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Current Class: CONFIDENTIAL
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1996ISLAMA01403

Channel: n/a

Case Number: 200104094

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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.5(B), 1.5(D)

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	SSO-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	SSD-01	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRME-01	DRL-09	G-00	/041W		

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 FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7931
 INFO AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY ROME
 AMEMBASSY PARIS
 AMEMBASSY LONDON
 AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
 USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
 AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
 AMCONSUL JEDDAH
 DIA WASHDC
 AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE
 AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
 AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
 AMEMBASSY RIYADH

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LONDON FOR POL:TUELLER; PARIS FOR POL:ALLEGRONE; ROME FOR
POL:STORELLA

E.O. 12958: DECL:02/19/06
 TAGS: PREL, PGOV, MOPS, PK, IR, RU, AF
 SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: TALIBAN OFFICIAL SAYS DIVISIONS WITHIN
 - MOVEMENT GROWING; PREDICTS "FIGHT WITH IRAN"

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY ERIC A. KUNSMAN, POLITICAL COUNSELOR,
EMBASSY ISLAMABAD. REASON: 1.5 (D).

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
 DATE/CASE ID: 19 JUN 2003 200104094

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2. (C) SUMMARY: [REDACTED] SAYS B1
 DIVISIONS WITHIN THE TALIBAN ARE GROWING AS A RESULT OF
 DISAGREEMENTS OVER GOALS. HE CLAIMED TALIBAN LEADER MOHAMMED
 OMAR WANTS TO BECOME RULER OF AFGHANISTAN AND IS NOT INTERESTED
 IN COMPROMISE WHILE "MANY" OTHERS IN THE MOVEMENT WANT TO
 COOPERATE WITH THE U.N. PLAN FOR AN INTERIM COUNCIL. THE
 HARD-LINERS ARE STRENGTHENED BY SUPPORT FROM PAKISTAN AND
 AFGHAN TRADERS, WHILE THE MODERATES ARE DENIED AID. [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] PREDICTS HEAVY FIGHTING WILL START IN WESTERN
 AFGHANISTAN BEFORE KABUL, AND CLAIMS THE TALIBAN ARE READY TO
 DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST IRAN, THROUGH CROSS-BORDER OPERATIONS
 IF NECESSARY. END SUMMARY.

3. (U) POLOFF MET FEBRUARY 16 WITH [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] WHO CLAIMED
 TO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN MANY TALIBAN MILITARY CAMPAIGNS,
 INCLUDING THE TAKING OF HERAT, PROVIDED HIS VIEWS ON CURRENT
 CONDITIONS WITHIN THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT.
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TWO MAIN SOURCES OF DIVISION

4. (C) [REDACTED] SAID THERE WERE TWO MAIN CAUSES OF DIVISION
 WITHIN TALIBAN RANKS: FIRST, THE AMBITION OF LEADER MOHAMMED
 OMAR AND, SECOND, DISAGREEMENT OVER NEGOTIATING WITH OTHER
 FACTIONS. ON THE FIRST ISSUE, [REDACTED] COMPLAINED THAT
 MOHAMMED OMAR'S PRINCIPAL GOAL SEEMED TO BE TO BECOME THE
 LEADER OF ALL AFGHANISTAN. "IN HIS DREAM, OMAR SAW HIMSELF
 BECOMING THE RULER OF AFGHANISTAN AND HE DEEPLY BELIEVES THIS
 IS HIS DESTINY," [REDACTED] REMARKED. ALTHOUGH ALL
 DECISIONS OF THE TALIBAN NEED TO BE APPROVED BY THE SHURA,
 [REDACTED] SAID OMAR HAD CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE WHEN THE SHURA
 WAS DIVIDED BECAUSE IT WAS HIS VISION WHICH CREATED THE
 MOVEMENT. "HE IS THE INITIATOR OF THE TALIBAN, SO WHEN THERE
 ARE QUESTIONS, HE IS OFTEN DEFERRED TO," [REDACTED]
 NOTED. POLOFF SAID SOME TALIBAN HAD COMMENTED THAT OMAR LACKED
 CHARISMA AND ASKED HOW HE MAINTAINED HIS INFLUENCE. [REDACTED]
 RESPONDED THAT IT WAS PRECISELY OMAR'S LACK OF EDUCATION AND
 HIS LOW STATUS WHICH GAVE HIM CACHET AS A MYSTIC/VISIONARY.
 "HE IS FROM THE KHOTAK TRIBE, WHICH IS NOT VERY IMPORTANT --
 THIS INSULATES HIM FROM THE TRIBAL RIVALRY WITHIN TALIBAN,"

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[REDACTED] ADDED.

5. (C) THE SECOND CAUSE OF DIVISION WITHIN THE TALIBAN, [REDACTED] CLAIMED, RESULTED FROM AMBASSADOR MESTIRI'S [REDACTED] NOVEMBER 16, 1995, MEETING WITH SHURA REPRESENTATIVES IN KANDAHAR. [REDACTED] SAID "EVERYONE BUT OMAR" WANTED TO DISCUSS MESTIRI'S PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL; "WE ALL HAD NAMES WHICH WE WANTED TO PUT FORWARD, BUT OMAR FLATLY REJECTED THE
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IDEA BECAUSE IT DID NOT AGREE WITH HIS VISION OF HIMSELF AS AFGHANISTAN'S RULER." [REDACTED] CHARACTERIZED OMAR'S REFUSAL TO EVEN DISCUSS THE U.N. PLAN AS "AGAINST THE TALIBAN MISSION." HE SAID THE TALIBAN HAD BEEN CREATED TO BE AN ANTI-IKHWANI/RADICAL ISLAMIST FORCE AND TO COMBAT IRANIAN AND RUSSIAN INFLUENCE. A COUNCIL, [REDACTED] STATED, WAS NOT NECESSARILY IN CONFLICT WITH THIS MISSION, BUT OMAR HAD "CHANGED THE AGENDA." BY REJECTING THE U.N. PROPOSAL, OMAR HAD DECIDED TO PIT THE TALIBAN "AGAINST THE WORLD," HE COMPLAINED. DESPITE THE DESIRE OF THE SHURA TO DISCUSS THE U.N. IDEA, [REDACTED] WHO SAID HE ATTENDED THE MEETING, CLAIMED THAT OMAR SIMPLY INSTRUCTED KANDAHAR GOVERNOR MOHAMMED HASSAN TO "GET RID OF MESTIRI FAST," WHICH THE GOVERNOR THEN DID.

[REDACTED]

6. (C) THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR CLAIMED THAT THE PROBLEM FACING MODERATES WITHIN THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT WAS THAT THEY DID NOT RECEIVE MUCH OUTSIDE SUPPORT, WHILE THE "MORE CONTROLLABLE NOBODIES" WERE GIVEN "EVERY FACILITY." SUPPORT FOR THE MOVEMENT MOSTLY CAME FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN AND WEALTHY AFGHAN TRADERS, [REDACTED] AVERRED. THIS AID USUALLY WAS IN THE FORM OF CASH, HE STATED, AND THE GOP HAD ONLY GIVEN

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THE TALIBAN AMMUNITION ONCE, "AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF THE
 MOVEMENT IN 1994." [REDACTED] SAID THE TALIBAN,
 PARTICULARLY SINCE THE SEIZURE OF HERAT AND SHINDAND AIR BASE,
 DID NOT REQUIRE MUCH FUEL OR AMMUNITION. LARGE FUEL STOCKS
 WERE TAKEN AT SHINDAND AND HERAT, AND A "HUGE AMOUNT OF WEAPONS
 AND AMMUNITION" WAS RECOVERED FROM HEKMATYAR'S BASE AT
 CHARASIAB. [REDACTED] COMMENTED THAT "WHEREVER YOU DIG IN
 HEKMATYAR'S AREAS, THERE YOU FIND A WEAPONS DEPOT." ASKED HOW
 THE GOP PROVIDED ITS FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE TALIBAN, [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] ALLEGED THE PAKISTANI GOVERNMENT USED AFGHAN
 TRADERS TO CHANNEL MONEY TO THE TALIBAN, AVOIDING WHEREVER
 POSSIBLE A DIRECT LINK WITH THE MOVEMENT.

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WATCH FOR FIGHTING TO START IN WEST FIRST

7. (C) [] SAID HE BELIEVED AN ATTACK AGAINST THE TALIBAN WOULD HAPPEN FIRST IN WESTERN AFGHANISTAN AND THEN WOULD SPREAD TO KABUL. [] WHO SAID HE HAD JUST VISITED HERAT AND WOULD BE RETURNING THERE AFTER A BRIEF STOP IN [] REMARKED THAT THE TALIBAN WERE IN THE PROCESS OF FORTIFYING THEIR POSITIONS ALONG THE IRANIAN BORDER, PARTICULARLY NEAR ISLAM QALEH IN HERAT PROVINCE. HE CLAIMED
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 THE TALIBAN HAD RECENTLY CAPTURED NINE AFGHANS BELONGING TO THE TRIBE OF PRO-KABUL COMMANDER ALLAHUDIN, WHO WERE TRYING TO INFILTRATE INTO HERAT FROM IRAN. THE NINE INDIVIDUALS WERE IN JEEPS WHICH CONTAINED SUPPLIES OF AK-47 ASSAULT RIFLES AND A "LARGE AMOUNT OF CASH." [] SAID THE GROUP HAD PLANNED TO DISTRIBUTE THE WEAPONS AND MONEY TO ALLAHUDIN'S TRIBE, AND THEN WOULD ATTACK SHINDAND AIR BASE "ON A SIGNAL FROM TEHRAN."

8. (C) TO RESPOND TO THESE IRANIAN PROVOCATIONS, [] SAID THE TALIBAN HAD PLACED HEAVY WEAPONS, INCLUDING ROCKET LAUNCHERS AND ARTILLERY, ALONG THE IRANIAN BORDER. THE HERAT SHURA HAD ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY, AND CALLED IN THE IRANIAN CONSUL IN HERAT TO CONVEY PRIVATELY, THAT IN THE EVENT OF AN IRANIAN-SUPPORT ATTACK AGAINST THE TALIBAN, THE TALIBAN WERE FULLY PREPARED TO RESPOND AGAINST IRAN. "WE HAVE TOLD THE IRANIANS THAT WE ARE FULLY PREPARED TO GO INSIDE IRAN AND FIGHT," [] COMMENTED GRIMLY. "WE HAVE GONE INTO IRAN BEFORE TO SEIZE WEAPONS AND BLANKETS FROM ISMAEL KHAN'S PEOPLE AND HAVE NOT HAD PROBLEMS DOING SO. THIS TIME OUR FORCES WILL BE MUCH BIGGER," HE BOASTED.

WHO'S WHO IN THE TALIBAN

9. (C) [] SAID HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE TALIBAN COULD TAKE KABUL, "BUT ONLY IF WE CAN RESOLVE OUR INTERNAL DIFFERENCES." HE DIVIDED THE TALIBAN INTO THREE GROUPS: HARD-LINERS, THOSE WHO COULD GO EITHER WAY, AND MODERATES, AND PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING LIST OF NAMES, POSITIONS AND TRIBAL AFFILIATIONS FOR EACH CATEGORY:

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HARDLINERS: MOHAMMED OMAR, LEADER OF THE MOVEMENT AND TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, KHOTAK TRIBE; MOHAMMED HASSAN, KANDAHAR GOVERNOR AND TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, BALBUL TRIBE; ABDUL WAKHEEL AHMED, FOREIGN AFFAIRS CHIEF AND TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, KAKAR TRIBE; AKHTAR MOHAMMED, REGIONAL FIELD COMMANDER, ACHAKZAI TRIBE; MULLAH KHAIRULLAH, TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, KAKAR TRIBE; MULLAH YARANNAH, NO POSITION GIVEN, NOORZAI; MULLAH BRADER, FIELD COMMANDER, NOORZAI TRIBE; MULLAH GHAZI, NO POSITION GIVEN, NOORZAI TRIBE; MULLAH OBAIDULLAH, TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, NOORZAI TRIBE.

SWING VOTES: MULLAH ABBAS, MAYOR OF KANDAHAR AND TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, ACHAKZAI TRIBE; MULLAH IHSANULLAH, TALIBAN "INSPECTOR GENERAL AND TAX COLLECTOR (SEE BELOW), TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, ALIZAI TRIBE; MULLAH RABBANI, MILITARY COMMANDER AND TALIBAN SHURA MEMBER, KAKAR TRIBE; MULLAH GHAUS, FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEPUTY, KAKAR TRIBE; MULLAH JALIL, ASSISTANT TO GHAUS, TRIBAL AFFILIATION UNKNOWN; MULLAH TURRABI, POSITION NOT GIVEN, ACHAKZAI; MULLAH BURJAN, FORMERLY OVERALL MILITARY CHIEF, SOMETIMES MEMBER OF TALIBAN SHURA, KAKAR TRIBE.

MODERATES: MULLAH NASEEM, GOVERNOR OF ZABUL, ALIZAI TRIBE; MAULAVI ABDUL HADI, ZABUL DEPUTY GOVERNOR [REDACTED] ALIZAI TRIBE; MULLAH ABDUL KARIM, HELMAND GOVERNOR, ALIGOZAI

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O 190921Z FEB 96
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
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INFO AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ROME

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TRIBE; MULLAH ABDUL SALAAM, HELMAND CORPS COMMANDER, NOORZAI
TRIBE; MULLAH ZAINULLAH, GRISHK CORPS COMMANDER, NOORZAI TRIBE;
MULLAH MOHAMMED HASSAN (NOT THE SAME AS THE GOVERNOR OF
KANDAHAR), POSITION NOT GIVEN, BARAKZAI TRIBE; HAJI ABDUL
SAMAD, KANDAHAR MILITIA CHIEF, ACHAKZAI TRIBE; HAJI MULLAH
SAYYED MOHAMMED, FARAH GOVERNOR, ALIZAI TRIBE; MULLAH MOHAMMED,
FARAH MILITIA CHIEF, BARAKZAI; YAR MOHAMMED, GOVERNOR OF HERAT,
POPALZAI TRIBE; SAYYED JANAN AGHA, HERAT CORPS COMMANDER, TRIBE
NOT GIVEN.

10. (C) [REDACTED] ADMITTED THAT THE MODERATE ELEMENTS, NONE
OF WHOM WAS A MEMBER OF THE TALIBAN SHURA, WERE "LOSING OUT" TO
THE HARD-LINERS. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE PROBLEMS FACING THE
MODERATES, HE CLAIMED THAT HERAT GOVERNOR YAR MOHAMMED HAD
AGREED TO REOPEN SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE FROM
LOCAL RESIDENTS, BUT HAD BEEN OVERRULED BY THE SHURA IN
KANDAHAR. HOWEVER, EVEN [REDACTED] CHARACTERIZED THE
DARI-SPEAKING POPULATION OF HERAT AS "POTENTIAL TRAITORS" WHO
SHOULD BE CLOSELY WATCHED TO ENSURE THAT THEY WERE NOT
SUBVERTED BY THE IRANIANS -- ALTHOUGH HE APPEARED TO HAVE NO
PROBLEM WITH THESE POTENTIAL FIFTH COLUMNISTS GOING TO SCHOOL,

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EVEN THE GIRLS. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE WAY POLITICS WAS
CONDUCTED WITHIN THE TALIBAN, [REDACTED] SAID MULLAH IHSANULLAH
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HAD EFFECTIVELY LOST HIS POSITION AS A SHURA MEMBER BECAUSE
KANDAHAR GOVERNOR MOHAMMED HASSAN HAD LEARNED THAT IHSANULLAH,
PREVIOUSLY THE MILITARY CHIEF FOR EASTERN AFGHANISTAN, HAD
TRIED TO ORGANIZE A 3,000 MAN PRIVATE ARMY, OSTENSIBLY TO
"BACK-UP THE TALIBAN" IN PAKTIA. FEARFUL THAT IHSANULLAH'S
AMBITION MADE HIM DANGEROUS TO THE TALIBAN, THE SHURA HAD FIRST
TRANSFERRED HIM TO HERAT, WHERE GOVERNOR YAR MOHAMMED HAD
REFUSED TO COOPERATE WITH HIM, THEN, CONCLUDING THAT IT COULD
NOT TRUST IHSANULLAH WITH A SPECIFIC REGIONAL COMMAND, HAD
APPOINTED HIM AS A ROVING INSPECTOR GENERAL AND TAX COLLECTOR
-- DEPRIVING HIM OF A REGIONAL BASE AND EFFECTIVELY PREVENTING
HIM FROM CONTRIBUTING TO SHURA MEETINGS.

COMMENT: ALL MIXED UP

11. (C) [REDACTED] PAINTS A PICTURE OF A DIVIDED AND CONFUSED
TALIBAN MOVEMENT -- WHICH TRACKS CLOSELY WITH OTHER INFORMATION
WE HAVE RECEIVED. WE HAVE HEARD FROM NUMEROUS SOURCES THAT THE
LEAST REACTIONARY LEADERS WITHIN THE TALIBAN -- INCLUDING THOSE
INTERESTED IN COOPERATING WITH THE U.N. PEACE MISSION -- APPEAR
TO BE LOSING OUT TO MORE HARD-LINE ELEMENTS. HOWEVER, WE
CANNOT CONFIRM [REDACTED] THESIS THAT THE MODERATES
ARE LOSING BECAUSE "MORE CONTROLLABLE HARD-LINERS" ARE BEING
BACKED BY PAKISTAN AND AFGHAN TRADERS; NONE OF THE TALIBAN, AS
FAR AS WE CAN MAKE OUT, IS VERY CONTROLLABLE AND GOP FOREIGN
MINISTRY SOURCES CONSISTENTLY COMPLAIN ABOUT THE WILLFULNESS OF
TALIBAN LEADERS. END COMMENT.

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