

SECRET

PT09574

RELEASED IN PART
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 05 ISLAMABAD 005749

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 1.6X6
TAGS: PTER, PREL, SNAR, AF
SUBJ: SEARCHING FOR THE TALIBAN'S HIDDEN MESSAGE

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 5717 B) ISLAMABAD 2899

(U) CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR WILLIAM B. MILAM.
REASON: 1.6X6.1. (S) SUMMARY: A LENGTHY MEETING BETWEEN
TALIBAN [REDACTED] AND THE
AMBASSADOR DID NOT PRODUCE AN OFFER TO RELINQUISH
USAMA BIN LADIN, BUT WAS NOTABLY DIFFERENT IN
TONE. [REDACTED] DID NOT ONCE QUESTION U.S. EVIDENCE

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AGAINST BIN LADIN OR REHEARSE TIRED TALIBAN
OFFERS FOR SOLVING THE PROBLEM. HE ADMITTED THE
LEGITIMACY OF U.S. CONCERNS AND PROMISED TO "WORK
BEHIND THE SCENES TO PROVE TALIBAN FRIENDSHIP."
HE APPEARED PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN RECEIVING
ASSURANCES THAT THE BIN LADIN ISSUE IS THE
TRANSCENDENT FACTOR IN U.S. CONCERNS ABOUT THE
TALIBAN AND THAT ITS RESOLUTION WOULD REPRESENT A
REAL INFLECTION POINT IN RELATIONS, RATHER THAN
SIMPLY CHECKING OFF ONE ITEM ON A LENGTHY LAUNDRY
LIST. HE ALSO PROBED FOR CONFIRMATION THAT THE
USG WAS NOT INIMICALLY OPPOSED TO THE TALIBAN AND
SET ON THEIR DESTRUCTION; AS SUCH, HE HINTED A

SMALL GESTURE TO DEMONSTRATE THIS WOULD BE WELCOME. END SUMMARY.

2. (S) TALIBAN [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] CAME OVERLAND FROM KANDAHAR TO QUETTA, THEN FLEW TO ISLAMABAD, IN ORDER TO MEET AMBASSADOR SEPTEMBER 17. (THE UN FLIGHT FROM KANDAHAR DID NOT FLY AS SCHEDULED, SO [REDACTED] EXERTED SOME EFFORT TO REACH ISLAMABAD FOR THE MEETING.)

[REDACTED] ARRANGED THE MEETING AND TRANSLATED,

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3. (S) THE TONE OF THE MEETING WAS DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS U.S.-TALIBAN MEETINGS. THERE WAS NO TENSION OR HOSTILITY; [REDACTED] LISTENED INTENTLY TO THE AMBASSADOR'S POINTS AND SEEMED WILLING (AND ABLE) TO UNDERSTAND THEM. HIS LENGTHY PRESENTATION ON USAMA BIN LADIN DID NOT ONCE CRITICIZE THE QUALITY OF U.S. EVIDENCE AGAINST BIN LADIN OR REHEARSE TIRED TALIBAN SUGGESTIONS FOR "SOLVING" THE ISSUE. [REDACTED] PRIMARILY TRANSLATED, BUT INSERTED HIS OWN COMMENTS TO BOLSTER WHAT ONE OR THE OTHER SIDE SAID AND OCCASIONALLY COACHED [REDACTED] AT ONE POINT, SAYING THE MATTER WAS CRUCIAL [REDACTED] ALSO ASKED THE AMBASSADOR TO REITERATE THAT THE USG DID NOT SEEK THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TALIBAN, EVEN THOUGH THE AMBASSADOR HAD JUST SAID THIS. WHEN THE AMBASSADOR NOTED HE HAD SAID NOTHING NEW, AND THAT PREVIOUS U.S. REPRESENTATIVES INCLUDING UNDER SECRETARY PICKERING HAD MADE THE SAME POINTS, [REDACTED] RESPONDED THAT "MAYBE WE HAD PROBLEMS WITH TRANSLATION BEFORE. I AM VERY COMFORTABLE WITH THIS ARRANGEMENT." THE

4. (S) [REDACTED] STRESSED APPRECIATION FOR U.S. SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE DURING THE JIHAD AGAINST THE SOVIETS AND DURING AFGHANISTAN'S ONGOING

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DROUGHT. HE NOTED THAT GOVERNMENTS CHANGE, BUT
PEOPLE STAY THE SAME, AND THE TALIBAN WANT TO

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KEEP THE LOVE BETWEEN AFGHANS AND AMERICANS
ALIVE. "WHATEVER THE TALIBAN IS, WHETHER GOOD OR
BAD, THE AFGHAN PEOPLE WILL REMAIN," [REDACTED]
"DON'T PUNISH THE PEOPLE FOR TALIBAN POLICIES."
AFGHANS DO NOT FORGET THEIR DEBTS, [REDACTED]
EMPHASIZED. IF AMERICA EXTENDS ITS HAND, AFGHANS
WILL REMEMBER.

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5. (S) ANOTHER REFRAIN IN HIS REMARKS WAS
INSISTENCE THAT THE TALIBAN WANT TO LISTEN, TO
TALK, AND TO RE-ESTABLISH TRUST WITH THE USG.
PEOPLE ([REDACTED] IN TRANSLATING REFERRED TO THE
PHONE CALL FROM MUJAHID IN NEW YORK REPORTED REF
A) FREQUENTLY TELL AFGHANS THAT AMERICA IS
AGAINST THE AFGHAN NATION. SOME AFGHANS BELIEVE
THIS, [REDACTED] SAID THE TALIBAN
AND THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE HAD MOVED FARTHER AND
FARTHER APART, AND THIS LACK OF TRUST CONTRIBUTED

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TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE WAR. WE DO NOT WANT

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THIS TO HAPPEN BETWEEN AFGHANISTAN AND THE U.S., HE INSISTED.

6. (S) TURNING TO BIN LADIN, [REDACTED] SUGGESTED THAT "IF WE HAVE SAVED HIS LIFE, PERHAPS WE HAVE SAVED AMERICAN LIVES, TOO. WE ATTEMPT TO CONTROL HIM. IF HE IS IN PRISON, THEN LET HIM BE PUNISHED A LONGER TIME." THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION AND CANNOT BE RESOLVED

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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 05749 02 OF 05 190153Z OVERNIGHT, BUT THERE IS NOTHING THAT IS IMPOSSIBLE. INSTEAD OF THREATS, HE SAID, FRIENDSHIP WOULD LET US DO MORE TOGETHER. THIS IS NOT A SMALL PROBLEM, [REDACTED] ADMITTED, "BUT WE WANT TO MOVE FORWARD." PEOPLE MAY THINK AFGHANS ARE IGNORANT, HE CONTINUED, BUT WE ARE NOT -- WE ARE WILLING TO LISTEN AND TO TALK.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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NOTED THAT THE U/S SAID UBL WAS THE FIRST PRIORITY, BUT WAS "ALSO VERY CONCERNED" ABOUT DRUGS. "VERY SHORTLY, YOU WILL HEAR OF BIG DECREASES IN DRUG PRODUCTION," HE INSISTED. THIS IS NOT A PROBLEM OF ONE YEAR; DURING THE WAR, NO ONE PAID ATTENTION TO WHO GREW WHAT. FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE TALIBAN ARE TRYING TO CONTROL THE SITUATION, DESPITE HARDSHIP FOR POOR FARMERS.

[REDACTED] ASSERTED THAT TALIBAN SUPREME LEADER MULLAH OMAR'S DECREE FORBIDDING POPPY CULTIVATION WAS THE RESULT OF [REDACTED] BEHIND-THE-SCENES EFFORTS

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[REDACTED] HE

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 05749 02 OF 05 190153Z EXPLAINED. "BUT THAT WAS MY DOING [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

8. (S) FOLLOWING OMAR'S DECREE, THE TALIBAN HAVE BEGUN TO TEACH THE DANGERS OF NARCOTICS IN THE MADRASSAHS, [REDACTED] INTERJECTED HE HAD WITNESSED SOME OF THE CLASSES. THE TALIBAN HAVE ALSO APPROACHED THE TRIBES TO SEEK SUPPORT, RECEIVING A "GOOD RESPONSE, SO FAR." AGAIN PLEADING FOR TRUST, [REDACTED] SAID PUTTING AN END TO POPPY CULTIVATION IS NOT A SMALL ISSUE, JUST AS BIN LADIN IS NOT A SMALL ISSUE. BUT INSTEAD, HE SAID, THE UNDCP ANNOUNCED A WITHDRAWAL IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SIX-PLUS-TWO REGIONAL ACTION PLAN. "WE NEVER KNOW WHAT REACTION WE WILL GET," [REDACTED] COMPLAINED. SAYING THE TALIBAN WANTED THE UNDCP TO REMAIN IN AFGHANISTAN, HE WORRIED THE WITHDRAWAL MIGHT PRESENT TRIBAL LEADERS WITH AN "EXCUSE" TO CONTINUE GROWING POPPY.

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9. (S) MULLAH OMAR DOES NOT ISSUE MANY DECREES, [REDACTED] SO THE TALIBAN ENFORCE THOSE HE DOES PROCLAIM. [REDACTED] CONFIDED THAT A NEW EDICT HAD BEEN PROMULGATED THAT EVERYONE -- GIRLS AND BOYS -- WILL BE EDUCATED, "WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HIJAB." IN THE U.S., [REDACTED] PEOPLE LIMIT THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN THEY HAVE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THEM WITH AN EDUCATION. AFGHANS WANT THE SAME THING. EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT; WITHOUT IT,

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 PEOPLE CANNOT READ THE KORAN. HE EMPHASIZED THE TALIBAN'S RESPECT FOR WOMEN, SAYING HE WOULD REFRAIN FROM DESCRIBING THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED AGAINST WOMEN BEFORE THE TALIBAN CAME TO POWER. [REDACTED] ALSO STRESSED THE TALIBAN'S INTEREST IN PURSUING PEACE INITIATIVES. HE CHARGED THAT THE OPPOSITION CLAIMS TO SUPPORT PEACE, BUT MASOOD ROUTINELY BREAKS HIS WORD.

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10. (S) THE AMBASSADOR CUED HIS REMARKS TO [REDACTED] LAST COMMENT ABOUT MASOOD. THE FACT THAT THE U.S. CRITICIZES THE TALIBAN, HE EXPLAINED, DOES NOT MEAN SUPPORT FOR MASOOD. THE U.S. WANTS TO SEE PEACE IN AFGHANISTAN AND THINKS THE WAY FOR THIS TO HAPPEN IS FOR THE TALIBAN AND THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE TO COME TO SOME KIND OF AGREEMENT. THE U.S. HAS MORE DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE TALIBAN THAN WITH THE NORTHERN ALLIANCE, THE

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TAGS: PTER, PREL, SNAR, AF
SUBJ: SEARCHING FOR THE TALIBAN'S HIDDEN MESSAGE

AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT. THUS, PERHAPS THE U.S. DOES SEEM TO PUSH THE TALIBAN HARDER, BUT IT ALSO PUSHES MASOOD THROUGH OTHERS. [] INTERJECTED THAT IRAN NOW SUPPORTS SANCTIONS ON BOTH SIDES, AND THE AMBASSADOR SAID THE U.S. WOULD PREFER NOT TO WORK FOR OR HAVE SANCTIONS AT ALL, IF THE REASON FOR THE SANCTIONS WERE TO BE REMOVED.

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11. (S) THE AMBASSADOR REAFFIRMED DEEP FEELINGS OF SUPPORT AND EMPATHY AMERICANS HAVE FOR THE
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AFGHAN PEOPLE, WHO SHOULD HAVE THE "OPTION FOR PEACE." HE OUTLINED THE MAGNITUDE OF U.S. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN. EVEN WITH THE TALIBAN IN CONTROL, HE POINTED OUT, IT IS AMERICAN FOOD THAT THE UN AND NGO'S DISTRIBUTE TO AFGHANS. THIS DEMONSTRATES THE GOOD WILL OF AMERICANS TOWARD THE AFGHAN PEOPLE; NOTHING THE U.S. DOES IS INTENDED TO HARM THEM. WHEN THE TALIBAN FIRST EMERGED, HE RECALLED, THE U.S. WAS BASICALLY POSITIVE ABOUT THE MOVEMENT. ONLY WHEN TALIBAN POLICIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES BECAME UNTENABLE DID U.S. CRITICISM INCREASE AND DID OUR RELATIONS BECOME PROBLEMATIC.

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12. (S) USG POLICY HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO ENGAGE THE TALIBAN, TO USE THE GOODWILL THE U.S. STILL RETAINS WITH THE AFGHAN PEOPLE AND WITH THE TALIBAN TO TRY TO MAKE THE TALIBAN UNDERSTAND THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS THE U.S. HAS FOR WHICH IT NEEDS AFGHANISTAN'S HELP. [REDACTED] INTERRUPTED TO SAY HE WISHED SUCH OPEN COMMUNICATION HAD STARTED EARLIER, AND MAYBE CRUISE MISSILES AND THE OTHER PROBLEMS WOULD NOT HAVE ESCALATED. MAYBE, THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED, BUT WE CAN STILL WORK TOWARD BETTER COMMUNICATION NOW.

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13. (S) RESPONDING TO [REDACTED] MENTION OF THE CRUISE MISSILES, THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THAT THE USG WAS NOT AFTER THE TALIBAN, OR PAKISTAN, OR AFGHANS IN THAT ATTACK, EVEN THOUGH PEOPLE IN SECRET

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ALL THREE CATEGORIES MAY HAVE DIED. RATHER, THE U.S. WAS ACTING IN SELF-DEFENSE AGAINST A MAN WHO PROCLAIMS HIMSELF THE SWORN ENEMY OF THE UNITED STATES AND ITS PEOPLE, WHO CONTINUES TO THREATEN AMERICAN CITIZENS, AND WHO AT THE TIME HAD JUST BLOWN UP TWO EMBASSIES, KILLING MANY AMERICANS AND EVEN MORE INNOCENT AFRICANS. THIS MAN, HIS EXISTENCE IN AFGHANISTAN (OR ANYWHERE ELSE) IS A MAJOR ISSUE FOR THE U.S. ALL IN THE USG ARE AGREED THAT UBL IS OUR MAJOR PROBLEM WITH THE TALIBAN -- HE IS AMERICA'S SWORN ENEMY AND WILL KILL AMERICANS AGAIN IF HE GETS THE CHANCE.

[REDACTED] AGREED WITH THE AMBASSADOR'S ASSERTION THAT BIN LADIN POSED A THREAT TO THE U.S. BUT NO COURT HAS DECIDED UBL'S FATE, AND "YOU CANNOT KILL ANYONE ON THE BASIS OF SUSPICION." PRECISELY, THE AMBASSADOR CONCURRED -- WE MUST MOVE BEYOND THIS ARGUMENT TO FIND A WAY TO PUT BIN LADIN IN A COURT TO SEE IF HE WILL BE JUDGED GUILTY OR INNOCENT.

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14. (S) THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ISSUES ABOUT WHICH THE U.S. HAS CRITICIZED THE TALIBAN, THE AMBASSADOR CONTINUED: DRUGS, WOMEN'S RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, PEACE, A BROAD-BASED GOVERNMENT. BUT THE U.S. HAS MANY ISSUES OF CONCERN WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN, AS WELL -- NUCLEAR ISSUES, KASHMIR POLICY -- AND BOTH NATIONS MAINTAIN A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING

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ON COUNTER-NARCOTICS, WHERE OUR COOPERATION IS
VERY STRONG AND WHERE OUR INTERESTS COINCIDE.

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THE U.S. CAN DISCUSS AND WORK ON MANY ISSUES WITH
THE TALIBAN AND OTHERS IN AFGHANISTAN. BUT THE
CONSENSUS ON THE UBL ISSUE IS SUCH THAT WE MUST
GET BEYOND THAT IN ORDER TO PROGRESS ON OTHER
MATTERS. THE U.S. WOULD NOT CHANGE ITS POSITION,
DROP ITS CRITICISM, OR ABANDON ITS PRINCIPLES,
THE AMBASSADOR WARNED, BUT THE UBL ISSUE IS
SUPREMELY IMPORTANT AND MUST BE RESOLVED SO THE
OTHER ISSUES CAN BE DISCUSSED IN A MORE AMENABLE
ATMOSPHERE. THE ONE ISSUE THAT CANNOT BE
SUBORDINATED OR DIMINISHED IS BIN LADIN. IF THE
U.S. AND THE TALIBAN COULD GET PAST BIN LADIN,
"WE WOULD HAVE A DIFFERENT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP."

15. (S) THE AMBASSADOR ADDED THAT THE U.S. WAS
NOT AGAINST THE TALIBAN, PER SE, WAS NOT OUT TO
DESTROY THE TALIBAN. THERE ARE SANCTIONS AGAINST
THE TALIBAN, BUT NOT BECAUSE THE U.S. DISLIKES

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THE TALIBAN, RATHER DUE TO THEIR POLICY OF

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HARBORING BIN LADIN. IF BIN LADIN IS EXPELLED TO A PLACE WHERE HE CAN BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE, THE CURRENT UN SANCTIONS WOULD CEASE.

16. (S) [] RESPONDED THAT AS BIN LADIN IS A SUPREME ISSUE IN THE U.S., SO HE IS FOR THE MULLAHS IN AFGHANISTAN. BUT "WE OWE IT TO YOU TO DO OUR BEST;" [] "I WANT TO DO OUR BEST TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE." REFERRING AGAIN TO

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 PEOPLE WHO ALLEGE AMERICA IS AGAINST AFGHANISTAN,
 [] NOTED HE COULD TELL TOP-LEVEL TALIBAN THIS WAS NOT TRUE, BUT SAID IT WAS HARDER TO CONVINCED MIDDLE AND LOWER LEVELS. HE URGED THE AMBASSADOR TO TRY TO GET "PEOPLE, AND THE UN, NOT TO CONDEMN US ALL THE TIME." HE HINTED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF ANOTHER GOODWILL GESTURE ON THE PART OF THE USG, ASKING IF THE AMBASSADOR COULD GIVE HIM ADVANCE NOTICE, FOR EXAMPLE, OF THE NEXT TRANCHE OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE. IT WOULD ALSO BE VERY SIGNIFICANT IF SOME OF THE UNDCP OFFICES COULD REMAIN INSIDE AFGHANISTAN. PERHAPS THE U.S. COULD OFFER A FAVORABLE RESPONSE TO THE DRUG BAN EDICT, [] SUGGESTED, OR SOME HELP TO FARMERS. PERHAPS ASSISTANCE COULD BE OFFERED TO THE AFGHAN PEOPLE THROUGH THE AFGHAN RED CRESCENT, INSTEAD OF THROUGH THE UN OR NGO'S, [] WHAT HE SOUGHT WAS SOMETHING TO USE TO NEUTRALIZE THE ARGUMENTS OF THE FANATICS, HE CLARIFIED, SOMETHING HE COULD USE TO DEMONSTRATE U.S. FRIENDSHIP. THE AMBASSADOR AGAIN EMPHASIZED THE ALREADY ENORMOUS LEVEL OF CURRENT U.S. ASSISTANCE, BUT TOOK ON BOARD [] POINT AND SAID HE WOULD SEE IF ANYTHING COULD BE OFFERED. HE REPEATED HE COULD MAKE NO PROMISES. [] SAID HE WOULD USE WHATEVER HE COULD TO "OPEN PEOPLE'S EYES."

17. (S) THE AMBASSADOR RECIPROCATED WITH SUGGESTIONS OF TWO GESTURES THE TALIBAN COULD MAKE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY -- RETREATING

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 FROM THE EDICT PROHIBITING FEMALE EMPLOYMENT IN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, AND PERMITTING AMCIT MARY MACMAKIN TO CONTINUE HER WORK INSIDE AFGHANISTAN. [] SAID HE HAD ALREADY TOLD OFFICIALS IN KABUL

NOT TO SAY ANYTHING BAD ABOUT MACMAKIN, AND HOPED SHE WOULD RECIPROCATE THIS GESTURE. EDUCATED WOMEN HAVE BEEN FLEEING FROM AFGHANISTAN, [REDACTED] CONTINUED, AND THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE TO LEAVE. WE MUST FIND A SOLUTION THAT MEETS THEIR NEEDS, AS WELL AS OUR OWN.

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18. (S) AS THE (LENGTHY) MEETING CLOSED, [REDACTED] ASKED THAT THE MEETING AND ITS CONTENTS REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL, TO WHICH THE AMBASSADOR AGREED. "WE WILL WORK BEHIND THE SCENES TO PROVE THAT WE ARE FRIENDS," [REDACTED] PROMISED. "I HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY NOT TO CREATE PROBLEMS FOR YOU OR FOR US."

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19. (S) COMMENT: [REDACTED] FIRST PRIORITY WAS CLEARLY RECEIVING ASSURANCES THAT UBL IS THE MAIN ISSUE FOR THE UNITED STATES. HIS UNSPOKEN QUESTION APPEARED TO BE: IF THE TALIBAN WERE TO DELIVER ON BIN LADIN, WOULD THEY ONLY FACE A CONTINUING AND UNENDING LIST OF FURTHER DEMANDS? SECONDARILY, [REDACTED] SOUGHT CONFIRMATION THAT THE USG WAS NOT INIMICALLY OPPOSED TO THE EXISTENCE OF THE TALIBAN REGIME. THIS MAY BE MORE IMPORTANT TO THE TALIBAN NOW THAT THEY SEEM TO BE -- WITH [REDACTED] -- ON A ROLL MILITARILY
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PAGE 04 ISLAMA 05749 04 OF 05 190154Z AND CAN LOOK FORWARD TO MARGINALIZING MASOOD'S NORTHERN ALLIANCE AS A MILITARY/POLITICAL FORCE IN AFGHANISTAN.

20. (S) COMMENT, CONTINUED: IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THIS MEETING CONSTITUTED A GENUINE EFFORT TO BREAK THROUGH ON UBL, NOR, IF IT WERE, IS IT CLEAR THE DEGREE TO WHICH [REDACTED] WOULD BE SPEAKING FOR ALL THE TALIBAN, ESPECIALLY OMAR. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] TONE AND STATEMENTS, HOWEVER, WERE FAR LESS OBSTREPEROUS THAN NORMAL TALIBAN RHETORIC, AND WE THINK THERE MAY BE SIGNIFICANCE IN THE FACT THAT HE REFRAINED FROM CRITICIZING U.S. EVIDENCE AGAINST UBL, OFFERING KNOWN NON-STARTERS LIKE ULEMA CONFERENCES OR TRIAL IN AFGHANISTAN,

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OR DEFENDING BIN LADIN.

21. (S) COMMENT, CONTINUED: WE RECOMMEND
CONSIDERATION OF ANY SMALL, RELATIVELY COST-FREE
GESTURES WE MIGHT MAKE TO TEST [] ASSERTIONS
AND GIVE HIM (AT LITTLE COST TO THE U.S.) AN
INDICATION THAT WE ARE NOT INALTERABLY OPPOSED TO
THE TALIBAN'S EXISTENCE. PERHAPS A FAVORABLE
STATEMENT ON THE DRUG BAN COULD BE ISSUED AT SOME
POINT. WE MAY ALSO BE ABLE TO USE THE DONATION

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OF TWO CARS LEFT BEHIND BY DEPARTED OFFICERS
(WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO AFGHAN NGO'S
LONG AGO, BUT WERE NOT DUE TO TALIBAN
ADMINISTRATIVE INEPTITUDE -- [] HOWEVER, DOES
NOT KNOW THIS) AS A TOOL AND WILL EXPLORE THIS
LOCALLY. IT WOULD ALSO BE WORTHWHILE TO LET US
CONVEY TO [] IN ADVANCE ANY UPCOMING
ASSISTANCE DONATIONS; WE URGE THE DEPARTMENT TO
GIVE US ADVANCE NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE IN THE
WORKS. WE ARE SKEPTICAL RIGHT NOW THAT GIVING
ASSISTANCE THROUGH THE AFGHANISTAN RED CRESCENT,
OR DIRECTLY THROUGH THE TALIBAN IS A GOOD IDEA.
WE MAY RAISE IT AGAIN IF WE SEE ANY SIGN OF

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ACTION ACROSS THE BORDER.
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