



Adjunct Professor of International Affairs

December 5, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: **Colonel Michael Meese**
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CC: **Colonel Cindy Jebb**
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SUBJECT: After Action Report—General Barry R McCaffrey USA (Ret)
VISIT TO KUWAIT AND AFGHANISTAN – 10-18 November 2009

1. PURPOSE: This memo provides a strategic and operational assessment of security operations in Afghanistan. Be glad to conduct a Faculty Seminar and Cadet Class lectures based on this report during this spring semester.

2. SOURCES:

A. SENIOR MILITARY OFFICIALS:

- 1.) **General David Petraeus**, Commander, United States Central Command (USCENTCOM).
- 2.) **General Stanley McChrystal**, Commanding General, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and US Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A).
- 3.) **LTG William Caldwell**, Commanding General, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan.
- 4.) **LTG Jim Dutton (UK)**, Deputy Commanding General, NATO ISAF Headquarters, Kabul.
- 5.) **MG Mike Scaparotti**, Commanding General, ISAF Regional Command (East), Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF)-82.
- 6.) **MG Dick Formica**, Commanding General, Combined Security Transition Command (CSTC)-A.
- 7.) **MG Peter Vangjel**, Deputy Commanding General, Third Army/United States Army Central.
- 8.) **MG John Macdonald**, Deputy Commanding General, USFOR-A.
- 9.) **RADM Greg Smith**, Director of Strategic Communications, ISAF/USFOR-A.
- 10.) **MG Mike Flynn**, Director of Intelligence, CJ2, ISAF.
- 11.) **MG Bill Mayville**, ISAF Director of Strategic Plans and Assessment (CJ3).
- 12.) **MG Nick Carter**, (UK), Commander, ISAF Regional Command-South (RC-S).

- 13.) **MG Stephen Mueller**, USAF, Director, Air Component Coordination Element (ACCE), HQ ISAF.
- 14.) **BG Mark Martins**, Interim Commander, Task Force 435, US Theater Internment Facility-Afghanistan.
- 15.) **BG Anne Macdonald**, Afghan National Police Development.
- 16.) **BG Ben Hodges**, Director of Operations, RC-SOUTH, Kandahar.
- 17.) **BG Guy Walsh**, Commander, 451st Wing.
- 18.) **BG John Nicholson**, Commander, RC-SOUTH, Camp Leatherneck.
- 19.) **BG Kurt Fuller**, Deputy Commanding General – Operations, CJTF-82.
- 20.) **BG Gregory Touhill**, USAF, Chief, Office of Military Cooperation – Kuwait.
- 21.) **BG Thomas Murray**, USMC, Deputy Commander, International Security Assistance Force, RC-SOUTH.
- 22.) **COL (P) KK Chinn**, Deputy Commanding General – Support, CJTF-82.
- 23.) **COL Brian Drinkwine**, Commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.
- 24.) **COL Harry Tunnell**, Brigade Commander, 5th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.
- 25.) **COL Michael Howard**, Brigade Commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.
- 26.) **COL Eric Kurilla**, Commander, Ranger Regiment, Camp Alpha, Bagram.
- 27.) **COL Randy Copeland**, Task Force-714 J3, Camp Alpha, Bagram.
- 28.) **COL Kimberly Rapacz**, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3, 335th Signal Command, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.
- 29.) **COL Dennis Cahill**, Chief, Development Information Operations (LOO), CJTF-82, CJ7.
- 30.) **COL Kevin Palgutt**, Military Police, Senior Advisor to the Minister of Interior.
- 31.) **COL Tom Umberg**, CSTC-A (Anti-Corruption Strategy).
- 32.) **LTC Amy Cook**, Commander, Joint Task Force Lone Star, (Bagram Detention Center).
- 33.) **LTC James Coote (UK)**, Distinguished Service Order (DSO), Military Assistant to COM RC-SOUTH, ISAF.

B. INTERMEDIATE JOINT COMMAND BRIEFING:

- 1.) **MG Jacques DeChevallier (FR)**, Deputy Commanding General.
- 2.) **MG Colin Boag (UK)**, Chief of Staff.
- 3.) **MG Mike Regner**, USMC, Chief of Operations.
- 4.) **BG Alberto Corres (SP)**, Chief of Staff, Stability Operations.
- 5.) **BG Stephen Bowes (UK)**, Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs.

- 6.) **RDML (S) Paul Becker**, CJ2.
- 7.) **COL Wayne Grigsby**, Deputy Chief of Staff.
- 8.) **COL Marty Schweitzer**, XO to the Commander.

C. ISAF STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP:

- 1.) **COL Kevin Owens**, Director.
- 2.) **COL Chris Kolenda**.
- 3.) **COL Hal Douquet**.
- 4.) **CDR Jeff Eggers**.
- 5.) **Mr. Greg Ryckman**.

D. AFGHAN OFFICIALS:

- 1.) **Abdul Rahim Wardak**, Minister of Defense.
- 2.) **Mohamad Hanif Atmar**, Minister of Interior.
- 3.) **General Bismillah Khan Mohammadi**, Chief of Staff of Afghan National Army.
- 4.) **MG Muhammad Raheem Wardak**, Commanding General, 201st Corps, Afghan National Army.
- 5.) **Dr. Ashraf Ghani**, Co-Director, Institute for State Effectiveness; former Afghan Minister of Finance.
- 6.) **Shahmahmood Miakhel**, former Deputy Interior Minister of Afghanistan.

E. DIPLOMATIC OFFICIALS:

- 1.) **Ambassador Karl Eikenberry**, US Ambassador to Afghanistan.
- 2.) **Ambassador Deborah Jones**, US Ambassador to Kuwait.
- 3.) **Ambassador Frank Ricciardonne**, Deputy Chief of Mission.
- 4.) **Ambassador Tony Wayne**, Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs.
- 5.) **Ambassador Mark Sedwill**, UK Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.
- 6.) **Ambassador (Ret.) William Taylor**, Vice President, Peace & Stability Operations, US Institute of Peace.
- 7.) **Core Country Team Brief**.
- 8.) **Mr. Robert Watkins**, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Advisory Mission-Afghanistan.
- 9.) **Mr. William Frej**, Mission Director, US Agency for International Development (USAID).

- 10.) **Ms. Annie Pforzheimer**, Political Counselor, US Embassy, Kabul.
- 11.) **Mr. Mike Spangler**, Economic Counselor, US Embassy, Kabul.

F. LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS:

DEA/FBI/Treasury Briefing – US Embassy, Kabul:

- 1.) **Mr. Jay Fitzpatrick**, Assistant Regional Director, DEA.
- 2.) **Mr. Bob Jones**, FBI Legal Attaché.
- 3.) **Mr. Keith Weiss**, DEA.
- 4.) **Mr. Jeff Silk**, DEA.
- 5.) **Mr. Kirk Meyer**, Afghan Threat Finance Cell.
- 6.) **LTC Joe Myers**, USFOR-A LNO.

3. CONTEXT:

- This report is based on a series of briefings at the United States Embassy in Kuwait, ARCENT HQS at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait ---and then subsequent field tactical observations in Afghanistan (ISAF, Afghan Government officials, UNAMA, USFOR-A, US Embassy Kabul, RC-South Kandahar, RC-East Bagram) at the invitation of General David Petraeus, Commander, USCENTCOM and General Stanley McChrystal, Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and US Forces – Afghanistan (USFOR-A).
- It was an honor to again assess the current challenges in Afghanistan. This report is based on personal research, data provided in-country during this trip, and first-hand observations gained during my many field visits to Pakistan, Kuwait, and Afghanistan during the period 2003 forward to the current situation.
- The conclusions are solely my own as an Adjunct Professor of International Affairs at West Point and should be viewed as an independent civilian academic contribution to the national security debate. No one in CENTCOM or the ISAF Command in Afghanistan has vetted this report.
- These observations focus on Afghanistan and the way forward. They do not center on Pakistan or the US domestic political challenge.
- The President's Afghanistan Strategy Speech at West Point was coherent, logical, and sincere. It was the end result of a very deliberative and thoughtful analytical review of the situation in Afghanistan and our several unpalatable options. It was an appropriate political statement which delivered resources to his field commander and explained why the Commander-in-Chief would not downsize or withdraw---and face the short term political and military disaster that would immediately ensue.
- There is precious little support for the Afghan operation among the American people. 66% say it is not worth fighting for. Only 45% of Americans and few among his political party approve of President Obama's handling of the war. This was not a speech on military strategy. We are unlikely to achieve our political and military goals in 18 months. This will inevitably become a three to ten year strategy to build a viable Afghan state with their own security force that can allow us to withdraw. It may well cost us an additional \$300 billion and we are likely to suffer thousands more US casualties.

- One of the most important concerns of American national security policy in the short run is arguably the stability of Pakistan. Pakistan is four nations under one weak federal government. Only the Pakistani Army is a load bearing bureaucracy. The Pak Army is disciplined, under-resourced, and courageous. The Pak Army is also the Frontier Corps, the Intelligence Service (ISI), and the most respected and trusted institution in the country. They are also the guardians of Pakistan's 70-90 nuclear weapons. They have only tenuous control over much of the country.
- We are very vulnerable in our Afghanistan operation. 90% of our Afghanistan logistics comes through the Port of Karachi and runs a dangerous thousand miles of wild country on "jingle trucks" headed to the Bagram or Kandahar Logistics Bases. Pakistani success in maintaining internal stability and economic growth is vital to our continued operations in Afghanistan. The present Zadari government and the economy are tottering on the edge. The Pakistani Army is fighting their own Taliban for the future of the nation. It is not clear if Pakistan will regress to fundamentalism or become a modern, unified state. There is little question that Pakistan offers de facto secure sanctuary in both Baluchistan and the FATA regions to the Quetta Shura and the Hekmatyar Taliban factions.

4. GENERAL:

- Afghanistan and her 28 million people are trying to build the basic elements of a civil and Islamic society while traumatized by 35 years of cruel violence and chaos. The country is a giant and beautiful land of great contrasts. The natural leadership of the tribes has been slaughtered (one million murdered) or driven into exile (three million) first by the Soviets during their terrible invasion and repression of the people---then by the Taliban as an antidote to clan resistance to their unwelcome and poisonous rule.
- The Afghans are such impressive, devout, generous, and energetic people. They have an acute sense of humor in the face of relentless misery and adversity. They are superb, courageous soldiers and energetic, creative businessmen. They have deep respect for learning and teachers---and a thirst and gratitude for education and knowledge even at the most elemental level. They are intensely focused as students at any age and quick to learn and adapt.

5. THE MILITARY SITUATION -- THE BOTTOM LINE:

- The Taliban believe they are winning. The Afghan people do not know who will prevail---their government or the Taliban. The populations particularly the Pashtun are hedging their bets. Most Afghans are also dismayed at the injustice and corruption of the government (in particular the ANP) compared to the more disciplined and Islamic Taliban. Taliban open internet communications among themselves and their propaganda to the Afghan people take into account their slogan that "the West has the clocks...but the Taliban have the time."
- The Taliban think they have the moral high ground. They are richly funded with drug money. They are well equipped and heavily armed. They have perfected massive anti-armor IED's. They are good at rapid and effective information operations. They deal in recent months with the Afghan people in a careful manner to avoid the cruel images of their past oppression.
- The Taliban now have a serious presence in 160 Districts of 364--- up from 30 Districts in 2003. They have a Shadow Government at Province level and most Districts throughout the country. Insurgent attacks have increased 60% in less than a year. In July alone they employed 828 IED attacks against friendly forces. We should expect 5,700 IED attacks in total by year's end 2009. We must guard against tactical arrogance by US and Allied ground combat forces.
- Twice in recent months we have seen battalion sized units of Taliban fighters conduct highly successful (notwithstanding catastrophic losses by the attacking insurgents) complex attacks employing surprise, reconnaissance, fire support, maneuver, and enormous courage in an attempt to over run isolated US units. This is not Iraq. These Taliban have a political objective to knock NATO out of the war ---backed up by ferocious combat capabilities. We must ensure that ISAF forces follow the tactical basics of: fire support to always include supporting artillery,

intelligence oversight, OP/LP's for early warning, adequate reserves, and operate with appropriate tactical mass against these very clever enemy fighters. Only the incredible small unit leadership, fighting skill, and valor of these two small US Army units ---which suffered very high casualties at Wanat and COP Keating --- prevented a humiliating disaster.

- US, Allied and ANA (Army)/ANP (Police) casualties have gone up dramatically. (The ANP take the overwhelming preponderance of the losses. Apparently the Taliban take them very seriously as a potential threat to their tight control of villages.) As of 25 November US casualties are 922 killed and 4565 wounded. (Eight + battalions killed or wounded). During the expected Taliban and ISAF simultaneous spring offensives--- we may well encounter ISAF casualty rates of 300-500 a month.
- ISAF is reinforcing just in time to rescue the deteriorating tactical situation. Currently 42 nations provide 35,000 Non-US NATO troops (many with severe ROE constraints or military competence issues). The current US force level of 68,000 troops will increase per order of President Obama on 2 December by as many as 33,000 additional troops. The Allies may well provide an additional 7000+ reinforcements. However, only the courageous Brit's will have both robust ROE and an aggressive ground-air-logistics-SOF combat capability. The Canadians and the Dutch will withdraw. The political support in Germany for their Bundeswehr (extremely weak capabilities because of very restrictive ROE) is on the verge of collapse. The French are extremely capable but in the field in small numbers.
- The Afghan National Army is a growing success story. All five Maneuver Corps Headquarters have been fielded along with 14 of 19 Brigade Headquarters, and 82 of the 132 authorized ground combat battalions. (Kandaks). 46 of these battalions are rated as capable of independent operations. Plans are to take the ANA from 90,000 to 240,000 by 2013.
- One of our most capable combat leaders US Army LTG Bill Caldwell has been recently given the task of building the ANA and ANP Afghan security force. He has already been assigned two US brigade training teams from the 82nd Abn Division and the 48th BCT of the GA NG. He will now command all NATO Training establishment forces. As the units graduate from institutional training and deploy to the Regional Commands to operate—they will then fall under ISAF operational command. More trainers will soon follow from elite US and NATO units.
- The Afghan National Police ANP (now 92,000 officers) are a work in progress. They are six years behind the ANA in development. The police are badly equipped, corrupt (7,300 fired in last two years), and untrained (64 of 365 Police Districts have gone through training.) The US Department of Defense will now take total charge of this program from State Department. It will take a decade to create an Afghan National Police Force with adequate integrity which can operate at village level in a competent manner. It will also require 1000 trained and protected judges--- and a competent force of prosecutors and defense lawyers. Finally, we must create a correction system so that convicted prisoners can be incarcerated in a humane manner.
- We have now mostly fixed the disorganized NATO/US/Afghan military command and control system. Thankfully, Secretary Gates, Generals Dave Petraeus at CENTCOM and General Stan McChrystal the ISAF Commander (with the deft political-military support of US Admiral Jim Stavridis the NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe) have unscrewed this mess. We now have a unifying theater strategic ISAF headquarters commanded by General McChrystal. The next level of control is the tactical-operational direction and coordination of all allied and Afghan forces in all four Regional Commands which is now in the hands of the very experienced US combat leader LTG Dave Rodriguez with the NATO (IJC) Intermediate Joint Command. Petraeus and McChrystal are the most effective counter-insurgency strategists and counter-terrorist fighters we have produced in nine years of war.
- We now have finally rationalized and made coherent US and NATO airpower in Afghanistan. This war would be immediately unsustainable without the massive employment of US Air Force, Navy (Carrier Battle Group dedicated on station in the Indian Ocean), Marine, and Army aviation power:
- The air power numbers are huge: ground attack (22,931 CAS sorties year to date); UAV, ISR, medevac, re-fueling (15,438 tanker sorties year to date), and transport assets (11,984 C17 sorties and 31,871 C130 sorties year to date). Nearly 100% of troop personnel, ammunition, sensitive items, and armored vehicles moved by air. (We

flew 2830 MRAP light armor vehicles into Afghanistan in less than a year. Now flying 7,000 MATV's). Casualties move in and out of the battle zone by air--three days time to return wounded soldiers to US with a 95% survival rate. Isolated Army, Marine, and SOF units are resupplied with food, water, fuel, building materials, and humanitarian aid by precision airdrop from altitudes in excess of 15,000 feet which land inside a 100 foot circle with 95% precision. Air power is the glue that holds together the war effort.

- Afghanistan and Iraq are an immensely costly war running in excess of \$377 million a day in FY10 Constant dollars. (WWII was \$622 million per day.). US Defense outlays for 2009 are \$657 billion (or 4.6% of GDP...the highest since 1992.) In FY 2009 the war in Afghanistan cost \$55.9 billion in regular appropriations with an additional supplemental of \$80.73 billion. Clearly Afghanistan will run with a burn rate in excess of \$9 billion per month by the summer of 2010.
- American military values which were put at such risk during the Rumsfeld leadership era of Abu Gharib have now been restored by our senior military and civilian leadership. My visit to the new Bagram Detention Facility was enormously moving. 500+ detainees. Most are released after 24 months. They gain 46 lbs in confinement. They learn to read in their native tongue at the 4th grade level. They are given the option of also learning English and almost all do. They receive vocational training and have access to a distinguished Afghan Islamic scholar. The US prison commander is a Texas National Guard female Lt Colonel who is a lawyer, an MP, a mother and a grandmother. She meets unguarded each day with the senior detainees, sitting cross-legged in a circle (Shura) to hear their views. The 18th Airborne Corps Military Police Brigade Commander who has oversight command of the facility talks to each detainee as they are released. He is a hard nosed combat soldier. Invariably he tells me--the detainees thank him and hug him goodbye.
- All three of our superb senior US-NATO dual-hatted combat leaders---General Stan McChrystal, LTG Dave Rodriguez, and LTG Bill Caldwell have called upon the best and the brightest of the military services and the inter-agency operators (FBI, DEA, AID, Border Patrol, etc.) to rally to this Afghanistan campaign. We now have the absolute best leaders in uniform, the CIA, law enforcement, and State/US AID headed into Afghanistan to run this operation.

6. THE PROBLEMS FACING 40,000 AFGHAN VILLAGES:

- Afghanistan is still in the 14th Century. It is the fifth poorest nation on the face of the earth. Basic services are rudimentary or non-existent. The Afghans lack infrastructure, justice, resources and the most basic forms of local and national governance. Only 12 % of the land is arable and they face grossly inadequate potable water, soil degradation, massive deforestation, and severe overgrazing.
- Afghanistan is the second most corrupt nation in the world after Somalia. Their adherence to tribal and Islamic values has been shattered by endless civil war and foreign oppression. There is almost no civil or criminal justice. Court trials last only minutes in many cases and lack juries. Human rights violations are endemic: extrajudicial killings, official impunity, restrictions on freedom of the press and religion, and severe and widespread child abuse. The nation's 34 provincial prisons and 203 detention centers are appalling. Prisoners are consistently subject to torture and police frequently rape female and male detainees.
- Five million children live in desperate poverty. 70% of the country is illiterate. Unemployment is widespread. 40% of the country literally does not know where their next meal will come from. People starve or freeze to death in the winter.
- The lot of women is dismal...87% complain of violence... half of it sexual...60% of marriages are forced. The education level is at four years. From a Western perspective ---in the conservative rural areas (80% of the nation) --- women are in many cases merely abused property with less opportunity than a donkey.
- General life expectancy is under 45 years. Tuberculosis and drug addiction are widespread. The country is infested with 5-7 million land mines which have disabled more than 200,000 Afghans.

- Terrorism and lack of basic physical security is widespread. The Taliban enforce a parallel system of justice involving hangings, torture, beheadings and beatings. Criminality and extortion on the nation's road network is omnipresent. Decades of warfare have left property issues in great disorder.
- The land is mired in endless bloody civil war among the Pashtun (42%), the Tajiks (27%), the Uzbeks (9%), the Hazaras (9%), and the many others who speak Dari, Pashto, and a polyglot of disparate languages. The frontiers with Afghanistan's six neighbor states are uncertain and divide intensely felt tribal and ethnic affiliations.

7. AFGHANISTAN NOW HAS HOPE:

- The Afghan nation has an elected President --Hamid Karzai --who is: brilliant, well educated, non-violent, a politically astute deal maker in a nation where murder not compromise is the normal political tool; a man who deeply cares for his people; and who is a personally courageous Afghan patriot who is constantly at risk of assassination (several near successful attempts...probably from the Gulbuddin Hekmatyar insurgents in the FATA region of Pakistan.). His popularity with his own people has fallen dramatically as the Taliban have surged to greater power in part because of the ineffectiveness of his government.
- Karzai is also a national leader in a deeply divided nation who has the legitimacy that comes from being part of the dominant ethnic group (42% of the nation is probably Pashtun) and the most prestigious tribe. President Karzai is also committed to earning his place in history as a transformer of his nation to a peaceful place in the civilized world. He is under enormous personally destructive and contradictory pressure from his Allies, the Afghan people, and US representatives. (Underweight, sick, nervous facial tic.) He is clearly imperfect. However, there is no evidence I have seen that he is personally corrupt in any way. Like President Grant following the US Civil War, he has a collection of ruffians in his inner circle. Some of the Provincial Governors are murderous felons. We in the international community have handled him very stupidly and arrogantly at times.
- Hamid Karzai is trying to govern the transition of Afghanistan with a leadership cadre which is a mixture of world class expatriates (to include the current MOD and MOI and several other cabinet level officials), many political and bureaucratic and military leaders who are courageous and devout but illiterate; and a collection of warlords, thugs, and rascals ---which include some of his own family (brother Ahmed Wali Karzai is reputed to be the straw boss of Kandahar and a de facto drug king pin.) ---and also a smattering of dishonest international contractors.
- The overwhelming percentage of 124,000+ US and Allied NGO's and contractors in Afghanistan (to include DynCorp whose Board of Directors I am proud to be with) are men and women of integrity, energy, and talent who are there at great personal sacrifice and peril. They care deeply about Afghanistan, they want an adventure, and they need a paycheck. Without them the entire war effort ---and most economic and political development would grind to an immediate and total collapse.
- The recent Afghan Presidential election in this fragile, violent nation (with no history of democracy or the rule of law) was deeply flawed. The 30,000+ Taliban are mostly Pashtun. They terrorized the Pashtun plurality into not voting. Karzai's dishonest campaign electoral machine then manufactured three million ballots to make up for the missing voters. However, given the realities of this troubled nation no one else could possibly have won. The US and the UN proposed a runoff Presidential election with the number two runner-up Mr. Abdullah (seen as the Tajik candidate). This course-of-action would have produced another delayed, murderous, freezing, expensive, and equally unconvincing political charade.
- We (the US, UN, and EU) forced on this primitive country a constitution that has some form of national election EVERY YEAR EXCEPT THREE until the year 2023. Could Florida handle this surfeit of democracy? We do not find many examples of operative democracy within 5000 miles of Kabul.
- Afghanistan has an elected bi-cameral legislature, a constitution, a growing road network (90% of the Ring Road is complete), and the rudiments of a disciplined and courageous Army. (90,000 troops.) When we entered Afghanistan on a punitive military expedition following the murder of nearly 3000 Americans on "911" --the Afghan nation was in a shattered condition. People were living in caves in the rubble of Kabul. There were

nearly no institutions left standing except the Taliban. Five million refugees have now returned since 2002 demonstrating with their presence hope for the future...

- The Taliban are politically rejected by nearly the entire non-Pashtun population. Even among the Pashtun they command polling support of less than 6%. The Taliban were the spiritually pure, they held the moral high ground, they dispensed immediate dispute resolution, they normally were disciplined and anti-crime. They were also a malignant virus in this sick society. They were the uneducated, murderous, rural hicks who destroyed the culture and invented a cruel form of Islam not normal to this devout but tolerant society. They were anti-history. They turned Afghanistan into a nightmare for women, for other ethnic minorities, and for the Shia Hazaras. They were senselessly cruel and destructive. Only the Soviets were worse.
- The Afghan's are generally extremely grateful for US and international presence. US/NATO forces have a 60%+ favorability rating in the polls. (US poll numbers are lower in the UK, South Korea, Germany and Japan.) All four recent Afghan Presidential candidates publicly endorsed and supported the US presence. However, the Afghans are extremely apprehensive that we will leave again...sinking them back to the chaos of endless civil war.
- Social indicators have dramatically increased for the better since the end of the Taliban's cruel era. Access to basic health care has rocketed from 8% in 2001 to 79%. 83% of the children are immunized. Child mortality has been reduced by 25%. TB deaths are down by 50%. Seven million children are in school to include three million girls -- up from one million students and zero girls during the Taliban rule.
- The repression of human communication and thought during the Taliban has been reduced dramatically. Eight million people have phones. There are 650 active print publications reflecting differing political views. There are 15 television networks and 55 private radio stations. There are also 150+ private printing houses and 145 media and film production companies. People and commerce now move constantly day and night (albeit at frequent risk of criminal or Taliban attack) across the Afghan frontiers with their six neighbor states.
- The economy is climbing from zero to rudimentary. The legal economy is growing at 10% per year. The Afghans have rapidly created effective businesses that do: light manufacturing, crafts, construction, trucking, and road building. The agricultural system is painfully trying to repair the damage of 30 years of war and the competition of opium planting for scarce arable land. The Afghan goal is to feed the population and again become a breadbasket for SW Asia. Educational institutions to include universities and vocational training programs are appearing across the country. Large deposits of iron, copper, gold, gas, and gemstones are in the initial stages of exploration and exploitation. Hydroelectric electrical power is coming on line.
- Violence against the people has been dramatically reduced as the Taliban learned both in Afghanistan and the Pakistani tribal areas that they will have a fatal kinetic encounter with ISAF ground combat units if they mass in sizable numbers in daylight or dark---OR if discovered by US airpower to include Predator/Reaper armed UAV's. The death rate among Afghan civilians is way down since the new ISAF Commander General McChrystal instituted extremely sound restrictive ROE on the employment of firepower in populated areas. Fareed Zakaria notes that the Afghan death rate is less than a tenth that of Iraqis during the terrible civil war violence of 2006.

8. THE DRUG ISSUE---OPIUM:

- The \$3.4 billion opium crop of 7,700 metric tons (2008) produces weapons and supplies for the Taliban and al Qaeda, corrupts the police and civil authorities, diverts land from food (two million drug workers) and has addicted a significant percentage of the population. Left unaddressed -- the heroin menace will defeat our strategic goals in this campaign.
- Afghanistan is now the most damaged narco-state on the face of the earth. There are at least 920,000 drug users causing abject misery among widows, orphans, the unemployed, the poor. A new UN study will soon suggest there may be as many as two million drug users.

- Afghanistan is the world's largest grower of opium which is banned under the 1988 UN Drug Convention to which it is a signatory. Drug money is a fifth of the national GNP. Afghanistan produces 93% of the global supply of heroin. This criminal trade funnels \$200-400 million into the Taliban and the warlords. Increasingly the Afghan criminal enterprises process a larger and larger percentage of the opium into exportable morphine or heroin. Production has overwhelmed global demand. As much ten thousand tons of stable opium have been stockpiled---enough to provide two years of the global demand for heroin. (900,000+ US addicts).
- Afghan heroin primarily is consumed in neighboring SW Asia nations, Russia, and Western Europe. It causes enormous suffering and bloodshed. Afghan heroin is estimated to kill more than 10,000 people a year in NATO countries...more than five times the NATO troop losses from combat.
- Only in the last 18 months have we begun to seriously address the problem. Secretary Rumsfeld spoke of the issue as one pertaining only to the Europeans. The current notion that we can ignore the growers as simple farmers trying to survive -- and focus our counter-drug strategy only on law enforcement against the cartels -- is painfully naïve. These huge criminal Afghan heroin operations if not defeated will corrupt legal governance, addict the population, distort the economy, and funnel immense resources to the Taliban and terrorist groups.
- The solution is three pronged. First, work on alternative livelihood agricultural crops. Second, have the Afghan political leadership confront the opium issue as un-Islamic and one that destroys their culture. Third, destroy the crops. Without the last -- nothing will work. Other nations have successfully addressed the drug issue: Thailand, Pakistan, Bolivia (until Morales), Peru, and to some extent Colombia (the traffic moved south to non-government controlled areas.).

9. SUMMARY:

- The time for rhetoric and analysis is done. This operation is now in the hands of the ISAF battalions and SOF elements on the ground. The American people will judge this on outcomes ---not political spin.
- There is no inevitability to history. We are neither the Brit's nor the Soviets. This is an effort to secure our own national safety and build a stable Afghan state. We can achieve our strategic purpose with determined leadership and American treasure and blood.
- The international civilian agency surge will essentially not happen ---although State Department officers, US AID, CIA, DEA, and the FBI will make vital contributions. Afghanistan over the next 2-3 years will be simply too dangerous for most civil agencies.
- NATO forces are central to our success. They bring resources, political legitimacy, and brainpower. With few exceptions, however, they will not conduct aggressive counter-insurgency operations. They will be a huge help with training and monitoring the growth and mentoring of the ANA and ANP.
- My judgment is that we can achieve our objectives in the coming five years:
 - 1ST: Create an Afghan security force that will operate in defense of their people and reduce our own active combat role.
 - 2ND: Create governance from the bottom up at District and Province level that makes the lot of the Afghan people better (and worth supporting the government against the Taliban).
 - 3RD: Mitigate the corruption of the Afghan transition by having a parallel chain of financial custody and approval of resources -- until the Afghan government is operating unlike an active criminal enterprise.
- We now have the most effective and courageous military forces in our nation's history committed to this campaign.

- The superb leadership from Secretary Gates, Admiral Mike Mullen, General Dave Petraeus, and General Stan McChrystal is objective, experienced, non-political, and determined.
- Our focus must now not be on an exit strategy -- but effective execution of the political, economic, and military measures required to achieve our purpose.

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