

November 7, 2008

To: Vice Chairman Bond
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

From: Louis Tucker
Minority Staff Director

The attached report represents my and your staff's recommendations regarding America's strategic interests in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region. All of your Committee staff contributed to its production. The report is pursuant to our late-September discussion regarding the lack of a comprehensive strategy for the region.

Your staff met with dozens of officials, held multiple "murder board" sessions and researched contemporary reports and their recommendations. Many institutions with much larger staffs have produced exhaustive reports on the topic, and we have included an appendix covering some of them. Due to your familiarity with the topic, I structured the report as an Executive Summary of our key findings and recommendations (succinct and easy to share with others for dialogue) followed by a list of appendices for further reading (a piece defining the problems in the region, a brief history of the region, a brief history of militant Islamic thought in the region, a summary of major regional studies with their key recommendations, a list of key USG players in the region, a list of contingency recommendations).

Five of us traveled to India, Afghanistan and Pakistan from 6-15 October to hear perspectives from operators and commanders on the ground and to discuss with them our working hypotheses. Due to time and security constraints we were limited in travel to: New Dehli, Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar, Orgun, Khowst, Asadabad, a location near Barikowt, and Islamabad. As there is an intelligence component to virtually all USG operations abroad, and in view of your committee appropriations' and authorization positions that directly affect almost all USG funding overseas, we met with a broad spectrum of elements/offices/individuals. Our main limitation was in not traveling to Bagram to meet with CENTCOM command elements. Although before departure the Secretary of Defense's office confirmed their support for the trip, CENTCOM remained strongly unsupportive of our initiative both during the planning phase in Washington, telling us not to come due to the "burden" of oversight, as well as once we were on the ground.

Multiple Executive branch reviews are currently underway, including those initiated by Admiral Mullen, General Petraeus and General Lute, as well as multiple mini-reviews such as the one being conducted by our embassy in Pakistan. I anticipate that you will receive substantial appropriation and authorization requests early next year resulting from these reviews, therefore I trust this report will assist in your evaluation of those requests.

Everyone we spoke with on the ground in Afghanistan and Pakistan confessed that they know of no overall USG strategy for the region. Rather, we observed quality individuals serving judiciously in their own lanes ungoverned by a coordinated, comprehensive strategy.

Below are our top six recommendations from the Executive Summary:

- The USG must develop and coalesce around a comprehensive regional strategy designed to meet a set of clearly defined goals for the Afghanistan-Pakistan region.
- The USG must first clearly define and prioritize America's regional goals in order to formulate the comprehensive regional strategy and to guide its implementation.
- In order to implement the comprehensive, regional strategy, the in-coming President should appoint and actively support a Washington-based Special Coordinator for USG efforts in Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- The USG must dramatically increase our engagement with Pakistan to develop a partnership toward meeting U.S. and Pakistani goals for the region.
- The USG must secure the support of traditional local leaders to make progress in the areas of security, development, and governance and must encourage those leaders to spearhead those efforts to the greatest extent possible.
- The U.S. Coordinator should include in the comprehensive regional strategy, a strategic communications plan, coordinated with the Departments of State and Defense, USAID, and other USG public diplomacy offices.

We look forward to working collaboratively with all parties on this vital national security imperative and to assisting you in appropriately resourcing and authorizing the way ahead.