

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Charles R. Grader, Director
DATE: May 9, 1978

Thru : Mr. Owen Cylke, DD

FROM : Ronald A. Rogers, AD/DP

SUBJECT: USAID Initial Contacts with the New Government

Ref : Dick Scott's memo dated May 8, 1978 on the Helmand Project

I fully concur with the ref memo, especially Dick's observation that there is no great pressure to push ahead with the Helmand Project with all its problems. The new Government certainly does offer an opportunity to discuss in all candor the outstanding problems of the Helmand Project. This same fresh approach should be used for all our projects, both ongoing and in the various stages of design.

There undoubtedly will be a tendency by some USAID project officers to put their best foot forward during their initial contacts with the new Government officials, especially at the ministerial and the presidency level. They may not want to confront them with design or implementation problems which have been a bone of contention with the previous government, but to move ahead as expeditiously and painlessly as possible. Tough issues/problems might be set aside until a congenial relationship is established. What is not needed is a smiling congenial relationships but a hard-headed attitude on both sides based on a determination to resolve problems. As Dick suggested in his memo, we should lay out the substantial problems and begin the resolvment process.

There are indications within the Government that this type of frankness may be welcomed. If we begin our relationship with the new ministry power struggle in a wishy-washy fashion or try to duck tough issues/problems at the outset, it could hinder future discussion when hard bargaining is required. I believe a hard-headed attitude will set the proper tone for future contacts with this Government. This alone should be considered significant progress.

As a first step I propose the convening of the Project Committees in order to develop issue papers for both new and ongoing projects which would be used



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by you during initial discussions with the Ministers. You would review the drafts with the Project Committee when tactics also will be discussed. If you agree, I will move ahead with the Project Committees.

cc:

Mr. B. Kosheleff, RD