



MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

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Interviewee Background

As a career foreign service officer, Mr. Camp worked in the State Department's ("State") Bureau of East Asia and Pacific Affairs focusing on Indonesia and China from 1990-1991. He then spent a year working for Senator Paul Simon. From 1992-1995, Mr. Camp served as the Consul General in Chengdu, China. From 1995-1998, he became the Deputy Director for the Office of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh in the State's Bureau of South Asian Affairs ("SA/PAB"). In 1998, he became the Deputy Director for the Office of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, in ("SA/INS"). From April 1999-2001, Mr. Camp served as a Director in the South Asia Directorate at the National Security Council ("NSC"). In April 2001, he returned to the State as Director for SA/INS. On September 10, 2001, Mr. Camp became Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary ("DAS") for SA and was later formally installed as a DAS in SA in December 2001. [U]

USG Priorities in the Region

DAS Camp said that the India-Pakistan nuclear crisis was the US Government's ("USG") top priority in the region. In May 1998, both India and Pakistan conducted nuclear tests and were on the verge of a nuclear conflict. In addition, the conflict in Kashmir was a major concern. The USG's priority in Afghanistan was rendering Usama bin Laden ("UBL"). DAS Camp noted that Afghanistan was a counterterrorism priority, more so than a regional priority, therefore the Office of Transnational Threats was the lead Directorate at the NSC and the Office of Counterterrorism was the lead office at State. [U]

USG Relations with the Taliban

When asked about the USG's impression of the Taliban, DAS Camp stated that initially, the USG had "no illusions" about the Taliban but saw them as a group that brought a degree of stability to Afghanistan. However, he noted that the USG may have

underestimated the Taliban's capabilities. He said that when the Taliban took control of Herat, the USG knew that the Taliban was going further than expected. [U] DAS Camp said that the USG had contacts with several of the warring factions in Afghanistan.

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He said that the USG was trying to deal with all parties to the Afghan conflict in an attempt to find a peaceful settlement. [S/NF]

As Deputy Director of SA/PAB, DAS Camp traveled to Afghanistan. His standing instruction to the Taliban was to render UBL to the USG. The Taliban responded that UBL was a guest in Afghanistan and hospitality required the Taliban to accommodate him. The Taliban assured DAS Camp that they had UBL under their control and as such, UBL would not commit terrorist activities. [S]

In January 2000, DAS Camp again traveled to Afghanistan, as part of the NSC staff, with Michael Sheehan, State's Coordinator for Counterterrorism, and Karl Inderferth, Assistant Secretary of State for SA. He stated that they delivered a strong, clear message to the Taliban that the USG would hold them responsible for actions committed by people under their protection. The Taliban gave the delegation the same response: that UBL was a guest in their country and they had him under control. [S]

Options to Try or Expel UBL

DAS Camp said that the Taliban offered to try UBL but the USG had no confidence in the offer. He believes that the USG may have countered by asking the Taliban to expel UBL to a third country where he could be tried by an Islamic court. He thought that the USG's rationale for expulsion was that the USG would be more likely to gain custody of him wherever he went. However, the Taliban was not interested in forcing UBL out of Afghanistan so plans were not seriously explored. When asked why he thought the Taliban were protecting UBL, DAS Camp stated that the USG assumed that UBL provided the Taliban with funding and military support. [S]

The Taliban as a Foreign Terrorist Organization ("FTO")

DAS Camp said that initially, the USG considered designating the Taliban as a State Sponsor of Terrorism¹ however this proposal was rejected because the USG did not recognize the Taliban as the official government of Afghanistan. DAS Camp believed that the idea of designating the Taliban as an FTO² arose because the Taliban provided

¹ The law establishing the "State Sponsors" list states that, "The US may not provide assistance to any country that the Secretary of State determines that the government of that country has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism." (22 USC 2371).

² The Secretary of State is authorized to designate as a foreign terrorist organization a foreign organization that engages in terrorist activity, which threatens the security of US nationals or the national security of the US (See 8 USC 1189). Designation has the following legal ramifications: it becomes unlawful for persons subject to US jurisdiction to knowingly provide material support to a designated FTO; members or representatives of the FTO may be found inadmissible to and removable from the US; and financial

material support to terrorism. He stated that the USG questioned whether it was better to stigmatize and isolate the Taliban through designation or to engage them. [C]

The GOP's Counterterrorism Efforts

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DAS Camp said that the USG did not have much leverage over the GOP at the time due to the Pressler and Glenn Sanctions,³ which discontinued most economic and military assistance to Pakistan. Furthermore, the USG's policy after the 1998 nuclear tests was not easing sanctions, but imposing tougher sanctions. [U]

DAS Camp stated that no change occurred in the GOP's counterterrorism policy until after September 11, 2001. Prior to September 11, 2001,

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institutions are obligated to freeze any assets of an FTO that are in its possession or control. (See 18 USC 2339B). [U]

³ The Pressler and Glenn Amendments provided nuclear non-proliferation conditions on assistance to Pakistan. Pressler Sanctions were applied to Pakistan for the first time in 1990 and Glenn Sanctions were applied to Pakistan for the first time in May 1998. These sanctions were lifted on September 22, 2001 after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. [U]

USG Policy Efforts Against the Taliban

DAS Camp said that the USG used the Six plus Two⁴ group ("the Group") to engage other countries on the Taliban. The Group primarily focused on humanitarian issues and political stability in the region however, the USG used it as a medium to discuss the Taliban's activities.

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When asked about the effectiveness of United Nations Security Council sanctions placed on Afghanistan, DAS Camp said that United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1267 and 1333 caused problems for Ariana Afghan Airlines but did not have a significant affect on the Taliban. He stated that the Taliban made money from the poppy trade, smuggling, and customs revenues and, despite sanctions, could get the things that it needed. [U].

DAS Camp said that he does not think any major diplomatic efforts existed that the USG did not try. The USG never concluded that "nothing could be done" to influence the Taliban. The Taliban wanted to be recognized in the international community so the USG always hoped that as part of their efforts to become a real country, the Taliban would respond to USG demands. Exploiting more moderate Taliban officials was always a debate within the USG but DAS Camp said that USG officials never found any member of the Taliban that would admit to differences with Mullah Omar, the leader of the Taliban.

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Union Oil Company of California ("UNOCAL")

When asked about the USG's position on UNOCAL's plan to build a gas pipeline through Afghanistan,⁵ DAS Camp said that the USG thought UNOCAL's efforts were unrealistic; the USG did not believe that Afghanistan would be secure enough to build a pipeline through various warlords' territories. However, UNOCAL was a US company so the USG supported its efforts. He noted that UNOCAL had a lot of supporters among the warlords.

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DAS Camp stated that the USG was not using any UNOCAL employees as a backchannel to the Taliban. He said that representatives from UNOCAL's Washington, DC office visited the State Department and expressed interest in the USG resolving the India-Pakistan conflict because cooperation between the two countries was necessary for the success of the pipeline; UNOCAL felt that it was making progress in Afghanistan. [U]

⁴ The Six plus Two group consists of China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan plus the US and Russia.

⁵ UNOCAL's pipeline project would export gas from Turkmenistan via a pipeline that ran through Afghanistan to Pakistan and then over to India. The primary market for the gas would be in South Asia. [U]

Afghanistan 2003

DAS Camp said that the USG's current policy towards Afghanistan focuses on preventing Afghanistan from reverting to a terrorist sanctuary. US Special Envoy to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, will attempt to help Afghanistan build a political structure that is inclusive and consists of a multiethnic governing group, while marginalizing the warlords to some extent because they allow the Taliban to regroup. He commented that different ethnicities need to feel that they are part of the future of Afghanistan. [U]

[Handwritten signature]
NMS