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15 November 2001

FOR: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

FROM: Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs
(Peter W. Rodman, ^{(b)(6)} [redacted] *PRZ*)

SUBJECT: Thoughts on Afghanistan Diplomacy (U)

~~(S)~~ We want to keep our eye on our main objective -- squeezing al-Qaida and the Taliban out of Afghanistan -- and we should be viewing the UN diplomacy in that light. But this means two things:

- First, we need to avoid a preoccupation with "nation-building" that commits us to possibly unattainable goals.
- But we also have a particular stake in the diplomatic process: Disunity among the factions could leave a vacuum that gave al-Qaida and the Taliban a new lease on life. For the longer term as well, we will not achieve an Afghanistan free of terrorism if political disunity opens up a vacuum again soon.

Thus it is in our interest that the UN process make some headway, and that we use our influence with the factions to promote their cooperation with it.

COORDINATION at TAB A.

→ SD 11/15/01
This is a hunt-and-kill - enhancing thought, not a pro-UN thought.
Doug Feith

~~CLASSIFIED BY ASD/ISA PETER RODMAN~~
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COORDINATION

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

Mr. Douglas J. Feith

 11/15/01