

3-16-1968

Kabul Times (March 16, 1968, vol. 6, no. 307)

Bakhtar News Agency

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Recommended Citation

Bakhtar News Agency, "Kabul Times (March 16, 1968, vol. 6, no. 307)" (1968). *Kabul Times*. 1688.
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THE KABUL TIMES

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VOL. VI, NO. 307

KABUL, SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 1968 (HOOT 25, 1346 S.H.)

PRICE AF. 3

SCHOOL STARTS IN COLDER REGIONS

Popal Says Nation Must Continue Acquiring Knowledge

KABUL, March 16, (Bakhtar).—Schools in cold regions of the country began spring sessions today after a three month winter recess. In Kabul, thousands of boys and girls returned to school. Make-up exams for those who failed last school year in one or more subjects also began today and will continue for a week.

In a speech over Radio Afghanistan, Dr. Ali Ahmad Popal, first deputy prime minister and minister of education, wished the students success and happiness and said he was happy to see education growing qualitatively and quantitatively.

"Small countries, more than ever, are prone to danger. Their attempts to acquire a respectable standard of living among the great community of nations is not only dependent on domestic stability and order but also on sincere international cooperation

which is an important condition for improving economic and political conditions," Popal said.

"It will be indeed tragic if, having made these objectives our national goals," he said, "our students forget to preserve and work hard and chose instead to use empty words, to hurl accusations and act without discipline.

Referring to youth activities, Dr. Popal said that our youth can form societies to help in national, private and state workshops.

"In their spare time, they can take an active interest in sports, scouting, music, sculpture and painting," he added.

"Most of our dormitories have enough water and land. Students can plant saplings and vegetables in their spare time," Popal said that they should also help dormitory administration by keeping libraries and cafeterias clean.

"Today," Popal went on, "a flood of opinions have entered from every area in the big and small nations alike. The world situation is tense and economic and political conditions are, in general, distressing.

"If a nation's time is not devoted to acquiring knowledge and education it will be damaged."

Popal said Afghanistan was confronted with such dangers. "A healthy, noble, hardworking, brave and God-fearing Afghan nation, a powerful and united nation is a thorn in the eyes of the enemy.

"In such a situation destructive hands become active in different ways and try to destroy national unity.

"I do not have anything to do with the ideologies of the people. The constitution guarantees the freedom of thought and expression. But national interests and prosperity are greater than the desires of a few individuals."

Popal drew the attention of

Afghanistan, Iran Unify Calendrical Calculations

KABUL, March 16, (Bakhtar).—Afghanistan and Iran have agreed to adopt a common and uniform calendar.

In recent talks held between Mohammad Ebrahim Kandahari, the Afghan calendar editor and Dr. Abbas Razi, the Iranian official astronomer, the two countries have agreed to unify calculations of the solar (Shamsi) Higar year, the information department of the Foreign Ministry announced.

The difference between Kabul and Tehran in time is one hour. If the transition of year occurs after 12:30 p.m. in Kabul, Nauroz or New Years Day will be counted to Kabul time. If it occurs before 12:30 p.m. in Kabul the first day of the solar calendar will be calculated according to Tehran time, the agreement says.

The two sides have also agreed that as has been customary in the past few years, the first six months of the year will have 31 days, the next five months 30 days and the last month of the solar year 29 days except for leap years when it will have 30 days.

Both Afghanistan and Iran, have used the solar calendars for past half century but their methods of calculating the lengths of the months and the first day of the year were different often causing a difference of one day in the official calendars of the two countries.

The agreement covers only Shamsi Higar calendars. Moslems also use the lunar (Qamarie) calendar for ritual purposes.

The Islamic calendar begins with the migration of the Prophet Mohammad from Mecca to Madina (September 20, 1622).

The first month of the first lunar year had began Friday, July 16, 1622. We are now in the year 1386 on the lunar calendar but for official purposes the lunar calendar is not suitable because a lunar year is 254 days. The solar calendar whose year starts on March 21 accords with Gregorian solar calendar.

Coming Thursday is the New Years Day in both countries.

UK Forces Us To Become Republic: Smith

LONDON, March 16, (Reuters).—Rhodesian leader Ian Smith said in a television broadcast Friday night that Britain was forcing Rhodesia towards becoming a republic.

Smith was speaking in an interview recorded in Salisbury on a commercial television programme — believed to be his first public statement since the hanging of five Africans.

He said he was awaiting a report from the Rhodesian Constitutional Commission before making a decision about declaring a republic.

He said: "It does seem as though the behaviour of the British government recently will almost make the decision for us."

"I think they are forcing us in that direction, whether the Rhodesians want it or not."

Smith said his conscience was clear on the hangings. The Rhodesian courts had decided by a majority of four to one for the executions.

British Premier Harold Wilson told parliament Thursday that the



Kabul, March 16 (Bakhtar).—Abdullah Yafali second deputy prime minister, returned to Kabul yesterday from Herat after opening the Herat-Islam Qala highway. Interior Minister Dr. Mohammad Omar Wardak, Public Works Minister Eng. Mohammad Hussain Masa, the ambassadors of Iran and the United States and others who went to Herat returned here on the same plane with Yafali.

Masa held a reception in the Park Hotel of Herat Thursday evening in honour of the guests

who came for the opening. Yafali, Herat Governor, Mohammad Siddiq and commander of the Herat garrison, U.S. Ambassador Robert Neumann Iranian Ambassador Mahmoud Ferughi and other guests attended. A concert was held at the end of the reception by Herat Cultural Department artists.

Above (left to right) Governor Siddiq, Eng. Masa, Second Deputy Prime Minister Yafali, Ambassador Neumann, Wardak, attended the official opening of the highway.

U.S. Frees Gold To Stem Buying Stampede

WASHINGTON, March 16, (Reuters).—The United States moved swiftly yesterday to shore up the dollar and to stem a gold stampede threatening the world monetary system.

Key elements were the final passage late Thursday night of legislation to free the nation's entire \$11,400 million gold stock to meet foreign demand, and boosting the federal discount (bank) rate to five per cent—the highest rate since the disastrous 1929 slump.

At the request of the U.S. government, Britain early Friday announced the temporary closing of the London gold market and stock exchange to curb the rush. The New York Stock Exchange said it planned to open.

The U.S. called its six European gold pool allies to an international meeting on Saturday (today) to consult on "coordinated measures — to ensure orderly conditions in the exchange markets."

But it insisted that there was no question of devaluing the dollar or raising the price of gold.

Sources close to the Swiss National Bank said that reports reaching them on the gold market situation were serious.

The stampede to buy gold approached record proportions in European markets Thursday, and the rush extended to South Africa and the Far East.

Bullion dealers in London, Zurich and Paris reported a huge demand

for bars and ingots, resulting in severe pressure on sterling and the dollar.

In London's foreign exchange market the pound sterling slumped to a new low of around \$2.32 rents, two full fel below its official parity level and a fall of almost half a cent from Thursday night.

Distrust of paper currencies became increasingly apparent as the scramble for gold intensified. Zurich dealers said orders to buy had reached huge proportions, and in Paris and London demand was even greater.

Hong Kong joined the gold rush Thursday with more business done in the first hour on the Chinese gold and silver exchange than in a normal full day.

In Tokyo the Japanese stock market declined heavily in an unfavorable reaction to the continued rush overseas.

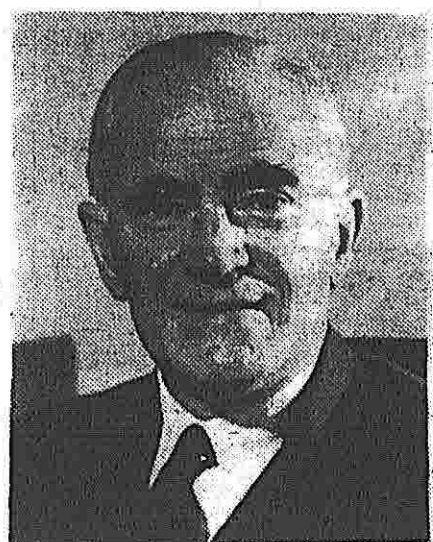
In Johannesburg there was a heavy demand for gold shares and gains at one stage ranged to 80 cents.

Dealers in Brussels reported "a very nervous atmosphere".

The rush reflects the feeling among dealers and speculators that the United States can not fulfil its commitment to maintain the gold price at \$35 an ounce.

The seven members of the London gold pool gave assurances after a meeting in basle last weekend that they were determined to support gold—but this has done little to curb the appetite of gold speculators.

BROWN RESIGNS; MICHAEL STEWART TAKES OVER



Michael Stewart



George Brown

LONDON, March 16, (AP).—British Foreign Secretary George Brown resigned Friday night. Michael Stewart, minister of state for economic affairs, was named to replace him.

Stewart was previously foreign secretary before Brown took over from him in 1966.

The announcement also came up with the surprise development that the Foreign Office is to be merged with the Commonwealth Office, both to be under Stewart.

Brown's displeasure with his cabinet colleagues built up as the gold drama unfolded before the government throughout Thursday night.

Brown said in his letter of resignation to Wilson: "The events of last night and the early hours of this morning have brought to a head a really serious issue which has as you know been troubling me for years."

"It is in short, the way this government is run and the manner in which we reach our decisions. You and I have discovered this more than once."

The 55-year-old Brown will remain as a backbench member of parliament. His walkout came after a day in which he shut himself up at home, refusing to come out either for an emergency cabinet meeting or to attend to his duties at the Foreign Office.

Brown took over the job in August, 1966. Stewart did not demonstrate a particularly forceful manner in the post and some commentators assumed Wilson now intends to take a stronger personnel hand in foreign affairs.

Stewart's duties as first secretary were vaguely defined. There will be no immediate replacement for him in the post.

As Minister for Economic Affairs, Brown found his plans for an incomes and prices policy frustrated by the freeze of 1966.

He switched to the Foreign Office in August that year and plunged with Wilson into Britain's bid to enter the European Common Market.

But Brown, married with two daughters, will probably be remembered as much for his startling social behaviour as his more serious efforts on Britain's behalf.

Like the time he was reported to have hugged Princess Margaret, sister of the queen, or clashed with photographers, or insulted his host, newspaper proprietor Lord Thomson at a London dinner.

'Under No Circumstances Take Any Decisions'

NEW DELHI, March 16, (DPA).—Six weeks of wordy discussions at the world's biggest economic conference here have failed to produce one concrete result, and with only 10 days to go before the meeting ends the gap between industrial and developing countries is wider than ever.

A humorous African delegate to the UN Conference on Trade and Development suggested that the abbreviation UNCTAD should really stand for "under no circumstances take any decision."

It is well known in the Indian capital that possible progress can be made in only small and smallest groups. Thus, despite increasing time pressure, there are many delegates who have nothing to do and spend their leisure propping up the bar.

The probable conference results will be more or less concrete declarations by industrial states, expressing willingness to attend fresh negotiations on some questions. Political observers take this to mean:

1. Agreement on a time table for individual negotiations on a range of raw materials from developing countries so as to achieve price stabilisation.

2. A promise in principle to ease access to the industrial states markets for semi-finished goods from developing countries.

3. A general agreement to increase financial aid to developing countries. The industrial countries will probably approve the goal of spending one per cent of the gross national product for development aid.

Robert Kennedy To Announce Candidacy Today

WASHINGTON, March 16, (DPA).—New York Senator Robert F. Kennedy, will announce at a press conference today whether or not he will be a candidate for the Democratic nomination for president of the United States.

Although Kennedy, the younger brother of the late U.S. President John F. Kennedy, had previously announced that he did not plan to enter the race for the Democratic nomination, he announced earlier his position.

His reassessment was prompted by the surprisingly good showing of Sen. Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota in the New Hampshire primary last Tuesday.

McCarthy, virtually unknown in national politics campaigned on a peace in Vietnam platform and won a 42 per cent share of the Democratic votes in the primary.

His opponent for the Democratic nomination was President Lyndon Johnson.

Johnson's name did not appear on the ballot. All those voting for him were required to write in his name.

Home Briefs

KANDAHAR, March 16, (Bakhtar).—The crown prince of Nepal, Basundhara, who arrived here Thursday visited Mir Wais Baba and Ahmad Shah Baba mausoleums and holy Kherqa and some other historical sites. He later inspected the Sardah and Dalah dams.

KABUL, March 16, (Bakhtar).—A congratulatory telegram has been sent on behalf of Prime Minister Noor Ahmad Etamadi to S. Ramgoolam, the prime minister of Mauritius on the occasion of the country's independence. The Information Department of the Foreign Ministry said.

KABUL, March 16, (Bakhtar).—Gul Habib, deputy from Paghman district of Kabul, in the lower house, has donated Af. 33,624 to the Education Ministry towards the payment of the salaries of the teachers of the 10th grade of the Nehman High School of Paghman.

KABUL, March 16, (Bakhtar).—A 12 member team of the directors of U.S. tourist organisations arrived here to visit the historical sites of the country.

SOUTH AFRICA SAYS 'NO' TO UN DEMANDS

GEORGE, Cape Province, March 16, (AFP).—South Africa yesterday rejected, the United Nations Security Council call for the release of 33 South African convicted in Pretoria last month on charges of terrorism.

The demand was made by unanimous vote in the Security Council Thursday night.

Opening the South Cape agricultural show in George Friday Premier B.J. Vorster said:

"I say here on behalf of all the people of South Africa, that we need not wait until March 31 to reply."

"I am giving it here, this morning. That reply is 'no,' and the world can regard it as our official reply. We do not even want to talk any more about this matter."

The prime minister accused the United Nations of having been busy interfering in the internal affairs of member nations for a long time.



THE KABUL TIMES

Published every day except Friday and Afghan public holidays by the Kabul Times Publishing Agency

Mauritius After Independence

Mauritius the small island in the Indian Ocean with a three quarter of a million population became independent last Tuesday. Indications are that this independent country may become a miniature Congo if the present trends for disintegration among its people are not checked. Its problems of economy which depends on the sole export of sugar from the sugar plantations are not solved, and the population boom in the already over populated country is not curbed.

Jubilations on the occasion of independence were boycotted by the Creoles, or the mixed race, whose representatives in the country's legislature are 44 per cent in the 70 member house. Communal clashes between Hindus and Moslems resulting in 24 deaths occurred last January and it is probable that unless stern security measures are adopted it may not be possible to prevent further big clashes among the various communities in the Island.

In the last clashes the security forces of the island state were not able to prevent bloodshed, as a result of which British security forces had to intervene.

It is hoped that the country now adopts the necessary measures to prevent such bloodsheds in the future.

The people themselves are divided between French speaking and English speaking groups. Should the Creoles succeed in their attempts to seize power in the country, it is most likely that the government will seek closer alliance with France, the country with whom they had ties before the arrival of the British forces in 1810.

Mauritius' independence once again raises the problems of the micro state's relations to the United Nations. There is no doubt that one of these days the island state will seek the full membership of the world organisation and a

Food For Thought

Education is a thing of which

only the few are capable; teach us

you will only a small percentage

will profit by your most zealous energy.

George Gissing

definite policy is needed to decide whether these micro-states have the right to become full fledged members of the United Nations or not.

Certainly it is not justified to reject membership on the grounds of size. But it is time the United Nations Security Council study this matter carefully and draft a formula.

There are 123 members at present, and apart from some of the countries that are not members of the world organisation, there are 75 political dependencies that cherish the hope to become sovereign as soon as possible. Of these, according to statistics, 50 have population under 100,000 people.

As their economic resources are potentially small, these entities must be studied and their membership to the world organisation reviewed with due respect to making the United Nations effective and their membership therein fruitful.

There is no doubt that the world is moving towards fragmentation and apparently, with the concurrent existence of spirit of nationalism, it can not be stopped. But the world organisation must set definite standards for their association or affiliation with it.

The Association should guarantee benefits from the United Nations and its specialised agencies to nations flowing to it, but at the same time make it possible for a number of them to have joint membership, and their votes should be weighted in proportion to the size of their population.

We also hope that Britain will not immediately stop giving aid to Mauritius. This tiny island already in the grip of a civil war, exporting the sugar crops with some of the advantages it has, has to face foodstuff shortage. Perhaps some sugar cane plantations ought to be converted into wheat growing areas to stop the import of foodstuffs.

Inside Greek Cities Today

By Peter Irvine

PART I

For the first time in my life I shall be glad to get out of Greece and fly back to a wintry London. I arrived here a few hours after Leslie Finar, who reported on Greek affairs for the British Broadcasting Corporation and for a Sunday newspaper, was given his marching orders by the military regime.

Within minutes of my arrival I was seated in the office of a highly respected Athenian journalist who told me grimly: "I'm very worried. They're kicking Finar out. Soon they could be kicking me in." On his desk lay, in black and white, all the latest pretty proofs that the colonels (or misters, as they now prefer to style themselves) control the press government directives, laying down that no reference should be made to this subject or that incident.

Some of the directives were odd, to say the least. One order imposed absolute silence about a collision between two Greek military aircraft—an accident unknown to journalists until they were forbidden to report. This illustrates the strange and unpredictable way in which the junta decides what it is good for people to know, and what not.

The dictatorship is applied neither comprehensively nor consistently. Uncensored copies of foreign newspapers and magazines are openly on sale on the streets. And the BBC is listened to as never before in peacetime. This last fact explains the expulsion of Finar. The junta is evidently much more sensitive to the spoken word on the radio than to the printed article. The colonels could not tolerate the retransmission to Athens, in the BBC's Greek service, of reports emanating from a resident of the city.

Apart from the press, it does not take long for a Greek-speaking visitor to establish that there is virtually no freedom of public expression. But my motive in travelling to Greece was to seek answers to other questions: answers which could not be obtained reliably from the swelling groups of Greek exiles in London and Paris.

The first question was: Are there at present any elements of effective resistance in Greece to the present regime? Among those who have fled the country, Mrs. Helen Vlachos, publisher of the conservative newspaper Kathimerini, has implied that there are centres of resistance, though she could not give details.

ils. Similar hints have come from the exiled leftwing leader Professor Andreas Papanreou.

In Athens itself I have found no indications to bear this out. The people whom I have questioned represent a political cross-section of citizens; they include businessmen, serving soldiers, journalists and doctors—not forgetting the inevitable taxidriver.

Several of these people spoke to me in the privacy of their homes. Most of them believed that eventually some sort of resistance movement would develop, but this would take time—a year or two rather than months was the general guess.

At present, they insisted, the Revolutionary Council—numbering 35 officers and led by the triumvirate of Papadopoulos (Prime Minister), Patakos (Minister of the Interior and Kakarezos (Minister of the Economy)—was in firm control. The only people with the experience to organise the mechanics of armed resistance, such as veteran and trained communist activists, were still in detention.

If the triumvirate were to be overthrown during the next few months the coup would come from within the junta, not from outside, and would almost certainly result in a regime more, and not less extremist than the present one.

Other informants, even more gloomily, emphasised that the decisive factor is the control of the armed forces. Every day since King Constantine's attempted counter-coup failed on December 13, the colonels have been strengthening their grip on the military command (since I have been here, they have dismissed a further batch of officers and exiled others to the seclusion of various islands).

The inference to be drawn, it is said, is that there is no chance for a very long time—four years was one estimate—that the colonels will be replaced. The most that Greece can hope for is a gradual and very circumscribed return to the forms of democratic life. But the colonels would rigorously control every stage of outward normalisation—proceeding from the awaited new constitution to a plebiscite to pronounce the people's acceptance of it, to parliamentary elections in which candidates would be restricted to "sound" screened men.

The realities of military po-

wer have much to do with another question: in Western Europe is that King Constantine misallocated on several counts. He had (the arguments went) chosen the wrong moment; and he had gravely overestimated the amount of support for himself in the armed forces in particular and the populace in general.

But information I have received from sources close to the military communications system indicates that the King came much closer to succeeding than has been generally appreciated—and perhaps even than he himself knows. If these sources are correct (and I believe they are), it was due to a freak mischance combined with a minor but vital military oversight that the King now languishes in Rome instead of presiding over his own government in Greece. As is known, Constantine received a rapturous welcome from the crowds in Larissa and everywhere else he went on the day of the coup; more important, militarily things were going very well for him. Communications between Athens and the three all-important army corps in the north had been cut and the royalist generals were giving the orders.

The nerve-centre for the key military movement was the town of Komotini in the extreme northeast of the country, the headquarters of the third army corps; from here the orders were given for the division's armour to take over Salonika in the King's name. Hundreds of tanks duly set forth to execute this movement and it seemed inevitable that by evening the king would be installed triumphantly in Salonika and the junta would have submitted.

But the royalist commanders had made the elementary error of failing to leave an adequate guard on the army corps headquarters at Komotini. A solitary major named Pentanis, one of the junta's men, managed to lay his hands on nine tanks and seized the headquarters; he locked up the royalist generals and reopened the line to the Greek Pentagon in Athens.

From then on the orders which went out from Komotini were the colonels' though some of the instructions, were cunningly presented as coming from General Perdis, the corps commander loyal to the King.

HOME PRESS AT A GLANCE

Today *Isiah* carries the full text of a radio message delivered by Dr. Ali Ahmad Popal, the first deputy prime minister and the education minister on the occasion of the commencement of the academic year.

All the premier dailies of the capital Thursday carried news about the opening of the Herat-Islam Qala highway which was constructed with the assistance of the United States government.

Today's *Isiah* in its editorial touched on the importance of education and the role of students in building the nation. Now that a new academic year has started, it is almost certain that all students take a retrospective view of their performance during the past year.

There are those who joyously look forward to learning new things in a higher grade. There are also those who have been less fortunate and have failed.

Naturally these students will not be so cheerful. However, the editorial consoled such students by saying that life is a continuous struggle. Every failure in life should help man become more resolute in his efforts to overcome difficulties.

Students who failed should become determined not to fail again. They should work harder and study more conscientiously. They are bound to succeed.

The same issue carried a letter to the editor criticising the way the nominal tax and identity card of a dead person are collected. Speaking of personal experience, the author of the letter, Mohammad Ayoub Amiri, said recently one of "my close relatives died. While we were mourning a woman representing the Municipal Corporation approached me and asked for the identity card of my deceased relative and Af. 50 for the municipal tax. At first I found it hard to believe that her claim was genuine and that she really represent the Municipal Corporation. I had to convince her that I would visit the corporation and submit the tax and identity card in person.

When I visited the corporation I found that she was on the level. The letter then made the following suggestions.

The Municipality should inform the public of this and any other decisions and regulations. The woman or man who pays such visits ought to take into consideration the fact that moments of grief are not the best occasions for arguments.

These tax collectors should have special uniforms or at least identification.

Old soldiers' illusions it appears, never die.

If events of the past six weeks in Vietnam prove anything, they demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that the policy of military escalation in Southeast Asia which President Johnson and his Pentagon advisers have followed for more than three years is futile—and worse.

Time and again, General Westmoreland and the joint chiefs of staff have asked for and received additional men and resources, each time with the promise that there was "light at the end of the tunnel."

Time and again they have been proved wrong. The tunnel has turned out to be a bottomless pit, each escalation has produced a new stand-off at a higher level of death, destruction and despair for the Vietnamese and at mounting costs in lives, money and respect for the United States. It has weakened the United States both domestically and

in its foreign relations (and)... raised the risk of a suicidal international conflagration.

The enemy in Vietnam still has substantial uncommitted reserves, plus the possibility for additional arms and manpower from deeply committed communist allies. There is very reason to fear that a further escalation... will create new problems of unprecedented proportions for the United States both at home and abroad. The effect will be to push off negotiations, not advance them.

The time has come to abandon this bankrupt policy. The American people have been pushed beyond the limits of gullibility. Searching questions about the escalation doctrine are at last being raised by significant numbers of private citizens, members of Congress and even by officials of standing in the administration itself. These questions must now be pressed at every level the fate of the nation depends upon it.

The Czechoslovak communist party newspaper *Rude Pravo* suggested that it would be better if some politicians were allowed to "go take a quiet rest some place."

The papers editorial, by central committee member Vladimir Kadlec, said that in the "current, complex situation in which the party seeks a new path, it is becoming necessary to evaluate the role of the leaders."

One of the letters to the editor published in Thursday's *Isiah* complained that locally produced textiles are in fact much more expensive than the imported equivalents. The letter argued that imported textile prices represent the cost price plus transportation charges and the customs duty.

If these charges are added to the price of locally produced textiles or subtracted from the imported textiles then the comparison will show that local textiles are much more expensive, the letter said.

Brussels is now almost certainly the most expensive city in Western Europe, it is currently experiencing a building boom unique in any even three or four times its size; and, reminiscent of the Rome-Vatican situation, it accommodates two ambassadors from most of the major countries—one accredited to the Belgian Government and one to the European Communities.

The student of international affairs or the plain curious reporter can sit up at the bar in the new American-owned Westbury Hotel and see the world go by, world made up of such diverse people as an agent of the Smith regime in Rhodesia or a Yugoslav government official (both these are likely to be interested in arranging barter deals), or perhaps an American labour lobbyist discussing Common Market redundancy proposals with some employer representatives of the Union des Industries de la Communauté Européenne.

To accommodate this tremendous influx, Brussels has had to alter drastically its zoning laws, although it has thus far managed to preserve the mediaval character of the city's central area by holding on to the zoning restriction which limits stru-

Brussels-New Capital Of Europe

The Brussels of today is, albeit somewhat reluctantly, fast becoming the capital of Europe. Ever since the establishment of the European Common Market and EURATOM headquarters in Brussels 1958, the Brussels could see fame being thrust upon them.

Their capital, with its just over one million population, had never presented an international image, nor indeed was it equipped to play host to Europe and, in addition, to visitors from far outside this Continent.

Ten years ago Brussels was badly served by hotels and restaurants, downtown office accommodation was limited since the demand was small, apartment buildings on the city's periphery were few and far between and, in general, its citizens presented an image of provincialism which was not only factual but, to them, highly desirable. But that was 10 years ago.

Today in this city, internationalism seems to be everywhere. The headquarters of the European Economic Community Commission on the Avenue de la Joyeuse Entree is a magnet not alone for politicians from all over Europe and beyond; it also attracts a miscellaneous collection of industrialists and lobbyists, reporters and specialist commentators, authors and researchers, diplomats and civil servants.

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tures to a height of seven storeys.

But no such limitation applies elsewhere and Brussels can today boast of having the tallest office block in all of Europe—the 38-storey Tour du Midi near the railway station. This one building has a floor area of over half-a-million square feet or roughly 40 per cent of the total office area built in the city in 1964. In 1966 more than 50 new office buildings went up in and around the city, providing accommodation of almost 3.5 million square feet, and the final figures for last year are expected at least to equal this total.

And approval has already been given for the so-called "Manhattan Project," which will provide both office and residential accommodation on a 130-acre site near the Gare du Nord. This project is, incidentally, to include six main buildings among them the largest hotel in Europe.

The demand for office space comes mainly from American firms and corporations, most of it going out on a rental basis and much of the building being financed by insurance companies. Office rents in this city vary on location but tend to average out at roughly 25 shillings (sterling) a square foot—on 9-10 year leases.

American corporations consider these charges relatively low on, say, New York standards, but in Brussels they cover nothing but the base accommodation and tenants must meet heating and general maintenance charges. Yet the demand still outstrips the supply; in the past two years, something like 200 US corporations have set up offices in this capital.

Throughout the country as a whole, American investments have grown in value from under \$30 million in 1959 to some \$800 million last year.

To a reporter with experience of covering the American political scene from Washington, the present position here in Brussels is remarkably similar in at least one respect—the large number of "pressure groups" or lobbyists operating in this city. The official guide of the EEC Commission lists nearly 200 of these groups (seldom with fewer than three or four representatives each) although their precise status is none too clear. The staff of the Commission maintains close liaison with the pressure groups and uses them as a source of material for the preparation of case papers. The six governments in the Common Market are not very anxious to have the lobbyists given official Commi-

ssion recognition since they prefer bilateral negotiations at national level. But the Commission itself which is anxious to improve its status as a kind of supranational government, is by no means adverse to discussions with lobbyists, especially with the main ones like the European Secretariat of the Free Trade Unions, COPA (the organisation of agricultural producers) and, of course, the giant industrial body, UNICE (Union of Industries of the European Community).

These lobbyists have little real influence on political decisions, but their pressure on behalf of individual industries can be successful on questions of tariff adjustments and such like.

Rising costs apart, Brussels seems to have taken this great influx of people very much in its stride. Virtually alone among the European capitals, this city has now really acute housing problem and even today it is possible to live outside the town and still drive into your office in less than 30 minutes.

Against this, public transport is bad and only those with cars can afford to move outside the city for accommodation. The 7,000 EEC Commission employees are mostly mobile (with their special EUR registration plates) but since most of their young children attend the special Community school, there's a limitation on how far outside Brussels they can live.

Quite apart from these considerations, the essential provincialism of the Brussels remains and seems to dictate that what might broadly be termed "cultural pursuits" can only be found in or near city centre—another good reason for most professional and business people to choose a cramped (and expensive) city apartment in preference to a house with garden in the surrounding countryside.

And the recent arrival close to Brussels of the civilian secretariat of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) from Paris is only adding to the demand for downtown apartment space, to say nothing of the resultant pressure on prices.

Yet perhaps the most remarkable thing about the transformation of Brussels in recent years is, in fact, how little it has really been transformed. The European's have moved in downtown while the Brussels have been pushed out to the periphery. Prices have gone up alarmingly, yet the city's "culture" remains self-generated—on the cocktail party circuit.

FWF

Display: Column inch, Af. 100 (minimum seven lines per insertion)

Classified: per line, bold type Af. 20 subscription rates

Yearly Af. 1000
Half Yearly Af. 600
Quarterly Af. 300

FOREIGN

Yearly \$ 40
Half Yearly \$ 25

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For other number first dial switchboard

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Editorial Ex. 24, 58

Circulation and Advertising
Extension 59

Greed For Construction Leads to Empty Houses

Ten years ago, many people had problems finding a good house for rent in Kabul. Members of the foreign community used to transfer to each other their houses and servants as soon as they left.

Today, hundreds of houses, beautifully constructed and with modern facilities are lying empty in the best locations of town.

What has brought this tremendous difference?—A construction boom which glutted the city with houses and apartments.

Besides, foreign aid cuts leading to the evacuation of a number of houses by members of aid missions greatly contributed to the dull market.

Since the real estate business is not organised, and the people are not used to housing agencies, those who have houses to rent cannot find the ones who want to rent them.

The best houses in Kabul are in Share Nau, Karte Seh, Karte Parwan and Karte Char. Share Nau is the best location because of its proximity to a number of embassies, cinemas and offices.

Also, there is an attractive public park and a number of small but thriving department stores. The best houses in this area are either rented by the embassies or their employees.

Similarly some foreign firms and merchants have residences in Share Nau. But even in this ideal area there are scores of empty houses and apartments with the familiar "To Let" signs on their gates and windows.

The reason behind this undesirable situation is not that they have raised the rent. On the contrary, houses and apartment owners have cut the rents considerably as they have felt the slump.

Houses in Karte Seh, Karte Parwan and Karte Char have met the same fate or worse due to the present static market in the real estate business. People have invested millions to build houses just to rent them to foreigners because it was the most profitable business and by far the safest. Now they have to pay the cost of the upkeep as well as the interest to the banks or private persons who have extended them credit.

What has brought this untimely construction boom? First the greed of the house and apartment owners who already possessed one house and built two more without making sure that the number of renters had trebled.

Secondly the lack of coordination between Kabul Municipality and government agencies who could survey the possibilities of renting houses to foreigners according to the exact number of foreign personnel stationed in Kabul. Then there was the disorganisation of the real estate business in town.

To have hundreds of modern houses and apartments in the town for rent without modern real estate agencies is like having power stations without electricity. Yet no one with a profound knowledge of the business has taken the initiative in this virgin field.

The present agents who are engaged in buying, selling and renting houses handle the home market. In other words, they only deal with Afghans because most of them do not speak any foreign language and don't know how the real estate business is handled today.

So those who wish to rent their houses to foreigners either put an announcement on the notice-board of the Kabul International Club or an advertisement in the Kabul Times.

Advertising being new to the people, the one or two drab ads usually do not catch the attention of the potential renters and

the matters ends there.

A house built during the last five years in Kabul is good as any and perhaps more airy and sunnier. The yard either around the house or on one side is attractively laid out and generally divided into patches for flowers and vegetables and a lawn with fruit and shade trees planted in the best spot.

The grape trees supported by wooden frames are the most enjoyable feature in each house as they provide shade in summer and delicious grapes in autumn. And the grapes can last till winter providing that the bunches are protected from wasps and frost by polythene bags.

Also the new apartments are attractive and built with due consideration to air, sunshine, heat and cold spells. They are located close to shopping centres and the rents are reasonable. A husband and wife with no children can live comfortably in one of these apartments.

The potential renters of modern houses in Kabul are first the Americans, either the U.S. embassy staff or members of AID and the other American organizations.

Second comes the West Germans who are almost as affluent and can afford to rent the best houses with fat rents. Other embassies either do not have a large staff or accommodate their employees in a way that it does not affect the market terribly.

Now what should be done about the people whose millions are tied up to these empty houses and apartments?

Afghans are generally prone to thinking that everything should be taken care of by the government. So it is the duty of the government to find an urgent solution regarding their houses. But is the government really responsible?

Now that we have the Department of City Planning and Town Construction people expect it not only to check the blueprints for their houses and improve them but also to help them make full use of their buildings.

This is where they are confused. The department is entrusted with the job of planning and supervision. It sees to it that no town is built haphazardly and devoid of water-supply and sewage systems as were the towns of the past. But it has nothing to do with renting houses.

The Kabul Municipality is responsible for approving the site of the building and implementing regulations regarding the distance between the walls and the streets, etc. The Construction and Mortgage Bank is only interested in receiving its 8 per cent interest and would be glad to get it because most of the people who have secured credits from it are unable to pay them on time back because they are not making any money on the houses they built.

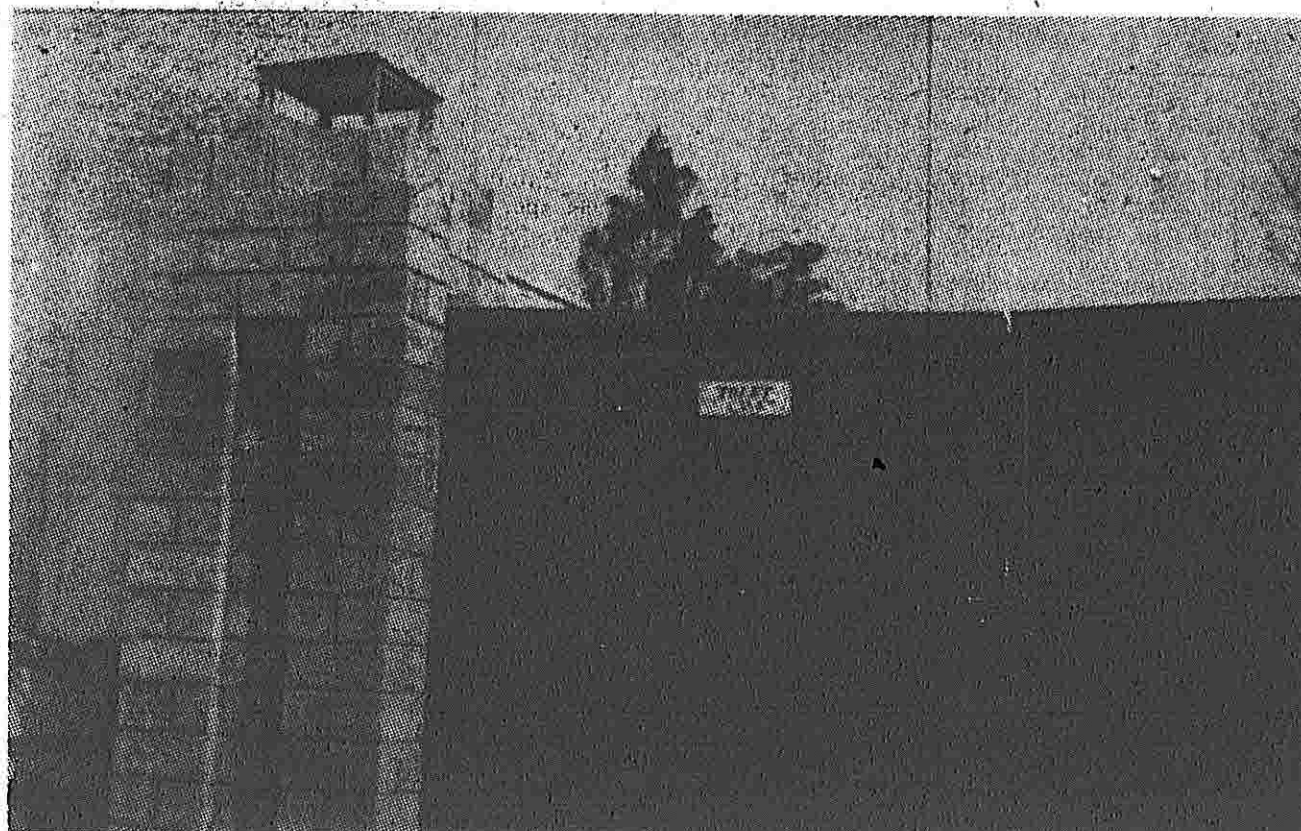
Therefore, the only solution is to establish a real modern estate agency to handle the business properly and stop further construction for at least five years. This agency could be placed under the Ministry of Commerce which has the right to supervise all business enterprises. Maintenance costs can be obtained from house and apartment owners who would pay a certain commission for the services of the agency. Thus we would have a thriving business which now results in financial losses almost disastrous to those who have invested all they had and more in real estates.

This real estate agency should have one additional job and that is to report periodically to the

(Continued on page 4)



With Waleh



One of the empty houses in Share Nau with the symbolic sign.

Eid Adha: Festival Of Sacrifice For Moslems

Exactly one week ago, all Moslem World including Afghanistan observed Eid Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice. This is a most important occasion, on which many Moslems make a pilgrimage to Mecca and sacrifice thousands of sheep.

According to the news from Mecca, there were 1,500,000 pilgrims there this year. Each Moslem is supposed to slay one sheep which means the Chicago Stock Yards have at last found a rival.

This marked the occasion on which Abraham, upon the Lord's command, took his son to the present site of Mecca in order to sacrifice him. However, Ismail was spared and a sheep miraculously substituted in his place.

Every Moslem is required to sacrifice a sheep providing that he or she has fulfilled the basic needs of living and does not owe anything to anybody, that is, if he or she has surplus money amounting to 200 darhams equivalent to Af. 70.

Darham was the currency in circulation during the reign of the Abbassid Caliphs who ruled a great part of the Moslem World. The rate of exchange between this extinct money and afghanis was probably calculated during the 18th century in which time 70 silver coins could be at least 30 sheep. However, the price of one lamb today is over Af. 500.

The main thing about the sacrifice is bleeding the animal. But according to Mohammad's practice, the meat thus obtained should be divided into three parts. One portion should go to close friends and relatives, another to the poor and the third should remain in the house.

The people of Afghanistan in general and Kabulis in particular observe the Festival of Sacrifice with great rejoicing because

it gives some of them the opportunity to visit friends and relatives and the others the time to escape from the capital for a few days.

The date of the festival is calculated according to the Moslem lunar calendar. Since there is a difference of 10 days between the lunar and solar calendars, it so happens that the festival in some years falls out in winter.

So it did last week and a large crowd from Kabul left for Jalalabad even one day ahead of the three-day holidays. As if fated, Jalalabad was as wet as Kabul. With the exception of half a day of sunshine in the subtropical climate, the rest of the days, were dam and all the migratory birds were disappointed.

Indeed there is no fun in being confined to the rooms in resort, especially when you take the kids along. And how much do they look forward to it and plan ahead!

Thus all the camping sites and hotels were emptied in the rainy resort and Kabulis rushed back to their abodes and the comforts of home sweet home.

Those who could not afford to leave the town or were tied up somehow did not have any fun in Kabul either. But the kids did. Most of them dressed in their best, strolled on the streets on all sorts of pretexts. Teenage girls were showing off and the small fry acting like copy cats.

The festival of course bestowed upon the poor a boon consisting of an assortment of meats than usual because of the cold. Sheep, goats, camels and bulls were slaughtered by the hundreds in every part of the town and the entrance of every well-to-do house was blocked by groups of destitute citizens asking for the

sacrificial meat.

A few days before the festival, usually the house-wife starts to be grouchy in order to extort as much money from her husband as she can. She spends most of this on new clothes for the children and all sorts of sweets and parties to keep up with the neighbours.

The moment a visitor enters the house, he is embraced and kissed on the cheek by the adult males. They tell him they wish he could make the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The women shake hands with him and the kids kiss his hand as a sign of respect. If the visitor is a woman, then the roles of the man and his wife are reversed while the kids still kiss her hands.

There are no hard and fast rules about kissing the cheeks or the hands in Kabul as the custom differs in different families. In sophisticated classes, men and women kiss one another on the cheeks as the French do and the children follow suit.

In the middle classes, the women kiss one another on one cheek as they embrace while the women kiss their kind on both. Teenagers, male or female, either shake hands or suffice to wish each other a happy Eid.

Very few people, men or women, kiss one another during the two festivals in the country. However, men have a tougher custom to follow and that is to embrace one another at least three times as the Prophet is supposed to have done.

During these embraces, they wish one another a happy Eid and make inquiries about the health and well-being of their families.

Supposing that there are 500 men attending the Eid prayer

during the first day of the festival in a central village, the chieftain has to embrace 499 men three times each. This means that he has got to embrace 1,497 times and ask about the health of every one's family as well.

Coming back to Kabulis, members of the middle and lower middle classes never leave any close friend or relative unvisited during the three days, each eating something in the other's house.

Doctors are busy with many a glutton during and after the festival days as their over-eating does not run parallel to their normal digestive processes.

An embarrassing situation arises when someone takes the Ramadan Eid for the Festival of Sacrifice and vice versa and uses the greeting meant for the former during the latter. One is required to say "May God accept with benevolence the days of your fasting" during the Ramadan Festival, but many people employ this absent-mindedly during the Festival of Sacrifice. And this makes a number of people smile, but not laugh as they are likely to make the same mistake.

Big shots used to receive their subordinates during the second day of each festival in their offices just a few years ago in order to exchange these cliches and have a chat later on.

This arrangement spares many a worrying junior official the trouble of going to his boss's home and helps the boss to see everyone concerned and get over with it.

Also in the old days, bosses and parents used to give cash presents to their subordinates and the children in order to buy candies and cookies, but the custom has vanished from the upper echelons of society.

Only in the middle and lower middle classes, parents and close relatives give small sums to kids. And some cheeky kids ask an uncle for this money and get it.

The crafty ones usually jingle the coins either in their pockets or in the palms of their hands in order to draw the attention of a potential cash giver and usually succeed in their scheme.

One custom which is vanishing from Kabul but is still prevalent in the country is the habit of boiling and yeing eggs for the festival days. A good housewife usually procures a large number of eggs a few days before the festival and boils them one or two days ahead.

Dyeing takes place at the same time as boiling by adding some colouring agent. In the villages, they generally dye the eggs with onion skins, but sophistication has crept in recently, introducing synthetic dyes.



A number of empty apartments and stores in Share Nau.



The construction boom in Kabul has resulted in the building of such fine apartments and stores and also in the overproduction of these and the dull real estate market.

Saigon, U.S. Trying To Flush Out North Vietnamese Troops

SAIGON, March 16, (AFP). American and Saigon government troops have launched their biggest campaign to flush out an estimated three divisions of North Vietnamese troops and Viet Cong units concentrated in five provinces bordering the capital, the U.S. command announced.

They had already killed 215 Viet Cong, arrested 22 suspects and seized 151 weapons. American losses were 11 killed and 94 wounded government troops were said to be light.

The campaign is the first offensive operation launched by U.S. and government troops since the Viet Cong Tet offensive last month.

Earlier it was reported Viet Cong forces Wednesday stormed into a government post at Tra Cu, 100 km. (60 miles) from the capital, destroyed it and withdrew taking an estimated 75 captured men with them.

They also took five automatic weapons and 5 individual weapons. This was the most successful Viet Cong attack in a day which also saw two major ground engagements with U.S. forces and rocket and mortar attacks on several air fields.

North Vietnamese and Viet

Cong destroyed 3,487 United States aircraft since the Vietnam war began, American officials said here yesterday.

Of 1,047 planes, 809 were downed over North Vietnam.

Accidents, sabotage and attacks on air base and fields put out of action 960 planes and 887 helicopters.

World Briefs

WASHINGTON, March 16 (Reuters)—The USSR has sent the U.S. government a bill for \$14,699 for damage caused to the Soviet embassy in Washington when someone dumped a parcel of explosives on the mission's window sill, officials reported Thursday.

KINSHASA, March 16, (AFP)—Congo President Joseph Mobutu had reportedly agreed to allow the 123 European mercenaries interned in Rwanda to return to their home countries, the Congolese press agency reported.

His only condition is that these countries of origin must guarantee that the mercenaries are never allowed to return to the Congo.

ATHENS, March 16, (AFP)—Greece's referendum on the new constitution will take place September first, Prime Minister George Papadopoulos announced yesterday.

Questioned on possibilities for the return of King Constantine, Papadopoulos told a press conference this will happen "when the king and the government both agree his coming back will be useful to the nation."

Rhodesia

(Continued from page 1) imposing a constitutional settlement.

Wilson said the executions came while the British government was considering new settlement ideas brought back from Rhodesia by former British premier Sir Alec Douglas-Home.

But, the opposition expressed the view that Wilson had no alternative but to negotiate with the Rhodesian regime for a settlement.

Leading Conservatives said that the prime minister was acting very unwisely in slamming the door on any further contact with the Smith regime, because all experience proved he would have to eat his words in time and come to terms.

AFP adds the Commonwealth sanctions committee at Marlborough House yesterday to consider imposition of total economic sanctions against Rhodesia instead of selective sanctions ordered by the United Nations Security Council.

Other measures being considered included cutting of air and postal communication with the rest of the world.

Arrivals And Departures

KABUL, March 16, (Bakhtar)—An educational delegation headed by Dr. Abdul Azeem Ziaee, the president of the Polytechnic Institute left Kabul for Soviet Union Thursday to negotiate on the standards diplomas and degrees between the government of Afghanistan and the USSR.

Dr. Faqir Mohammad Yaqoubie, president of vocational educational department of the Education Ministry and Abdul Ahad Naceem, vice president of the inspection department of the Education Ministry and Mir Hussain Shah, deputy dean of the College of Letters are members of the delegation.

Mrs. Jamila Shadan and Mrs. Mehr Afzoon, officials of the Public Health Ministry who had gone to Delhi to participate in a four weeks seminar on hospital organisation returned to Kabul yesterday. The course was sponsored by the World Health Organisation.

Dr. Mohammad Sarwar Aleemie, a teacher on mental illnesses of the College of Medicine and Pharmacy of the Kabul University left Kabul for India yesterday to participate in a one week seminar on mental hygiene organised by WHO.

Engineer Abdul Ahad, director of Banaee Construction Company who had gone to India two weeks ago at the invitation of the Indian government returned to Kabul yesterday after observing cheap housing units there.

Mohammad Hasan Rahimi and Ghulam Rasoul Yahyaee, officials of the Public Works Ministry who went to the Soviet Union six years ago to study Agriculture returned to Kabul yesterday.

Sayed Anwar Shah, an official of the central silos who went to Soviet Union four years ago under a USSR government scholarship to study building construction returned here yesterday.

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Kabul University Hospitals needs Dixon Shelves. Interested parties may contact Administration Division.

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School Starts

(Continued from page 1)

the students to four points he considered highly significant.

1 They should preserve national unity, respect Afghan patriotism and place the interest of society above their own.

2 They should respect the Constitution.

3 They should respect the national and religious tenets and believe in God and principles of Islam.

4 They should place their reliance in the nation's power and ideology.

"I don't say that my concepts are complete and absolute, but I do believe that any action that falls outside this brief framework will be unhealthy," he added.

Poal then urged students, teachers, and officials, to cooperate with each other so that education would progress further under the guidance of His Majesty the King.

Construction

(Continued from page 3)

Department of City Planning and Town Construction on the defects of houses and apartments already built and rented in order to avoid these defects in the future.

To organise business, we can have one expert on loan from a foreign country for a period of three months. During this short time, he can train a number of enthusiastic Afghan youths to survey the market and to advertise to entice potential customers.

This can be done easily if we realise the importance of the real estate business and then do something about it.

And whatever action we ought to take in this connection should be taken right now or it would be too late as the recession is already affecting hundreds of Kabul citizens for whom rent constitutes the only means of livelihood.

Weather Forecast

Skies will be overcast over the Salang and Pamirs. Yesterday the warmest area was Farah with a high of 29 C, 84 F. North Salang had 2 mm rain, depth of snow 300 cm. South Salang 3 mm. depth of snow 342 cm. Wind speed in Kabul was recorded at 5 knots.

The temperature in Kabul at 10 a.m. was 10 C, 50 F.

Yesterday's temperatures:

| | |
|----------|-----------|
| Kabul | 17 C 5 C |
| | 63 F 41 F |
| Ghazni | 16 C 1 C |
| | 61 F 34 F |
| Kandahar | 28 C 4 C |
| | 82 F 39 F |
| Lal | 7 C -2 C |
| | 44 F 28 F |
| Khost | 22 C 5 C |
| | 72 F 41 F |



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ARIANA CINEMA
At 2 4:30 and 9 p.m.
American film
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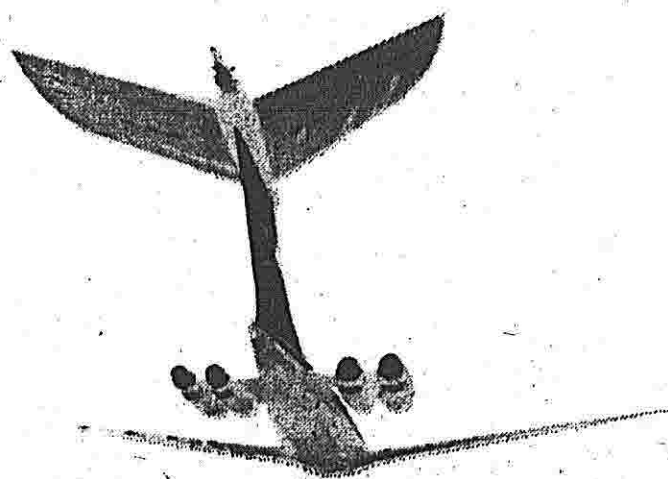
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