

TRANSLATION OF THE SPEECH MADE BY MR. MONSEF.
DEPUTY OF PARLIAMENT, ON 16th MAY 1947.

"The statement which I wish to make before the members of parliament centers around this verse:

"We should never lament from Aliens"
"Whatever brought to us come from akins"

"Regarding Helmand river, we, of course, have many complaints to make against the government and people of Afghanistan. Despite all the friendly statements frequently repeated by Afghan authorities, they act with great meanness and create limitations in respect of one of our most established historic rights.

"Of course unless we get sure about the impossibility of coming to terms with the government of Afghanistan, the international courtesy, as well as the brotherly, religious and social ties that we have with the people of Afghanistan which we have always looked upon with respect, necessitates that we would not abandon our traditional policy of steadfastness. In this way we shall not choose any methods for acquiring our rights other than peaceful means and reference to UNO.

"But should, God forbids, we get disappointed in this way and should the fact become established that Afghans intend to take advantage of our credulity and want to

finish their unjustified and incomplete work, thus repeating and renewing the inauspicious memories of last year which inflicted tremendous losses on Seistan I cannot believe that any sensitive Iranian, in whose veins runs the pure Iranian blood, can stand this loss and historical disgrace.

"Unfortunately there are some indications which point to the fact that preparations are being made for bringing about the disappointment referred to above. I therefore deem it my duty to warn the people and the government of Iran to set to preserving their established and historical right.

"The sources of all this violation of rights lie in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the method of work of its diplomatic officials. Since 1317 it was heard that Afghans are digging new canals and constructing dams in the course of Helmand. Now the question is that during this period what has been done about this matter by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and what information have been obtained by our diplomatic officials in Afghanistan?"

TRANSLATION OF THE SPEECH MADE BY MR. MONSEF.
DEPUTY OF PARLIAMENT, ON 16th MAY 1947.

"The statement which I wish to make before the members of parliament centers around this verse:

"We should never lament from Aliens"
"Whatever brought to us come from akins"

"Regarding Helmand river, we, of course, have many complaints to make against the government and people of Afghanistan. Despite all the friendly statements frequently repeated by Afghan authorities, they act with great meanness and create limitations in respect of one of our most established historic rights.

"Of course unless we get sure about the impossibility of coming to terms with the government of Afghanistan, the international courtesy, as well as the brotherly, religious and social ties that we have with the people of Afghanistan which we have always looked upon with respect, necessitates that we would not abandon our traditional policy of steadfastness. In this way we shall not choose any methods for acquiring our rights other than peaceful means and reference to UNO.

"But should, God forbids, we get disappointed in this way and should the fact become established that Afghans intend to take advantage of our credulity and want to

finish their unjustified and incomplete work, thus repeating and renewing the inauspicious memories of last year which inflicted tremendous losses on Seistan I cannot believe that any sensitive Iranian, in whose veins runs the pure Iranian blood, can stand this loss and historical disgrace.

"Unfortunately there are some indications which point to the fact that preparations are being made for bringing about the disappointment referred to above. I therefore deem it my duty to warn the people and the government of Iran to set to preserving their established and historical right.

"The sources of all this violation of rights lie in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the method of work of its diplomatic officials. Since 1317 it was heard that Afghans are digging new canals and constructing dams in the course of Helmand. Now the question is that during this period what has been done about this matter by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and what information have been obtained by our diplomatic officials in Afghanistan?"

TRANSLATION OF THE SPEECH MADE BY THE
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BEFORE THE
'MAJLIS' ON 27.2.1327 (17th May, 1947)

Mr. Noury-Esfandiary, Minister of Foreign Affairs;-

As the question of Heland is vital to one of our important provinces, and of paramount interest to the 'Majlis' I therefore wish to state, in detail, the whole position; and I very much apologise that I may take the time of the honourable members.

Late in fall which is the season for rain the water of Helmand gradually increases. In Bahman the river starts to overflow and this continues until late in Mordad. Early in Tir the water diminishes. Since many years the question of the division of water in summer and autumn has been in dispute between Afghans and Iranians.

In 1872 when the foreign affairs of Afghanistan were being administered by the British Government, Sir Fredrick Goldsmid was appointed by Iran and Afghanistan to arbitrate on the issue. His award regarding the division of Helmand water provided that no works to be carried out on either side calculated to interfere with the supply of water for irrigation on both banks of Helmand.

As notwithstanding the above award, occasional disputes occurred between the two parties on the division of water, at the time of H.I.M. the late Shah, negotiations were carried out for the conclusion of a satisfactory agreement. This resulted in 1317 agreement, according to which

the two governments agreed that each year any quantity of water reaching Bank-i-Kemal Khan should be divided equally between Iran and Afghanistan from Band-i Kemal Khan downwards. In the Declaration attached to this Agreement the Royal Government of Afghanistan announced that it had no intention to restrict or limit the supply of water to Seistan, and undertook not to permit any action which cause a decrease in the water share of Iran in Band-i Kemal Khan.

Despite the fact that the Agreement and its attached Declaration were signed at Kabul by the representatives of both Governments, and ratified by the Iranian 'Majlis', the Afghan Government ratified the Agreement but on the pretext that Afghan Council had rejected it, officially informed this Government of its refusal to accept the Agreement and the relative Declaration.

It is to be regretted that the refusal of Afghan Government in ratifying the Declaration in respect of ensuring water for Seistan is contrary to the good will that the Iranian Government is expecting from a friendly and neighbouring country.

From 1317 up to 1321 the continuous efforts and endeavours by this Government to make Afghan Government accept the Declaration were useless, and the proposals

made by the Iranian Government in a spirit of goodwill to the Government of Afghanistan did not bear any fruit.

Since early in 1326, when it was certain that the Afghan Government would not ratify the Declaration, it was suggested that a group of Iranian engineers and experts, together with Afghan's experts, visit the course of Helmand from its source up to its end and submit a complete report to be used as a basis for fresh negotiations for solving the question at issue. This suggestion was regretfully rejected too by the Government of Afghanistan.

Thereafter it was proposed that the Iranian Minister of Agriculture, accompanied by a group of competent persons, visit Kabul for surveying Helmand course and negotiating with Afghan authorities with a view to making an Agreement for the division of water. While the Government of Afghanistan did not create any difficulty for the visit of our Minister of Agriculture to that country, it made assertions in this respect which disappointed the Iranian Government from getting a practicable result.

In Mordad 1326 therefore the Iranian Embassy at Kabul was instructed to send a note to the Afghan Minister of Foreign Affairs, stating that as the Declaration attached to the 1317 Agreement as well as other proposals for solving the question of Helmand water have not been accepted

by Afghan Government, and as the Iranian Government cannot accept the 1317 Agreement without its Declaration, it will therefore continue to count upon Goldsmid's award, according to which Afghan Government should not carry out any works throughout the entire course of Helmand calculated to diminish Iran's share of water, and on the strength of which the Iranian Government feels justified to control any action taken by Afghan Govt. throughout the entire course of Helmand. It was also pointed out in the note that should Iran be refused of her share of water, and the unfriendly attitude as well as unjustified actions be continued, the Iranian Government will take appropriate measures for recovering its right.

Following this action, the Iranian Government decided to refer the case to International Authorities. But meanwhile conversations took place between Mr. George Allen, U. S. Ambassador, and the Prime Minister, whereby the American Government expressed its willingness to use its good offices in trying to settle the Helmand question.

The Government of Iran accepted this view, and necessary instructions were issued to the Iranian Embassy at Washington. The Government of Afghanistan, too, sent its Minister of Public Works to Washington and negotiations were carried out with the participation of the U. S. Government.

The United States Government asked several questions from the Iranian Government regarding the quantity of water required in different months for irrigation of Seistan, area of Seistan and its culturable lands, despatch of an impartial commission to investigate into the amount of water used, participation of Iran in the construction of water reservoirs, view of the Iranian Government as to a final settlement for the division of water and the making of an interim arrangement pending a final one etc. Answers to all these questions were given after due consideration. The American Government had asked the same questions from the Government of Afghanistan.

On 24th Esfand 1326 a report was received from our Embassy at Washington on the views of the State Department regarding the division of Helmand Water. In short, this report provides for a technical commission composed of three representatives from disinterested countries to be agreed upon by Iran and Afghanistan, to survey the entire course of Helmand in both countries and to study all the matters related to this river, such as ascertaining the quantity of water, number of canals branched off Helmand, construction of dams and irrigational works etc., and to submit a report on temporary irrigation of Seistan until the final arrangement is made. In making the final arrangement and recommending to the parties due consideration is

to be given to agreements concluded among other countries in similar cases. The two parties are to give their observations on the acceptance or refusal of the recommendations of the commission within 30 days after the receipt of such recommendations.

After studying the views of the State Department, the Government of Iran on 15 Farvardin 1327 advised the Iranian Embassy at Washington of its acceptance of the said views for a slight changes in same, namely requesting that a representative from Iran to accompany the commission, and that the period of 30 days in which both parties should announce their acceptance or refusal be increased to 60 days. At the same time I asked the Afghan Ambassador at Teheran to enquire from his Government as soon as possible and advise us of its views.

Meanwhile our Embassy at Kabul was telegraphically instructed that as the draught season commences next month negotiations with the Afghan Foreign Ministry be carried out immediately with a view to ensuring the water requirements of Seistan in the current year; and also to request that pending the settlement of the dispute no action be taken in respect of digging Boghra Canal, which according to the reports of Seistan local officials several thousand workers are engaged in it.

The Afghan Ambassador at Teheran, who in all the interviews and on every occasion shows his good will in settling the Helmand case, was asked too to make a prompt effort to solve this question and to insure our require quantities of water for irrigation of Seistan in the current year. Similarly he was requested to make necessary endeavours to stop digging of Boghra Canal.

This was the actual position which I wanted to bring to the notice of honorable members of Majlis. I believe that when a part of the lands of a country is to be irrigated by a river whose source lies in a neighbouring country, there should be a complete good understanding between the countries concerned, so that whenever a difficulty arises in this connection, solution be sought with a spirit of good will and earnestness. As an example, I should state that the United States Ambassador was relating to me the other day that a similar case existed between the United States and Mexico, but there never occurs the slightest difference between them and both parties are satisfied. Why there should not be a similar understanding between Iran and Afghanistan in respect of Hilmand River?

Sometime ago when I was the Minister of foreign affairs and the noise about Hilmand water had just started I said one day to the Afghan Ambassador "you say this year

was a year of drought both sides should make use of the available water proportionately. Why then all this dispute and quarrel? When we speak of moral, cultural and religious ties which bind our two countries, and always mention is being made of brotherly, religious and friendly relations, why not then you allow our agents to visit the Hilmand course? The report submitted by them on the truth of the position would be effective in calming the public opinion. Why should you consider such an action an interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan."

"We have no intention whatsoever to interfere in the internal affairs of your country. This is a very simple question, but please note at the same time that it is a vital matter for one of our provinces and we cannot dispense with it."

With regard to later development, namely, the mediation of the United States Government and the question of formation of a commission, as the matter is now under consideration, I cannot say any more about it. But I hope to be able to inform the Majlis of the result in a near future.

Once again I do hope that the Government of Afghan would be aware of the importance of this case to us, and would help us to settle it in a spirit of good understanding, cooperation, and friendship; so that we might not be compelled to refer the case to an international authority, and thus a case which must be settled between ourselves in a

more friendly manner be referred to international competent organs.

TRANSLATION OF THE SPEECH MADE BY THE
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS BEFORE THE
'MAJLIS' ON 27.2.1327 (17th May, 1947)

Mr. Noury-Esfandiary, Minister of Foreign Affairs;-

As the question of Heland is vital to one of our important provinces, and of paramount interest to the 'Majlis' I therefore wish to state, in detail, the whole position; and I very much apologise that I may take the time of the honourable members.

Late in fall which is the season for rain the water of Helmand gradually increases. In Bahman the river starts to overflow and this continues until late in Mordad. Early in Tir the water diminishes. Since many years the question of the division of water in summer and autumn has been in dispute between Afghans and Iranians.

In 1872 when the foreign affairs of Afghanistan were being administered by the British Government, Sir Fredrick Goldsmid was appointed by Iran and Afghanistan to arbitrate on the issue. His award regarding the division of Helmand water provided that no works to be carried out on either side calculated to interfere with the supply of water for irrigation on both banks of Helmand.

As notwithstanding the above award, occasional disputes occurred between the two parties on the division of water, at the time of H.I.M. the late Shah, negotiations were carried out for the conclusion of a satisfactory agreement. This resulted in 1317 agreement, according to which

the two governments agreed that each year any quantity of water reaching Bank-i-Kemal Khan should be divided equally between Iran and Afghanistan from Band-i Kemal Khan downwards. In the Declaration attached to this Agreement the Royal Government of Afghanistan announced that it had no intention to restrict or limit the supply of water to Seistan, and undertook not to permit any action which cause a decrease in the water share of Iran in Band-i Kemal Khan.

Despite the fact that the Agreement and its attached Declaration were signed at Kabul by the representatives of both Governments, and ratified by the Iranian 'Majlis', the Afghan Government ratified the Agreement but on the pretext that Afghan Council had rejected it, officially informed this Government of its refusal to accept the Agreement and the relative Declaration.

It is to be regretted that the refusal of Afghan Government in ratifying the Declaration in respect of ensuring water for Seistan is contrary to the good will that the Iranian Government is expecting from a friendly and neighbouring country.

From 1317 up to 1321 the continuous efforts and endeavours by this Government to make Afghan Government accept the Declaration were useless, and the proposals

made by the Iranian Government in a spirit of goodwill to the Government of Afghanistan did not bear any fruit.

Since early in 1326, when it was certain that the Afghan Government would not ratify the Declaration, it was suggested that a group of Iranian engineers and experts, together with Afghan's experts, visit the course of Helmand from its source up to its end and submit a complete report to be used as a basis for fresh negotiations for solving the question at issue. This suggestion was regretfully rejected too by the Government of Afghanistan.

Thereafter it was proposed that the Iranian Minister of Agriculture, accompanied by a group of competent persons, visit Kabul for surveying Helmand course and negotiating with Afghan authorities with a view to making an Agreement for the division of water. While the Government of Afghanistan did not create any difficulty for the visit of our Minister of Agriculture to that country, it made assertions in this respect which disappointed the Iranian Government from getting a practicable result.

In Mordad 1326 therefore the Iranian Embassy at Kabul was instructed to send a note to the Afghan Minister of Foreign Affairs, stating that as the Declaration attached to the 1317 Agreement as well as other proposals for solving the question of Helmand water have not been accepted

by Afghan Government, and as the Iranian Government cannot accept the 1317 Agreement without its Declaration, it will therefore continue to count upon Goldsmid's award, according to which Afghan Government should not carry out any works throughout the entire course of Helmand calculated to diminish Iran's share of water, and on the strength of which the Iranian Government feels justified to control any action taken by Afghan Govt. throughout the entire course of Helmand. It was also pointed out in the note that should Iran be refused of her share of water, and the unfriendly attitude as well as unjustified actions be continued, the Iranian Government will take appropriate measures for recovering its right.

Following this action, the Iranian Government decided to refer the case to International Authorities. But meanwhile conversations took place between Mr. George Allen, U. S. Ambassador, and the Prime Minister, whereby the American Government expressed its willingness to use its good offices in trying to settle the Helmand question.

The Government of Iran accepted this view, and necessary instructions were issued to the Iranian Embassy at Washington. The Government of Afghanistan, too, sent its Minister of Public Works to Washington and negotiations were carried out with the participation of the U. S. Government.

The United States Government asked several questions from the Iranian Government regarding the quantity of water required in different months for irrigation of Seistan, area of Seistan and its culturable lands, despatch of an impartial commission to investigate into the amount of water used, participation of Iran in the construction of water reservoirs, view of the Iranian Government as to a final settlement for the division of water and the making of an interim arrangement pending a final one etc. Answers to all these questions were given after due consideration. The American Government had asked the same questions from the Government of Afghanistan.

On 24th Esfand 1326 a report was received from our Embassy at Washington on the views of the State Department regarding the division of Helmand Water. In short, this report provides for a technical commission composed of three representatives from disinterested countries to be agreed upon by Iran and Afghanistan, to survey the entire course of Helmand in both countries and to study all the matters related to this river, such as ascertaining the quantity of water, number of canals branched off Helmand, construction of dams and irrigational works etc., and to submit a report on temporary irrigation of Seistan until the final arrangement is made. In making the final arrangement and recommending to the parties due consideration is

to be given to agreements concluded among other countries in similar cases. The two parties are to give their observations on the acceptance or refusal of the recommendations of the commission within 30 days after the receipt of such recommendations.

After studying the views of the State Department, the Government of Iran on 15 Farvardin 1327 advised the Iranian Embassy at Washington of its acceptance of the said views for a slight changes in same, namely requesting that a representative from Iran to accompany the commission, and that the period of 30 days in which both parties should announce their acceptance or refusal be increased to 60 days. At the same time I asked the Afghan Ambassador at Teheran to enquire from his Government as soon as possible and advise us of its views.

Meanwhile our Embassy at Kabul was telegraphically instructed that as the draught season commences next month negotiations with the Afghan Foreign Ministry be carried out immediately with a view to ensuring the water requirements of Seistan in the current year; and also to request that pending the settlement of the dispute no action be taken in respect of digging Boghra Canal, which according to the reports of Seistan local officials several thousand workers are engaged in it.

The Afghan Ambassador at Teheran, who in all the interviews and on every occasion shows his good will in settling the Helmand case, was asked too to make a prompt effort to solve this question and to insure our require quantities of water for irrigation of Seistan in the current year. Similarly he was requested to make necessary endeavours to stop digging of Boghra Canal.

This was the actual position which I wanted to bring to the notice of honorable members of Majlis. I believe that when a part of the lands of a country is to be irrigated by a river whose source lies in a neighbouring country, there should be a complete good understanding between the countries concerned, so that whenever a difficulty arises in this connection, solution be sought with a spirit of good will and earnestness. As an example, I should state that the United States Ambassador was relating to me the other day that a similar case existed between the United States and Mexico, but there never occurs the slightest difference between them and both parties are satisfied. Why there should not be a similar understanding between Iran and Afghanistan in respect of Hilmand River?

Sometime ago when I was the Minister of foreign affairs and the noise about Hilmand water had just started I said one day to the Afghan Ambassador "you say this year

was a year of drought both sides should make use of the available water proportionately. Why then all this dispute and quarrel? When we speak of moral, cultural and religious ties which bind our two countries, and always mention is being made of brotherly, religious and friendly relations, why not then you allow our agents to visit the Hilmand course? The report submitted by them on the truth of the position would be effective in calming the public opinion. Why should you consider such an action an interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan."

"We have no intention whatsoever to interfere in the internal affairs of your country. This is a very simple question, but please note at the same time that it is a vital matter for one of our provinces and we cannot dispense with it."

With regard to later development, namely, the mediation of the United States Government and the question of formation of a commission, as the matter is now under consideration, I cannot say any more about it. But I hope to be able to inform the Majlis of the result in a near future.

Once again I do hope that the Government of Afghan would be aware of the importance of this case to us, and would help us to settle it in a spirit of good understanding, cooperation, and friendship; so that we might not be compelled to refer the case to an international authority, and thus a case which must be settled between ourselves in a

more friendly manner be referred to international competent organs.