REleased in part
B1, 1.5(d)

SECRET

PAGE 01
ISLAMA 00966 01 OF 03 261232Z
ACTION SA-01

INFO
LOG-00 CIAE-00 SMEC-00 OASY-00 DODE-00 DOEER-00 EUR-01
FBIE-00 H-01 INM-02 TEDE-00 INR-00 IO-14 L-01
ADS-00 M-00 NEA-01 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01
PA-01 PM-00 PRS-01 P-01 SCT-00 SP-00 SS-00
TRSE-00 T-00 USIE-00 SNIS-00 NISC-01 PME-00 PRME-01
PRMC-01 DRL-09 G-00 /039W

P 261235Z JAN 95
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0338
INFO AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL JEDDAH
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

SECRET SECTION 01 OF 03 ISLAMABAD 000966

LONDON FOR POL: TUELLER

SECRET

Current Class: SECRET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E. AHMAD
DATE/CASE ID: 21 APR 2003 200104007

UNCLASSIFIED
PAGE 02

SECRET

Current Class: SECRET
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 1995ISLAMA00966

Case Number:

PAGE 02 ISLAMA 00966 01 OF 03 261232Z
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: KISL, MOPS, PREL, UN, PK, AF
SUBJECT: THE TALIBAN: WHAT WE'VE HEARD

REF: (A) ISLAMABAD 749

1. SECRET -- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: RECENT VISITORS TO KANDAHAR CITY SAY THE TALIBAN ARE WELL-ARMED, MILITARILY PROFICIENT, AND EAGER TO EXPAND THEIR INFLUENCE. PRACTICING A HEAVY-HANDED STYLE OF CONSERVATIVE ISLAM, THE TALIBAN NONETHELESS PROFESS SUPPORT FOR THE U.N PEACE EFFORTS AND SAY THEY HAVE NO INTEREST IN SECTARIANISM. ALTHOUGH DENIED BY THE GROUP'S LEADERS, BOTH U.N. AND WESTERN JOURNALIST SOURCES BELIEVE THE TALIBAN CONTINUE TO RECEIVE FOREIGN SUPPORT.

END SUMMARY.

3. WHAT FOLLOWS IS A COMPILATION OF REPORTS FROM SEVERAL SOURCES WHO HAVE TRAVELLED RECENTLY (WITHIN THE PAST TEN DAYS) TO KANDAHAR, AND A ROUND-UP OF WHAT WE HAVE HEARD HERE IN ISLAMABAD.

WHAT THEY BELIEVE IN

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 00966 01 OF 03 261232Z

4. TALIBAN LEADERS TOLD [REDACTED] THAT THEY INTEND TO LIBERATE KABUL, AND AS MUCH OF THE REST OF AFGHANISTAN AS POSSIBLE, FROM
THE MENACE OF THE COMMANDERS. SIMILAR COMMENTS WERE MADE TO

WHO MET WITH THE TALIBAN

JANUARY 22. A RECURRENT THEME IN THESE CONVERSATIONS, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD, IS THE TALIBAN'S DESIRE TO REPLACE THE AD HOC BANDITRY AND LOCAL RULE OF SMALL MILITIAS WITH STRICT SHARIAH LAW. AS EXAMPLES OF THEIR INTERPRETATION OF ISLAMIC ORTHODOXY, SAYS THE TALIBAN IN KANDAHAR HAVE BANNED THE PLAYING OF CHESS AND MARBLES, ALTHOUGH A THREE-WEEK BAN ON SOCCER HAD TO BE LIFTED AFTER WIDESPREAD PROTEST.

All were told that women have been ordered to stay in the home, and male doctors have been refused permission to treat female patients, leaving doubts as to where the women and girls of Kandahar will be able to turn for medical treatment. Women who taught elementary school for boys have also been sent home, leaving much of the young male population without teachers. However, reports that the Taliban would force all adult males to grow beards are not correct, found. Who says he saw a dozen or so ex-communists who now do the "smart work" for the Taliban (writing reports, signing checks for employees, etc.), suggested that the decision not to force the growing of beard may reflect a Taliban desire to accommodate the generally moustachioed (but not bearded) ex-communists in the administration.

5. IN TERMS OF RELATIONS WITH OUTSIDE FORCES, THE TALIBAN HAVE SECRET
OF PAKISTAN, WHICH THEY ACCUSE OF CRUSHING AN "ISLAMIC
REBELLION" IN PAKISTAN'S MALAKHAND DISTRICT.

THE TALIBAN HAVE AGREED TO SEND A REPRESENTATIVE
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MESTIRI MISSION'S PROPOSED INTERIM
GOVERNING MECHANISM.

POPULAR REACTION TO THE TALIBAN

6. BOTH REPORT THAT THE
EDUCATED ELITE OF KANDAHAR ARE "TERRIFIED" OF THE TALIBAN. ONE

TALIBAN FINANCES

Current Class: SECRET
7. ALL VISITORS TO KANDAHAR HAVE TOLD US THEY BELIEVE THAT THE TALIBAN MUST HAVE ACCESS TO CONSIDERABLE FUNDING. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, TALIBAN REPRESENTATIVES TOLD SOURCES IN ISLAMABAD SAY EX-COMMUNIST MILITIA OFFICERS, WHO APPLY INTERMITTENTLY FOR VISAS TO VISIT RELATIVES IN THE CIS, REPORTED THE TALIBAN WERE ABLE TO OFFER SALARIES "THREE TIMES" THAT WHICH COMMANDERS COULD PAY. ONE GROUP OF OFFICERS TOLD EX-OFFICERS HAD JOINED WITH THE TALIBAN, AND THAT MANY MORE WERE CONSIDERING SIGNING UP. BOURKE SAID EXPERIENCED EX-COMMUNIST REGIME BUREAUCRATS WERE ALSO BEING HIRED BY THE TALIBAN -- HE SAW A DOZEN OR SO, BUT EXPECTED THERE WERE MORE. SOURCES HAVE HEARD REPORTS THAT THE TALIBAN ARE HIRING

SECRET

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 00966 02 OF 03 261233Z

FORMER REGIME POLICE OFFICERS TO SET UP A POLICE ACADEMY IN KANDAHAR CITY. ADDED THAT THE FOOD, FUEL AND OTHER INPUTS FOR TALIBAN MILITARY OPERATIONS MUST BE COSTLY. WHEN HE ASKED TALIBAN REPRESENTATIVES ABOUT THEIR FINANCES, SAID HE WAS TOLD THAT FUNDS COME FROM A COMBINATION OF CUSTOMS DUTIES AND A TAX LEVIED ON LOCAL MERCHANTS. YET LOCAL BAZAARIS DENY THAT THE TALIBAN ARE TAXING THEM AT ALL, ALTHOUGH SEVERAL TOLD THEY WOULD HAPPILY PAY IF ASKED. THERE ARE REPORTS THAT THE TALIBAN HAVE RECEIVED FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER AFGHAN FACTIONS, PARTICULARLY RABBANI, ALTHOUGH PROBABLY NOT IN AMOUNTS LARGE ENOUGH TO PAY THE KINDS OF BILLS OBSERVERS BELIEVE THE RELIGIOUS STUDENTS MUST BE RACKING UP. THE APPARENT GAP BETWEEN OBVIOUS SOURCES OF FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES SUGGESTS TO OUR INTERLOCUTORS THAT THE TALIBAN HAVE OTHER BENEFACCTORS.

THE TALIBAN MILITARY

8. SAYS THE TALIBAN HAVE REHABILITATED A LARGE MILITARY COMPOUND EAST OF KANDAHAR CITY, MOST RECENTLY A BASE
OF NIFA COMMANDER AMIR LALAI, AND BEFORE THAT A DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMUNIST REGIME. ACCESS TO THE FACILITY
IS REPORTEDLY STRICTLY CONTROLLED. VISITORS TO THE CITY REPORT
SOUNDS OF HEAVY WEAPONS FIRING FROM THE VICINITY OF THE CAMP,
WHERE THEY BELIEVE EX-MILITIA OFFICERS AND PERHAPS OTHERS ARE
TRAINING TALIBAN CADE TO USE ARTILLERY AND TANKS. NIFA
OFFICIAL HAMID GAILANI BELIEVES THE TALIBAN ARE USING NEARBY
MOUNTAINS FOR TARGET PRACTICE, MUCH AS DID NAJIB'S TROOPS. THE
TALIBAN ADMIT TO CONDUCTING CONTINUOUS TRAINING EXERCISES AT
THE FACILITY, INCLUDING ARTILLERY PRACTICE.

SECRET

9. IN TERMS OF ACTUAL MILITARY CAPABILITY, THE TALIBAN CLAIM
TO POSSESS 200 TANKS, OF WHICH THEY SAY 100 ARE FULLY
OPERATIONAL. THEY ALSO SAY THEY HAVE AN AIR FORCE COMPRISING
11 MIGS PILOTED BY EX-MILITIAMEN AND 9 TRANSPORT HELICOPTERS.
DRIVING IN FROM CHAMAN, [_____]SAID HE WAS IMPRESSED BY THE
ORDERLY TALIBAN CHECKPOINTS, PLUS THE "VERY LARGE AMOUNT" OF
HEAVY AMMUNITION AND RPGS STACKED AT EACH CONTROL POINT. HE
DID NOT SEE ANY TANKS OR ARTILLERY, BUT BELIEVED THE TALIBAN
HAD PLACED THEM BEHIND NUMEROUS VISIBLE REVETMENTS. THE
SECONDED EARLIER OBSERVATIONS THAT THE TALIBAN HAD
"NEW AK-47S, RPG'S AND LIGHT MACHINEGUNS."

MILITARY OPERATIONS

10. [_____]WAS DENIED PERMISSION BY THE TALIBAN TO TRAVEL INTO
HELMAND TO OBSERVE THE HEAVY FIGHTING THERE. HE WAS PERMITTED
TO GO TO GHAZNI, WHERE GOVERNOR QARI BABA WAS DESCRIBED AS "ONE
OF US," BUT ULTIMATELY DECIDED NOT TO GO. TRAVELLING 20
KILOMETERS OUT OF KANDAHAR CITY TOWARDS HELMAND, [_____]SAID HE
Saw "HEAVIER CONCENTRATIONS" OF WHITE-TURBANED TALIBAN TROOPS,
OFTEN CAMPED JUST OUTSIDE BUILDINGS. SOME OF THESE TROOPS TOLD
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>LOG-00</th>
<th>CIAE-00</th>
<th>SMBC-00</th>
<th>OASY-00</th>
<th>DODE-00</th>
<th>DOE0-00</th>
<th>EUR-01</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INFO</td>
<td>FBIE-00</td>
<td>H-01</td>
<td>INM-02</td>
<td>TEDE-00</td>
<td>INR-00</td>
<td>IO-14</td>
<td>L-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ADS-00</td>
<td>M-00</td>
<td>NEA-01</td>
<td>NSAE-00</td>
<td>NSCE-00</td>
<td>OIC-02</td>
<td>OMB-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PA-01</td>
<td>PM-00</td>
<td>PRS-01</td>
<td>P-01</td>
<td>SCT-00</td>
<td>SP-00</td>
<td>SS-00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TRSE-00</td>
<td>T-00</td>
<td>USIE-00</td>
<td>SNIS-00</td>
<td>NISC-01</td>
<td>PMB-00</td>
<td>PRME-01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRMC-01</td>
<td>DRL-09</td>
<td>G-00</td>
<td>/039W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P 261235Z JAN 95
PM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0340
INFO AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
AMCONSUL LAHORE
AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMCONSUL JEDDAH
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
AMEMBASSY RIYADH
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
SECRET

THAT FIGHTING IN HELMAND WAS VERY HEAVY, BUT THAT AT
LEAST THE WOUNDED WERE BEING EVACUATED BY HELICOPTER FOR
MEDICAL ATTENTION. SAID HE DISCOUNTED THIS REPORT AT
FIRST, BUT SUBSEQUENTLY MET WITH ICRC HOSPITAL OFFICIALS IN
QUETTA WHO SAID THEY HAD RECEIVED 20 BADLY WOUNDED TALIBAN FROM
THE FIGHTING IN HELMAND VIA HELICOPTER. ALSO REPORT THAT THE TALIBAN TROOPS APPEARED ORDERLY
AND MUCH MORE DISCIPLINED THAN THE OTHER AFGHAN FACTIONS.

SUPPORT FROM PAKISTAN

TO KANDAHAR JANUARY 22 REPORT THAT THE
TALIBAN LEADERS THEY SPOKE WITH SEEMED "COACHED" IN WHAT
QUESTIONS TO ASK AND WHAT KINDS OF ASSISTANCE TO ASK FOR. FUEL
IN KANDAHAR CITY, WHICH FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS HAS BEEN
SUPPLIED FROM IRAN, HAD BEEN REPLACED WITH DIESEL FROM
PAKISTAN, THE MANAGER OF THE MAJOR "OFFICIAL" GAS STATION IN
KANDAHAR CITY TOLD ONE THE MANAGER SAID HE
DISPENSED FUEL FOR ALL THE TALIBAN VEHICLES IN KANDAHAR. THE
SAID THAT, GIVEN RECENTLY-IMPOSED TIGHT BORDER
CONTROLS AT CHAMAN, IT IS UNLIKELY THE LARGE AMOUNTS OF FUEL
THE MANAGER SAID HE DISPENSED COULD BE SMUGGED IN EASILY,
13. COMMENT: THE IMPRESSIONS REPORTED RAISE MORE QUESTIONS THAN THEY ANSWER. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO REPORT ON THE TALIBAN,

HOLZMAN