CHAPTER - III

CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY AND THE
The decade of 1963-73 marks the period of change and experiment in both internal and external behaviour of Afghanistan,-- the democratic changes in the internal political system and the policy of "equi-distance" in foreign affairs. Throughout the period, the experiment in democracy along the planned and guided economy became the hallmark of the domestic agenda of the successive constitutional governments\(^1\) in Kabul under the direct and active supervision of the King Zahir Shah. In the sphere of foreign policy, efforts were made to bring the "pendulum" back to the centre which had swung northward toward the Soviet Union under Premier Daoud\(^2\) and subsequently move closer to the west particularly the United States of America. The Pashtunistan question lost its lofty position of being the central issue of Afghan foreign policy and remained merely a political rhetoric, as and when required to meet the Kabul Government's ends.

However, desired results could not be achieved in either of the fields - domestic or foreign - the experiment in constitutional democracy coupled with frequent droughts.

\(^1\) Five Prime Ministers changed during the constitutional period (1963-73).

\(^2\) *New York Times*, July 19, 1963
concluded in political instability and economic crisis. The westward shift in the foreign policy, too, could not evoke anticipated American interest and fetch coveted assistance. All this ended in the unpopularity of the democratic experiment and the royal family too and hence, the coup of July 1973 and overthrow of the centuries old monarchial system in the Central Asian kingdom.

So far as the United States is concerned, she looked at the changes in Afghanistan cautiously but favourably. Washington found the Afghan Government's experiment in democracy and development coupled with the significant shift in its foreign policy "in line with President Kennedy's policy for aid to less developed nations." Notwithstanding its involvement in the Vietnam war and domestic public opinion against more economic commitments abroad, the United States maintained the level of economic aid to Kabul at $16 million a year in the initial years of the 'democratic' experiment in Afghanistan. Besides economic aid, the State Department continued its efforts at Afghanistan-Pakistan rapprochement and encouraged high-level state visits between Kabul and Washington in order to offset the Soviet influence in Afghanistan and bring it closer to the west. Washington

3 New York Times. September 6, 1963
4 Ibid. July 19, 1963
worked on the theme of keeping Afghan options and communication channels open to the West and limit the Soviet opportunities in Kabul with regard to Pashtunistan question. It meticulously promoted Afghanistan-Pakistan rapprochement through its ally, the Shah of Iran. The conclusion of the Tehran Accord in May 1963 and the subsequent lull in Afghan-Pakistan dispute over Pashtunistan, can be termed as a success of U.S. diplomacy in the region. Another feature of American policy towards Afghanistan during the period was promotion of the exchange of high level state visits between Washington and Kabul with a view to make the Afghan leaders feel important. As a part of this policy the United States invited King Zahir Shah on an official visit to Washington in 1963 and continued the process even in subsequent years of the 'democratic experiment'.

Thus the United States showed keen interest in Afghanistan at the beginning of the Kabul government's experiment in democracy and development. However, as the years passed and the American position in Vietnam became vulnerable, they got more and more entangled in that issue giving less priority to other areas. Even the progress of the democratic experiment in Afghanistan, too, did not encourage Washington to move in a big way there. This lackadaisical American position towards Afghanistan in early 1970s coincided with the continued politico-economic
instability in that country and finally culminated in unpopularity and downfall of the pro-western Monarchy in 1973.

The Constitutional Period 1963 - 65

Simultaneous to the announcement of Daoud's stepping down, came the royal decision to appoint Dr. Mohammad Yousuf, a non-royal family member for the first time since the downfall of King Amanullah in 1929, as Prime Minister of Afghanistan. Apparently, assigning the premiership to a western educated, non-royal family member, Dr. Yousuf, was an unusual step, but it was a calculative move on the part of the king on many counts. First, to prevent royal family members particularly Daoud from participating in the power structure and become a threat to the king. Secondly, the non-royal family member without a power base could be replaced if and when any political or economic crisis erupted and could be blamed for the same without much hesitation. Thirdly, to gain the sympathy of the politically conscious intelligentsia and political groups by projecting

6 During the early 1960s there were several small political groups who had been carrying out underground political activities in Afghanistan. Some of them formed political parties, subsequently like the P.D.P.A., Jamat-i-Islam, etc.
himself as a reformist King. Fourthly, the introduction of aforesaid changes— the removal of Daoud and appointment of a non-royal family member premier— along with an experiment in western oriented politico-economic model, the king wanted to attract and enliven the western particularly American interest and support in Afghanistan.

Democracy

The newly appointed Prime Minister, Dr. Yousuf announced his cabinet on March 13, 1963 in which for the first time there was no member of the Royal family that dominated the country for centuries,7 and presented it before the king. King Zahir Shah confirmed his cabinet without delay on March 14.8 After royal acceptance of the Government, Dr. Yousuf, in his first public policy broadcast on the night of March 14, outlined a policy of democratic— reform at home and continued neutrality abroad.9

Elaborating his government’s domestic agenda, the Prime Minister stated that a planned and guided economy10 would

7 *Kabul Times*, March 14, 1963; *New York Times*, March 20, 1963
8 *Kabul Times*, March 16, 1963
10 *Kabul Times*, March 16, 1963
continue in most spheres, but private enterprises will be further supported and encouraged in the framework of national economic policy. He emphasized the need for constitutional reforms and a representative system of government. Working on this framework, the new government formed a seven member Constitutional Committee on March 28, 1963 which held its first meeting on March 31, and completed the draft of the new Constitution in February 1964. Later on, a Constitutional Advisory Commission considered the first draft of the constitution and finally passed it after making some changes.

Soon, the King called a meeting of a special Loya Jirgah, consisting of members of Parliament, representatives of the people, Prime Minister and other ministers, President and members of the Supreme Court, Chairman and members of the --commission for drafting the constitution, and a number of selected members at the Royal discretion was called in Kabul. With the participation of 452 members, this newly constituted Loya Jirgah met in Kabul from September 9 to 20, 1964 to approve the new constitution. After much debate --

12 Ibid., pp. 563-65
13 Loya Jirgah: A Time Honoured Afghan Tradition (Kabul) 1987), p.21
14 Ibid.
and discussion for ten days, the Loya Jirgah endorsed the constitution consisting of eleven chapters and 128 articles. Finally, the King on October 1, 1964, signed the constitution, making it the law of the land.

First Elections and the New Shura (Parliament)

The 1964 Constitution provided for a bicameral Parliament (Shura): a fully elective 216 member Wolesi Jirgah (Lower House or House of the People) and an 84-member partly elected, partly nominated Meshrano Jirgah (Upper House, or House of Nobles). The first indirect elections for Shura was held in August-September 1965 in the absence of political parties, a provision which still awaited the implementation of the Political Parties Act. After the release of the election results on October 1, 1965, the King asked the interim Prime Minister, Dr. Yousuf to form a new government. In the meanwhile, some new developments took place in the Afghan political arena. Though the 1965 elections were held in the absence of political parties, the newly elected Shura (Parliament) was not without factions and groups. Some of these unofficial groups—particularly—

15 Ibid.
16 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan, no. 11, p. 587
17 Ibid. pp. 580
in the Lower House (Wolesi Jirgah) were extremely critical of the present government and political system. One such group (minute but vocal) with a leftist orientation was led by Babrak Karmal, and Dr. Anahita (a woman deputy from Kabul).\textsuperscript{18} It was in such politically fragmented circumstances that Dr. Yousuf was asked to form a new government.

Amidst a politically surcharged state of affairs, October 24, 1965 was fixed as the day when Dr. Yousuf was to present his Cabinet before the Parliament. As the day for approval reached nearer, the denunciations of the interim government increased in volume and scurrilous content. The situation became much more serious when a group of students led by Babrak Karmal and his followers occupied the parliamentary seats on October 24 and forced the speaker, Dr. Zahir to adjourn the government formation until October 25.\textsuperscript{19} On the following day when students were barred from entering the Parliament building, they demonstrated outside the Prime Minister's residence. At last, Afghan troops opened fire on the demonstrating students; three people died and scores were wounded.\textsuperscript{20} In the wake of

\textsuperscript{18} Louis Dupree, Afghanistan, no. 11, p. 591
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 592
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
violence and death, Dr. Yousuf resigned on October 29, 1965, after remaining less than a week in power.\textsuperscript{21} And thus, there was a major jerk for the democratic experiment in Afghanistan.

Development

For the economic development of Afghanistan, the Yousuf government adhered to the principle of guided economy,\textsuperscript{22} which was started by the former Prime Minister Daoud. However, the new government could do little for the actual prosperity of the country as it remained occupied with the democratic experiment - preparation of the constitution, holding elections and then developing parliamentary norms. At the time when the government assumed power, the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan (second five year plan began on March 21, 1962) was completed. In the first year of its administration, the Yousuf government received $65.37 million in foreign loans and grants for development projects and technical assistance\textsuperscript{23}. In the same year, total exports of the country rose to $73.65 million compared to $66.05 million in the previous year, and imports came down to $55.62 million from $60.57 million in 1962.\textsuperscript{24}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textbf{21} New York Times, November 7, 1965
\item \textbf{22} Kabul Times, March 16, 1963
\item \textbf{23} The Survey of Progress, 1964-65, Ministry of Planning, Afghanistan (Kabul, 1965), pp. PF-2
\item \textbf{24} The Survey of Progress, 1962-64, (Kabul, 1964) pp. 19
\end{itemize}

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In the following year 1964, the amount of foreign assistance – loans and grants for development projects and technical improvement – increased to $75.32 million\textsuperscript{25}, and exports and imports of the country remained at $70.68 million and $66.85 million respectively\textsuperscript{26}. The Yousuf government could not complete the tenure of the next financial year of the country (1965-66) and resigned in October 1965.

**Foreign Policy**

In the sphere of foreign relations, Prime Minister Yousuf himself in the first broadcast to the nation promised to continue "the traditional policy of neutrality, nonalignment and independent judgement with a view to safeguarding the country's independence, national sovereignty and territorial integrity and the strengthening of friendly ties with all people and nations on the basis of mutual respect and confidence..."\textsuperscript{27} Speaking on the Pashtunistan issue, Dr. Yousuf reiterated Afghanistan’s support for the ‘legitimate demands’ of the people of Pakhtunistan\textsuperscript{28} but the tone and tenor of his speech and

\textsuperscript{25} *The Survey of Progress, 1964-65* (Kabul, 1965) pp.PF-2

\textsuperscript{26} *The Survey of Progress, 1965-66*, (Kabul, 1966), pp. 76

\textsuperscript{27} *Kabul Times*, March 16, 1963

\textsuperscript{28} Ibid.
by avoidance of the usually provokative wording on the subject at hinted a clear-cut shift in the government's policy on the issue. 29 Soon, the Afghan government responded positively to the renewed 30 Iranian overtures at rapprochement between Pakistan and Afghanistan and gave her consent to the Shah for a direct dialogue with Pakistani authorities.

Direct negotiations between Afghanistan and Pakistan with a view to restore diplomatic and trade relations, were opened in Tehran on May 26, 1963. The Afghan side was led by Sayyid Qasim Rashtiya (Minister of Information and Broadcasting) and the Pakistani side by Mr. Z.A. Bhutto (Foreign Minister). After two days of intensive deliberations, both sides decided to resume diplomatic and trade relations and concluded an agreement on May 28 in the presence of Shah Reza Pahlavi, 31 its terms being as follows:

29 New York Times, March 22, 1963

30 The Shah of Iran offered his services to mediate in the Pakistan-Afghanistan dispute in 1962 and visited Rawalpindi and Kabul in July 1962. However, he had to postpone his efforts till the more opportune movement, as both the disputants were adamant on their positions. After Daoud's stepping down, Shah renewed his mediatory efforts in May 1963.

(1) Pakistan and Afghanistan would re-establish embassies in each other's capital as soon as possible.

(2) The Afghan Consulates at Peshawar and Quetta would be re-established as soon as possible. Pakistan reserved the right to establish Consulates at Kandahar and Jalalabad if necessary.

(3) Afghan trade agencies would be temporarily established at Peshawar and Chaman until the projected railway lines from Chaman and Landikotal had been extended into Afghanistan. Should more trade agencies be needed, this would be discussed between the two Governments.

(4) Transit and trade arrangements would be regularized taking the 1958 transit agreement into account.

(5) Both parties agreed that the duties and conduct of their representatives would be in accordance with the recognized principles of international law, usage, and practice, and would be confined to the discharge of their official functions.

(6) The two Governments agreed to endeavour to create an atmosphere of goodwill, friendship and mutual trust, and expressed their deepest gratitude to the Shah, whose good offices had made the re-establishment of relations possible.

The United States Secretary of State expressed great pleasure at the signing of the Tehran agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan and termed it a big step forward.32 In fact, the resumption of normal relations and reopening of the Afghan-Pakistan border meant that US economic aid to Afghanistan could once again start flowing through the normal route from the Pakistani port of Karachi overland to Kabul.33

32 Department of State Bulletin, June 17, 1963
33 New York Times, May 29, 1963

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However, barely 48 hours had passed after the conclusion of Tehran accord, when the Pakistani and Afghan plenipotentiaries who participated in the Tehran Conference reiterated their respective positions on the issue. Pakistan Foreign Minister, Z.A. Bhutto commented in Rawalpindi that Pashtunistan was a "closed issue", adding that Pakistan would continue to refuse to allow Afghan nomads to enter the country. On the other hand, the Afghan minister of Information, Sayyid Qasim Rashtiya, said that his government had never recognized the Durand Line as the international boundary between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and that Pakhtoonistan continued to be the main issue dividing the two countries. 34

Thus, the arguments and counter-arguments over the Pashtunistan issue, in the aftermath of the Tehran accord indicate that though it broke the prolonged diplomatic impasse between Afghanistan and Pakistan and essentially separated the political question of "Pashtunistan" from normal (bilateral) diplomatic and economic relations; 35 but they could not change diametrically opposite traditional positions on the subject overnight. Pashtunistan issue continued to be stressed forcefully in official Afghan

34 Ibid., May 31, 1963
35 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan, no.11, pp. 565

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pronouncements. Nevertheless hostile propaganda was scaled down, and tribal provocations on both sides ceased. 36

So far as the Afghan-US relations in the aftermath of Daoud's resignation are concerned both sides showed keen interest in strengthening the bilateral relations but for varied motives. Kabul wanted to improve relations with the United States in order to get more economic aid for developmental purpose and to bring an equilibrium in its foreign policy, whereas, Washington was interested in disengaging Afghanistan from the USSR and bringing it closer to the West. Democratic reforms and planned economy at home, and rapprochement with Pakistan along a westward tilt in foreign policy, formed the basis of the Yousuf government's scheme to evoke American interest in Afghanistan. Washington on its part encouraged a Pakistan-Afghanistan reconciliation process along with furnishing substantial economic aid and exchange of high level state visits between Washington and Kabul.

Such mutuality of interests with Afghanistan prompted Washington to manoeuvre Pakistan-Afghanistan rapprochement through its ally, the Shah of Iran. Soon, the Shah of Iran

acting on U.S. directions could arrange direct negotiations between Pakistani and Afghan authorities at Tehran. Two days of deliberations between the two sides led to the conclusion of Tehran Accord on May 28, 1963, with provisions to resume diplomatic and trade relations. The State Department welcomed the agreement and termed it a "big step forward".37

To further this spirit of cordiality and to promote friendly ties with Washington, an Afghan Assembly Delegation, led by Abdul Zahir, President of National Assembly visited several U.S. states in July 1963.38 On the eve of departure of the Afghan delegation, the Prime Minister in an interview to a New York Times correspondent told that "Afghanistan had asked the United States for aid amounting to $60,000,000 a year for the current five-year plan but was receiving only a fraction of that amount.39

Encouraged by the conclusion of Tehran Agreement, a success of American diplomacy, and to reciprocate the Afghan gesture the Kennedy Administration extended an official

38 Kabul Times. July 15, 1963
invitation to King Zahir Shah for a visit to the United States. Accepting the American invitation, the Afghan King paid a state visit to the United States from September 4 to 16, 1963. In Washington, King Zahir Shah was given a warm welcome by President Kennedy on September 5 and given a state dinner at the White House. At a news conference following his meeting with the President, the King said the constitutional reform programme he instituted had progressed to the point of "First Draft". Under the new constitution his own role would be that of "one definite centre who brings together various elements". Speaking about his country's relations with neighbouring countries the Afghan King said that his country has good relations with Soviet Union, Peoples Republic of China and India. But he conceded that it was "very difficult" to expect a full reconciliation with Pakistan - until the troublesome question of Pashtu speaking tribesmen could be settled between the two countries.

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41 Ibid; *New York Times*, September 8, 1963; *Kabul Times*, September 7, 1963

42 *New York Times*, September 6, 1963

43 Ibid.
During the Washington portion of his visit King Zahir Shah had an exchange of views with President Kennedy and Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, on matters of mutual interest to Afghanistan and the United States and the current world situation. After two days of discussion, a joint communique was issued in Washington on September 7, 1963 that emphasized Afghanistan's policy of nonalignment and lent United States's support to Afghan "national integrity".

The communique said that the United States had "followed with interest and sympathy the efforts being made by Afghanistan, under the leadership of His Majesty, to achieve economic development and social progress". President Kennedy assured the King of "the continuing desire of the United States to co-operate with Afghanistan in economic and technical fields and by so doing to contribute


45 Department of State Bulletin, October 7, 1963, pp.535-36

46 New York Times, September 8, 1963

47 Department of State Bulletin, October 7, 1963, pp.535-36
to the success of the efforts which Afghanistan is making to provide a better life for its people".48

The communique further noted that "Afghanistan's traditional policy is the safeguarding of its national independence through non-alignment, friendship and cooperation with all countries. The United States for its part places great importance on Afghanistan's continued independence and national integrity".49 Finally both sides agreed that the visit of the King Zahir Shah has not only "contributed to better understanding between the United States and Afghanistan but also strengthened the already existing friendly relations between the two".50

Besides his engagement in Washington, the king paid a courtesy visit to the former President Dwight E. Eisenhower at Gettysburg and then made a coast to coast tour of the United States.51 On September 16, after a two weeks stay in the United States, King Zahir Shah accompanied by Queen Homaira and a high level official delegation

48 Ibid., New York Times, September 8, 1963
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
51 New York Times, September 8, 1963

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left for Afghanistan via Beirut.\textsuperscript{52} Though the Washington visit of the Afghan king could not bring any immediate American aid, it strengthened bilateral relations and "pointed up the changing character of Afghanistan's foreign policy".\textsuperscript{53}

In the following year, as the war in Vietnam escalated and the American position became vulnerable, Washington tried to involve even countries like Afghanistan in the peace process. The U.S. Assistant Secretary, Mr. Phillips Talbot, touring the region to highlight the American peace efforts in Vietnam made an unofficial two-day visit to Kabul on March 14, 1963. During his stay in Kabul, Talbot had discussions on the bilateral and other current international issues - particularly Vietnam - with the acting Afghan Prime Minister, Mr. Abdullah Malik.\textsuperscript{54}

No doubt the conclusion of the Tehran Agreement and the Washington visit by King Zahir Shah helped in enhancing American influence in Afghanistan, U.S. economic aid to Kabul still remained the principal determinant of the

\textsuperscript{52} American Foreign Policy, \textit{Current Documents}, no. 44, pp.596-97
\textsuperscript{53} \textit{New York Times}, September 9, 1963
\textsuperscript{54} Kabul Times, March 15, 1964; \textit{New York Times}, March 14, 1964
bilateral relations. Perceiving this ground reality, the United States committed $1 million aid for the completion of construction work at Kabul University\(^ {55}\) on March 26, 1963, soon after the change of government in Kabul. In June 1963, Washington agreed to grant 47,000 tons of wheat to Afghanistan.\(^ {56}\) Again, in October after the Washington visit of King Zahir Shah, the United States loaned $1 million to Kabul for purchase of trucks and automobile spare parts.\(^ {57}\) The total U.S. commitments in the year 1963 remained $17.5 million — $14.8 million in grants, $2.6 million in loans and $0.1 million under PL-480 programme.\(^ {58}\)

In the following year, i.e. 1964, the United States with a view to improve Afghanistan’s southward transportation — communication link with Pakistan and thereby reducing its dependence on the USSR and keep the western supply lines open, granted $8 million for the completion of 124 km Herat-Islamkala road.\(^ {59}\) Besides, 

\(^{55}\) Kabul Times, March 27, 1963

\(^{56}\) Ibid., June 15, 1963

\(^{57}\) Ibid., October 20, 1963


\(^{59}\) Kabul Times, July 4, 1964
Washington granted 100,000 tons of wheat to Afghanistan in November 1964. The total US assistance to Afghanistan in 1964 amounted to $14.3 million - an all time record - $12.5 million in grants, $9.7 million in loans and $19.1 million under PL-480 program. However, the American assistance to Afghanistan in 1965 came down to $32.7 million - $10.5 million in grants, $0.3 million in loans and $21.9 million as part of PL-480 programme.

Mohammad Hashim Maiwandwal and the Democratic Experiment

In the wake of Dr. Yousuf's resignation, the King Zahir Shah appointed Mohammad Hashim Maiwandwal (former Ambassador to U.K., U.S.A. and Pakistan, and Minister of Press and Information in Dr. Yousuf's Interim Cabinet) as the Prime Minister of Afghanistan on October 29, 1965. The Wolesi Jirgah approved the new Prime Minister's cabinet.

60 Ibid., November 15, 1964
62 Ibid.
63 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan, no. 11, pp. 593
and policies on November 2.64

The new government shortly after resumption of power tacitly tried to restore normalcy in the capital and win public opinion in its favour by talking to the agitating student community of Kabul University and conceding to their demands. The Prime Minister, Maiwandwal made a visit to Kabul University campus on November 4, and assured students that police and government officials who acted brutally would be subject to punishment. He conveyed the king’s and his own regrets at the bloodshed and ordered the release of most arrested students and faculty members. 65 This exceptional gesture of the Prime Minister won the support of both the Parliament and the students.66 Nonetheless, the new regime realised the necessity of change in its approach if such happenings had to be prevented.

The Maiwandwal government followed the policies which were similar to the political and economic agenda enshrined in the 1964 Constitution. However, with memories of the traumatic down fall of the Yousuf government still fresh and

66 Ibid.
the position of his government yet vulnerable before an untested political system, the new Prime Minister took additional caution in accepting or promoting new political initiatives.67 The selective implementation of the Press Law of 196568 and the unproductive debate over the Political Parties Bill69 reflected well the cautious approach of the Maiwandwal government in introducing changes, particularly in the political field. Still, it did contribute to the process of democratic experiment in the country. The new cabinet took up the tedious task to educate the inexperienced parliamentarians about parliamentary procedures, enact the basic laws necessary for orderly conduct of the government and establish a viable strategy for the Third Five-Year Plan which was to begin in the spring of 1967.70

So far as the development model of the country was concerned, the Maiwandwal government pursued the policy of

67 Ibid., 167

68 The Press Law of 1965, was actually implemented in a controversial manner. The Newspapers hostile to the governments and the present political system were banned.

69 Political Parties Bill could never be passed during the constitutional period because of King Zahir Shah's reluctance to give ascent to it.

70 R. Newell, no. 65, pp.168
the 'guided economy' and launched the Third Five-Year Plan in 1967. However, the Prime Minister, in order to counter the increasing left-wing influence in the political circles, added his own steps that would bring a greater measure of economic democracy, principally through more direct government participation in production and possible actions that would bridge the gaps between wealth and poverty.71

The overall development scenario of Afghanistan during the period remained satisfactory in the given internal and external circumstances, but it never came nearer to the government's rhetoric of social democracy. In 1966 Afghanistan exported $69.52 million worth of commodities while its total imports came to $150.74 million - $66.66 million, excluding loans and grants and $84.08 million loan and grant imports.72 In the same year the Kabul government received $52.7 million in foreign loans and grants, which diminished from a $77.4 million loan in the previous year.73 In the following year Afghan exports amounted to $ 

71 Ibid., pp.169

72 Survey of Progress, (Ministry of Planning, Kabul 1967), 1966-67, Table I, Foreign Trade

73 Survey of Progress, 1966-67, Department of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Royal Government of Afghanistan, (Kabul, August 1967) pp.60: Infact the volume of grants in the year 1966 compared to preceding years diminished remarkably due to the completion of a number of large projects which contained substantial grant components.
66.4 million and its imports came down to $148.36 million - $62.93 million, excluding loans and grants and $75.42 million loan and grant imports. During the same period 1967-68 total foreign assistance from all sources remained $69 million - 59.7 million in loans and $9.3 million in grants.

Besides the Maiwandwal government launched the Third Five Year Plan (1968-72) in April 1967, which was an improvement over the previous plans in some important respects. Though the first two Plans (1957-67) made some impressive advances in areas like power generation, transportation, communications, education and health, they hardly provided direct increases in production. Actually, they concentrated less on production than on creating a basis for it. The Third Plan placed emphasis on the need to shift from the predominantly infrastructural composition of the investment programmes to more productive projects with more immediate yields. In order to accomplish these goals the Third Plan envisaged Afghans 33 billion

74 Survey of Progress, 1968-69 (Kabul, 1969), pp.5-14 & 18
75 R. Newell, no. 65, pp.144
76 R. Newell, no. 65, pp.139-40
77 Marvin Brant, "Recent Economic Development" in Louis Dupree (ed.) Afghanistan in the 1970s (New York, 1974) pp. 87
development expenditure, a 32% increase over the Second Plan amount of 25 billion Afghanis. However, before the actual implementation of the Plan, Maiwandwal government resigned in October 1967 and left the task for the successor governments.

Foreign Policy

In the realm of foreign relations, Prime Minister Maiwandwal continued the policy of 'equi-distance' vis-a-vis the Super Powers and improving ties with neighbours, including Pakistan. In its dealings with the Super Powers, the new government adhered to the policy of strict neutrality and maintained an equilibrium. Whereas, development aid was welcomed from both the Soviet Union and the United States, dependence on either side was cautiously avoided. Soviet-Afghan cooperation in different fields continued as earlier and efforts were made to enlist American aid in order to carry forward the experiment in democracy and development. Working on this theme the Prime Minister, Maiwandwal paid an official visit to the Soviet Union in February 1966, and visited Washington in March 1967.

Besides, the Maiwandwal government continued the process of improving relations with neighbouring countries.

78 Aid was reduced from both the Super Powers in constitutional period.
begun by the previous government. Soon after resumption of power, the new government invited Pakistani President Ayub Khan on an official visit to Kabul. President Ayub Khan paid a two day official visit to Kabul in early January 1966, and held discussions with the King Zahir Shah and Prime Minister Maiwandwal on bilateral relations.79 The Chinese President Liu Shao-Chi also paid an official visit to Afghanistan on April 4-8, 1966, and invited Prime Minister Maiwandwal for a visit to China.80 On the Pashtunistan question, the government of Prime Minister Maiwandwal maintained a formal posture adamantly in favour of Pashtun independence, but steps were taken to ensure easier trade and diplomatic relations with Pakistan. It appears that the Pashtunistan issue, while still potent among some of the tribes and still sincerely felt by the government, loomed less large in the total spectrum of an enlarged political arena.81

So far as Afghan-US relations in the aforesaid period is concerned, Prime Minister Maiwandwal continued the policy of his predecessor, Dr. Yousuf of moving closer to Washington for developmental aid and equilibrium in foreign

79 *New York Times*, January 4, 1966
80 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 1966, pp.21452
81 R. Newell, no. 65, p. 170

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policy. The United States on its part continued supporting the pro-western Maiwandwal government's experiment in democracy and development and encouraged the exchange of high level state visits between the two countries. In view of its deep involvement in Vietnam the level of U.S. assistance declined substantially during the period under discussion. But still it remained a major donor (next to Soviet Union) of aid to Kabul. In the year 1966, Washington provided $ 31.8 million - $ 2.8 million in loans, $ 8.2 million in grants and $ 20.8 million in commodity assistance - to Afghanistan.82 In the following year, 1967, the level of U.S. assistance to Kabul remained $ 31.4 million - 17.0 million in loans, $ 8.3 million in grants and $ 6.1 million in commodity assistance.

Besides aid, the exchange of high level visits between Washington and Kabul remained an important aspect of the bilateral relationship during the period. Soon after the resumption of power by the Maiwandwal government, a U.S. Senate delegation visited Afghanistan, as a part of its Asia tour, in December 1965. During its two day stay in Kabul on December 15-17, the delegation was received by the King Zahir Shah and members of newly constituted Parliament.

including the Prime Minister Maiwandwal.\textsuperscript{83} This was the first visit of a US Senate delegation to Afghanistan\textsuperscript{84} ever since the establishment of direct diplomatic relations between the two countries.

With a view to strengthen bilateral relations, the U.S. government invited the Afghan Prime Minister Maiwandwal on a state visit to Washington in 1967. Accepting the invitation Prime Minister Maiwandwal paid a two-weeks official visit on March 25 to April 9, 1967 to the United States.\textsuperscript{85} President Johnson received the Afghan Prime Minister at the White House on March 28 and both the leaders exchanged views on matters of mutual interest. President Johnson expressed pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister back to Washington, recalling his distinguished role as Afghan Ambassador to the United States.\textsuperscript{86} Responding to the President's welcome at a White House ceremony, the Afghan Prime Minister said his people appreciated the assistance of the United States and other friendly countries. He described Afghanistan's efforts

\textsuperscript{83} Eighty-Ninth Congress, Second session, "Visit to Japan, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Israel", Report of Senate Delegation, (Washington, DC, 1966), pp.15-17

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{New York Times}, March 26, 1967

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Department of State Bulletin}, April 17, 1967, pp.631-32
at democracy and outlined his government's intention to intensify economic development under the Third Five Year Plan. 87 At this President Johnson assured the Afghan Prime Minister of the continuing desire of the United States to do its part in assisting Afghanistan's efforts for implementing the Third Five Year Plan. 88 Similar cooperation between the two countries in the field of education, agriculture, water resources and transportation were also assured.

The Prime Minister reviewed Afghanistan's foreign policy of nonalignment and friendship and cooperation with all nations. Speaking on Pak-Afghan relations he reiterated Afghanistan's desire to find a peaceful settlement of the Pashtunistan issue. 89

Noor Ahmed Etemadi and Constitutional Monarchy

After the resignation of Hashmim Maiwandwal on October 12, 1967, King Zahir Shah asked Abdullah Yakta, the Minister

87 Ibid., Public papers of the President's Lyndon B. Johnson, 1967, March 28, pp. 395-400
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
of State to take over the duties of the Premier until a new cabinet was formed.90 On 2 November, 1967 the King appointed Noor Ahmed Etemadi, deputy premier in the outgoing cabinet, as the new Prime Minister of Afghanistan.91 His nomination was approved by the Parliament without significant opposition on November 15, 1967.92

In the domestic field the Etemadi government encountered the issues faced by its predecessor - to make the constitutional experiment work with a hostile and politically naive Parliament and to keep the pace of economic development consistently up despite internal political instability, frequent droughts and decline in foreign assistance. Under such circumstances, as a matter of fact, the new government was not left with much scope to manoeuvre new initiatives but to adjust with the prevailing realities and pursue the ongoing trend to accomplish the twin task of democracy and development.

With a view to make the constitutional experiment work and to ensure that democratic institutions take root, the

90 New York Times, October 12, 1967
92 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan, no.11, p.693

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Etemadi government made serious effort to maintain favourable formal relations with the Parliament. It followed the practice begun under Maiwandwal of making cabinet ministers readily available to testify before parliamentary committees. On one such demand made by the Wolesi Jirgah in May 1968, the Prime Minister Etemadi and his cabinet appeared before the Lower House in June 1968. In the absence of any political party to back up the cabinet, the Prime Minister had a tough time to explain his government’s policies on all issues before the institutionally immature and hostile Wolesi Jirgah. Though the government faced the specially convened session of the Wolesi Jirgah successfully, still it became clear that Parliament was not going to allow a free hand to the Prime Minister in dealing with domestic and external issues.

Parliamentary hostility was not the only test the government had to go through. Soon, the Etemadi cabinet had to deal with a series of student-workers demonstrations. In particular the student community of Kabul which started strikes and demonstrations initially aimed at alleged

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93 R. Newell, no. 65, p. 173
94 Louis Dupree, Afghanistan, no.11, p.649
95 Ibid.
academic corruption and police brutality had by now become increasingly politicized. Radical groups had used student discontent to build political organisations dedicated to embarrass the government. A new wave of students’ demonstrations began in Kabul during the 1968-69 school year. The agitating Kabul students made charges of corruption and official collusion with private capitalists and demanded greater student political rights. After months of demonstrations and protests, the government made few concessions and the radical leadership appeared to be effectively isolated by the summer of 1969.  

Amidst such a politically surcharged atmosphere, the king announced the opening of elections for the Thirteenth Parliament, the second of the Constitutional Era. In the absence of any political parties, the elections were held in August and September for Meshrano and Wolesi Jirgah respectively. The official results of the Parliamentary elections were declared on October 6, 1969. Afterwards the new Shura, assembled for the first session from October 14 to December 13, 1969 to elect office bearers to conduct Parliamentary business and approve the incoming

96 Richard Newell, no.65, pp. 157
97 Ibid., p.171
98 Louis Dupree, no.11, p. 653

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government. After sixteen days of debate from November 13 to December 2 (excluding holidays) the Parliament approved the reappointment of Noor Ahmed Etemadi as Prime Minister, as the King desired.

However, the much desired harmony between the legislature and the executive could not last long. Soon an impasse developed between the National Assembly – especially its dominant lower house, the Wolesi Jirgah – and the Cabinet. And all this affected the prestige and performance of the government in no uncertain terms. In fact, friction between the legislature and the cabinet resulted in the failure of the government to get any meaningful legislation passed – particularly laws establishing an industrial development bank and the legalisation of political parties. This weak position of the government also had a detrimental effect on its economic performance which in turn further imperiled it before the Parliament. To make the situation even worse, foreign assistance, a vital

99 Ibid.
100 Ibid.
102 Richard Newell, no.65, pp.174
necessity and major source of financing the development plans, declined substantially in each year of Etemadi's government. In the year 1967-68 Afghanistan received $ 69 million in foreign aid, $ 59.7 million in loans and $ 9.3 million in grants. In the following year, the amount of total assistance came down to $ 50 million, $ 37.9 million in loans and $ 12.2 million in grants. In the year 1969-70, the level of foreign aid to Kabul government further came down to $ 44 million - $ 34.4 million in loans and $ 9.7 million in grants.103

At this juncture, criticism of the government became nearly universal and the Prime Minister became a target of serious parliamentary attacks. In May 1971, Parliament moved against the Prime Minister by threatening a vote of no confidence, the equivalent of censure. Finding himself locked in such circumstances, the Prime Minister, Etemadi resigned on May 17, 1971.104

In external affairs as in the domestic field, Prime Minister Etemadi continued the policies of his predecessors. The traditional policy of neutrality and non-alignment along

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103 R. Newell, no. 65, pp.144
104 New York Times, June 6, 1971

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with efforts at improving ties with neighbours, formed the basis of the new government's foreign policy. On the Pashtunistan question, the Etemadi government time and again reiterated Afghan support for the right of self-determination of the Pashtuns east of Durand Line, but avoided open confrontation on the issue. Elucidating his government's external policy before the Parliament, the Prime Minister stated that the fundamental role of Afghan foreign policy was "safeguarding the national interest, independence, national dignity and prestige (of the country) and attracting friendship of all nations... and serving the cause of world peace." 105 Referring to Pashtunistan issue the Prime Minister said:

"Afghanistan's efforts in supporting ... Pashtunistani brethren to attain their right to self-determination is continuing and will continue with full determination. Until this issue finds a just solution in accordance with the aspirations of ... Pashtunistani brethren, the Government of Afghanistan will not let any opportunity, including the opportunity available during talks with leaders of friendly countries, slip without explaining the nature of the Pashtunistan issue." 106

Like its predecessors, the strengthening of Afghan-US relations remained the priority area of Etemadi government’s foreign policy. By continuing the experiment with the Western model of democracy and development at home and

105 Kabul Times, June 13, 1968
106 Ibid.
keeping a nonaligned position abroad, the new Prime Minister, endeavoured to enliven the American interest in Afghanistan. Keeping in line with the government's policy to strengthen bilateral ties with Washington, an Afghan delegation led by Sardar Abdul Wali paid an official visit to the United States in February 1968 to inspect military establishments. ¹⁰⁷ So far as the United States was concerned, she looked at the changes in Afghanistan with favour and continued to express her interest in the land locked country through official visits of high American dignitaries to Kabul and supply of moderate economic assistance. As part of this policy, the US Secretary of State, William P. Rogers, on May 25, 1969, paid an official visit to Kabul at the invitation of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Noor Ahmad Etemadi. This was the first visit ever made to Afghanistan by a United States Secretary of State. ¹⁰⁸ During his brief stay of four hours in Kabul, Mr. Rogers was received in audience by the King and held talks with the Prime Minister, Etemadi "on the issues of interest to the two countries, international problems, issues related to the region, and mutual ties including the

¹⁰⁷ Kabul Times, February 15, 1968
US economic aid to Afghanistan”.109

Secretary Rogers and members of his entourage later attended a luncheon banquet which was held in their honour by the Prime Minister in the foreign ministry building.110 Premier Etemadi speaking at the luncheon banquet said - "Afghanistan pursues the policy of neutrality as an established tradition and therefore by adopting policy of non-alignment with respect to military pacts, it supports resolutely the principles of the United Nations charter, free cooperation based on equal rights between Nations, and the need for the peaceful settlement of international conflicts (Pashtunistan issue, Vietnam war).111 Secretary Rogers in his speech said:

"In the last two decades we have learned from each other and have established a mutual understanding on fundamentals which allows us the free and frank exchange of views which is characteristic of relations between friends. As Americans, we are pleased to have played a role with our Afghan colleagues in some of these activities. We look forward to our continued participation in the years ahead".112

Appreciating the Afghan experiment in constitutionalism he wished the Afghans “all success in this noble endeavour”.113

109 Ibid.
110 Kabul Times, May 26, 1969
111 Ibid. Emphasis added.
112 Ibid.
113 Ibid.
After Secretary Roger's visit, Bertran D. Smucker, the Assistant Executive Director Overseas Operations of CARE (Cooperation for American Relief Everywhere) paid a five-day visit to Afghanistan in October 1969. During his stay in Afghanistan he met with officials from various ministries and government departments to discuss current programs and plans for future ones. CARE through its Medico Service, had carried out a training program for Afghan doctors while providing health services.

In the following year the US Vice President Spiro T. Agnew paid a 19-hour visit to Kabul on January 6, 1970, as a part of his 11 nation tour of Asia. His visit to Afghanistan was seen, in the diplomatic circles, as an important expression of continuing United States interest in and support for the Kabul Government's nonaligned

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114 Ibid., October 29, 1969
115 Ibid. October 29 - November 1, 1969
116 Ibid.
118 After Richard Nixon (in 1953) Agnew was the second US Vice President to visit Kabul, and highest-ranking American official to visit Afghanistan since President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1959).
stance". During his stay in Kabul, the US Vice-President had dinner with the King Zahir Shah and discussed Afghanistan's domestic and regional interests and the question of the level of American aid with the Prime Minister, Noor Ahmad Etemadi. He appreciated Afghanistan's development pace and democratic experiments and assured continued assistance:

"we know that you have been seeking to develop your natural and human resources to modernise your country and enrich the lives of your people. We have great admiration for these efforts also. We Americans are proud of our association with Afghans over the years in working toward a bright future for Afghanistan. As Afghans persevere in these efforts, we look forward to assisting in any way we can".

Soon after the conclusion of US Vice President Spiro T. Agnew's visit to Kabul, Afghan Defence Minister, General Khan Mohammad visited Washington on January 26, 1970, with a view to reciprocate Vice President's visit and to strengthen the bilateral ties.

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120 Ibid.
122 Kabul Times. January 26, 1970

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Besides the visit of high level American dignitaries to Kabul, Washington continued providing economic assistance to the Etemadi government, though at a reduced scale from year to year. In the year 1968 Washington provided $14.8 million of assistance\textsuperscript{123} in comparison to $31.4 million assistance in the previous year. In 1969, the level of US assistance to Kabul came down to $13.8 million $1.2 million in loans, $7.6 million in grants and $5.0 million under PL-480 scheme.\textsuperscript{124} In 1970, the level of US aid to Afghanistan came down to $7.6 million $6.8 million in grants and $.8 million under PL-480 programme.\textsuperscript{125} In the following year, 1971, the US commitment to Afghanistan amounted to $12.6 million $8.8 million in grants and $3.8 million under PL-480 programme.\textsuperscript{126}

\textsuperscript{123} "Retrospective Review of the US Assistance to Afghanistan, 1950-79", no.58, pp. Annex. C-1
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{126} Ibid.
The Last Years of the democratic experiment 1971-73:

Noor Ahmed Etemadi continued as a caretaker Prime Minister till June 9, 1971, when King Zahir Shah appointed Abdul Zahir, ambassador to Italy as the new Premier, and asked him to form a government. Though the country had a new Prime Minister, the attitude of the conservative Parliament remained unchanged and the impasse between the two continued. It is evident from the 19 days of tumultuous debate in which members vented their resentment over the alleged abuses by previous governments before giving grudging approval of Abdul Zahir's cabinet on July 26, 1971. Despite the prevailing political scenario soon after assumption of power, the new Prime Minister Abdul Zahir attempted to revive the collapsing constitutional machinery and launched a rescue operation for the severely drought affected economy. Altogether, through his government's efforts Afghanistan received from foreign sources more than three hundred fifty thousand tons of wheat and foodgrains. Operation help launched in the year 1971-72 in the hard-hit areas, saved hundred of thousands of

127 *New York Times*, June 11, 1971
128 Louis Dupree, no.11, pp.664
lives. Moreover, foreign aid, which was slackened, again began to flow into Afghanistan. In the year 1971-72, Afghanistan received 100 million roubles from the USSR, forty-four million dollars credit from China and more than $30 million from the United States. 

Notwithstanding the Prime Minister's best efforts, the Parliament and Cabinet deadlock continued and no substantial legislation could be passed during the period. Lacking effective internal organization and discipline, the Wolesi Jirgah continuously failed to fulfill its basic duties. Quorums were rarely achieved. It had assembled the minimum numbers of representatives only once in two months, prior to November 1972. Moreover, inaction and irresponsible behaviour of the assembly members affected the implementation of important programmes. At this juncture, the failure of King Zahir Shah to give critically needed support to legislators who were trying to make the system work, aggravated the impact of friction between the

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129 Kabul Times. December 6, 1972
130 Ibid.
131 Kabul Times. November 26, 1972
legislature and the cabinet. King Zahir Shah also refused either to give assent to the legalization of Political Parties Bill or approve legislation to extend representative government to the provinces and cities.

This situation of continued political deadlock took a turn for the worse when widespread hunger in April 1972, resulted in the starvation death of thousands of persons. About half of Afghanistan's livestock was lost. The government tried to fight the situation on a war footing and received substantial foreign aid. However, failing to overcome the effects of the economic disaster and frustrated by the prevalent political scenario, Prime Minister, Abdul Zahir resigned on September 25, 1972.

Muhammad Moussa Shafiq was appointed as Prime Minister

133 Ibid.
134 Facts on File, 1972, pp.494
135 New York Times, September 25, 1972
on December 8, 1972,\textsuperscript{136} at a time when the constitutional system was facing a crisis of credibility and survival. The city-based educated section was frustrated by the defects of the introduced reforms and resultant political instability in the country. Besides, there was widespread discontent over the distress and dislocation that had followed the drought and government's inefficiency to ease the situation.

The new Prime Minister, Shafiq, quickly took measures to revitalize the floundering economy, to stimulate the inert bureaucracy and mobilize the support of the urban elite. Accordingly, he attempted to bring rapprochement with Parliament and focussed his attention more on the issues and agencies which had been the centre of public interest or complaint.\textsuperscript{137} The success of his strategy is evident from the fact that Parliament soon passed the annual budget which had languished for nine months since the actual fiscal year had begun.\textsuperscript{138} His efforts in the early months included the creation of the Industrial Development Bank, a new literacy programme, the creation of a Ministry for Higher Education and the development of a fertilizer and agricultural

\textsuperscript{136} Kabul Times, December 9, 1972
\textsuperscript{137} R. Newell, no. 132, p.59
\textsuperscript{138} Kabul Times, December 12, 1972

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services delivery programme. Moreover, he opened government actions to public scrutiny, improved the managerial functions of government officers; placed tacit emphasis on the availability of Afghan-expertise, implying less reliance on foreign and technical advice, set up various cabinet and administrative reforms.

However, due to the lack of royal support his reforms could not be implemented and his government became a lameduck. By the spring of 1973, everything came to the standstill. The Prime Minister himself expressed a new tone of doubt and pessimism as is evident from his speech on May 6, 1973. The fall of the government seemed imminent in such circumstances. What followed next was an unopposed coup on July 17, 1973 which closed the chapter of western style democratic experiment, abolished the monarchy and brought Mohammad Daoud to power.

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139 R. Newell, no. 132, p.60
140 Kabul Times, January 7, 1973
141 Ibid., December 25, 1972
142 Kabul Times, May 6, 1973
143 New York Times, July 18, 1973
Foreign Relations

In the sphere of foreign relations, both Dr. Abdul Zahir and Moussa Shafiq pursued the traditional policy of neutrality and non-alignment, maintained good relations with neighbours and supported right to self-determination of the Pashtuns east of Durand Line. Explaining his government's stand on various issues related to foreign policy, Moussa Shafiq reiterated that

"Afghan foreign policy will continue on the basis of active non-alignment and neutrality. This government will therefore exert all efforts for the consolidation of friendship with all nations of the world on the basis of mutual respect, free cooperation based on equal rights, expansion of bilateral relations and especially the strengthening of traditional friendly ties... In conformity with these objectives Afghanistan will continue to play its role in the common efforts of the non-aligned countries and Islamic nations, and will constantly refrain from joining military pacts." 144

Speaking on the Pashtunistan question, Prime Minister Shafiq said "Our support of the right of self-determination for our Pashtunistan brethren which constitutes a national and historical right and duty of Afghanistan will unfailingly continue in accordance with the will of the Afghan nation, as expounded in numerous official declarations." 145

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144 Kabul Times, December 11, 1972
145 Ibid.
So far as Afghan-US relationship during the last phase of the Constitutional Era was concerned, it continued without significant change. Though Washington, too, was frustrated with the progress of the democratic experiment in Afghanistan, still she continued her economic aid to the drought affected country and high American officials paid visits to Kabul.

The special representative of US President, Richard Nixon, on international trade and monetary matters, Mr. John B. Connally Jr. visited Kabul on July 7, 1972, as a part of his 11 nation tour of Asia-Pacific region. During his few hours stay in Kabul he had a luncheon meeting with the King and discussed several issues of interest between Afghanistan and the U.S. with Prime Minister, Dr. Abdul Zahir. His talks with Foreign Minister Mohammad Moussa Shafiq centered on economic relations between the two countries and consequences of the prolonged drought situation in Afghanistan. Speaking to reporters at Kabul airport prior to his departure for Tehran, Connally said

146 Kabul Times. July 8, 1972; Facts on File. 1972, pp.569
147 Ibid.
148 Ibid.
there would be no abrupt changes in US foreign policy, and America would continue to share its wealth "as much as we can". 149

In the aftermath of the Connally visit, Dr. John A. Hannah, Administration of the US Agency for International Development, paid a three day official visit, the first time by an AID-Administrator, to Afghanistan 150 in October 1972. Dr. John assured the Afghan Prime Minister Dr. Zahir "of expanded assistance to Afghanistan as far as his organisation's resources permit". 151 During his stay an agreement was concluded between the two governments whereby the United States agreed to give a $16.5 million loan to Afghanistan. The loan was to be utilised for dollar costs of fertiliser and management services in support of the newly formed Afghanistan's fertilizer company. 152 Besides, these official visits, Washington continued much needed economic assistance to the drought torn Afghan economy. In the year 1972, U.S. provided $33.9 million worth of

149 Facts on File, 1972, pp.569
150 Kabul Times, October 23, 1972
151 Ibid., October 25, 1972
152 Ibid.
assistance to Afghanistan $3 million in loans, $6.6 million in grants and $24.3 million under the PL-480 programme. In the last year of the democratic experiment, the American economic assistance to Kabul amounted $37.2 million, $19.5 million in loans, $7.5 million in grants and $10.1 million under PL-480 scheme. However, before this whole amount of American aid could be utilized, there came a change of government in Kabul.


154 Ibid.