CONCLUSION

Afghanistan is a developing land-locked state which has used the alternative access to the area through the Soviet Union to overcome the inherent weaknesses of its enclosed location. In the process, Afghanistan was not only able to accelerate the pace of economic development by assuring the northern passage but also kept its political options of the problems of access to the sea through Pakistan open. Incidentally, this latter aspect had a far-reaching politico-economic impact upon Afghanistan when the influence of unequal natural division of the state is considered.

Afghanistan is of average size, economically poor and disassociated from the regional politico-economic activity. Afghanistan has only, at present, a small role in the region. With subsistence agriculture as the mainstay of the economy, its specialization on Karakul and natural gas enables it to earn the much-needed foreign exchange. Internally, heterogeneous Afghanistan has constantly faced problems of building up a viable state out of ethnically disparate peoples who have seldom shown a clear conception of definite state-ideas. These, in turn, weakened the basis for formulation and implementation of the foreign policy in relation to the growing level of modernization and external political changes. It can be said that most of the problems faced by land-locked Afghanistan, are largely connected with the efforts to raise the standard of living of the inhabitants in response to the increasing
influence of politico-geographical factors upon the economic development of the state.

The cumulative effect of these interactions has not only resulted in the reorientation of power relationship within the state but also changes in the perspective of external relations. The morphology of the Afghan State area clearly suggests the concentration of economic activities in the peripheral regions which are vulnerable and easily accessible to external influences of neighbouring states. Analyzing the pattern of resource allocation and territorial contiguity of the Afghan State area, it is evident that (a) the regions are distinctly separated from each other by physical and human barriers (in the form of primary territorial groups); (b) that the peripheral regions of the state (economically more-endowed than those in the interior) have more in common with the adjoining states; and (c) within this broader perspective, there exists a sharp contrast in the composition of population, economic interests and political attitudes.

The physical environment, then, became a major constrain upon which the primary and secondary territorial groups developed their socio-political organizations. Each of these units had definite area of action which ultimately resulted in their singular development, irrespective of those already evolved by other territorial units. This leads to an important corollary that the lack of state idea among the inhabitants was largely due to the peculiar interaction of the processes of
co-operation and conflict in the still tribal dominated state. Though the non-territorial and detribalized urban elite groups have emerged in Afghanistan, the traditional groups continue to retain their influence upon Afghanistan as a nation state.

However, the evolution of axis regions have contributed significantly to the problems and orientation of the land-locked state. These axis regions were zones of socio-political influences which not only left deep impress upon the cultural environment but also were responsible for the transitional nature of the state. Each of the axis regions had definite area. The fusion of these areas into a single state and the result of definition of the boundaries, brought the latent disruptive forces to play an important role in the politics of the state. As the state was an amalgam of partitioned axis regions, the problems faced by Afghanistan, were connected inevitably with those of the adjacent countries. /In the process the dominant nature of external influences and internal tribal dynamics kept Afghanistan in a constant state of political instability and isolation. /To achieve wider regional (inter-state) movements and to break away from the historical influences, the change in the location of the state capital (from Kandahar to Kabul) and the shift of regional power node (from Balkh to Mazar-i-Sharif) was partially successful in giving Afghanistan a proper national perspective. However, the changes in the international political situations and Afghanistan's problems in external relations, once again reinforced the pivotal
importance of the axis regions upon the state.

The highly centralized form of government, still retaining the elements of tribalism, is suggestive of the presence of strong centrifugal forces undermining the political viability of the land-locked state. With the emergence of urban elite groups, the moderation in the political climate in Afghanistan (1963-1973) was partially responsible for the realignment and polarization of political power in the state. These changes resulted in significant variations in the external associations and gave due impetus for wider participation in the politics of the state. However, this sudden change retarded the politico-economic development of the state. Instead of accelerating the development processes, they undermined the stability of the state. The contemporary socio-political order within Afghanistan, then, is beset with disintegrating forces which have constantly eroded the foundations of existing institutions and organizations. The critical evaluation has led to constructive proposals, whereby the state was able to direct the disjointed political character of the polity towards gradual transition and national goals. The revolution in 1973, therefore, can be viewed as a measure to reorganize the contents and nature of the state more in relation to the economic needs of the developing society rather than traditional political requirements.

The changes in the administrative set up and reorganization of the provinces was a major step towards centralization
of state power which were both strategic and political. The pattern of administrative units of Afghanistan represented the cumulative influences of politico-economic decisions upon the traditionally conservative society. Though the raison d'être of the changes have been over-shadowed, the effective combination of variables explain the such administrative patterns. These variables include geographical factors, cultural factors and political considerations. This administrative pattern can, thus be understood only within the milieu of the nature of various Afghan Governments' tradition, continuity and other extra-mural forces. Yet, analyzing the not-too-infrequent administrative reorganizations, leads to the inference that over-lapping of functions between the ministries has minimized the effectiveness of various development efforts. As a result, the differences between the regions have accentuated.

The administrative machinery has to be reorganized and geared to the task of development. Subsequent to the centralization which is needed to marshal economic resources, decentralization is absolutely necessary to provide greater scope for individual initiative, and less avoidable delays as well as to achieve a fair amount of balanced regional developments. The Ministry of Planning should become effective as a co-ordinating agency, and should scrutinize carefully all sectoral programmes and industrial projects. The Ministry should have a strong evaluation unit responsible for scanning the day-to-day progress of planning and assessing the situation. Unless
adequate institutions are created and the methods of administration overhauled to suit the changing environment, development will be slow and very expensive.

In order to raise the people's standard of living, serious effort has been directed to increase the domestic production of cloth, footwear and other consumer goods, sufficient in quantity to meet the larger portion of popular consumption. This increase would automatically reduce imports and accordingly, tends to reduce the dependence on foreign sources.

An expansion in education and training is envisaged with new vocational schools, accelerated courses, on-the-job training, as well as technological training in the country itself, some of which are to be under the guidance of foreign specialists. Competent students are also being sent abroad in large numbers to undergo professional and vocational training in many different fields. Finally, foreign technicians were invited to aid in solving important practical problems of economy.

In working out plans for economic development, foreign technical and monetary aid was sought. During the various plans, effective friendly aid was received from the USSR, the United States of America, Czechoslovakia, Federal Republic of Germany, and the United Nations. This co-operation was to be prolonged and extended during the succeeding plans, with additional countries participating. It would be most hopeful if countries rendering such assistance to underdeveloped areas could plan the extent of their aid, not merely for one year at
a time, but for the entire period under consideration. Further, it should not be forgotten that if even a portion of the foreign aid which has been planned is not granted, separate projects of vital importance to the receiver will have to be omitted, to the detriment of progress.

It will be obvious from the preceding review that Afghanistan has proceeded so far without essential prerequisites. This was largely due to the existence of the vast untapped potentialities for economic growth. However, a stage has now been reached where allocative efficiency is of supreme importance. A long-term perspective on future development in the country is imperative, as it is in the light of this prognosis that medium and short-term plans are to be drawn up. Proper priorities and co-ordinated targets in all fields are necessary for making the most effective use of the limited investment resources available to the country. At the same time, both the financial yardstick and the physical aspects of growth have to be considered while relating material balance to each stage of development.

The greatest single obstacle to scientific planning is the lack of statistical data. Hence, statistical services must be strengthened as rapidly as possible. Till such time as a complete census of population and production (practically agricultural) can be taken, sample studies and surveys should be made, so as to provide a reasonable basis for informed decisions on diverse aspects of the economy.
Manpower is one of the crucial bottlenecks of development in the country. A thorough scrutiny has to be made of the educational system and the educational development programme, in order to bring them in line with the general requirements of national development. Priorities to suit the changing phases of the economy have to be made, so that scarce resources are not "wasted" on the less important items. At present (and perhaps for quite some time to come), technical and professional education should be given even greater emphasis.

The locational perspective of Afghanistan, viewed from both within and outside it, is largely responsible for the strategy of shaping of political activities and other forces of change. Perceived connectivity with external links were identified with the regional disparity. As a result, the impress upon the Afghan landscape has been in the form of interdependence, pattern of agglomeration and specialized resource-use. Analyzing, both from the synchronous and diachronic views, the Afghan continues to be a closed one; while the lack of data on economy, trade, etc., hamper the analysis of the degree of its closeness. A time scale study proves otherwise, for the magnitude of foreign financial and technical aid to the land-locked Afghanistan forms an important benchmark.

But what is evident is that both the political and economic forces are dominated by the societal forces. With the combination of individual and group motivations, they transformed themselves into an ideology which became inseparable
with the political action area. Such is the case with the Pushtuns and other tribes; whose rivalry has left a lasting impress upon the Afghan landscape. These became the forces of change. At such a stage, many of such consequences can be termed as political, for the implementation of socio-economic policies add more to its dimension.

To view things operationally feasible, is to consider the various events as interconnected episodes. Knowledge of these spatial settings of consolidation and economic stability in Afghanistan is significant (see chapters IV and V). This is primarily due to the shortcomings of the various regimes to fulfil the required objectives of development.

It, then, sums up to the fact that any concern for the stability of politico-economic infrastructure of the state, focuses itself on the regime and the elites. Significant subsets are presence of opposition parties, elections, various forms of leadership, etc. These become operational by specific political transactions, such as Daoud's resignation in 1963, military coups in 1973 and 1978. Spatial characteristic (see chapter II) forms the basis of the analysis.

The spatial attributes, then, form the major objectives for the Central Government to establish a conformity between the action area and original political area. This has left Afghanistan, particularly the Pushtuns (see chapters II and III) to dominate the landscape. As a result, it was the non-Pushtuns who were able to impress the economic landscape and
accrue adequate political power. The 1978 coup can be considered from this point of view which was able to challenge the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Daoud government.

This suggests that the interaction arising from such spatial impact of political decision has not only inter repercussions but also external implications. Earlier, the lack of modernization had been responsible for the downfall of governments in Afghanistan. Later, failure to implement the process of politico-economic socialization, transit difficulties and disenchantment over the constitution (as well various other political policies) led to downfall of the republican regime in 1978. This clearly indicated that with the gradual accumulation of landscape changes (stemming from reinforcing processes) resulted in the conversion of political action area from east (Pushtun dominated zone) into a new political action area (the non-Pushtun, northern Afghanistan). This was suggested earlier (see chapter ) for the political action area is often the mosaic of conflict between territoriality and place perception.

It is clear from the preceding discussions that the central authority has attempted to strengthen its control over the state's political area. Various ministries and agencies (including those with foreign collaborations) had striven for a balance in regional development between the centre's desire for effectiveness of national planning and the periphery's needs (see chapter IV). However, apart from few other centres
like Herat and Kandahar, it was primarily the Kabul valley and the Kunduz-Mazar-i-Sharif axis which dominated and created an acute regional differences. Nationalist and progressive institutions continued to foster their inspirations which ultimately proved detrimental to the stability of the state. These owe much of their direction and drive for identification to the elite selectiveness of the ideology.

The effort to correlate the role of political process to geographical space has been discussed. Their hierarchical order of administrative units and political perception has been clearly indicated. Ultimately, the impress on landscape (through the political changes which has taken place in Afghanistan) has been correlated with the expression of people and their reaction to a decision concerning the territoriality. Their organization and their final coup de grace forms the end of the geographical space links.

The following chart shows a generalized response of the population to definite political action of the central authority.

Thus the political geography of Afghanistan clearly suggests that if the state has to exist as an independent and economically viable unit, it has to reconcile with the hard facts of its location inheritance. In order to direct the state towards the path of modernization, Afghanistan should attempt to rational political reforms which will induce the ethnically heterogeneous nation to a wider participation in
### Political Process - Afghanistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>Central</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Forces</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ideological</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basis of the people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Territoriality</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Administrative</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Area formation</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and interaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Landscape</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Political</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>action areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

a) Independent development (influence of neighbouring countries.
b) Nationalism
c) ---
d) High degree of central authority
e) Urbanization
f) Public utility and institutions
g) Area of activity

/ indicates a high degree of desire
X indicates a minimum desire
the affairs of the state. As noted earlier, it should separate those areas of development which could be achieved by local resources from those requiring heavy foreign assistance. By doing so, it cannot only develop the traditional socio-economic base of the state but also enable the aid-giving countries to concentrate on developing the basic economic infrastructure of the state. This differentiation between the various development projects is important, for, otherwise, it will increase the burden of repayment for the land-locked state. The diversification and specialization of some of the products of foreign trade will assuredly, in long run, enable the state to finance its own development projects. Regarding the transit difficulties, it can be assumed that unless internal political stability is achieved there is little possibility of acquiring a easily accessible route. This is mainly due to the fact that under such circumstances, neither the economic objectives will be fulfilled nor the foreign aid will be effectively utilized. As a consequence regional rivalry between the Afghan east and north will dominate the entire political activities as well as external relations. This, as the 1978 coup suggests, will ultimately lead the country to fall within the overriding sphere of influence of the heartland.

Nevertheless, the access to the sea will figure prominently but can be overcome if the present policy of the Afghan Government succeeds. This policy of reconciliation will, no
doubt, assure free access which will benefit both Afghanistan and its neighbours.

Lack of data has continuously obstructed a detailed analysis. The purpose of dealing with the aspect of internal boundary changes separately, is mainly to highlight the various associated problems. These need a careful and detailed analysis, which can be made only after the requisite data is collected through time.