

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

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DECLASSIFIED  
PA/HO, Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
June 9, 2005

TO : The Ambassador

FROM : POL: Charles W. Naas

SUBJECT: Conte-Long, Symington Amendments

DATE: February 13, 1969

You will recall that in your meeting with the King on December 30, you raised the question of Afghan military expenditures. The King assured you that he was strongly determined not to develop excessive armed forces or increase any segment of the military establishment beyond what had been planned many years ago. He said that, in his view, it would be madness to develop the military beyond basic requirements in view of Afghanistan's economic needs. He noted that in fact the long term military plan which had been drafted during Prime Minister Daud's time (a three phase plan) had been markedly reduced. He explained that, of course, attrited equipment would be replaced but emphasized again that there would be no step-up in total Afghan military strength.

To the best of our knowledge, admittedly scanty, the defense budget is in line with similar budgets for the last several years and that there is no significant increase. Attache sources indicate that in fact the Executive is trying to enforce more careful control by the military of their resources.

In the last year, again to the best of our knowledge, Afghanistan has received the following "sophisticated" equipment: (a) 10 MIG 21s, which were delivered in mid-1968, are more sophisticated than planes received before but were part of the agreed Air Force level under the 1965 Loan Agreement with the USSR. (b) There have been fragmentary reports of a newer, larger, perhaps surface-to-surface, missile having been introduced in Afghanistan in 1967 but we have not been able to confirm this. [REDACTED] doubt that such "new" missiles exist here but the possibility cannot be ruled out entirely.

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