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THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
2000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2000

INFO MEMO

I-01/012550-USDP
October 15, 2001 3:30 P.M.

FOR: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

DepSec Action _____

FROM: Douglas J. Feith, Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) *DJF*

SUBJECT: Afghanistan Strategy – Guidance for Northern Alliance

- The attached “Guidance for the Northern Alliance – DOD draft” is an alternative, drafted by Paul Wolfowitz and my Policy team, to the CIA’s paper.
- Our overall campaign objective in Afghanistan is (1) to destroy al-Qaida (mainly people, not infrastructure) and (2) to oust the Taliban leadership. The latter is crucial if we are to compel or persuade other regimes to stop supporting terrorism.
- To be sure, the US has an interest in post-Taliban stability in Afghanistan. And there are precautions we should take (see attached Guidance).
 - But the US should not plunge into a nation-building project. We cannot *ensure* stability in Afghanistan no matter how we try to fine tune Northern Alliance actions.
 - The USG should not agonize over post-Taliban arrangements to the point that we delay the Taliban’s ouster.
 - The sooner the Taliban is pushed out of Kabul, Mazar-I-Sharif, Herat and other key cities, the better.
- The US public will not view US military action in Afghanistan as successful until the Taliban leadership is overthrown. Failure to accomplish this soon will limit the USG’s freedom of action against other terrorist groups and state sponsors in other theaters.

~~Classified by: D.J. Feith, USDP~~
~~Reason: 1.5(d)~~
~~Declassify on: 15OCT11~~

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Prepared by: Douglas J. Feith, USDP, 695-51



Guidance for the Northern Alliance and Other Opposition Forces

- The US goal is to help Afghans to defeat the Taliban and regain control over their land and people.
- We want to help to capture or kill as many al-Qaeda terrorists and Taliban leaders ^(AS) possible and to prevent them from conducting terror operations from Afghanistan.
- We will provide the support they will need to accomplish those goals: coordinate air strikes with your ground movement, ~~and providing you with~~ ammunition, supplies and food.
- The US has been delayed by an inability to have close coordination with opposition forces on the ground. We will want to provide US military liaison officers working in their command centers to coordinate military operations, serve as forward air controllers, and build trust and confidence among the leaders.
- We expect their forces will conduct themselves in a decent and humane manner toward the civilian population. Atrocities are unacceptable. We will oppose breaches of this code.
- To succeed, opposition forces in the north must ally with anti-Taliban forces in the south. This means that the future of Kabul will likely be decided by a political process and not military action alone.
- We expect them to declare, as soon ~~as~~ ^{entire} possible, that they are moving on Kabul, not to establish dominion over the whole country, but to get a political process started that will reflect the interests of all the Afghan peoples.
- We envision some kind of international security arrangement for Kabul and the surrounding area in which a political process could take place.
- We expect to consult with you on your plans for moving on Kabul. It may be wise to encourage the Taliban to surrender the city without your forces having to invest and occupy it by force, possibly by surrounding the city.
- We envision a highly capable peacekeeping force drawn from our allies in Europe, the Muslim world and elsewhere to secure Kabul until stability is achieved.

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Guidance for the Northern Alliance

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- Our goal is to help you defeat the Taliban and regain control over your land and people.
- We want to help to capture or kill as many al-Qaeda terrorists as possible and to prevent them from conducting terror operations from Afghanistan.
- We will provide you with the support you will need to accomplish these goals: coordinated air strikes with your ground movement, ammunition, and supplies.
- We have been delayed by our inability to have close coordination with you on the ground. We will want to provide you with US military liaison officers working in your command centers to coordinate military operations, serve as forward air controllers, and build trust and confidence between your leaders.
- We expect your forces will conduct themselves in a decent and humane manner toward the civilian population. Atrocities are unacceptable. We will deal with breaches of this code of conduct swiftly and severely.

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- To succeed, we must ally with anti-Taliban forces in the south. This means that the future of Kabul must be decided by a political process and not just military action.
- We expect you to declare, as soon as possible, that you are moving on Kabul, not to establish dominion over the whole country, but to get a political process started that will protect the interests of all the Afghan peoples.
- We envision some kind of international security arrangement for Kabul and the surrounding area in which a political process could take place.
- We expect to consult with you on your plans for moving on Kabul. It may be wise to allow the Taliban to surrender the city without your forces having to invest and occupy it by force.
- We envision a highly capable peacekeeping force drawn from our allies in Europe, the Muslim world and elsewhere to secure Kabul until stability is achieved.

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Military and Humanitarian Assistance:

- As soon as you secure delivery points, we plan to provide you with humanitarian assistance, weapons and logistics -- over roads if possible but by air if required.
- We plan to establish a humanitarian assistance supply network originating from countries to your north so that this assistance does not have travel through Pakistan and Talib-controlled territory.