Chapter – IV

Composition of Provisional Government of India in Afghanistan
Composition of Provisional Government of India in Afghanistan

Contents

1 Introduction
1.1 Niedermyre-Hentig Expedition
1.2 Hindu-German Conspiracy –Drang Nach Osten
2 First Afghan expedition
3 Second expedition
3.1 Composition
3.2 Organisation
4 Journeys
4.1 Persia and Isfahan
4.2 East Persian cordon
4.3 Reach to Afghanistan
4.3.1 Entry in Herat
4.3.2 Entry in Kabul
5 Afghan intrigues
5.1 Meeting with Emir Habibullah
5.2 Meetings with Nasrullah khan and Amanullah khan
5.3 Political developments
5.3.1 Formation of provisional government of India at Kabul
5.3.2 Proclamation of prov govt of India
5.3.3 Activities of prov. Govt., at a glance
5.4 Draft Afghan-German friendship treaty
6 Mission’s conclusion
7 British Counter efforts
7.1 Sistan force
7.2 British Intelligence efforts
7.3 Diplomatic measures
8 Influences
8.1 Influences on Afghanistan
8.2 Influence on Soviet Russian Eastern policy
8.3 Influences on British India
9 Epilogues or conclusion
10 References
Introduction

A provisional government is an emergency or interim government set up when a political void has been created by the collapse of a very large government. The early provisional governments were created to prepare for the return of royal rule. Irregularly convened assemblies during the English Revolution, such as Confederate Ireland (1641-49), were described as "provisional." The practice of using "provisional government" as part of a formal name can be traced to Talleyrand government in France in 1814. The numerous provisional governments during the Revolutions of 1848 gave the word its modern meaning: A liberal government established to prepare for elections. The most notable provisional government was the Russian Provisional Government in 1917.

Provisional governments are generally unelected and tend to arise in association with or in the aftermath of civil or foreign wars. In a time of crisis a collapsed government may reform with provisional status under a coalition. Provisional Government of India was a provisional government-in-exile established by Indian Nationalists in Afghanistan during World War I with support from the Central Powers. Its purpose was to enrol support from both the Afghan Emir, as well as Tsarist (and later Bolshevik) Russia, China and Japan for the Indian Movement.

The Niedermayer-Hentig Expedition

The Niedermayer-Hentig Expedition was a diplomatic mission sent by the Central Powers to Afghanistan in 1915-1916. The purpose was to encourage Afghanistan to declare full independence from the United Kingdom, enter World War I on the side of the Central Powers, and attack British India. The expedition was sent as a part of the Indo-German efforts to provoke a nationalist revolution in India. Nominally headed by the exiled Indian prince Raja Mahendra Pratap, the expedition was a joint operation of Germany and Turkey and was led by the German Army officers Oskar Niedermayer and Werner Otto Von Hentig. Other participants included members of the Indian nationalist organisation called the Berlin Committee, including Maulavi Barkatullah and C. R. Pillai, while the Turkish effort was represented by Kazim Bey, a close confidante of Enver Pasha.
Britain saw the expedition as a serious threat. Britain and its ally Russia unsuccessfully attempted to intercept it in Persia during the summer of 1915. Britain waged a covert intelligence and diplomatic offensive, including personal interventions by the Viceroy Lord Hardinge and King George V, to maintain Afghan neutrality. The mission failed in its main task of rallying Afghanistan, under Emir Habibullah Khan, to the German and Turkish war effort, but it influenced other major events. In Afghanistan, the expedition triggered reforms and drove political turmoil, culminating in the assassination of the Emir in 1919, precipitating the Third Afghan War. It influenced the Kalmyk Project of nascent Bolshevik Russia to propagate socialist revolution in Asia, with one goal being the overthrow of the British Raj. Other consequences included formation of the Rowlatt Committee to investigate sedition in India as influenced by Germany and Bolshevism, and changes in the Raj's approach to the Indian independence movement immediately after World War I.

**Hindu-German Conspiracy and Drang Nach Osten**

In August 1914, World War I began when alliance obligations arising from the war between Serbia and Austria-Hungary brought Germany and Russia to war, while Belgium directly triggered Britain's entry. In November, after a series of military events and political intrigues, Russia declared war on Turkey, causing Turkey to join the Central Powers in fighting the Entente Powers. In response to war with Russia and Britain, and further motivated by alliance with Turkey, Germany accelerated plans to weaken its enemies by targeting their colonial empires, including Russia in Turkestan and Britain in India, for political agitation. (Hughes Thomas L2002:1)

Germany nurtured pre-war links with Indian nationalists. For years, Indian nationalists had used Germany, Turkey, Persia, the United States, and other countries as bases for anti-colonial work directed against Britain. As early as 1913, revolutionary publications in Germany regularly referred to the approaching war between Germany and Britain and the possibility of Germany supporting Indian nationalists. (Hughes Thomas L2002:2) In the war's early months, German newspapers devoted considerable coverage to Indian distress, social problems, and British colonial exploitation.

German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg encouraged this activity. (Hoover Karl 1985:3) This German effort was led by prominent archaeologist
and historian Max von Oppenheim, who headed the new Intelligence Bureau for the East and formed the Berlin Committee, which was later renamed the Indian Independence Committee. The Berlin Committee offered money, arms, and military advisors according made by the German foreign office and Indian revolutionaries in exile such as the Ghadar Party in North America. From elsewhere in Asia and from the United States, clandestine shipments of arms and men reached India with which the planners hoped to trigger a nationalist mutiny. (Strachan Hew2001:4)

In Turkey and Persia, nationalist work was evident by 1909, under the leadership of Sardar Ajit Singh and Sufi Amba Prasad. (Yadav B.D.2002:5) Reports from 1910 indicate that Germany was already contemplating efforts to threaten India through Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan. Germany had built close diplomatic and economic relationships with both Turkey and Persia from the late 19th century. Von Oppenheim had mapped Turkey and Persia while working as German secret agent. The Kaiser toured Constantinople, Damascus and Jerusalem in 1898 to bolster the Turkish relationship and to portray solidarity with Islam, a religion professed by millions of subjects of the British Empire, in India and elsewhere.

The German Intelligence Bureau for the East spread propaganda through the region referring to the Kaiser as Haji Wilhelm, fostered rumours that the Kaiser had converted to Islam following a secret trip to Mecca, and portrayed him as a saviour of Islam. (Hughes Thomas L2002:6)

In Turkey in 1913, a coup led by Enver Pasha sidelined Sultan Mohamed V and concentrated power in the hands of a junta. Despite the nature of the new government, Turkey retained its traditional influence over the Muslim world. Turkey ruled Hejaz until the Arab Revolt of 1916 and controlled the Muslim holy city of Mecca throughout the war. Its Sultan's title of Caliph was recognised as legitimate by most Muslims, including in Afghanistan and India.

Once at war, Turkey joined Germany in taking aim at the opposing Entente Powers and their extensive empires in the Muslim world. Enver Pasha had the Sultan proclaim Jihad. (Hughes Thomas L2002:7) His hope was to provoke and aid a vast Muslim revolution against the Entente Powers, particularly by Muslims in India.
Early in the war, the Emir of Afghanistan declared neutrality. The Emir feared the destabilizing influence on his subjects of the Sultan's call to jihad as Turkey's entry aroused widespread nationalist and pan-Islamic sentiments in Afghanistan and Persia. The Anglo-Russian entente of 1907 designated Afghanistan to the British sphere of influence. Britain nominally controlled Afghanistan's foreign policy and the Emir was granted a monetary subsidy by Britain. However, in reality, Britain had almost no effective control over Afghanistan. For Britain, Afghanistan was perceived as the only state capable of invading India, and remained a serious threat. (Hughes Thomas L2002:8)

The first Afghan expedition

In the first week of August 1914, the German Foreign Office and military, including von Moltke, suggested attempting to use the pan-Islamic movement to destabilise the British Empire and begin an Indian revolution. The argument was reinforced by Germanophile explorer Sven Hedin in Berlin two weeks later. General Staff memoranda in the last weeks of August confirmed the perceived feasibility of the plan, predicting that an invasion by the Emir of Afghanistan could cause a revolution in India. (Hughes Thomas L2002:9)

With war, revolutionary unrest increased in India. Some Hindu and Muslim leaders secretly left to seek help of the Central Powers for an Indian revolution. The pan-Islamic movement in India, particularly the Darul Uloom Deoband, also made plans for an insurrection in the North-west India with support from Afghanistan and the Central Powers. (Jalal ayesha2007:10) Mahmud al Hasan, the principal of the Deoband School, left India to seek the help of Galib Pasha, the Turkish governor of Hejaz. Another Deoband leader, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, travelled to Kabul to seek the support of the Emir of Afghanistan. They initially planned to raise an Islamic army headquartered at Medina, with an Indian contingent at Kabul. Mahmud al Hasan was to command this army. (Reetz Deitrich2007:11) While at Kabul, Maulana came to the conclusion that focusing on the Indian Freedom Movement would best serve the pan-Islamic cause. Ubaidullah proposed to the Afghan Emir that he declare war against Britain. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad is known to have been involved in the movement prior to his arrest in 1916. (Qureshi M.N.1999:12)
Enver Pasha conceived an expedition to Afghanistan in 1914. He envisioned it as part of a pan-Islamic venture, directed by Turkey, with some German participation. The German delegation to this expedition, chosen by Oppenheim and Zimmermann, included Oskar Niedermayer and Wilhelm Wassmuss. An escort of nearly a thousand Turkish troops and German advisers were to accompany the delegation through Persia into Afghanistan, hoping to rally local tribes to jihad.

The mission faltered from conception. In an ineffective ruse, the Germans attempted to reach Turkey by travelling overland through Austria-Hungary in the guise of a travelling circus, eventually reaching neutral Romania. Their equipment, arms, and mobile wireless stations were confiscated by Romania after Romanian officials discovered the wireless aerials sticking out through the packaging of the "tent poles". (hopkrik, peter2001:13) Replacements could not be arranged for weeks, while the delegation waited at Constantinople. To reinforce the Islamic identity of the expedition, it was suggested that the Germans wear Turkish army uniforms, but this Germans refused. Differences between Turkish and German officers, including the reluctance of the Germans to accept Turkish control, further compromised the effort. Eventually, the expedition was aborted.

**Second Expedition**

In 1915, a second expedition was organised mainly through the German Foreign Office and the Indian leadership of the Berlin Committee. Germany was now intricately involved in the Indian revolutionary conspiracy and provided it with arms and funds. Lala Har Dayal was prominent among the Indian radicals liaising with Germany and was expected to lead the expedition. When Har Dayal declined, the exiled Indian prince Raja Mahendra Pratap became the leader. (Hopkrik, peter2001:14)

**Composition**

Raja Mahendra Pratap was the chief of the Indian princely states of Mursan and Hathras. He had been involved with the Indian National Congress in the 1900s, attending the Congress session of 1906. Raja Mahendra Pratap toured the world in 1907 and 1911, and in 1912 contributed substantial funds to Gandhi’s South African movement. Raja Mahendra Pratap left India for Geneva at the beginning of the war, where Virendranath Chattopadhyaya of the Berlin committee met him.
Chattopadhyaya's efforts, along with a letter from the Kaiser, were able to convince Pratap to lend his support to the Indian nationalist cause. (Popplewell Richard J. 1995:15) Raja Mahendra Pratap agreed to lend his weight on the condition that the arrangements were made with the Kaiser himself. A private audience with the Kaiser was arranged, at which Raja Mahendra Pratap agreed to nominally head the expedition.

Prominent among the German members of the delegation were Niedermayer and Von Hentig. (Hughes Thomas L2002:16) Von Hentig was a Prussian military officer who had served as the military attaché to Beijing in 1910 and Constantinople in 1912. Fluent in Persian, von Hentig was appointed secretary of the German legation to Tehran in 1913. In the early months of the war, von Hentig was serving on the Eastern front as a lieutenant with the Prussian 3rd Cuirassiers when he was recalled to Berlin for the expedition.

Niedermayer was tasked with the military aspect of this new expedition as it proceeded through the dangerous Persian desert between British and Russian areas of influence in Persia. The German delegation further included the German officers Günter Voigt and Kurt Wagner.

Accompanying Raja Mahendra Pratap in the expedition were other Indians from the Berlin Committee, notably Champakaraman Pillai and the Islamic scholar and Indian nationalist Maulavi Barkatullah. Barkatullah had behind him a long association with the Indian revolutionary movement, having worked with the India House in London and in New York from 1903. In 1909, he moved to Japan, where he continued his anti-British activities. Taking the post of Professor of Urdu at Tokyo University, he visited Constantinople in 1911. However, his Tokyo tenure was terminated under diplomatic pressure from Britain. He returned to the United States in 1914, later proceeding to Berlin, where he joined the efforts of the Berlin committee. Barkatullah had as early as 1895 been acquainted with Nasrullah Khan, the brother of the Afghan Emir, Habibulla Khan. (Hughes Thomas L2002:17)

Raja Mahendra Pratap chose six Hindu Afridi and Pathan volunteers from the prisoner-of-war camp at Zossen. Before the mission left Berlin, two more Germans joined the group: Major Dr. Karl Becker, who was familiar with tropical diseases and
also spoke Persian, and Walter Rohr, a young merchant fluent in Turkish and Persian. (Hughes Thomas L2002:18)

Organisation

The titular head of the expedition was Raja Mahendra Pratap, while Von Hentig was nominated the Kaiser's representative. He was to accompany and introduce Raja Mahendra Pratap and was responsible for the German diplomatic representations to the Emir. For the mission, an account with 100,000 pounds sterling in gold was deposited at the Deutsche Bank in Constantinople. Before it left Berlin, the expedition was also given gold plus gifts for the Emir, including jewelled watches, gold fountain pens, ornamental rifles, binoculars, cameras, cinema projectors, and an alarm clock.

Journey

To evade British and Russian intelligence, the group split up, beginning their journeys on different days and separately making their ways to Constantinople. Raja Mahendra Pratap and Von Hentig, with a German orderly and an Indian cook, began their journey in early spring 1915, travelling via Vienna, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia and Adrianople to reach Constantinople. At Vienna, they were met briefly by the deposed Khedive of Egypt, Abbas Hilmi. (Hughes Thomas L2002:19)

Persia and Isfahan

Reaching Constantinople on 17 April, the party waited at the Pera Palace Hotel for three weeks while further travel arrangements were arranged. During this time, Raja Mahendra Pratap and Hentig met with Enver Pasha and enjoyed an audience with the Sultan. On Enver Pasha's directions, a Turkish officer, Lieutenant Kasim Bey, was deputed to the expedition as the Turkish representative, bearing official letters addressed to the Afghan Emir and the Indian Princely states. At Constantinople, two Afghans from the United States joined.

The group, now approximately twenty people, left Constantinople in early May 1915. It crossed the Bosphorus to take the unfinished Baghdad Railway to Baghdad. The Taurus mountains were crossed on horseback taking as von Hentig reflected the same route taken by Alexander the Great, Paul the Apostle, and Frederick I. The group crossed the Euphrates at high flood to finally reach Baghdad towards the end of May. (Hughes Thomas L2002:20)
As Baghdad raised the spectre of an extensive network of British spies, the group again split. Raja Mahendra Pratap and von Hentig's party left Baghdad on 1 June 1915 to make their way towards the Persian border. Eight days later they were received by the Turkish military commander Raouf Bey at the Persian town of Krynd. Leaving Krynd, the party reached Turkish-occupied Kermanshah on 14 June 1915. Some members were sick with malaria and other tropical diseases. Leaving them under the care of Dr. Becker, von Hentig proceeded towards Tehran to decide on the subsequent plans with Prince Heinrich Reuss and Oskar Niedermayer. (Hughes Thomas L2002:21)

Persia at the time was divided into British and Russian spheres of influence with a neutral zone in between. Germany exercised influence over the central parts of the country through the consulate in Isfahan. The local population and the clergy, opposed to Russian and British semi-colonial designs on Persia, offered support. Through the end of June, Niedermayer and von Hentig’s groups reconnoitred Isfahan. The Viceroy of India was already receiving reports of pro-German sympathies among Persian and Afghan tribes. Details of the progress of the expedition were being keenly sought by British intelligence. By now, British and Russian columns close to the Afghan border, including the Seistan Force, were hunting for the expedition.

By early July, the sick at Kermanshah had recovered and rejoined the expedition. Camels and water bags were purchased, and the parties left Isfahan separately on July 3, 1915 for the journey through the desert, hoping to rendezvous at Tebbes, half way to the Afghan border. (Hughes Thomas L2002:22) Von Hentig’s group travelled with twelve pack horses, twenty four mules, and a camel caravan. Through the march, efforts were made to throw off the British and Russian patrols. False dispatches spread disinformation on the group's numbers, destination, and intention. To avoid extreme daytime heat, they travelled by night. Food was found or bought by Persian messengers sent ahead of the party. These scouts also helped identify hostile villages and helped find water. The group crossed the Persian desert in forty nights. Dysentery and delirium plagued the party, some Persian guides attempted to defect, and camel drivers had to be constantly vigilant for robbers. On 23 July, the group reached Tebbes the first Europeans after Sven Hedin.

**East Persian cordon**
The expedition now had to race against time. Ahead were British patrols of the East Persia Cordon and Russian patrols. The expedition was still 200 miles from the Afghan border. By September, the German codebook lost by Wilhelm Wassmuss had been deciphered, which further compromised the situation. Oskar Niedermayer, now in charge, emerged a brilliant tactician. He sent three feint patrols, one to northeast to draw away the Russian troops and one to the southeast to draw away the British, while a third patrol of thirty armed Persians, led by a German officer, Lieutenant Wagner, and was sent ahead of the main body to find a route. (Hopkrik, Peter2001:23)The first group, after leading the Russians astray, was to remain in Persia to establish a secret desert base as a refuge for the main party.

The second group, after luring away the British, was to fall back to Kermanshah and link with a separate German force that was in Persia at the time under Lieutenants Zugmayer and Griesinger. (Hopkrik, Peter2001:24) All three parties were ordered to spread misleading information about their movements to any nomads or villages they crossed. Meanwhile, the main body headed through Chehar Deh for the region of Birjand, closest to the Afghan frontier. (Hopkrik, Peter2001:25)

The group now moved both by day and by night. From nomads, Niedermayer learnt the whereabouts of British patrols looking for them. He lost men through exhaustion, defection and desertion. On occasions, deserters would take the party's spare water and horses at gunpoint. Nonetheless, the forced march brought the expedition on the second week of August near to the Birjand-Meshedroad, eighty miles from Afghanistan. Here, the Kaiser's bulkier and heavier gifts to the Emir, including the German wireless sets, were buried in the desert for retrieval later. (Hopkrik, Peter 2001:26) An advance patrol reported seeing British columns on the road.

However, even here, Niedermayer escaped. His group had covered 255 miles in seven days, through the barren Dasht-e Kavir. On 19 August 1915 the expedition reached the Afghan frontier. Raja Mahendra Pratap's memoirs describes the group as left with approximately fifty men, less than half the number who set out from Isfahan seven weeks earlier. Dr. Becker's camel caravan was lost and he was later captured by Russians. Only seventy of the 170 of the horses and baggage animals survived. (Hopkrik, Peter2001:27)

Reach to Afghanistan
Crossing into Afghanistan, the group found fresh water in an irrigation channel by a deserted hamlet. Albeit teeming with leeches, the water saved the group from dying of thirst. Marching for another two days, it reached the vicinity of Herat, where they were able to make their first contact with Afghan authorities. (Hopkrik, Peter 2001:28) Unsure what reception awaited them, Barkatullah, as an Islamic scholar of some fame, was sent ahead by von Hentig to advise the governor about the expedition's arrival with the Kaiser's message and gifts for the Emir Habibullah. The governor sent a grand welcome, with noblemen bearing cloths and gifts, a caravan of servants, and a column of hundred armed escorts to invite the expedition into the city as guests of the Afghan government.

Entry in Herat

On 24 August 1915, the expedition entered Herat, with von Hentig in the lead in his Curassiers uniform, in a procession welcomed by Turkish troops headed by a Turkish captain. (Hopkrik, Peter 2001:29) They were housed at the Emir's provincial palace. They were officially met by the governor a few days later when, according to British agents, von Hentig showed him the Turkish Sultan's proclamation of Jihad and announced the Kaiser's promise to recognise Afghan sovereignty and provide German assistance. The Kaiser also promised to grant Afghanistan territory as far north as Samarkand in Russian Turkestan and as far into India as Bombay.

The Viceroy of India had already warned the Emir Habibullah of approaching "German agents and hired assassins". The Emir had promised the Viceroy to arrest the expedition if it managed to reach Afghanistan. However, under a close watch, the expedition members were given the freedom of Herat. The governor promised to arrange for the 400-mile trip east to Kabul in another two weeks. Suits were tailored and horses given new saddles so they were presentable to the Emir. (Hughes, Thomas L 2002:30) The trip was arranged to avoid the southern route through Kandahar, possibly because Afghan officials wished to avoid fomenting unrest in the Pathan region close to India.

Entry in Kabul

On 7 September 1915, the group left Herat for Kabul with Afghan guides, in a 24-day trip through the northern, harsher, Hazarajat route over the barren mountains of Central Afghanistan. Enroute the expedition was again careful to spend enough money and gold to ensure popularity amongst the local people. Finally, on 2 October, 1915, the
expedition reached Kabul. It was received by a "salaam" by the local Turkish community and a Guard of honour by Afghan troops in Turkish uniform. Von Hentig describes receiving cheers and a grand welcome from the local inhabitants of Kabul. (Hughes, Thomes L2002:31)

**Afghan intrigues**

At Kabul, the group was housed at the Emir's palace at Bagh-e Babur accommodated as Guests of State and their provisions arranged for. Despite the comfort and the welcome, however, it was soon clear that they were all but confined. Armed guards were placed around the palace, ostensibly for "the group's own danger from British secret agents" and armed guides escorted them on their journeys. (Hughes, Thomes L2002:32) Meanwhile Emir Habibullah, reportedly in his summer palace at Paghman, responded for nearly three weeks with only polite non-committal replies to requests for audience. An astute politician, it was clear that the Emir was in no hurry to receive his guests while he found out as much as he could about the members and aliased with British authority at New Delhi. It was only after Niedermayer and von Hentig threatened Hunger Strike that anything moved.

In the meantime, on Hentig learnt as much as he could about his eccentric host. Emir Habibullah was, by all measures, the lord of Afghanistan. He considered it his divine right to rule and the land his property. He owned the only newspaper, Siraj-al-Akbar, the only drug store; all the automobiles in the country (Rolls Royce’s all of them) and only allowed himself to collect stamps and be photographed. (Hughes, Thomes L2002:33)

The Emir's brother, prime minister Nasrullah Khan, on the other hand was a man of religious convictions. Unlike the Emir, he spoke the local language Pashto fluently, dressed in traditional Afghan robes, and interacted more closely with border tribes. While the Emir humoured British India, Nasrullah Khan held more pro-German sympathy. Nasrullah's views were shared by his nephew, Amanullah Khan, the youngest and most charismatic amongst the Emir's sons. The eldest son Inayatullah Khan was in charge of the Afghan army. In this political situation, the mission expected more sympathy and consideration from Nasrullah and Amanullah. (Hughes, Thomes L2002:34)
Meeting with Emir Habibullah

Finally on 26 October 1915, the Emir granted audience at his Palace at Paghman, which allowed him privacy from British secret agents. The meeting, which lasted the entire day, begun in an uncomfortable note, with Habibullah in a prolonged opening address summing up his views on the expedition as “I regard you as merchants who will spread out your wares before me. Of these goods, I shall choose according to my pleasure and my fancy, taking what I like and rejecting what I do not need”.

He expressed surprise that a task as important as the expedition's was entrusted to such young men. Von Hentig had to convince the Emir that the mission did not consider themselves merchants, but instead brought word from the Kaiser, the Ottoman Sultan and from India, wishing to recognise Afghanistan's complete independence and sovereignty. (Hopkrik, Peter2001:35) The Kaiser's typewritten letter, compared to the handsome Ottoman greeting failed to settle the Emir's suspicions, who doubted its authenticity.

Von’s explanations that this was the only available instrument at the Kaiser's field headquarters before the group's hurried departure may not have convinced him entirely. Von Hentig forwarded the invitation to join the war on Central side, explaining the war situation as favourable, and invited the Emir to declare independence. This was followed by a presentation from Kasim Bey explaining the Ottoman Sultan's declaration of Jihad, Turkey's desire to avoid a fratricidal war between Islamic people, and her message to Afghanistan, which was similar to the Kaiser's. Subsequently, Barkatullah invited Habibullah to declare war against the British Empire and to come to the aid of India's Muslims. It was Barkatullah, further, who proposed to the Emir that he allow Turco-German forces to cross Afghanistan for a campaign towards the Indian frontier, to which he hoped the Emir would join forces. (Hopkrik, Peter2001:36)

Barkatullah and Raja Mahendra Pratap, both eloquent speakers, further pointed out the rich territorial gains the Emir stood to acquire by joining the central powers. The Emir's reply was, however, shrewd but frank. Nonetheless, it expressed hopes of an alliance in near future with Persia (which Prince Henry of Reuses and Wilhelm Wassmuss worked on) which would bridge the Emir's needs. (Hopkrik, Peter2001:37) This first meeting, although it reached no firm outcome, has however been noted by
historians as a cordial one which helped open communications with the Emir and allowed the mission to hope for success?

This meeting was followed by another eight hour meeting in October 1915 at Paghman, followed by more audiences between the Emir and the mission at Kabul. The Emir at times met with the Indian and German delegates separately, promising to consider the propositions but never committing himself to it. He wished to seek concrete proof that Turco-German reassurance of military and financial assistance was feasible. In a letter to Prince Henry of Reuss in Tehran (which the messenger delivered to Russians instead), von Hentig asked for Turkish troops, while Rohr wrote to the prince later that a thousand Turkish troops armed with machine guns along with another German expedition headed by himself should be able to draw Afghanistan into the war. Meanwhile, Niedermayer advised Habibullah on reforming his army with mobile units equipped with more modern weaponry. (Hughes, Thomas L.2002:38)

Meetings with Nasrullah Khan and Amanullah Khan

Through the Emir's vacillating position the mission found a more sympathetic and ready audience in the Emir's brother prime minister Nasrullah Khan, and the Emir's younger son Amanullah Khan. Nasrullah Khan had been present at the first meeting at Paghman, and in secret meetings with the "Amanullah party" at his residence, he encouraged the mission. Amanullah Khan gave the group reasons to feel confident, even as rumours of these meetings reached the Emir. Messages from von Hentig to Prince Henry that were intercepted by British and Russian intelligence were subsequently passed on to Emir Habibullah. These suggested that von Hentig was prepared to organise "Internal revulsions" in Afghanistan if that was necessary to draw Afghanistan into the war. (Hughes, Thomas L.2002:39)

Through the months that the expedition stayed in Kabul, Habibullah fended off pressures to commit to the Central effort with what has been described as "masterly inactivity". Meanwhile, they were allowed to venture into Kabul freely, which the members put to good use on a successful Hearts and Minds campaign, spending plenty of money on local goods and paying cash. Two dozen Austrian prisoners of war who had escaped from Russian camps were used by Niedermayer to construct a Hospital. Kasim
Bey, meanwhile, acquainted himself with the local Turkish community and sought to further Enver Pasha's message of Pan-Turanian Jihad and unity of Turkish tribes.

Habibullah tolerated the increasingly anti-British and pro-Central tone being taken by his newspaper Siraj al Akhbar, whose editor—his own father-in-law Mahmud Tarzi took Barkatullah as an officiating editor in early 1916. Tarzi published a series of inflammatory articles by Raja Mahendra Pratap and printed anti-British and pro-Central articles and propaganda. By May 1916, the tone in the paper was deemed serious enough for the Raj to intercept the copies to India. (Sims, William1980:40) Through German links with Ottoman Turkey, the Berlin Committee at this time established contact with Mahmud al Hasan at Hejaz while the expedition itself was now met at Kabul by Ubaidullah Sindhi’s group. (Seidt, H.U.2001:41)

Political developments

Formation of provisional Government of India at Kabul

A number of political events and progress took shape in December 1915, allowing the mission to celebrate some success on Christmas Day that year at Kabul with wine and cognac left behind from the Durand mission forty previously which Habibullah lay at their disposal. These events included the foundation of the Provisional Government of India that same month, and a shift from the Emir's usual aversive stance to offer discussions on a German-Afghan treaty of friendship. (Hughes, Thomas L.2002:42)

In November, the Indian members decided to take a political initiative which they believed would convince the Emir to summon for Jihad, and if that was unlikely, have his hand forced by his advisors. On December 1, 1915, the Provisional Government of India was founded at Habibullah's Bagh-e-Babur palace in the presence of the Indian, German and Turkish members of the expedition and friends. It was declared a revolutionary government-in-exile which was to take charge of independent India when British authority had been overthrown. (Patnaik, A.K.2005:43) The Indian revolutionaries abroad had been carrying on anti-British activities in England, France and U.S.A. since 1905. With the beginning of the First World War, most of them joined hands with Germany to overthrow the British rule in India.

An Indian National Party was formed in Berlin with the help of German foreign Office and schemes were made for action from the Middle East and Far East or the
overthrow of the Imperial rule in India. Two prominent revolutionaries, Raja Mahendra Pratap and Maulvi Barkatullah, accompanied Von Hentig's mission to win the support of Afghanistan and make it a springboard against British. Raja Mahendra Pratap and other Indian revolutionaries were aware of the fact that Afghanistan could not openly join their side in the ordinary circumstances without the help of money, arms, ammunition and troops. (Andreyev, A.2003:44) Germany and other countries were approached for help. These revolutionaries even tried to bring Germany and Russia together against the British. They formed the first provisional government of India in Kabul on first December 1915.

**Raja Mahendra Pratap gave the following names of Ministers and other active members of the Provisional Government:**

1. Raja Mahendra Pratap                      Life President
2. Maulana Barkatullah                 Prime Minister
3. Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi            Home Minister
4. Maulvi Mohammad Bashir            War Minister
5. Champak Raman Pillai                                Foreign Minister
6. Shamsher Singh aliases Mathura Singh Minister
7. Khuda Bakhsh                                    Plenipotentiaries
8. Mohammad Ali Qusoori do-
9. Rahmat ali Zakariya do-
10. Zafar Hasan                                     do-
11 Allah Nawaz.                                   do-
12. Harnam Singh                                    do-
13. Gujar Singh alias Kala Singh do-
14. Abdul Aziz                                      do-
15. Abdul Bari                                      do-

**Proclamation of provisional government**

The provisional government issued a proclamation which was sent to India and seized by the British authorities. The proclamation was addressed to Indian ruler’s riots to exploit the war situation which had exhausted the British during two years of fighting. It urged upon the Indian soldiers, police constables and the Indian rulers to get ready for a
great upheaval to oust the foreigners from India. It spoke of German and Turkish
assurance of assistance in the Indian war of liberation with men and material without any
desire to establish their own rule over India.

The most important diplomatic manoeuvre did by the provisional government
was their obtaining a written agreement from Germany and Turkey that along with their
other allies, Austro-Hungarian and Bulgaria after the expulsion of the British by the
Indian people, they themselves would not only recognize the Indian government by the
Indians as the legitimate government of the country but also get it approved by the other
powers in the post war peace time. the proclamation urged people of all religions to get
united in the mission of expelling the British in India and live happily together like
brethren encourage ‘arts and science, turn the whole human race into a family by
promoting civilization to the highest degree and turn the face of the earth in to heaven
and make it a fit abode for the pious’.

The provisional government was working disparately to bring about a collision
between Afghanistan and Great Britain and to prepare India for the acceptance of afghan
invasion. Raja Mahendra Pratap thought that an external invading army would march into
India at right time to liberate it and its efforts would be matched by a general uprising of
Indian people, soldiers and others. He in a letter to Reich chancellor of Germany,
requested for twenty thousand troops only for Indian mission and it would fully cooperate
with him. He believed that after arrival of sufficient military help from Germany and
turkey, the afghan government would join hands with him and the provisional
government to oust the British from India by military might.

In the meantime, the provisional government of India issued its manifesto listing
there in the promises of the Turkey-German help .it also spoke very high of the efforts of
the Gath rites by employing armed resistance against the British .the provisional
government of independent India exhorted the Hindus and Muslim of India to maintain
unity and also called upon the rajas and Nawab (rulers of the Indian princely states) to
rise against the alien rule. They also appealed the army men to rise in revolt against the
British imperialism. (Singh Rajpal2005:45)

A secret treaty was made with the Royal Government of Afghanistan. It was
The most important clause of the treaty was that Afghanistan would lend fifty thousand troops to fight in India against the British. For every Afghan solider killed free India would give ten thousand rupees. River Sind was to be the boundary between Free India and Afghanistan. Afghanistan was to declare war against the British when twenty five thousand soldiers arrived from Germany.

**Activities of the provisional Government at a glance**

Maulana Ubaidullah sent men to India with messages and government proclamations to army to rebel and to drive out the British from India. He had his men in Sind, Punjab and Bihar, besides at Deoband. Raja Mahendra pratap letters were sent to the elder brother of Acharya Kripalani who was Musalman. Acharya Raja Mahendra pratap himself told Raja Mahendra pratap that he took his letters to Vrindaban, Allahabad and Banaras. Requested Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Ji, Babu Shiv Prasad Gupta and Babu Narain Das of Vrindaban to spread his messages. Raja Mahendra pratap as the President sent a letter on a solid gold plate to the Tsar of Russia. It was taken to Tashkent by Mr Khushi Mohammad and Shamsher Singh. They were received by Governor Kropotkin. Governor said. Letter to the Czar would be forwarded. Presents sent by Raja Mahendra Pratap were not accepted. Envoys were asked to return to Kabul and it was promised that answer would be sent to Afghanistan. In this mission head was Sardar Shamsher Singh. Mohammed Ali was his assistant. They came to Kabul.

Prime Minister Sardar Nasrullah Khan became very hopeful. He at his own expense organised the army of twelve thousand Afridies at the frontier. This army fought here and there. Shamsher Singh insisted on going to Russia. Khuda Bakhsh was made the head of the second Mission. Shamsher Singh was made his assistant. They were, however, not allowed to proceed to Tashkent. They remained at Tirmiz. Thence they were handed over to the British at Meshad in Iran. Shamsher Singh was hanged at Peshawar and Bakhsh, being a son of some high official, was interned.
The second Mission carried letters to Japan, China and America. It was only to travel through Siberia. Raja Mahendra Pratap wrote letters to the Japanese and Chinese governments and Maulana wrote letters to his American friends. A Mission to friends in Iran was also sent. Mr. Carsasp and a Sikh Sardar were given messages. They were arrested by the British in Seistan and were shot at the spot. Carsasp was a Parsi and his father was once a Dewan of Baroda.

Kala Singh carried the letter of the Chancellor Bethwen Hollweg and my message to the King of Nepal. Germany recognized him as His Majesty. Raja Mahendra Pratap had to appeal strongly for it. Later the British recognized him tile. Kala Singh was helped by Mujahidin of Asam’s One day back Kala Singh was arrested. Mujahidin escaped and give the news to Raja Mahendra Pratap how well mission was received by the Royal Prime Minister of Nepal.

Maulana Barkatullah reached Moscow in 1918 after that Raja Mahendra Pratap had passed Russia, helped by Mr. Trotsky. Raja Mahendra Pratap going through Russia in March, 1918 was triumphal He was taken by a special train from Tashkent to Petrograd. He spoke at a meeting where audience, was twenty five thousand.

When Raja Mahendra Pratap was in Europe, in early 1919, a great chance happened in Afghanistan. Amir Habibullah was murdered and King Amanullah came to the throne. Home Minister Udraidullah encouraged the king to declare war on the British government in India. This news brought Raja Mahendra pratap flying to Russia. It is another interesting story how he got four companions, how he flew over the fighting line between Red White Russians. With two companions he reached Moscow, It was at this time that Raja Mahendra Pratap was received by comrade Lenin at the Kremlin. Five Indians and Professor Voznesenski of the Foreign office were with him at the historical interview. The credit goes to Maulana Barkatulla for establishing very good relations with the Soviet Foreign Office which introduced him to Comrade Lenin.

Mr. Karakhan arranged Journey to go to Kabul with Mr. Surits who was appointed Ambassador. It was promised that Russia would help Raja Mahendra pratap in his plan of Revolution in India. Raja Mahendra Pratap and Mr. Surits arrived on the 12th December 1912 at Kabul. War with Kosaks near Ural Mountain and horseback travel from Herat to Kabul delayed them. King Amanullah followed his advice and friendly treaty was made between Afghanistan and Soviet Russia. Maulvie Abdur Rub and Acharya who accompanied Raja Mahendra Pratap from Berlin to Moscow and thence to Kabul were expelled by King Amanullah from Afghanistan for anti Afghanistan activities. It may also be mentioned that they were later expelled by Russia, too.
King Amanullah asked Raja Mahendra Pratap to go on his Mission, to China, Japan, Tibet, Siam, America, Germany and Turkey. This Mission, however, had to end at Tashkent when Afghanistan could make peace with England. Raja Mahendra Pratap returned royal letters. Maulana Ubaidullah left Kabul when King Amanullah asked him to end all activities of his Provisional Government of India in Afghanistan. He stayed long in Moscow and later left for Turkey and Mecca. Maulana Barkatulla left Moscow for Berlin, Germany.

In 1925 he collected twelve thousand dollars from Indian workers in California with the help of Gadar party and Afghan Association. Two thousand dollars Raja Mahendra Pratap sent for Maulana Barkatullah and three other Indian friends in Germany. He also took seven Indian volunteers to go with him to Tibet. The idea was that as Raja Mahendra Pratap had opened up western route to India with Russian, Afghan and Mujahidin of the Indian frontier co-operation. He opened the northern route with Chinese, Tibetan and Nepal Cooperation.

They landed in Japan. Proceeded to Peking and Kalgan. Marshal Feng Yu Shiag gave his full support. Here it may also be mention that Mr. Kara Khan, Ambassador of Russia at Peking gave him a verbal message for Dalai Lama in answer to his secret letter to Russia.

Through Via Ningsha Launch they arrived at Shiag Fu. Here general Nachi gave him great military welcome. Here Raja Mahendra Pratap bought horses and mules to travel in Tibet. His subordinate governor of Cheku. Tibetan name Faigundo received him warmly and gave a Chinese banquet. They were guests of the Tibetan Governor of Chhomdo. Lama Phag, Phala Head of the Eastern Tibet Monasteries, became Raja Mahendra Pratap's good friend. They were, however, asked to leave Chhomdo and wait outside the Tibetan territory till an answer came from Lhasa. They returned to neutral Gomba. At last, They were back at Ch-Ambo. They was again the guests of the Governor. Now Dalai Lama's answer was received. They were told they were free to remain in Tibet but they could not proceed to Lhasa. Nepali counsel did not answer his letter; He had to take permission from Kathmandu. His money was finishing. He had brought Chinese silver. It had good value in Tibet but the volunteers, Chinese and Tibetan servants and twenty horses and mules had to be fed.

Raja Mahendra Pratap decides to return by the southern route. It was dramatic move of the Tibetan central govt. The Prime minister himself coming from Lhasa met him on the way. He told him he had come to inspect frontier fighting. He presented him a powerful binocular. Passage was difficult. He had to pass to passes covered by snow. **Draft Afghan-German friendship treaty**
December 1915 also saw concrete progress on the mission's Turco-German objective. The Emir informed von Hentig he was ready to discuss a treaty of Afghan-German friendship. This however, the Emir told von Hentig, would take time and require extensive historical research. Work on the treaty began with drafts proposed by von Hentig himself. This draft was finalised on 24 January 1916. Amongst its ten articles were clauses recognising Afghan independence, declaration of friendship with Germany and establishment of diplomatic relations—von Hentig himself accredited the "Embassy secretary of the German Empire". In addition, the treaty would guarantee German assistance against Russian and British threats if Afghanistan joined the war on the Central side. The Emir's army was to be modernised, with Germany providing 100,000 modern rifles, 300 artillery pieces, other equipments for modern warfare.

The Germans were to be responsible for maintaining advisors and engineers, and was to maintain a supply route overland through Persia for arms and ammunition. Further, the Emir was to be paid £10,00,000. Historians have pointed out that the German guarantees were dubious. In spite of this however, Hentig and Niedermayer both signed this document. It granted, as von Hentig argued in a telegram to the foreign office, an initial basis to begin work in Afghanistan in preparation for an Afghan invasion of India. Oskar Niedermayer explained that the Emir intended to begin his campaign as soon as Germany could make available 20,000 troops to protect Afghan Russian front, and asked for urgent provisions for wireless sets and substantial shipment of arms. Further, Niedermayer required at least a million pounds initial funding. He judged the condition an offensive into India ideal, and informed General staff to expect the campaign to begin in April.

(Hughes, Thomas L. 2002:46)

Mission’s conclusion

At the end however, Emir Habibullah went back to his vacillating inactivity. He was aware the mission was finding support within his own council and had excited his volatile subjects. A Durbar was called by Habibullah four days after signing the draft treaty, where the grand meeting expected a call to Jihad. Instead, he reaffirmed his neutrality to the large crowd, explaining that the war's outcome was still unpredictable and he stood for national unity instead. Through the spring of 1916, he continuously deferred the mission's overtures and gradually increased the stake, demanding that India rise in revolution before he began his campaign. Further, it was clear to Habibullah that the treaty required the Kaiser's signature before it held any value and that for Germany to even attempt to honour the treaty; she would have to be in a strong
position in the war. It was a good insurance policy for Habibullah.

Meanwhile, British intelligence reports worried him that he himself may be assassinated and his country may face a Coup d’état. His tribesmen were unhappy at Habibullah's perceived subservience to the British, and his council and relatives openly spoke of their suspicion at his inactivity. Habibullah began purging his court of officials who were known to be close to his brother Nasrullah and his son Amanullah. He recalled emissaries he had sent to Persia for talks with Germans and Turks for military aid. Meanwhile, the war itself took turn for the worse for the Central powers. The Arab revolt against Turkey and the Fall of Erzurum to the Russians ended hopes of sending a Turkish division to Afghanistan. (Hughes, Thomas L.2002:47)

German influence in Persia also declined rapidly, ending hopes that Goetz Pasha could lead a Persian volunteer division to Afghanistan. The mission itself came to realise that the Emir deeply mistrusted them. A further attempt by British intelligence to feed false information to the mission, purportedly originating from Goetz Pasha, convinced von Hentig that they made attractive presents from the Emir to the Viceroy if it came to that. A last offer was made by Nasrullah in May 1916 to remove Habibullah from power and take charge of frontier tribes in a campaign against British India. Von Hentig, however, knew by now it would be fruitless. With the Indian members choosing to stay behind, persisting in their attempts at alliance with regional powers, the Germans ultimately left Kabul on 21 May, 1916. Curt Wagner was instructed by Niedermayer to stay behind at Herat and act as a Liaison officer. (Seidt, H.U.2001:48)

The party split up into multiple groups, each making its own way back to Germany independently. Niedermayer headed west, attempting to run the Anglo-Russian cordon and escape through Persia, while. Von Hentig made for the route over the Pamir Mountains towards Chinese Central Asia. Having served in Peking before the war, von Hentig was familiar with the region and planned to make Yarkand a base from which to make a last attempt for local Muslim unrest against Anglo-Russian interests in the region, which would force the dispatch of troops for protection. He later escaped over the Hindu Kush, avoiding his pursuers for 130 days as he made his way on foot and horseback through Chinese Turkestan, over the Gobi desert, and subsequently through China and Shanghai. From there, he stowed away on an American vessel to Honolulu where, following the American declaration of war, he was exchanged as a diplomat via San Francisco, Halifax and Bergen, finally reaching Berlin on 9 June 1917.

Niedermayer meanwhile escaped through Russian Turkestan towards Persia. In Turkestan,
he was robbed and left for dead, and a wounded Niedermayer was at times reduced to begging before he reached friendly lines, finally arriving in Tehran on 20 July 1916. (Strachan, Hew2001:49) Kurt Wagner finally left Herat on October 25, 1917, making his way through northern Persia to reach Turkey on January 30, 1918. At Chorasan in Persia, he tried to rally Persian democrat and nationalist leaders, who promised to raise an army of 12,000 if Germany provided military assistance.

Raja Mahendra Pratap, meanwhile, attempted to seek alliance with Tsar Nicholas II from February 1916, but his messages remained unacknowledged. The 1917 Kerensky Government also refused visa to Raja Mahendra Pratap, aware that he was considered a "dangerous seditionist" by the British Government. It was Lenin's Bolshevik government with whom Raja Mahendra Pratap was able to correspond more closely.

He visited Tashkent in February 1918 at the invitation of Turkestan authorities followed by a visit to Red Petrograd where he met Trotsky. He and Barkatullah remained in touch with the German government and with the Berlin Committee through the latter's secret office in Stockholm, After Lenin's coup, he acted at times as liaison between the Afghan government and the Germans, hoping to revive the Indian cause. In 1918, Raja Mahendra Pratap suggested to Trotsky, at Petrograd, a joint German-Russian invasion of Indian frontiers. He recommended a similar plan to Lenin at Moscow in 1919, which the Narkomindel arranged for Raja Mahendra Pratap to meet while the latter was on his way to Berlin to seek the Kaiser's assistance. He was accompanied at Moscow by Indian revolutionaries of the Berlin committee who were at the time turning to communism. (Seidt, H.U.2001:50)

**British Counter efforts**

**Sis tan force**

The East Persian Cordon was established in the Sis tan province of southeast Persia to prevent the Germans from crossing into Afghanistan and to protect British supply caravans in Sarhad from Damani, Reki and Kurdish Balushi tribes who may be tempted by German gold. The small force of 2nd Quetta Brigade maintained in Western Baluchistan since the beginning of the war was expanded in July 1915 and became the East Persia Cordon stretching from Russian Turkestan to Baluchistan. A similar Russian cordon was established to prevent infiltration into north-west Afghanistan.

From March 1916 the force became the Seistan Force under the direction of General
Kirkpatrick, the Chief of General Staff in India. The cordon was initially under the command of a Colonel J.M. Wilkeley before it was taken over by Reginald Dyer in February, 1916. The cordon's task was to "intercept, capture or destroy and German parties attempting to enter Sistan or Afghanistan", and to establish intelligence system and watch for the Birjand-Merked road. (Collet, Negel2006:51)

**British Intelligence Efforts**

British efforts against the conspiracy and subsequently the expedition began in Europe itself. Even before Raja Mahendra Pratap met the Kaiser, attempts were made by British intelligence to assassinate V.N. Chatterjee while on his way to Geneva to invite Raja Mahendra Pratap to Berlin. British agents were known to be present in Constantinople (Tokyo), Cairo, and in Persia.

The main efforts were however directed at intercepting the expedition before it managed to reach Afghanistan, and thence to exert pressure to ensure that the Emir maintained his neutrality. British intelligence in Persia, under the efforts of Sir Percy Sykes, also intercepted communication between the expedition and Prince Reuss in Tehran through various means. Among these were letters from von Hentig captured in November 1915 detailing the meetings with the Emir as well as messages from Walter Rohr detailing the requirements for arms, ammunition and men.

The most dramatic intelligence coup however was a message from von Hentig asking for a thousand Turkish troops and the necessity for "internal revulsions" in Afghanistan if need be. This message found its way to Russian intelligence and through them to the Viceroy who passed on an inflated summary and warned the Emir of the possibility of a coup funded by the Germans and the threat to his life. In summer 1916, intelligence captured in Punjab letters sent by the Indian provisional government's Ubaidullah Sindhi to Mahmud al Hasan, which were addressed to the Turkish authority and the Sheriff of Mecca.

The letters, written in Persian on Silk cloth, were found sewn into the messenger's clothes when he was betrayed in the Punjab, earning the name the yellow Silk Letter Conspiracy. Raja Mahendra Pratap's private secretary Harish Chandra was captured in Europe in October 1915. (Poppelwell, 1995:52) In August 1915, Harish Chandra had returned to Switzerland after a visit to India when he had carried messages from raja Mahendra Pratap to Indian princes. Harish Chandra now divulged details of the Provisional government of India and of the expedition and further passed on to British intelligence letters from Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg and Raja
Mahendra Pratap addressed to Indian princes. (Mc, Kell, D.M.1998:53) Subsequently, Chandra was sent as a double agent to the United States in 1917 to investigate and report on the finances of the Ghadar Party and the revolutionary movement in Washington. Also used as a double agent was a man by the name of Sissodia who, claiming to be from a Royal family of Rajputana, attempted to infiltrate the Germans and Berlin committee through Zurich.

**Diplomatic measures**

The Afghan Emir Habibullah was warned by New Delhi of the approach of the expedition even while efforts were underway to intercept it in the Persian desert. After it crossed into Afghanistan, the Emir was asked to arrest the members. However, Habibullah humoured British pressure without obliging the Viceroy's requests. He assured the Viceroy that he intended to remain neutral, but he could not take any action that was overtly pro-British. Indian intelligence also became aware after the expedition had been Kabul for some time that they carried with them highly inflammatory letters from the Kaiser and the Turkish sultan. Russians further voiced through British channels their concerns at the Emir's tolerance of the German presence and their intrigues with Pro-German Afghan counsels.

By December 1915, New Delhi felt it necessary to put more weight on the Afghans. Communications between the British Empire and Kabul had been hitherto through the Viceroy at New Delhi. Acutely aware the pressure on Habibullah from his pro-German relatives and the strong anti-British feeling among his tribes, Harding now suggested that a letter from George V himself may help Habibullah maintain his neutrality. (Hopkrik2001:54) Accordingly, a personal handwritten letter addressed personally to Habibullah, written on Buckingham Palace stationery, was sent by George V praising the Emir for his steadfast neutrality and promising to increase his subsidy. The letter, which addressed Habibullah as "Your Majesty", was intended to encourage Habibullah and make him feel an equal partner to the empire. It had its intended effect. Habibullah sent verbal communication through British agents in Kabul that he could not acknowledge the letter formally because of political pressure, but he nonetheless sent reassurances he would remain neutral.

**Influence**

**Influence on Afghanistan**

At the time, the expedition greatly disturbed the Russian and British influences in Central and South Asia, and raised concerns among the two European powers for the safety of their
interests in the region. Further, it nearly succeeded in propelling Afghanistan into the war. After the war, the pre-war offers and liaisons of the mission with figureheads of Afghan politics influenced the political and social situation in the country, starting a process of political change that culminated in the 1919 assassination of Habibullah and transfer of power to Nasrullah and subsequently Amanullah. This was followed closely by the Third Anglo-Afghan War that led to Afghan Independence.

Historians have pointed out that in its political objectives; the expedition was three years premature. However, it planted the seeds of sovereignty and reform in Afghanistan, and its main themes of encouraging Afghan independence and breaking away from British influence were gaining ground in Afghanistan by 1919. Habibullah's steadfast neutrality alienated a substantial proportion of his family members and council advisors, and further fed discontent among his subjects. Further, his communications to the Viceroy in early February 1919 demanding complete sovereignty and independence over foreign policy was rebuffed by Britain. Two weeks later, Habibullah was assassinated during a hunting trip.

The Afghan crown passed to Nasrullah Khan before Habibullah's younger son Amanullah Khan assumed power. Both had been staunch supporters of the expedition. The immediate effect of this upheaval was the precipitation of the Third Anglo-Afghan War, in which a number of brief skirmishes were followed by the Rawalpindi treaty, and Britain finally recognised Afghan independence. (Hughes, Thomas L.2002:55) Amanullah proclaimed himself the king. Among the first countries to recognise the independent Afghan Government was Germany.

**Influence on Soviet Russian Eastern policy**

It has been suggested that the Kalmyk Project, the name given to Soviet plans to launch a surprise attack on the northwest frontier of India via Tibet and other Himalayan buffer states, may have been prompted by Raja Mahendra Pratap's efforts and his advice to the Soviet leadership, People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, and to Vladimir Lenin in 1919 when, along with other Indian revolutionaries, he pressed for a joint Soviet-Afghan campaign into India.

Soviet Russia herself intended to nurture political upheaval in British India in its strategy against British imperialism. In 1919, Soviet Russia sent a diplomatic mission headed by an "orientalise" by the name of N.Z. Bravin. Among other works, this Bravin expedition established links at Herat with the Austrian and German remnants of the Niedermayer-Hentig expedition and liaised with the Indian revolutionaries in Kabul. Bravin proposed to Amanullah a military alliance
against British India and a campaign for which Soviet Turkestan would bear the costs. These negotiations however failed to reach concrete conclusions before the Soviet advances were detected by British Indian intelligence.

A later Soviet plan considered raising a force of nearly forty thousand cavalry from Turkestan or the Urals, which would advance to India through Afghanistan with help from Afghan tribes who may rally against Amanullah. (Andreyev, A. 2003:56) However, these plans presented their own problems. Amongst other routes to India that were explored were plans to foment unrest in Tibet and the Himalayan buffer states of Bhutan, Sikkim, Nepal and Thailand and Burma through the Buddhist Kalmyk people, and use these places as a staging ground for revolution in India. This offered the shortest route to the revolutionary heartland of Bengal. It was to proceed under the cover of a scientific expedition to Tibet under Indologist Fyodor Shcherbatskoy, and arm the indigenous people in the North-East Indian region with modern weaponry before a regular supply could be arranged. The project had the approval of Lenin.

Raja Mahendra Pratap himself had a strong obsession with Tibet, and made efforts as early as 1916 to penetrate into the Himalayan Kingdom to cultivate anti-British propaganda. His efforts were resumed after his return from Moscow in 1919. Raja Mahendra Pratap, further, was close to Fyodor Shcherbatskoy and Sergey Oldenburg. Privy to the organisation's designs in the region, he intended to participate in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs' planned expedition to Tibet in summer 1919. However, the Kalmyk project was ultimately shelved following the Czech uprising in the Trans-Siberian railway. Raja Mahendra Pratap himself set out alone to unsuccessfully pursue his goal in Tibet. (Andreyev, A. 2003:57)

**Influence on British India**

The war-time conspiracy which initially led to the conception of the expedition, the presence of Raja Mahendra Pratap's Kabul mission in Afghanistan and its overtures to Bolshevik Russia, and the active revolutionary movement that still existed in Punjab and Bengal led to the appointment in British India of a Sedition committee in 1918 chaired by Sydney Rowlett, an English judge. In the midst of a worsening civil unrest throughout India, it was tasked to evaluate German and Bolshevik links to the Indian militant movement, especially in Punjab and Bengal. On the recommendations of the committee, the Rowlett Act, an extension of the Defence of India act of 1915, was enforced in India. (Fisher, M.W. 1972:58)
A number of events followed the passage of the Rowlett Act in 1919 which were influenced by the conspiracy. At the time, British Indian Army troops were returning from the battlefields of Europe and Mesopotamia to an economic depression in India. (Swami, P. 1997:59) The Ghadar Conspiracy of 1915 and the Lahore conspiracy trials were still in public attention. News was also beginning to reach India of the Indian Voluntary corps who, influenced by Ghadarites, fought on behalf of the Turkish Caliphate, as did reach news of Indian communists Raja Mahendra Pratap Himself was shadowed by British agents through Central Asia during his journeys to and from Germany via Soviet Union, among them Frederick Marshman Bailey. (Bailey and Hopkrik 2002:60) The third Anglo-Afghan war began in 1919 in the wake of Amir Habibullah's assassination and institution of Amanullah in a system blatantly influenced by the Kabul mission. Raja Mahendra Pratap, who had been in Berlin at the time the war broke out, returned to Kabul at the news of the war, for which the Germans provided him air transport.

It was at this time that the pan-Islamic Khilafat movement began in India and Gandhi, until then relatively unknown in the Indian political scene, began emerging as a mass leader. His call for protest against the Rowlett act achieved an unprecedented response of furious unrest and protests. The situation, especially in Punjab, deteriorated rapidly with disruptions of rail, telegraph and communication systems. The movement was at its peak before the end of the first week of April, with some recording that "practically the whole of Lahore was on the streets, the immense crowd that passed through Antalkali was estimated to be around 20,000." In Amritsar, over 5,000 people gathered at Jallianwala Bagh. This situation deteriorated perceptibly over the next few days. The British authority feared a more sinister conspiracy for rebellion brewing under the veneer. (Collect 2006:61) Michael O'Dwyer is said to have been of the firm belief that these were the early and ill-concealed signs of a conspiracy for a coordinated uprising around May, on the lines of the 1857 revolt, at a time when British troops would have withdrawn to the hills for the summer.

The Amritsar massacre, as well as responses preceding and succeeding it, contrary to being an isolated incident, was the end result of a concerted plan of response from the Punjab administration to suppress such a conspiracy. (Cell, J.W. 2002:62) James Houssemayne Du Boulay is said to have ascribed a direct relationship between the fear of a Ghadarite uprising in the midst of an increasingly tensed situation in Punjab, and the British response that ended in the massacre. (Tuteja, K.L. 1997:63)
The Provisional Government of India, after 1919, sought help from Communist Russia. A number of its members as well as Indian revolutionaries of the Berlin committee sought Lenin's help for the Indian movement. Some were involved in the early Indian communist movement. With a price on his head, Raja Mahendra Pratap himself travelled under Afghan nationality for a number of years before his return to India after 1947. He was subsequently elected to the Indian parliament. Barkatullah and C.R. Pillai returned to Germany after a brief period in Russia. Barkatullah subsequently moved back to the United States, where he died in San Francisco in 1927.

C.R. Pillai was associated with the League against imperialism in Germany, where he was witness to the Nazi rise to power. C.R. Pillai was killed in 1934. Ubaidullah Sindhi proceeded to Soviet Russia, where he spent seven months at the invitation of the Soviet leadership, and was afforded official treatment as a guest of the state. During this period, he studied the ideology of socialism. Ubaidullah Sindhi was impressed by Communist ideals during his stay in Russia. In 1923, Ubaidullah Sindhi left Russian for Turkey, where he initiated the third phase of the Waliullah Movement in 1924.

He issued the Charter for the Independence of India from Istanbul. Ubaidullah travelled through the holy lands of Islam before permission for his return was requested for by the Indian National Congress. In 1936, the Indian National Congress requested his return to India, and was subsequently permitted to return. He undertook considerable work in interpretation of Islamic teachings. Ubaidullah died on 22 August 1944 at Deenpur, near Lahore. (Jain, N.K.1997:64)

Both Oskar Niedermayer and Werner Otto von Hentig returned to Germany and subsequently enjoyed celebrated careers. On von Hentig's recommendation, Niedermayer was knighted and bestowed with the Military Order of Max Joseph upon his return to Germany. He was asked to lead a third expedition to Afghanistan in 1917, but declined. Niedermayer subsequently joined the Reichswehr at Moscow before retiring from service in 1933 and joining the University of Berlin.

He was recalled to active service during World War II, serving in Ukraine. He was taken prisoner at the end of the war, and died in a Soviet Paw camp in 1948. Werner von Hentig himself was honoured with the Hohenzollern House Order by the Kaiser himself. He was considered for the Pour le Merete by the German Foreign office, but the rules of recommendation meant
Bothmann-Hollweg, von Hentig’s superior in the mission, was not eligible to recommend him since the latter did not hold the honour himself.

He subsequently embarked on a diplomatic career, serving as German consul-general to a number of countries. He influenced the decision to limit the German war effort into middle-east during World War II. In 1969, von Hentig was invited by Afghan King Mohammed Zahir Shah as a guest of honour to the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of Afghan independence, where he was given a red carpet reception by those who remembered him. Von Hentig also penned in German his memoirs of the expedition. [Hughes, Thomas l ([2002)]

References:

2. Ibid 1 pp.452
6. Ibid 1 pp.450
7. Ibid 1 pp.450
8. Ibid 1 pp.453
9. Ibid 1 pp.450
14 Ibid. 13 pp.98
16 Ibid 1 pp.455
17. Ibid 1 pp.458
18. Ibid 1 pp.459
19. Ibid 1 pp.459
20. Ibid 1 pp.460
21. Ibid 1 pp. 461
22. Ibid 1 pp.462
23. Ibid 13 pp.136
24. Ibid 13 pp.137
25. Ibid.13 pp 138
26. Ibid 13 pp 143
27. Ibid 13 pp150
28. Ibid 13 pp150
29. Ibid 13 pp151
30. Ibid 1 pp464
31. Ibid 1pp464
32. Ibid 1 pp 465
33. Ibid 1pp 465
34. Ibid 1pp 465
35. Ibid 13 pp 160
36. Ibid 13 pp161
37. Ibid 13 pp162
38. Ibid 1 pp 469
39. Ibid 1 pp 467
42. Ibid 1 pp 470
45. Singh raj pal [2005] Indian revolutionaries abroad—a study of the role of M. P and the first prov govt.of independent India—‘the life and times of raja m. P. Edt by dr vir Singh original publication new Delhi pp38
46. Ibid 1 pp 471
47. Ibid 1 pp 471
48. Ibid 41 pp 4
49. Ibid 4 pp 791
50. Ibid 41 pp 4
51. Collett, Nigel (2006), the Butcher of Amritsar: General Reginald Dyer, Continuum International Publishing Group, pp145
52. Ibid 15 pp 227
54. Ibid 13 pp 157
55. Ibid 1 pp 473
56. Ibid 44 pp 87
57. Ibid 44 pp 97
61. Ibid 51 pp. 222.
64. Jain, Naresh Kumar (1979), Muslims in India: a biographical dictionary, Manohar. PP.19