

Mr Standish

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. C. Martin - Actg AGR
Thru : Mr. Arthur Reich - Actg AD/DP
FROM : Richard B. Scott - DP

DATE: December 10, 1973

SUBJECT: Inclusion of the Shamalan Issue as One of the Problems in the Issues Paper to be Presented to the Minister of Agriculture

The present situation of the Shamalan project as I briefly outlined it in my memo "A Variation in Tactics" dated December 4, 1973 has been included as a paragraph in the paper to be presented to the Ministry of Agriculture, at his request, on the problems faced in the Helmand. Although I do not object to this inclusion, the more references the better, I do not think the coverage (which amounts to a shortened paraphrasing of my memo) adequate, given this rare opportunity for some kind of leverage or at least change of pace in our negotiations, none of which have I witnessed. I proof-read and corrected the paragraph included but it is certainly not adequate to put over the importance of the issue which must, among other things, for our own future interests, be clearly spelled out in technical detail along with what this means for future water and land management in the area.

The point of this memo is, first, to attempt to insure that the Shamalan issue in its present state is not allowed to pass without complete and adequate technical documentation, even if for some reason we do prefer to allow such a pregnant issue to die in childbirth, and, second, to suggest an early meeting between Agriculture, Engineering, BuRec, and Program to discuss what is at stake. This meeting might be held in Kabul or in Lashkar Gah. The document itself might suggest a larger meeting of all the involved agencies, U.S. and Afghan, to discuss the situation.

A closing set of points on allowing the "Problems" paper to stand as the documentation of the issue include: 1) As a layman, my statements of the technical implications are not adequate; they can hardly be considered acceptable to a technician who now or later may be interested in our (USAID) understanding of the implications of what is being done under our loan. 2) The Shamalan "problem" is of a completely different nature from most of the other problems listed. The Shamalan is a live issue, construction being carried out now, with us watching. Something could and should be done, and timing and emphasis are important. Every day the lateral grows longer. Most of the other issues are on points requiring bureaucratic and technical reorganization, issues we can find being



discussed in documents dating from the 1950s. Once the document is prepared, in an informal way, the contents should probably be discussed with the Governor and the new head of HAVA who may not be aware of the situation as it relates to the changes from the original plan. But this could be discussed in the proposed first meeting.

Copies:

DD - Mr. F. Sligh

ENG - Mr. J. Standish