

IMMEDIATE  
RELEASED IN PART

CONFIDENTIAL UNCLASSIFIED INCOMING

B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(C), 1.4(D) DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ARA/NEA REARCS

859

PAGE 01 OF 02 ISLAMA 05010 00 OF 03 011325Z 043819 0866393  
ACTION: PK (01)

ISLAMA 05010 00 OF 03 011325Z 043819 0866393

INFO: IN (01) SAU (01) ARPD (01) SAF (04) TC (01) BG (01) SRA (01)  
RA (01) PPO (02) AG (01) LY (01) MO (01) TS (01) LE (02)  
SY (02) JO (02) BA (01) HU (01) QA (01) EG (01) IS (01)  
MAG (01) NEA (01) EEC (01) ECON (01) AF (01)  
01/1525Z A3 MAH (TOTAL COPIES: 034)

PRO-TALIBAN NOISES FROM THE GOP

ACTION SA-00

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-00 ACDE-00 INLB-01 AGRE-00 AID-00 ACQ-00  
CEA-01 CIAE-00 SNEC-00 COME-00 CTNE-00 INL-01 DODE-00  
DOEE-00 SRPP-00 DS-00 EB-00 EUR-00 EXIM-01 E-00  
FBIE-00 FRB-00 H-01 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-00 ITC-01  
LAB-01 L-00 ADS-00 NEA-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02  
OMB-01 OPIC-01 PA-00 PM-00 PRS-00 P-00 SCT-00  
SP-00 SSO-00 STR-00 TRSE-00 T-00 USIE-00 SNIS-00  
NISC-00 PMB-00 DSCC-00 PRM-01 DRL-04 G-00 NFAT-00  
SAS-00 /029W

-----4F662E 011341Z /38

O 011320Z JUL 98  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0094  
INFO AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
AMEMBASSY ALMATY  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE  
AMEMBASSY BISHKEK  
AMEMBASSY TASHKENT  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY RIYADH  
DIA WASHINGTON DC  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR  
AMCONSUL KARACHI

*PK*

USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/CCJ3/CCJ5/POLAD//  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY DHAKA  
AMCONSUL LAHORE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 005010

DEPT FOR SA/PAB AND EUR/CACEN; PARIS FOR POL/RAVELING; LONDON FOR  
POL/TUELLER; ABU DHABI PLEASE PASS TO DUBAI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/1/08  
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, KISL, ECON, PK, AF  
SUBJECT: BAD NEWS ON PAK AFGHAN POLICY: GOP SUPPORT FOR THE  
TALIBAN APPEARS TO BE GETTING STRONGER

REFS: (A) ISLAMABAD 4934 (NOTAL); (B) PESHAWAR 445

(U) CLASSIFIED BY JAMES ELLIOTT, ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION.  
REASONS: 1.5 (C) (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: THE SUM TOTAL OF RECENT COMMENTS MADE BY A WELL-  
CONNECTED JOURNALIST AND BY PAKISTANI MFA OFFICIALS TENDS TO  
INDICATE THAT GOP SUPPORT FOR THE TALIBAN IS GETTING STRONGER.  
THIS VIEW IS BUTTRESSED BY STRONG EVIDENCE THAT THE PAKISTANI  
GOVERNMENT RECENTLY AGREED TO PROVIDE THE TALIBAN 300 MILLION  
RUPEES (USD SIX MILLION) IN FINANCIAL SUPPORT. REASONS FOR  
PAKISTAN'S REGRESSION -- THE TREND-LINE HAD GENERALLY BEEN IN A  
MORE POSITIVE DIRECTION -- ARE SPECULATION. HOWEVER, SOME  
OBSERVERS HAVE ASSERTED THAT POLITICAL FALLOUT FROM THE MAY NUCLEAR  
TESTS HAS CHANGED THE REGIONAL CONTEXT IN WHICH AFGHAN POLICY IS  
MADE, LEADING TO A DYNAMIC FAVORING THOSE IN THE GOP WHO HOLD PRO-  
TALIBAN VIEWS. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) POLOFF MET JUNE 30 WITH AHMED RASHID, A WELL-CONNECTED  
PAKISTANI CORRESPONDENT AFFILIATED WITH "THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC  
REVIEW," AND ARNIE SCHIFFERDECKER, A POLITICAL ADVISER AT THE UN  
SPECIAL MISSION FOR AFGHANISTAN (UNSHA). RASHID SAID HE HAD  
RECENTLY CANVASSED PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, INCLUDING  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE  
DIRECTORATE (ISID) SOURCES, ABOUT THE STATE OF PAKISTAN'S AFGHAN  
POLICY. WHAT HE HEARD SURPRISED HIM: TO A MAN THE GOP OFFICIALS  
WERE STRONGLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE TALIBAN. RASHID SAID THIS WAS A  
SURPRISE BECAUSE EARLIER THIS YEAR MFA AND ISID SOURCES -- EVEN  
THOSE WITH KNOWN PRO-TALIBAN VIEWS -- WERE AT LEAST MAKING A  
PRETENSE OF SUPPORTING THE UN EFFORT, THE FORMATION OF A BROAD-  
BASED GOVERNMENT, ETC. HOWEVER, IN HIS RECENT CONVERSATIONS, THE  
GOP OFFICIALS WERE FEEDING HIM SUCH UNVARNISHED VIEWS AS: THE  
TALIBAN ARE CAPABLE OF TAKING OVER ALL OF AFGHANISTAN; THEIR REGIME  
IS QUALITIVELY BETTER FOR THE AFGHAN PEOPLE THAN THAT OF THEIR  
OPPONENTS; THE OUTSIDE WORLD SHOULD TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE TALIBAN  
MIND-SET BEFORE CONDEMNING THEM ON SUCH ISSUES AS HUMAN RIGHTS,  
ETC.

THE CLINCHER: RUPEES FOR THE TALIBAN

3. (C) CONTINUING, RASHID RELATED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED "SOME  
DISTURBING NEWS." HE HAD RECENTLY FOUND OUT THAT THE GOP'S

COORDINATION COMMITTEE FOR AFGHAN POLICY HAD DECIDED TO PROVIDE THE  
TALIBAN 300 MILLION RUPEES (USD SIX MILLION) IN THE NEXT SIX MONTHS  
AT A RATE OF 50 MILLION RUPEES A MONTH. THE PRIME MINISTER HAD  
JUST SIGNED OFF ON THE DECISION. HIS SOURCES TOLD HIM THAT THE  
MONEY WAS EARMARKED TO PAY FOR THE SALARIES OF TALIBAN OFFICIALS  
AND COMMANDERS. SCHIFFERDECKER COMMENTED THAT HIS SOURCES --  
INCLUDING AYYAZ WAZIR, THE GOP'S AFGHAN DESK OFFICER -- WERE  
TELLING THEM THE SAME THING, ALTHOUGH WAZIR HAD ASSERTED THAT THE  
MONEY WAS FOR "HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE" TO PEOPLE LIVING IN  
TALIBAN-CONTROLLED AREAS. ALTHOUGH 300 MILLION RUPEES MIGHT NOT BE  
CONSIDERED A LARGE SUM, RASHID AND SCHIFFERDECKER AGREED THAT IT IS  
IN THE CONTEXT OF AFGHANISTAN "WHERE A LITTLE MONEY GOES A LONG  
WAY." (NOTE: INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN OTHER CHANNELS TENDS TO  
CONFIRM THAT PAKISTAN IS OFFERING THE TALIBAN THE 300 MILLION  
RUPEES.)

NUCLEAR TESTS HAVE CHANGED EQUATION

4. (C) POLOFF ASKED RASHID AND SCHIFFERDECKER WHAT THEY THOUGHT  
THE DYNAMIC MIGHT BE THAT IS MOVING THE GOP TOWARD STRONGER SUPPORT  
FOR THE TALIBAN. RASHID SAID HE WAS NOT SURE. HOWEVER, AS IS HIS  
WONT -- RASHID IS SOMEWHAT CONSPIRATORIAL-MINDED -- HE WENT ON TO

SPECULATE THAT THE ISID IS TRYING TO USE THE TALIBAN AS "A  
BARGAINING CHIP" WITH THE WEST IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE MAY INDO-  
PAKISTANI NUCLEAR TESTS. EXPANDING ON THIS POINT, RASHID SAID  
ISID MAY WANT TO PROTECT ITS INTERESTS IN THE TALIBAN -- EVEN  
EXPAND ON THEM, AS A WAY OF MAKING THE WEST FEEL THE HEAT IF IT

INSISTS ON "PUNISHING" PAKISTAN FOR ITS NUCLEAR TESTS.  
SCHIFFERDECKER COMMENTED THAT HE WAS NOT SURE OF RASHID'S COMMENTS,  
BUT THOUGHT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER IS SO PREOCCUPIED ON OTHER  
ISSUES BECAUSE OF THE NUCLEAR TESTS THAT HE IS NOT FOCUSING ON  
AFGHANISTAN AT ALL. CITING THE PROVERB "THE MICE WILL PLAY, WHEN  
THE CAT IS AWAY," SCHIFFERDECKER SPECULATED THAT ISID IS TAKING  
ADVANTAGE OF SHARIF'S NON-INVOLVEMENT IN AFGHAN ISSUES TO PUSH ITS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ARCHIE M BOLSTER  
DATE/CASE ID: 05 DEC 2003 200104208

CONFIDENTIAL  
UNCLASSIFIED

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

INCOMING

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
ARA/NEA REARCS

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 OF 02 ISLAMA 05010 00 OF 03 011325Z 043819 5066393  
POLICY VIEWPOINT, WHICH HAS ALWAYS BEEN PRO-TALIBAN.

ISLAMA 05010 00 OF 03 011325Z 043819 5066393

IN TENSIONS IN THE REGION; MEANWHILE, OTHER OBSERVERS ARGUED THAT INCREASED FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS WOULD FORCE THE GOP TO REIN IN ITS FINANCIAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR THE TALIBAN. (NOTE: DEFAULT ON INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS IS A REAL POSSIBILITY FOR PAKISTAN. IF THE GOP IS A CONDUIT FOR ASSISTANCE TO THE TALIBAN FROM ABROAD, HOWEVER, THIS INFLOW OF HARD CURRENCY WOULD ACTUALLY HELP THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS. END NOTE.) AFTER SEVERAL WEEKS WHEN THINGS WERE IN FLUX, IT APPEARS THAT THOSE WHO SUSPECTED THAT THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT MIGHT BECOME MORE PRO-TALIBAN IN AFGHANISTAN WERE RIGHT; BASED ON THE INFORMATION DISCUSSED ABOVE, THE GOP APPEARS TO HAVE REGRESSED TO A POINT WHERE IT IS AS HARD-LINE AS EVER IN FAVOR OF THE TALIBAN.  
SIMONS

-----  
PRO-TALIBAN COMMENTS BY MFA OFFICIALS  
-----

5. (C) RASHID'S AND SCHIFFERDECKER'S COMMENTS WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTING IN LIGHT OF REMARKS MADE BY [REDACTED]

B1

[REDACTED] AT A [REDACTED] LUNCH GIVEN BY AMBASSADOR SIMONS FOR A VISITING ATLANTIC COUNCIL TEAM (WHICH INCLUDED FORMER AMBASSADORS CHAS. FREEMAN AND JACK MATLOCK). AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS WHEN HE WAS RELATIVELY MODERATE WHEN DISCUSSING AFGHANISTAN, [REDACTED]'S COMMENTS AT THE LUNCH WERE AGGRESSIVELY PRO-TALIBAN. A SAMPLING:

-- "THE TALIBAN HAVE BROUGHT SECURITY TO 80 PERCENT OF THE COUNTRY. IN FACT, THEIR (THE TALIBAN'S) AREAS ARE SAFER THAN ISLAMABAD."

-- "THE TALIBAN ARE NOT NEW TO AFGHANISTAN SOCIETY. THEY ARE INDIGENOUS. THEIR CULTURE CANNOT BE CHANGED."

-- "THE TALIBAN GENUINELY WANT A BROAD-BASED GOVERNMENT. IN FACT, MANY OF THEIR OFFICIALS ARE FROM ETHNIC GROUPS OTHER THAN THE

PASHTUN MAJORITY. THIS SHOWS THE TALIBAN'S SINCERITY IN WANTING TO FORM A BROAD-BASED GOVERNMENT."

-- "IF IT WAS NOT FOR THE WAR, THE TALIBAN WOULD BE MAKING PROGRESS ON WOMEN'S ISSUES. THEY WOULD BE MAKING SUCH PROGRESS NOW, BUT THE UN HAS FAILED TO HELP THEM, DESPITE TALIBAN REQUESTS."

-- "THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE IS TOTALLY UNRELIABLE. THEY REFUSE TO KEEP THEIR WORD."

-- "NORTHERN ALLIANCE UNITY IS A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS. THE NORTH IS DIVIDED AND FINISHED."

6. (C) THIS TYPE OF COMMENTARY ON THE TALIBAN CONTINUED IN THE ATLANTIC COUNCIL TEAM'S SUBSEQUENT MEETING AT THE MFA WITH A GROUP OF HIGH-RANKING MFA OFFICIALS. FOR EXAMPLE, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] AVERRED THAT ALL PAKISTAN WANTS IN AFGHANISTAN IS "STABILITY WHICH THE TALIBAN BRING." HE ADDED, "DESPITE YOUR (U.S.) UNFAIR IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS, STABILITY IS SOMETHING WE WOULD THINK THE U.S. AND PAKISTAN COULD AGREE ON." CONTINUING ON THIS TRACK, [REDACTED] ADMITTED THAT THE TALIBAN MAY NOT BE PERFECT "IF ONE IS FOCUSED ON HUMAN RIGHTS," BUT ARGUED THAT "OUR DIFFERENCES ON THESE AND OTHER ISSUES" SHOULD NOT OBSCURE THE PAKISTANI-U.S. "INTEREST IN LINKING CENTRAL ASIA AND SOUTH ASIA THROUGH TRANSIT ROUTES." [REDACTED] WENT ON TO ARGUE THAT THE U.S. SHOULD SUPPORT PAKISTAN'S EFFORTS TO VACATE THE AFGHAN UNGA SEAT (WHICH IS CURRENTLY HELD BY THE NORTH) SO THAT THE TALIBAN "ARE TREATED FAIRLY." [REDACTED]'S COMMENTS WERE WARMLY GREETED BY THE OTHER GOP OFFICIALS PRESENT, WHO NODDED VIGOROUSLY IN AGREEMENT. (NOTE: IN A [REDACTED] MEETING WITH SENATORS BROWNBACK AND ROBB, [REDACTED] REITERATED SIMILAR POINTS TO THOSE

ABOVE, WHILE EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR AN EFFECTIVE PEACE PROCESS -- (SEE REF A.)

-----  
COMMENT  
-----

7. (C) VARIOUS OBSERVERS HAVE SPECULATED ON HOW THE MAY NUCLEAR TESTS MIGHT AFFECT PAKISTAN'S AFGHANISTAN POLICY (SEE REF B; FOR EXAMPLE). AMONG OTHER THEORIES: SOME ARGUED THAT PAKISTAN MIGHT BE MORE AGGRESSIVE IN AFGHANISTAN BECAUSE OF THE GENERAL INCREASE

CONFIDENTIAL  
UNCLASSIFIED