

22 October 2001

INFORMATION PAPER

Subject: Combat Operations in the Global War on Terrorism during Ramadan

1. (U) Purpose. Recommend continued combat operations during Ramadan.
2. (U) Key Points.
  - (U) Based on history, Islamic community members, nation states and organizations, have not paused combat activities for Ramadan. Hostilities continued or increased during Ramadan because of religious tenets.
  - (U) **Religious significance:**
    - (U) During Ramadan Muslims focus on enhancing their sense of community and aim to achieve a greater awareness of God. Muslims believe their prayers will be heard especially during this period of reflection. It is similar to the Christian Lenten period.
    - (U) Adult Muslims must fast from sunrise to sunset, however, "Ramadan is actually a time of increased activity wherein the believer, now lightened of the burdens of constant eating and drinking, should be more willing to strive and struggle for Allah."
  - (U) **Important dates during Ramadan:**
    - (U) On the 17<sup>th</sup> day of Ramadan (in 624 AD) (3 Dec 01), Almighty Allah separated the truth from falsehood at the Great Battle of Badr, Islam's holiest battle. This decisive victory laid the foundation of the Islamic State. The Muslims became a force to be reckoned with by the dwellers of the Arabic Peninsula.
    - (U) The last ten nights of Ramadan, in particular, were important. Included in these nights is "Laylat Al-Qadr" of **the Night of Destiny, or Power**, which is **the holiest night to Muslims**. It marks the anniversary of the Revelation of the Quran, and is celebrated between the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> days of Ramadan (13 Dec 01). The Night of Destiny is also significant because the majority of Muslim Jurists believe that it is on this night that a good deed is worth the work of a thousand months. **Martyrdom seekers, have since the beginning of Islamic history, sought martyrdom on this night.**
  - (U) **Historical dates during Ramadan:**
    - (U) 25<sup>th</sup> day of Ramadan (in 1260 AD), The Muslim armies met and crushed

the Mongols at Ain Jalut.

- (U) October 1973 A.D. Egypt characterized the attack on Israel during Ramadan (and Yom Kippur) as a just war because it was aimed at liberating land held by non-Muslims.

- (U) The Taliban fought through the Hajj, in March 2001. Hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca and is more sacred to Muslims than Ramadan.

• (U) **Other Factors:**

- (U) The Global War on Terrorism is focused on al-Qadia a terrorist organization, and is not focused on Islam.

- (U) Terrorists do not honor holidays.

- (U) Begin the public affairs campaign now before Ramadan begins. Press the Arab, European, Asian countries and the UN to come forward in action, demonstrate their coalition commitments and actively participate in the Global War on Terrorism.

- (U) Escalate the Information Operations campaign as a **global perception management (PM) tool** by preemptively using this pre-Ramadan period to discuss food shortages and the on-coming winter weather. International help is available to the Afghan people, but is inhibited by the Taliban government's desire to harbor terrorists at the expense and abandonment of the majority of the Afghan people.

-(U) Develop a strategy for the placement of refugee camps within Afghanistan in the northern regions where ample food, housing, clothing and medical supplies are gathered, but are not currently deliverable throughout the country because of the war.

• ~~(S)~~ **Recommendations:**

- ~~(S)~~ Continue combat operations during Ramadan as required by military necessity.

- ~~(S)~~ SecDef/CJCS to discuss the military necessity of combat ops during Ramadan with:

-- ~~(S)~~ MOD/CHOD counterparts,

-- ~~(S)~~ US/Coalition country politicians.

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--(S) Host governments trading the welfare of their citizens to protect terrorists.

-- (S) Humanitarian objectives to prevent famine and re-establish sovereign nation stability.

-- (S) A series of Coalition and US messages supporting the Afghan people, and condemning terrorists.

- (S) Establish refugee camps within Afghanistan before the onset of winter weather, under coalition control.

-- (S) Reasons:

+ (S) Afghans are IDPs, not refugees.

+ (S) Sets the conditions for:

++ (S) UN led humanitarian operations,

++ (S) NGO/PVO re-involvement, and

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