papers, IOLR.

26 Viceroy to Amir, 17 January 1920, L/P&S/10/819, IOLR.

27 Dobbs to Foreign Secretary, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.
to look towards Russia rather than Britain; this he sought to achieve by granting to the Afghans concessions of various sorts. By mid-January Suritz's efforts had borne some fruit. It was agreed that the question of the northern frontier of Afghanistan would be settled by a joint Russo-Afghan Commission and Suritz had conceded to the Afghans that at least two members of the Commission would be Afghans. 28

Suritz succeeded in persuading the Amir to renew the war on Great Britain four months after the delivery at Kabul of 80,000 or 100,000 rifles with 600 rounds per rifle, and 1,500 machine guns. Further, the Amir was willing to conclude a Treaty of Friendship containing the following main provisions:

1. The Kerki and Terek districts be ceded to Afghanistan;
2. A subsidy of 10,000,000 rubles in gold be paid to the Amir;
3. The Bolsheviks build a factory for the production of smokeless powder;
4. The Bolsheviks supply equipment for (a) Telegraph lines from Kabul to Herat direct and via Kandahar to Herat; (b) 100,000 rifles; (c) send civil and military interpreters; (d) a number of batteries of artillery; (e) wireless telegraphy installations at Kabul, Herat and Kandahar; (f) render assistance in arming the Indian frontier tribes,

28 Political and Secret Department, Memoranda, A 187, L/P&3/18, IOLR.
and (g) permit the Afghans to use two streamers on the Oxus. 29

Suritz agreed to accept (2) and (4)(g) of the Afghan demands and also to provide twelve aeroplanes, eight guns (anti-aircraft), 1,000,000 roubles in gold; a wireless telegraphy station for Kabul; a plant for making smokeless powder; and 5,000 rifles; as also to make available the services of technical advisers and other specialists. In return, the Afghans were asked to pledge themselves not to interfere with the passage of 10,000 rifles from Tashkent to the frontier tribes. 30 Apropos the proposed Treaty of Friendship, Suritz made the following counter-proposals:

(a) Neither party shall make any agreement which might prove injurious to the other;

(b) Afghanistan shall keep the Bolsheviks informed of any negotiations with the British which might affect Soviet Russia;

(c) Bolshevik representatives shall be formally recognised;

(d) Factories shall be established by the Bolsheviks at Kandahar, Ghazni, and Jalalabad;

(e) A commercial treaty shall be concluded.

The Afghan reply to this counter-proposal is not available in the documents. It appears that it was not acceptable. The terms, however, indicate that the Bolsheviks

29 Ibid.

30 Political and Secret Department, Memoranda, A 190, L/P&S/19, IOLR.
were aiming at keeping the North-West Frontier of India in a state of turmoil.31

The signing of the Rawalpindi Treaty had produced little cordiality between Afghanistan and the Government of India. The British Envoy was detained at Kabul, in spite of the promises of the Afghan delegates at Rawalpindi, until the end of September. On his final release, he brought with him an Afghan Envoy and a letter from the Amir expressing a desire for resumption of diplomatic relations. Though the British received and permitted the Afghan Envoy to stay, they did not send an Envoy to Kabul.32 The Afghan Government represented to its own people that the Rawalpindi Treaty was merely an agreement for an armistice of six months, entered into in order to gain time for the strengthening of their forces and organization of propaganda among frontier tribes. They said that on the expiry of the armistice, they would only make permanent peace on the condition that the British cede to Afghanistan the frontier tracts inhabited by the Pathan tribes.33 They promised the Wazirs, Mahsuds and Afridees that they would intervene with the British to save them from the consequences of their action during the Third Afghan War. They continued in military

31 Ibid.
32 Political and Secret Department, Memoranda, A 187, L/P&S/18, IOLR.
33 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 137, NAI.
occupation of Arnewai on the Chitral border. Certain Afghan
officers who had been sent during the war were retained in
Waziristan. Nadir Khan and his brother carried on propaganda
against the British in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan. A
grand assemblage was held by Nadir Khan at Hadda of the
Nangarhar province in the month of January 1920.34 It was
attended by tribal leaders, Mullahs and about 15,000 tribesmen
of the North West Frontier Province. Representative of the
Indian revolutionaries were also present. Nadir Khan informed
the Assembly that the six months' armistice with the British
was about to expire; and that Afghanistan would not hand over
the Frontier tribes to the British imperialists. He went on
to say that the time was ripe for all tribesmen to set aside
their differences as the Khilafat movement was endangered. He
declared:

The question of the integrity and the stability
of the 'Khilafat' is of greater importance than
the one described above, and is more essential
for the name and honour of our illustrious
religion. You know that the body of Islam, God
forbid, without a strong and powerful Khilafat
is headless.35

Around the same time, it was reported to the Govern-
ment of India that the Amir had told the tribesmen that
Afghanistan would demand all the territories lying between the
Indus and the Durand Line as it did not deem the Rawalpindi

34 Stewart, n. 12, p. 113.
Pact to have established either permanent boundaries or peace.36

The Afghan Consul-General at Tashkent, Aslam Khan, published the news that the Rawalpindi Treaty was only temporary.

The object of the Kabul Government in concluding the armistice was merely to gain time, to gather the harvest, to reorganise the army and fortify the frontiers. The Afghan representative (i.e., the future head of the Afghan delegation) has strict injunctions to insist on the following terms and compromise for nothing less. England must set free India, Persia and Baluchistan. She must return to Afghanistan all territory seized in previous wars. 37

Meanwhile, in accordance with Article 5 of the Rawalpindi Treaty, the undemarcated frontier in the vicinity of the Khyber had to be demarcated. The Afghan delegates had been assured at Rawalpindi that this operation would not involve any annexation, but would only amount to a definition of the area claimed by the British. 38 It was agreed upon that representatives of both the sides should be present during the demarcation of the frontier. Maffey, Chief Political Officer, was appointed by the British to demarcate the boundary and General Ghulam Nabi Khan was appointed by the Amir to carry out

36 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, I-582, Notes, p. 76, NAI.
37 Ibid.
38 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 29 August 1919, January 1921, I-147, Pro. 127, NAI.
the demarcation. He was instructed to meet the British representative on 22 August 1919 at the Landikhana Waters and to start demarcation work. In compliance with the Amir's instructions Ghulam Nabi Khan reached Hazarnao, a village near Dakka, and contacted the British camp officer who informed him that the Boundary Commission would reach Darband on 23 August and that he could meet them there. In the meanwhile the Commission had already left for Darband. The Afghan delegate objected to the British representatives' plan. The British demarcated the line between Sasobi and Landikhana, without the presence or consent of the Afghan representatives. While the British were busy demarcating the frontier, the tribes attacked them. Therefore, the frontier was only delimited on the maps.

On 26 August 1919, when the Afghan representative visited the frontier, he noticed that the boundary line had gone up to Torkham and still further. In this case the line drawn towards the north would have brought into British territory the villages between Spina Suka and Kotal-i-Kam Dakka and westward Koh Shamsha, Koh Sasobi right up to Dur Baba which belong to Afghanistan and thus the Afghan Government would have been deprived of these places. General Ghulam Nabi asked Maffey if he had any document in support of British claims.

In the absence of such a document, the British should rectify

---

39 General Ghulam Nabi to J.L. Maffey, 26 August 1919, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.
The conclusion of the Rawalpindi Treaty was followed by the opening of correspondences between the Amir and the Government of India. The first letter was addressed by the Amir to the Viceroy which was sent through the Afghan envoy, Sardar Gul Muhammad Khan, was of a formal nature intimating the Amir's pleasure at the restoration of peace. He alleged that the British did not respond to his letter in which he asked for complete independence. As he put it:

I see with great regret that if Afghanistan had succeeded in acquiring the confirmation of its complete independence as a result of its first letter which it had addressed to Your Excellency with the object of securing that right, this disastrous event of hostilities would never have happened between the old friends, but what has happened was predestined to take place. 41

The Amir expressed the hope that a British Agent would be sent to Kabul and regular diplomatic relations established. Foreign Secretary Sir Hamilton Grant was of the opinion that a British Envoy should not be sent to Afghanistan, until and unless the Friendship Treaty was signed. He reasoned that it did not behove a great Power like Great Britain to allow its representative to go to Kabul and compete with a Bolshevik mission for favourable treatment. He also alleged that the Afghan Government was intriguing with the tribes inside the British

40 Ibid.

41 Amir to Viceroy, 10 September 1919, MSS, EUR. E 264/55(c), Chelmsford Papers, IOLR.
frontier. Meanwhile, Grant, in his conversation of 15 October 1919, with Sardar Gul Muhammad Khan, the Afghan Envoy, objected to the presence of the Soviet emissary Bravin at Kabul. The Sardar replied that Afghanistan was an independent State and could do whatever she liked. In reply, thereof, the Foreign Secretary referred to America, France and other Western states which, while they were sovereign States, had no diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia. He went on to say that if the Afghans considered Soviet Russia as their friend, they could not claim British friendship at the same time. Grant also wanted that Afghanistan extradite such Indian "seditionists" as Maulavi Obeidullah and others. He accused the Afghans of intriguing with the frontier tribes and of not treating the British Envoy with due respect.

The Amir addressed a letter to King George, which according to Chelmsford was of a formal kind evidently intended to establish a claim to correspond directly with the King-Emperor. This was the assertion of his independence from the British Indian Government. He sent a similar letter to the Viceroy and the third letter addressed to Grant and referred to the negotiation of a Treaty of Friendship in the following terms: "The said Treaty is in fact the forerunner of another

---

42 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Notes, p. 20, NAI.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Amir Amanullah to King George, 10 September 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS, EUR, E 264/55(C), IOLR.
treaty, which will be concluded for the purpose of establishing and perpetuating friendship." 46

Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Mahmud Tarzi also wrote a letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in which he expressed his pleasure at the conclusion of peace treaty between the two countries and the beginning of direct correspondence between Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry and Britain's Foreign Office. 47 The letter gave an obvious indication of the Amir's intention to sidetrack the Government of India, and correspond directly with the British Government in future. Tarzi also forwarded the Amir's letter to King George through the Foreign Office.

The first letter was acknowledged by the Viceroy, who intimated the readiness of the Government of India to negotiate a Treaty of Friendship as soon as they had been convinced of the Amir's sincerity by the fulfilment of the conditions indicated at Rawalpindi. 48

Regarding the other letters, the Secretary of State proposed that acknowledgements of the Amir's letter to King George and Tarzi's letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should be sent by the Secretary to the

46 Amir Amanullah to Sir Hamilton Grant, 10 September 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E 264/55(C), IOLR.

47 Mahmud Tarzi to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 10 September 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E 264/551(c).

48 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Pro. 10, NAI.
Foreign Department, Government of India, and the Viceroy respectively. The latter, however, pointed out that such action in respect of the Amir's letter to the King might cause resentment. 49 Lord Chelmsford, in his letter to Montague, suggested that Mahmud Tarzi's communication should be ignored. He himself did not reply to the Amir's letter until the British Agent had not returned to India. The Government of India accordingly kept the Amir's letter addressed to King George and the Viceroy, and the Afghan Envoy was merely informed that they had been forwarded. 50 Amir Amanullah, in his letter of 5 November 1919, to Sir Hamilton Grant, now Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province, proposed an Indo-Afghan Frontier Commission. He maintained that the frontier problem was like a deep gulf dividing the two Governments. Nadir Khan had been deputed to decide all the difficult questions of the Frontier and was about to proceed to the Eastern Front. The Amir suggested that Nadir Khan should be met by a British delegate for a discussion and settlement of the whole frontier problem. 51 Grant, on the advice of the Government of India, wrote to the Amir that he was not authorised to discuss such important questions.

49 Ibid.

50 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 33.

51 Amir to Grant, 5 November 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS, EUR. E 264/55 (C), I01R.
and that the Amir could write directly to the Viceroy.\footnote{52}

After the conclusion of the Rawalpindi Peace Treaty, a strong pro-British party headed by Sardar Ali Ahmad emerged in Kabul. Mahmud Tarzi's influence declined because of his anti-British attitude. The British through their agents propagated against Tarzi within the court and in the public. Hafiz Saifullah Khan, in his interview with Lord Chelmsford, stated: "Mahmud Tarzi has lost much of his former influence, and probably owes his continuance in office to the fact that he is the Amir's father-in-law. The pro-British party are very strong, and it seems certain that Tarzi would fall if he were to attempt his old tactics."\footnote{53}

The British position became weaker after the Treaty of Rawalpindi as Dobbs, now Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, wrote about the Amir's attitude towards the British. His assessment was that the treaty was "undoubtedly wounding to Afghan pride, and what he wants to establish is that we are at least in as great need of his friendship as he is of ours, and that the bogeys with which he can threaten us, if we don't make it up, are worse than the bogeys with which we can threaten him."\footnote{54} The Afghan bogeys were Bolshevism and tribal unrest on the British frontier, both of which were

\footnotesize

52 MSS. EUR. E 264/55(c), Notes, p. 6, Chelmsford Papers, IOLR.

53 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 18 October 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E. 264/55(N), IOLR.

54 Dobbs to Grant, 2 December 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E. 264/55(C), IOLR.
dangerous to British India. The British bogeys were stoppage of trade with Afghanistan, and preventing Afghan powindas entering into India. The question seemed to be how long could this game of bogeys against bogeys go on? It was difficult for the British to impose such restrictions on the Afghans and the latter could not bear such injury to their interest for a long time. The Amir once stated:

I won't abate a jot of my dealings with Bolshevism and my intrigues with the tribes, but will rather increase them until I have forced the British to meet me as equals and concede at least some of my terms. Meanwhile I will show my contempt for the British bogeys of stoppage of powindas by imposing extra duties on British goods and forbidding the powindas to go down to India. 56

The Afghan view of the British policy regarding six months' probation period was bluntly presented by Nadir Khan:

You expected that within six months the Bolsheviks would have been smashed, Ireland pacified, the Indian troubles settled, and Turkey finally partitioned. You thought that after six months you would be in a much stronger position towards us, and would be able to impose your will on us. The opposite of all this has occurred. Everyone of these difficulties has increased, and you are now in a much weaker position towards us than if you had made an immediate and final treaty with us at Rawalpindi. 57

55 The powindas were nomads, breeding sheep and other cattle. They migrated to India in winter and went back to Afghanistan in summer.

56 Dobbs to Grant, 2 December 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS, EUR, E 264/55(C), IOLR.

57 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 34.
At the end of August 1919, Amir Amanullah delivered a speech on the occasion of his coronation. He declared that Afghanistan was recognised as an independent state by Soviet Russia, Turkey, Germany and Austria. He thanked all those who had accepted Afghanistan's independence and added that Afghanistan would be friendly with those countries which helped her politically and economically.58

The General Staff Branch in India had been pressing for some immediate political action with regard to the Amir. They feared that he was drifting into an increasingly hostile attitude. It was thought that had the Amir attacked India it would have followed and coincided with serious Afridi unrest and internal agitation over the Turkish Treaty. At that time the troops might have had difficulty in coping with the situation. Military action should be taken and the Afghans should be forced to cease intrigue with the tribes and with the Bolsheviks.59 The Foreign Department, however, did not agree with the General Staff Branch's suggestions. Dobbs proposed to the Viceroy the despatch of an agent to Kabul and recommended Maula Bakhsh for this purpose. The Viceroy turned down the suggestion because he feared that Russian intrigue would endanger the British agent in the Kabul.60

---

58 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Notes, p. 60, NAI.

59 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Notes, p. 89, NAI.

60 Ibid.
The Government of India thought that the conditions of friendship which were desired by the British had not been fulfilled by the Amir. The first way in which he could have proved the sincerity of his intentions was by the dismissal from his territory of all hostile foreigners, particularly Bolshevik missions and Bolshevik agents. Further, the British Government regarded the presence in Afghanistan of such Indian "seditionists" as Mahendra Pratap, Maulavi Obeidullah and Maulavi Barakatullah as indicating an unfriendly attitude on the part of the Afghan Government. The British required that there should be no intriguing with the tribes and that no allowances should be granted by the Afghan Government.\(^{61}\)

The probationary period was from August 1919, to January 1920. During this period the Amir's policy consistently remained anti-British and did not fulfil British conditions. He invited Bolshevik emissaries to Afghanistan and sent an Afghan delegation to Soviet Russia. In May 1919, a Bolshevik wireless message had announced the arrival of a delegation of 150 Afghans in Tashkent, with an invitation to Bravin to proceed to Kabul. On 4 June, General Mohammad Wali Khan arrived in Tashkent en route to Moscow.\(^{62}\) The Amir did not expel Indian revolutionaries; their anti-British activities actually increased. The Afghans continued intriguing with the

---

\(^{61}\) Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Notes, p. 77, NAI.

\(^{62}\) Viceroy to Secretary of State, 12 June 1919, L/P&S/10/808, IOLR.
tribes; Shah Daula Khan, the administrator of Wana, continued his work of inciting the tribes. Although the Afghan Government stated that he was not acting in accordance with their instructions, they sent rations and money twice to him. The improved treatment of the British Agent was another condition to be fulfilled by the Amir during the probationary period. His letters to India were suppressed and he himself remained in confinement until 18 August. Sardar Ali Ahmad denied that the Agent was being kept as hostage; he hinted in a letter of 28 August 1919, that the Agent's return was conditional on the withdrawal of British troops from Dakka.

It must be remembered that the British demand that the Afghans should leave the tribes at their mercy really amounted to asking the Afghans to betray their allies in the recent war; it also meant that the Afghans should surrender their trump card in their relations with the Government of India. The allowances paid by the Amir to the tribes on the Indian side of the border were the price he had to pay as an insurance policy.

The Government of India thought that it was impossible to ignore the flagrant breaches by Afghanistan of the stipulations set forth at the Rawalpindi Conference and incorporated in Article 5 of the Rawalpindi Treaty. Afghanistan, in the

63 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 5 January 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E 264/55(C), IOLR.
64 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 35.
eyes of the British, did not prove by her conduct a sincere desire for British friendship and so could not be permitted to send a delegation for the final negotiation of a Treaty of Friendship. In view of the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East, on the other hand, persistence in the policy of complete indifference towards Afghanistan would have led to her drifting into enmity. It thus seemed essential to regain close touch with the Amir and to create an opportunity for frank discussions towards the resolution of the differences between the two countries.  

Further, it was important for the British to tide over the critical period of the spring and summer of 1920, during which the British military position in India was, for various reasons, comparatively weak. Due to the Turkish peace terms, internal difficulties were expected at any moment.

Consequently, on 17 January 1920, the Viceroy wrote a letter to the Amir in which he referred to the Amir's earlier communication regarding Nadir Khan's delegation to the frontier. The letter recited the issues on which the Amir had failed to fulfil the conditions precedent to the conclusion of a Friendship Treaty and concluded with a proposal for a discussion of all outstanding matters. He added:

65 Dobbs to Government of India, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.

66 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 36.
A discussion, such as I have suggested, would not have as its aim the immediate conclusion of a definite treaty of friendship, for which the conditions as I have pointed out have not yet been fulfilled, but would be designed merely for the purpose of frankly examining any obstacles which may now exist to a good understanding and to preparing a firm foundation on which a treaty of friendship can be erected at a later date. 67

The Amir in his letter of 10 February 1920, pointed out that some of the provisions of the Rawalpindi Treaty were incompatible with the sovereignty of Afghanistan, and denied the allegation of Afghan intrigue in Waziristan. He said: "I had invited your Excellency's attention to the necessity of discontinuing hostilities against your frontier tribes. My advice was simply based on foresight, and the bad results of your hostility have now become apparent to your Excellency in matters relating to the Wazirs." 68

He pointed out that Afghanistan as a sovereign state was not bound to comply with the British demands for the cessation of relations with the Bolsheviks and with Indian refugees in Afghanistan; that the main object of his negotiations with the Bolsheviks was the protection of the rights of Khiva and Bukhara. He denied that his officials had instigated the tribes who were living on the eastern side of the Durand line. The Amir, in concluding his letter, suggested discussions for the purpose of removing misunderstandings. 69

67 Viceroy to Amir, 17 January 1920, L/P&S/10/819, IOLR.
68 Foreign Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Pro. 294, NAI.
69 Dobbs to Government of India, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.
The Foreign Secretary to the Government of India thought that the Amir would send a delegation to India to negotiate a treaty of friendship without any prior notice or discussion as to whether he had fulfilled the stipulations or not. He thought that the Amir might send a delegation as he had done before. He proposed that in any case the arrival of a delegation without prior approval of the Government of India should be prevented. Anyhow, Dobbs agreed to accept an Afghan delegation for discussions to pave the way for making a friendship treaty. The Viceroy agreed with Dobbs' opinion that the Amir may send his delegation without prior information but disagreed with him on the issue of inviting an Afghan delegation for discussion. He thought that the Amir would think the British were nervous or anxious and added: "Anything therefore which might be regarded as overture from us at this stage would, I feel, be more likely to do harm than good." The position was a little changed by the receipt of the Amir's letter. The letter gave an opening for a communication to the Amir in which he could be told plainly that he must clearly

---

70 The Amir had sent the new Afghan Envoy to Peshawar without any prior information and similarly the dispatch of Nadir Khan as a delegate to settle frontiers problems was announced later.

71 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Notes, p. 77, NAI.

72 Ibid.

73 Notes by Viceroy Chelmsford, 20 December 1919, Chelmsford Papers, MSS, EUR. E 264/55(c), IOLR.
realise that until he fulfilled the provisions of the Rawalpindi Treaty there was no possibility of beginning discussions. 74

Grant recommended that the Government of India should invite an Afghan delegation to India for discussion. He was of opinion that it was necessary for the Amir to come to an understanding with his neighbour in the north. But the Amir should not use Afghanistan as a base for Bolshevik intrigue against India. Regarding Indian Revolutionaries also, the Amir should not use Afghanistan as a base for operation against India. Apropos the tribes, he pointed out that their cession to Afghanistan was out of question. He further argued that the tribes were dependent on British India and not on Afghanistan, and that therefore, the Amir could not claim that the tribes should be ceded to Afghanistan. He suggested that the discussion should be continued on the above lines. 75

The Amir, in his letter of 23 February 1920, to the King Emperor, requested for facilities and assistance to be rendered to an Afghan deputation to England in connection with the question of Khilafat and the custody of the holy places. He also wanted to be acquainted with the real intentions of the British Government with regard to the following questions:

74 MSS EUR E 264/55(C), Notes, p. 16, Chelmsford Papers, IOLR.

75 Grants to Chelmsford, 23 February 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS. EUR. E 264/55(C), IOLR.
(a) that the Khilafat should have full and independent authority; (b) that the holy places should remain under the standard of the Khilafat and the interference by non-Muslims should be stopped. He wrote that "the very important and sacred question of the Islamic Khilafat is a matter which concerns Muhammadans themselves and that nobody else has the right by virtue of religion to interfere with it."76

The motives of the Amir were probably, first, to pose as champion of Islam; secondly, to place himself at the head of a combination of Muslim communities of Central Asia; and finally, to obtain a diplomatic foothold in London.77

The Government of India were in favour of encouraging the despatch of an Afghan deputation to London.78 The Secretary of State for India, however, did not approve of the idea and advised the Viceroy that the Amir should be informed that his delegates could not arrive in England before the conclusion of the Turkish settlement. He made it clear to the Viceroy that as Afghanistan did not take part in the war she had no right to claim a voice in the peace settlement.79

76 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Pro. 31, NAI.
77 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 8 March 1920, Chelmsford Papers, MSS EUR, E 264/55(C), IOLR.
78 MSS. EUR E 264/55(C), Notes by Dobbs, p. 31, Chelmsford Papers, IOLR.
79 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Pro. 327, NAI.
Preparations were, however, being made for bilateral negotiations. The British delegates were instructed that the main object of the conference was free and frank discussion between the two parties. Among its object was to tide over the critical period of summer in which the British may be faced with a real threat from the tribes. The general lines laid down for the British delegates were that they should firmly but politely impress on the Afghan delegates that although the British Government sincerely wished to be friendly with Afghanistan and also respect her independence. The Afghans had by their recent conduct made it extremely difficult for the British to maintain such a friendly attitude. The British delegates were to elicit from the Afghans what they really wanted from the British, to explain what was really wanted by the British from them, and to check the absurd and exaggerated pretensions of the Afghans. Further, although a complete cessation of Afghan relations with the Bolsheviks was not to be requested, the delegates were to insist that the Bolsheviks should not, by Afghan assistance, be enabled to disturb the tranquility of British India. As regards the frontier tribes, it was to be explicitly stated that there could be no question whatever of any concession to the Afghan claims and that any influence which they might possess over the tribes must be exerted in favour of peace. 80

80 Notes by Dobbs, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.
On 9 March 1920, the Viceroy intimated to the Amir the names of the British delegates and suggested that the venue would be Mussoorie. He was invited to send his delegates so as to reach Peshawar en route to Mussoorie, not later than 5 April 1920. Nothing was heard from Kabul until 7 April 1920, on which date the Assistant Political Agent, Khyber, was informed that the Afghan delegation had reached the frontier. The Chief Afghan delegate was Mahmud Tarzi. The delegates were held up, owing to the absence of a letter from the Amir. However, on 10 April 1920, a letter from the Amir, dated the 31 March 1920, to the Viceroy intimating the names of the delegates reached Simla. On 12 April the delegates were allowed to cross the border and were received with all due honours.

81 Sir Henry Dobbs, Foreign Secretary was Chief British delegate for the Mussoorie Conference and Pears, Revenue Commissioner at Peshawar, Colonel Muspart of the General Staff, and Nawab Sir Abdul Qayum, who served in the North-West Frontier Province, were members of the delegation.

82 Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Pro. 323, NAI.

83 Chelmsford to Montague, 10 April 1920, Montague Papers, Roll No. 1833, NAI.

84 Members of the Afghan delegation who assisted Mahmud Tarzi consisted of Ghulam Mohammad, Commerce Minister, Abdul Hadi, official in Foreign Department, Diwan Narinjan Das, Finance Member, and Colonel Pir Mohammad.

The Afghan and British delegates reached Mussoorie on 14 and 15 April. On 16 April, the Afghan delegates attended the Friday prayers at the Landour Mosque near Mussoorie, where Mahmud Tarzi made a speech which was widely published in the Indian press. He said that the main object of his delegation's visit to India was the discussion of the Khilafat question. He added:

Muslims need not be disappointed as the protector of the religion of Islam is the gracious God. The almighty God according to his promises will liberate the holy places from the hands of foreigners. The object of our deputation also is to demand from the British Government that no Muslim nations should refrain from interfering in the question of Khilafat and the holy places. 86.

At the first meeting which was held on 17 April 1920, Mahmud Tarzi requested clarification of British policy on the following matters:

(1) In view of the intense religious feeling which had recently been aroused in Afghanistan and the neighbouring Muslim countries, it was of the utmost importance that the British Government should declare its policy with regard to the Khilafat question and the future of the holy places of Islam.

(2) With regard to the tribes on the Indian frontier which were connected by race, religion, and language with the Afghans, it was necessary that the British Government

86 Foreign and Political Department, Frontier, B, December 1920, 29-31, Notes, p. 2, NAI.
should declare its intentions towards them and the tracts occupied by them.

(3) It was also desirable that the British Government, the old friend of Afghanistan, should make plain its intentions with regard to the freedom and complete independence of Afghanistan. 87

As regards the holy places, Dobb explained that the Sharif of Mecca was independent and there had never been any British forces in the Hejaz. He agreed that the British had given the Sharif subsidy, but claimed that it had been given during the war. British policy in regard to the Turkish Empire was governed by political and not religious motives and no modifications in the Turkish peace terms could be made out of regard for Afghan sentiment. Nor could assistance be rendered towards sending an Afghan delegation to the peace conference, membership of which was confined to the belligerent powers. 88

At the first meeting, it was mentioned that the Afghan Delegation at the Rawalpindi Conference had presented a Memorandum to the effect that the frontier tribes should not be punished on account of their help to the Amir within the probationary period of six months. The Chief British Representative, however, pointed out that the British Government

87 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 18 April 1920, L/P&S/10/810, IOLR.

88 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 24, NAI.
had repeatedly made it clear that the tribes were British subjects and they could deal with them in their own way and time. 89

The question of agitation among the frontier tribes was stated by Dobbs to have three branches:
(a) Afghan agitation;
(b) Bolshevik agitation, and their intention to arm tribes with the connivance of Afghanistan;
(c) Indian revolutionary agitation in the tribal territory.

The British view was that any Afghan encouragement to such agitation was tantamount to an act of hostility. 90

Tarzi, in a counter statement, reminded Dobbs that the world was in a disturbed state over the Khilafat and other questions and British troops were tired of war. His assessment indicated British weakness and he, therefore, thought that it was the right moment to recover Afghan territories taken over by the British during the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. Tarzi bluntly said:

what we require of you is this...that you hand over Waziristan and perhaps other parts of the frontier to us, with a subsidy sufficient to pay for their administration, and that you lend us advisers and material for the development of our country. If you will do this, we will be your friends and you shall have peace on your borders. If you refuse we will make an arrangement.

89 Proceeding of the Fifth Meeting, Mussoorie Conference, 7 June 1920, Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, NAI.

90 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 13, NAI.
with the Bolsheviks, obtain help from them, continue to allow the Bolsheviks and Indian seditionists to conspire in Kabul for the overthrow of your domination in India. 91

At the fifth meeting he warned the British: "...We are therefore, valuable as friends and dangerous as enemies. If you do not make us your friends, we will be against you." 92

The Chief British delegate, Dobbs, declared that the British Empire was the most powerful empire in the world and could not accept Afghan demands. He added: "Do you really not see that if you go back to Kabul with a plan of this kind, if you begin again using our tribes against us and allowing the Bolsheviks to arm our tribes against us, there can only be one end, and that is war." 93 Refuting the British allegations that the propaganda of the Bolsheviks and the Indian revolutionaries had been carried out with the approval of the Afghan Government, 94 Tarzi added: "The moment friendship between the two countries is established we can stop all kinds of causes of dissension, and we shall do so with great delight." 95

91 Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting, Mussoorie Conference, 7 June 1920, Foreign and Political Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, NAI.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Colonel Shah Daula, Administrator of Wana, and Haji Abdul Razak of Kabul, instigated the tribes.

95 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 38.
The Afghan Minister of Commerce, Ghulam Mohammad, who was a member of the delegation, even suggested the cession of the tribal areas to Afghanistan:

If we become friends then there will be no incitements. If you leave the frontier tribes to us, we will of course manage them. While you consider them to be under yourselves you complain that we incite them to attack you. While the frontier tribes are yours we cannot be responsible for their actions. We can only be responsible if the frontier tribes are left to us, and a yearly allowance is given for this purpose. 96

At the ninth meeting held on 24 June the Afghan delegation accused the British officers of habitually instigating the Afghan tribes, the Mangals, the Mohmands of Lalpura, the Hazaras, and other against the Amir. Dobbs admitted that the British had conducted such propaganda but maintained that this was done during the war and hence was a legitimate activity. 97

While the Mussoorie Conference was going on, Commander-in-Chief Nadir Khan and Abdul Qadus Khan, Afghan Chief Minister and Governor of Kandahar continued their intrigues in British territory. Afghan regular forces occupied Tandisar in the Kurram and Lambarbat in Chitral. In Baluchistan a headman loyal to the British was abducted on

96 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, November 1920, 1-582, Pro. 421, NAI.

97 Proceedings of the Ninth Meeting, Mussoorie Conference, 24 June 1920, Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, NAI.
orders from the Afghan administrator of Spin Boldak, and mixed bands of British outlaws and Afghan tribesmen had been encouraged to attack British territory. On 24 April 1920, the British delegate, on receiving news of the occupation of Lambarabat, suspended the conference. DOBBS left for Simla to consult the Viceroy. The Afghan delegation, on their part, objected to the British operations in Waziristan and declared suspension of the conference. A note to this effect was handed over to Sir Abdul Qayum.

The official conversation remained suspended until 3 June. The period of suspension, however, was not wasted. There were frequent unofficial meetings between the Chief representatives of the two governments. During the interval Tarzi in a private discussion told Dobbs that if Waziristan were ceded to Afghanistan, his government would make a defensive and offensive alliance with the British against the Bolsheviks. He added that this would enable the British to extricate Bukhara, Khiva and the Turcomans from the Russian influence. He claimed that his government had already sent six guns and military instructors to the Amir of Bukhara. Dobbs dismissed this proposal and said that it was not possible for Britain to give territorial concessions.


99 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 26 April 1920, L/P&S/10/810, IOIR.

100 _Itihad-i-Mashriqi_, 5 June 1920.
During the break, Abdul Hadi Khan, member of the Afghan delegation, had left for Kabul in order to consult the Amir and other officials. After his return, Tarzi wrote two letters to Dobbs, in which he wanted the suspension of British operations in Waziristan and asked for explanations regarding British policy regarding the Turkish settlement.¹ There was no response from Dobbs to Tarzi's letters. During the interval the Afghans sought to justify their encroachments at Tandisar and Lambarbat by arguing that these places had been occupied during the war and that their retention by them was a set off against a British encroachment in the shape of the occupation of Torkham. When the Afghans realized that the British were firm, they finally evacuated both places and also released the headman abducted from Baluchistan. The Afghans evacuated these two posts on the condition that the British army would not penetrate there during the period when peace terms were being discussed. The Afghans during the interval continuously demanded an assurance that the Waziristan operations would be suspended during the conference. During this period, the Allies had finally formulated and announced the Turkish Peace Terms and the Secretary of State for India had come to a decision on British policy in Waziristan.²

On the resumption of negotiations, Dobbs presented to the Afghan Delegation a written statement dated 7 June 1920,

¹ Viceroy to Secretary of State, 10 May 1920, L/P&S/10/810, IOLR.
² Foreign and Political Department, Frontier B, 20-31, Notes, p. 5, NAI.
summarizing the British attitude towards Afghanistan, wherein the Afghans were warned that war would be inevitable in case they continued intrigues with the tribes. Further, it was demanded that the Afghan Government should restrain Bolshevik emissaries and Indian 'seditionists' in Kabul from prosecuting their hostile propaganda in India and among the frontier tribes. The Afghans were warned that the gravest exception would be taken to any agreement which might be made with the Bolshevik Government facilitating intrigues by the latter in India.

The Afghan delegate replied that his country's government was too weak to resist the pressure of the Bolsheviks in the matter, and a hint was given that before making any attempt of the kind they would need considerable material assistance from India. The recent Bolshevik aggression on Persia at Enzeli was cited in support of the contention that compliance with British desires would inevitably expose Afghanistan to Bolshevik attack. According to Dobbs, the negotiations on this subject ended with a strong hint from the Afghan delegates that it was impossible for Afghanistan to avoid taking sides between two opposing forces like the British and the Bolsheviks and that unless the British were prepared at least to make a defensive alliance with Afghanistan, she would be forced to go over to the

103 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, File 137, NAI.
Bolsheviks. 104

At the eleventh and twelfth meetings, strong objections were raised to the demarcation of the border at Torkham effected ir. accordance with the Rawalpindi Treaty, on the ground that it constituted a departure from the Durand line. The British included Torkham in British territory under the ex parte demarcation carried out by Maffey in August 1919. 105 The Afghans maintained stoutly that they had been deceived regarding Torkham and had signed the Rawalpindi Treaty and consented to the ex parte demarcation on the distinct understanding that Torkham would be left to them. They maintained that the inclusion of Torkham in British territory was a practical violation of the frontiers settled by the Rawalpindi Treaty and that they were justified in committing, as a set-off, a similar violation by the continued occupation of Arnawai in Chitral territory. 106

The Afghan delegates had received special instructions from Nadir Khan, the Commander-in-Chief, to insist on this point. The Afghans were extremely bitter and they hinted several times that without some concessions on this issue, amity between the two countries was impossible. 107

104 Ibid.
105 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 85, NAI.
106 Viceroy to Secretary of State, 13 June 1920, L/P&S/10/810, IOLR.
107 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 86, NAI.
Regarding the British attitude towards Afghanistan's independence, there were six points on which the Afghan delegation had doubts:

(a) No answer had been given from the King-Emperor to the two letters addressed to him by the Amir on 10 September 1919 and 14 January 1920:

Dobbs explained that the first was a complimentary letter sent at a time when owing to Afghan negotiations with the Bolsheviks and intrigues with the tribes, the British Government had grave doubts as to the sincerity of the Amir's desire for British friendship. The second was a letter raising very important matters, and Dobbs asked to be excused from discussing the King's action. But in reality the Government of India decided that it was an issue of prestige and had therefore decided to ignore it for the time being.

(b) The omission to publish in the press, together with the Rawalpindi Treaty, Grant's letter admitting the freedom of Afghanistan to conduct its foreign relations.

Dobbs said that had the letter been published with the Treaty it would have only roused further feelings among the British people who were already excited against

108 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 39.
109 A letter was agreed upon in the Rawalpindi Conference admitting Afghanistan's freedom in its foreign relations, was signed by Grant and handed over to the Afghan delegation.
Afghanistan over the war. An assurance was given that the letter was equally binding with the Treaty.

(c) When an Afghan Envoy had been sent to India, the Viceroy's remarks gave the impression that the British Government did not intend to treat Afghanistan as an independent country.

Dobbs explained that this was not the British intention, but that it was considered 'that the presence of an Afghan Envoy in India provided for the despatch of business between the two countries better than would be done by an Afghan Minister in London'.

(d) The Afghan Government hoped that they would be allowed to have an Envoy in London, a Consul-General at the capital of India, with consuls at Calcutta, Bombay, and Karachi, and Vice-Consuls at Peshawar, Quetta, and Parachinar. They also hoped to receive a British Envoy and Consuls in Afghanistan.

The point was reserved for consideration at the time of negotiating a Treaty of Friendship. It was asserted that even if Afghanistan's requirements were not met in full, that would not imply a diminution of her national status.

(e) Grant had laid down such conditions inter alia the dismissal of Indian revolutionaries such as Mahendra Pratap, Obeidullah and Barakatullah and Bolshevik Missions and Bolshevik Agents from Afghanistan - the
fulfilment of which was incompatible with Afghan independence. 110

The Afghan delegation pointed out that any individual had a right of political asylum in a Muslim country. He added: "If our material interests were involved, and substantial friendship shown to us, we might perhaps be willing to waive some of these moral scruples." 111

At the resumption of the Conference on 7 June, Dobbs had made an important modification in the two conditions mentioned above, as laid down by Grant at Rawalpindi. He had said:

We do not even ask you to cease from relations with the Bolsheviks if you wish to maintain them. Far less do we ask you to attack the Bolsheviks. We ask you only to see that the Bolsheviks do not use you as a road for troubling us. We do not ask you to expel the Indian revolutionaries if you wish to keep them. We ask you only to take care that they shall not use your hospitality to trouble us, and in return for such friendship we wish to help you to become free, strong and prosperous. 112

The reason for this modification is apparent from a minute written by Dobbs on 12 December 1919:

110 Chelmsford to Montague, 25 August 1920, Montague Papers, Roll No. 1833, NAI.

111 Proceedings of the Fourth Meeting, Mussoorie Conference, Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, NAI.

112 Proceedings of the Fifth Meeting, 7 June 1920, Mussoorie Conference, Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1920, 1-147, NAI.
Another point which I suggest we should seriously consider is the possibility of the British Government coming to some arrangement in the next few months for a recognition of the Bolshevik Government. We should look very foolish if, shortly after having made immense efforts to make the Afghans get rid of the Bolshevik emissaries, we had to consent to their admittance.

The omission to address the Amir in correspondence as His Majesty was also interpreted by the Afghans as an indication that the British did not recognise him as an independent ruler. The British Government took the view that as friendship had not yet been established between the two Governments, it was not appropriate for the King to correspond directly with the Amir. The British attitude in this regard can be understood from the Secretary of State's private letter to the Viceroy where in he stated that:

I do not see why the Amir should not get his title eventually, but as I have telegraphed to you it should be better for him to get it quietly after he has behaved himself. The more importance he attaches to it, the more value we shall give to it. After all, I do not see that he can expect to have it as a right. It was only given to some of his forbears, and so far as I know there has never been any understanding that it should be given as a pure matter of course.

The subsidy to the Afghan Government was another issue which was raised by Abdul Hadi, a member of the Afghan

113 Dobbs to Grant, 12 December 1919, *Chelmsford Papers*, MSS. EUR. E 264/55(C), IOLR.

114 Montague to Chelmsford, 13 May 1920, *Montague Papers*, Roll No. 1831, NAI.
delegation, at the eleventh meeting. He claimed that the financial weakness of Afghanistan had resulted from the friendship with the British Government. He, therefore, asked that the crore of rupees promised to Amir Habibullah together with the balance of the annual subsidy due to him, should now be given. 115 Dobbs replied at the thirteenth meeting by pointing out that the position had changed radically since the death of the late Amir with whom there had been proved an uninterrupted friendship. He added:

Firstly, the friendship of the Afghan state has not been uninterrupted. Secondly, the British control of foreign relations has by mutual consent been given up....The two situations are not really comparable. Nevertheless, the British Government, from a wide point of view, recognise that the progress and contentment of Afghanistan is the best way to secure that she shall be a peaceful and helpful neighbour. 116

Internal developments in Afghanistan were having an impact on the conference. By the end of June 1920, Mahmud Tarzi was perplexed by reports from Kabul about the loss of his influence at court. He was anxious to finish the discussions and return quickly to Kabul to retrieve his position. He feared that his return without some explicit statement of the offers which the British were prepared to make would be gravely misunderstood by the Afghan people. He, therefore,

115 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 85, NAI.

116 Proceeding of the Thirteenth Meeting, 13 July 1920, Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, NAI.
pressed for a definition of British intentions, especially in the matter of financial assistance to Afghanistan. At the same time, news arrived that Suritz at Kabul had at last been authorised by the Soviet Government to make Afghanistan an offer of money, arms and material, and it seemed probable that the Amir would be forced by his financial straits to accept this offer, unless he was assured by the British. In the meanwhile the Secretary of State sanctioned eighteen lakhs of rupees in the event of a Treaty of Friendship being concluded.\footnote{117}

The Afghans had represented in a series of private meetings the emptiness of their treasury. They also sought the material development of their country which was impossible without British help. The Afghan delegates asked the British to help them in the construction of railways, telegraphs and factories, in the development of their mines and in the education of their youths in Europe. They especially mentioned the project of a railway from Chaman to Kandahar and onwards along the Helmand, as one which they were anxious to take up, because the British railway via Nushki to the Persian frontier was, they said, diverting from Afghanistan the through trade between India and Khurasan and Central Asia and was reducing their customs revenue. At the same time they asked for the payment of the one crore of rupees which had been

\footnote{117 Ibid.}
promised to the late Amir on account of the expense incurred by him in maintaining neutrality in the World War and for the arrears of Habibullah's subsidy forfeited under the Rawalpindi treaty. 118

Dobbs discussed the various forms in which material assistance might be given. These included the grant of a subsidy; free transit of war material through India to Afghanistan; a gift of aircraft; assistance in the education of Afghan youths in Europe, in the constructions of railways, telegraphs and telephones, industrial development, and in the establishment of a banking system. The possibility of a rebate of customs duties on goods transitting India to Afghanistan and of permission being given to establish Afghan Trade Agencies in India was also indicated. Postal arrangements between India and Afghanistan were also discussed, and the re-establishment of an official Afghan post-office at Peshawar definitely and firmly refused. 119

Permission to export opium, hemp drugs, and rouble notes from Afghanistan to countries outside India was also requested, but no definite settlement reached. Regarding rouble notes, Dobbs said that he would ask his Government whether permission under the Rouble Notes Ordinance could

118 Dobbs to Government of India, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.

119 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 120, NAI.
be given to export notes from Afghanistan to any place outside India where they were current and could be exchanged or purchased.

The Afghan Minister of Commerce said that he knew they were sold in London and Shangai. He added that the Afghans wanted to sell pre-Bolshevik currency of the Tsar who had been British allies. The Afghans delegates were rather disappointed that they could not secure a promise regarding the export of Rouble notes from Afghanistan through India.

About the middle of July an important proposal was made by Dobbs, in response to approaches made to him by the Afghan delegates, to conclude immediately a Treaty of Friendship. He thought it would be advantageous to settle the matter with the Afghan Government and to eliminate Bolshevik intrigues and Turkish influence in Afghanistan. Jamal Pasha was on his way to Kabul and could spoil Afghanistan's relations with the British. The Viceroy thought that Dobb's arguments were reasonable and could be considered. But the Chief of the General Staff argued that the Government of India could not agree to a permanent treaty to be concluded on the spot. The Amir had never

120 The Minister of Commerce, Sardar Ghulam Mohammad Khan had himself invested heavily in these notes and his disappointment was partly personal.

121 Dobbs to Government of India, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.

122 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 139, NAI.
informed the Viceroy that Tarzi had authority to sign a Treaty of Friendship. He added: "Without being absolutely assured that Tarzi's credentials are genuine, we could not afford to run the risk of the signature of a solemn treaty and of its subsequent repudiation by the Amir." The matter was forwarded to the Viceroy's Council where it was decided that an aide memoire should be given to the Afghan delegates and the conclusion of a treaty of friendship should be avoided. The Government of India, after considering the matter did not consult the Secretary of State for India and dropped the idea of signing a Friendship Treaty with Afghanistan. But the Secretary of State was informed about Dobbs' suggestion. The Government of India lastly came to the conclusion that the delegation should return to Kabul with a written statement given by the Chief British representative at the Mussoorie Conference. On the basis of that aide memoire a Treaty of Friendship could be negotiated at once if the Amir on his part was prepared to enter into negotiation on those terms. A delegation openly authorised to negotiate a Treaty of Friendship should be despatched by the Amir. It was considered essential that the Treaty be negotiated by a delegation having fresh credentials on behalf of the Amir.

123 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 90, NAI.

124 Dobbs to Maffey, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/908, IOLR.

125 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 90, NAI.
The aide memoire originated from the discussions at Mussoorie. Some important correspondence took place between London, the Government of India, and the British Chief delegate at Mussoorie, regarding the necessity of having some tangible gains from the Conference, by informing the Afghan delegation of the British views as to the mutual obligations which should in future be undertaken by the British and Afghan Government.

On 15 June Dobbs telegraphed to the Government of India the reasons for obtaining something tangible from the Conference:

During the last few days I have received numerous informal messages from the Afghan delegates begging me to represent to the Government the serious disadvantages of the present limited scope of discussions. Tarzi says that we should strike while the iron is hot, and by definitely laying down now, in explicit terms, what we are prepared to do for Afghanistan and what we expect of her, anchor Afghanistan to our side. He would then return to Afghanistan with these definite proposals and his Government could then decide immediately what its future policy shall be. 126

Dobbs' views were supported by the Government of India and the Viceroy, in his telegraphic letter No. 759-3, dated 19 June 1920 to the Secretary of State for India, suggested:

Besides the foregoing arguments there are the additional new facts that Suritz has now received definite authority to make Afghanistan an offer of money, arms and material and that the Amir is in desperate straits for money as

126 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 26, NAI.
is evidenced by the recent serious conspiracy in Kabul which was caused by lack of sufficient funds to pay officials and troops... If the adoption of this policy is not permitted, the Amir, in order to obtain funds without delay, may be forced into the arms of the Bolsheviks. 127

Due to the changed circumstances further insistence was not made on the probationary period and the proposal of an aide-memoire was sanctioned by the Secretary of State, and was presented to the Afghan delegates at the close of the Conference. 128

The Government of India achieved what it wanted from the Conference. The summer of trouble had passed without a serious mishap on the frontier. As Dobbs remarked, "at least one of the most critical periods in the recent history of the East will have been passed through with less difficulty than might have been anticipated." 129

The differences between the two Governments were discussed in the frankest manner. The Afghan delegation revised many of its ideas and shed some of its pretensions. The Afghans had learnt the limits up to which they could go. 130

The seventeenth and last meeting was held on 24 July 1920, when Dobbs declared that he had received information from

127 Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 41, NAI.
128 Maconachie, n. 8, p. 43.
129 Dobbs to Foreign Secretary, 6 August 1920, L/P&S/10/809, IOLR.
130 Ibid.
the political Agent of Kurram that the Afghan forces had withdrawn from Tandisar. It will be recalled that the withdrawal of the Afghan forces from Lambarbat had already taken place. He requested the Afghan delegates to withdraw their forces from Arnawai; otherwise the conclusion of the Friendship Treaty would prove impossible. Dobbs presented the Afghan delegation the following aide mémoire containing provisions similar to the draft treaty, the conclusion of which was postponed to a later date:

"Note on Proposals of the British and Afghan Governments discussed by the delegates of the two States at the Conference held at Mussoorie, between the months of April and July 1920, as a preliminary to definite negotiations for a Treaty of Friendship:

(1) It was agreed that it is in the mutual interest of both Governments that the Afghan State shall be strong and prosperous.

(2) The British Government will be prepared to reiterate the undertaking, already given by them, to respect absolutely the integrity and independence of Afghanistan, both in internal and external affairs, and to restrain to the best of their ability all persons within the British boundaries from taking action obnoxious to the Afghan Government.

(3) The British Government expect that the Afghan Government will similarly undertake to prevent to the best of their ability all action within the boundaries of Afghanistan,
whether by their own subjects or by British subjects who are or may in the future be refugees from the British Dominions, or by subjects of other nations, which may tend to stir up strife or produce enmity against the British Government within the boundaries of India. The British Government expect that the Afghan Government will undertake in particular to restrain their subordinate officials and others from inciting the frontier tribes within the British boundaries against the British, to prevent to the best of their ability the passage through Afghan territory to the British frontier of arms and ammunition and of persons intending to raise an agitation against the British Government, to prohibit preparations within Afghan territory for making raids into British territory, to punish persons found guilty of committing such raids, and to abstain themselves from all interference with tribes or persons on the British side of the frontier, and from all kinds of political propaganda within the British Empire.

(4) If the Afghan Government were willing to give formal undertakings as set forth in the foregoing paragraph, then the British Government, in the event of a Treaty of Friendship being signed, and in order to show their sympathy with the desire of the Afghan Government to develop their country, would be willing to consider, as part of a Treaty of Friendship, the grant, for so long
as the Afghan Government performed its undertakings to the satisfaction of the British Government, of assistance and concessions to Afghanistan on the following lines:

(a) A yearly subvention of eighteen lakhs of rupees.

(b) Reasonable assistance towards the education in Europe, at such places as might be agreed upon between the two governments, of a moderate number of Afghan youths, to be selected by the Afghan Government with due regard to their educational qualifications.

(c) Reasonable assistance, to be granted gradually, as financial and other circumstances might permit, towards the construction in Afghanistan of Railways, telegraph lines, and factories, and towards the development of mines.

(d) Technical advice regarding irrigation.

(e) The manufacture and supply of specially prepared paper for the printing of Afghan currency notes and (if necessary) provision of machines for note printing.

(f) Technical advice regarding the establishment of an Afghan Government or Commercial Bank, and regarding possibilities of improving the system of commercial credit in Afghanistan.

(g) The restoration of the privilege of importing arms and ammunition and military stores through India to Afghanistan, provided that the Government of Afghanistan
shall first have signed the Arms Traffic Convention, and provided that such importation shall only be made in accordance with the provisions of that Convention.

(h) The grant in respect of all goods imported into India at British ports for re-export to Afghanistan, and exported to Afghanistan by routes to be agreed upon between the two Governments, of a rebate at the time and place of export of the full amount of customs duty levied upon such goods, subject to a deduction of not more than one-eighth of such duty as re-compense for the work of customs registration, and provided that such goods shall be transported through India in sealed packages which shall not be broken before their export from India.

(i) An understanding to levy no customs duty on such goods of Afghan origin or manufacture as may be lawfully imported into India, provided that such goods shall not be exempted from the levy of the present Khyber tolls, and from the levy of octroi in any Indian Municipality, in which octroi is, or may be hereafter, levied.

(j) An undertaking to permit the export from Afghanistan through India, in bond, and in sealed packages, by routes to be agreed upon between the two Governments, of opium and charas produced and manufactured in Afghanistan, provided that such opium and charas shall
not be despatched, from Indian ports to any destination to which the British Government are under an obligation to prohibit or limit the despatch of opium or charas.

(k) The facilitating of the interchange of postal articles between India and Afghanistan, and arranging in accordance with a separate postal agreement for the establishment of offices of exchange on their frontiers, provided that neither Government shall be permitted to establish a post office in the territory of the other Government.

(l) Permission to establish at Peshawar and Quetta trading agencies of the Afghan Government, provided that the personnel and property of the agencies shall be subject to the operations of all British laws and orders and to the jurisdiction of British courts, and that they shall not be recognised by the British authorities as having any official or privileged position.

(m) Permission to establish Afghan Consulates at Calcutta, Bombay and Karachi, provided the Afghan Government permit the establishment of British Consulates at Jalalabad, Ghazni, and Kandahar. The Consuls of both Governments, with their staffs, to enjoy all the privileges conceded by international practice to such officials.

(5) In the event of the conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship the British Government would be prepared, on its
signature, to make the following gifts to the Afghan Government, as immediate and tangible tokens of the sincerity of their intentions:

Either the following:

A

(a) 160 miles of steel telegraph posts, with a double wire, to be handed over either at Chaman or at Peshawar.
(b) 10 new large motor lorries with spares.
(c) 20 new touring cars with spares, American make, owing to difficulty in obtaining prompt delivery of new English cars.
(d) 300 soldiers' pals (bivouack tents),

Or the following:

B

460 miles of steel telegraph posts with a double wire.

(N.B. - This would be sufficient for the construction of a telegraph system from the British frontier to Kabul and from Kabul to Kandahar; but it must be explained that immediate delivery could be made only of 160 miles, which would suffice for the line from the British frontier to Kabul. The balance of 300 miles could not be made available in less than a year from now, owing to shortage of material in India).
(6) The following points are reserved for further consideration at the time of negotiating a Treaty of Friendship:

(a) Permission to export from Afghanistan rouble notes through India to countries outside India where their entry is permitted.

(b) Representation of the Afghan Government in London."\(^{131}\)

\(^{131}\) Foreign Department, Secret Frontier, January 1921, 1-147, Pro. 96, NAI.