

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Interviewee: Afghan **Minister of Interior, Ali Jalali**
Date: October 23, 2003
Location: Ministry of Interior
Participants: Zelikow, Hurley, Scheid
Drafted by: Kevin Scheid
Reviewed by: Philip Zelikow
Additional Info:

The Minister welcomed the delegation. Mr. Zelikow asked if there was anything the US could have done diplomatically to influence the Taliban prior to 9-11? The Minister identified three groups that formed the Taliban prior to 9-11: core extremists groomed by Pakistan to take over the country, this group was closest to al Qa'ida and worked through intermediaries like the ISI; moderate Taliban who were willing at times to negotiate; and a group that joined because of the Taliban's power in the country.

In 1999 the Jalali was in the US with the Central Asian Institute where he published a paper on whether the Taliban could be dealt with diplomatically. He felt that the only way was to work through the Pakistani government to get at the core members. He also wrote a paper for Johns Hopkins, *Whither the Taliban*, in which he argued that the Taliban did not have the ability to manage Afghanistan.

The current threat? When you have terrorism present it is followed in the country by warlordism, crime and drug trafficking. The Taliban terrorist activities are becoming more numerous lately, but we should see this as an indication of increased strength of the Taliban. They only know our weaknesses and they are exploiting them. The fact that the terrorist do not have an indigenous support network reflects that this is not an insurgency, but brought in from the outside.

Pakistan can play this whichever way they want. They have extremist elements in their country and they can help direct them to Kashmir or Afghanistan as places of jihad. Nonetheless, the Paks marketing to the US is that they have a domestic extremism problem of their own that they need to deal carefully with - walk a tight wire. The key to all this is to have in Afghanistan a legitimate government that provides services to the people. The people need evidence that this government can provide in order to undermine the attractiveness of alternative systems of governing.

There will need to be a US or coalition military presence in Afghanistan for a long time. PRT's have had a big impact in the provinces, we need to do more of this work.

The building of the police force is going well. To date there are about 3,000 trained. He is satisfied with the progress. Nonetheless, he is concerned about what is happening at the provincial level in the country. He made an appeal to "Indigenize" the terrorist problem so that the provinces and the Afghan national government can take care of this matter without relying on the US and the coalition.