



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

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AUG 09 1971

To: The Acting Secretary  
From: NEA - Christopher Van Holler *C.V.H.*

Drought in Afghanistan

For the second straight year, Afghanistan is faced with a drought which is expected to reduce the wheat crop by up to 25 percent and cause the death of up to 70 percent of the livestock (100 percent in some areas). Since wheat is the basic food in the near subsistence, predominantly agricultural economy of Afghanistan, and the pelts from the Karakul sheep, the largest hard currency earning export of Afghanistan, the drought is considered a major national disaster.

On August 7, Ambassador Neumann determined that a disaster of the magnitude to require outside assistance exists in Afghanistan. Under standing emergency authority, he is purchasing small amounts of animal feed and heavy lift pumps in Pakistan. If these can be used effectively in Afghanistan, the Ambassador expects to request additional funding for greater quantities.

On the basis of earlier information on the drought and a preliminary request from the Government of Afghanistan, we have approved the sale of 100,000 tons of wheat to Afghanistan under PL-480 Title I. Negotiations should begin this week, and be concluded promptly. Ambassador Neumann anticipates a future request for 100,000 tons of wheat on a grant basis. Since such a request cannot be met under present PL-480 Title II ceilings, Congressional action might become necessary.

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