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 FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2907  
 INFO AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
 AMEMBASSY ALMATY  
 AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE  
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 05 ISLAMABAD 011233

DEPT FOR SA/PAB, INR, EUR/CACEN, AND NEA/NGA; PARIS FOR  
POL/RAVELING; LONDON FOR POL/TUELLER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/29/07

TAGS: PGOV, KISL, PINR, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: TALIBAN DECISION-MAKING AND LEADERSHIP  
STRUCTURE

REFS: (A) PESHAWAR 878; (B) ISLAMABAD 2533

(U) CLASSIFIED BY TOM PRICE, POLITICAL COUNSELOR. REASONS: 1.5  
(C) (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: MULLAH OMAR PLAYS THE KEY ROLE IN TALIBAN  
DECISION-MAKING, WHILE HIS ADVISERS -- WAKIL AHMED, MULLAH JALIL,  
AND OTHERS -- ARE BELIEVED TO PLAY KEY ROLES IN POLICY  
IMPLEMENTATION. ALTHOUGH THEY DO NOT SERIOUSLY RIVAL OMAR FOR  
INFLUENCE, SEVERAL TALIBAN LEADERS, INCLUDING TALIBAN DEPUTY LEADER  
MULLAH RABBANI, REPORTEDLY MAINTAIN AN INDEPENDENT POWER BASE.  
BECAUSE OF OMAR'S HIGHLY-PERSONALIZED LEADERSHIP STYLE, TALIBAN  
INSTITUTIONS, SUCH AS THE "INNER" SHURA, HAVE WEAKENED FROM DISUSE,  
ALTHOUGH THE "ULEMA" SHURA IS BELIEVED TO MAINTAIN SOME AUTHORITY.  
WHILE THE MOVEMENT IS UNDER THE SWAY OF OMAR, IT DOES NOT APPEAR

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RELIANT ON HIS SURVIVAL -- AFGHANISTAN'S MULLAHS ARE MOBILIZED AND  
THE TALIBAN WILL PROBABLY REMAIN THE LEADING FORCE IN THE PASHTUN  
COMMUNITY INTO THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

=====  
MULLAH OMAR: LEADERSHIP FROM THE TOP  
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2. (C) MULLAH MOHAMMAD OMAR PLAYS THE KEY ROLE IN TALIBAN  
DECISION-MAKING. THE TALIBAN'S TWIN POLICIES OF CONTINUING THE WAR

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UNTIL VICTORY AND IMPOSING "SHARIA'H LAW" ON AFGHANISTAN BEAR HIS IMPRINT. WITHIN THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT, MULLAH OMAR'S LEGITIMACY SPRINGS FROM HIS REPUTATION AS A PIOUS MUSLIM WITH A VISION OF AN "ISLAMIC" GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN, AND AS AN EFFECTIVE (IF RELATIVELY UNKNOWN) COMMANDER DURING THE AFGHAN-SOVIET WAR, AND FROM HIS ROLE IN OPPOSING "CORRUPT MUJAHIDEEN" COMMANDERS IN THE KANDAHAR AREA. OMAR'S PREEMINENT ROLE IN THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT WAS RECOGNIZED IN APRIL 1996 WHEN HE WAS NAMED "AMIR AL-MU-MININ" (COMMANDER OF THE FAITHFUL) BY A GROUP OF (TALIBAN-PICKED) RELIGIOUS SCHOLARS IN KANDAHAR. IN SEPTEMBER 1996, AFTER THE TALIBAN CAPTURED KABUL, THE TALIBAN ANNOUNCED THAT OMAR WOULD SERVE AS THE LEADER OF "THE ISLAMIC STATE OF AFGHANISTAN," WHICH WAS RECENTLY RENAMED "THE ISLAMIC EMIRATE OF AFGHANISTAN" IN HIS HONOR. (NOTE: FOR BIO-DATA ON OMAR AND OTHER TALIBAN LEADERS, SEE REFS A AND B.)

3. (C) OBSERVERS AGREE THAT MULLAH OMAR MAINTAINS AN IDIOSYNCRATIC, ALMOST OBSCURANTIST, STYLE OF LEADERSHIP. A MAN OF FEW WORDS, OMAR IS SAID TO LISTEN TO VISITORS CAREFULLY AND THEN SAY A FEW POLITE WORDS. AT THIS POINT IN THE MEETING, IF THE ISSUE CAN BE DEALT WITH IMMEDIATELY, OMAR MAY ISSUE AN ORDER FOR THE

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VISITOR TO BE ISSUED MONEY OR WEAPONS BY INITIALLING A PIECE OF PAPER. OTHERWISE, OMAR RETIRES TO HIS SPARTAN OFFICES NEAR THE KANDAHAR GOVERNOR'S GUESTHOUSE TO MAKE DECISIONS. SINCE THE TALIBAN CAPTURE OF KABUL, MULLAH OMAR IS SAID TO HAVE DEVOLVED MANY DECISIONS CONCERNING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TO HIS ADVISORS OR TO THE "CARETAKER COUNCIL" IN KABUL. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] A FORMER RESISTANCE COMMANDER WITH LINKS TO THE TALIBAN, MULLAH OMAR NOW FOCUSSES MORE ON THE BIG PICTURE -- "OMAR SEES HIMSELF AS A RELIGIOUS FIGURE OF HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE AND HE PREFERENCES TO PRONOUNCE ONLY ON WHAT HE CONSIDERS THE IMPORTANT ISSUES."

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4. (C) OMAR REPORTEDLY MAINTAINS TIGHT REINS OVER THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT AND THE POPULATION IN TALIBAN-CONTROLLED AREAS THROUGH THE ACTIVITIES OF THE RELIGIOUS POLICE, A.K.A. "THE DEPARTMENT TO PROPAGATE VIRTUE AND PREVENT VICE." (NOTE: AMONG OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES, THE RELIGIOUS POLICE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THAT AFGHANS IN TALIBAN-CONTROLLED AREAS MAINTAIN PROPER BEARD-LENGTH AND THAT WOMEN ARE CLOTHED ACCORDING TO ISLAMIC LAW.) [REDACTED] [REDACTED] AT THE TALIBAN-CONTROLLED AFGHAN EMBASSY

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IN ISLAMABAD, TOLD POLOFF THAT MULLAH QALAMUDDIN, THE HEAD OF THE RELIGIOUS POLICE, REPORTS TO MULLAH TURABI, THE TALIBAN "ACTING MINISTER OF JUSTICE," WHO, IN TURN, REPORTS DIRECTLY TO MULLAH OMAR. SOME SOURCES HAVE TOLD POLOFF THAT MAULAWI KHAIRULLAH

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STRUCTURE

KHAIRKHWAH, THE "ACTING MINISTER OF INTERIOR" WHO MAINTAINS  
RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE TALIBAN'S CIVILIAN INTELLIGENCE  
ORGANIZATION, ALSO REPORTS DIRECTLY TO OMAR.

=====  
OMAR'S ADVISERS  
=====

5. (C) ARRAYED AROUND OMAR ARE SEVERAL KEY ADVISERS WITH CROSS-  
CUTTING RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT, INCLUDING:

-- MAULAWI WAKIL AHMED: WAKIL AHMED, WHO ALSO SERVES AS OFFICIAL  
"TALIBAN SPOKESMAN," IS CONSIDERED OMAR'S CLOSEST ADVISER. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] WHO

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SERVED IN KANDAHAR UNTIL RECENTLY, TOLD POLOFF THAT WAKIL AHMED  
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SERVES ALMOST AS OMAR'S "STAFF AND PERSONAL ASSISTANT." IN  
ADDITION, WAKIL AHMED HAS PERIODICALLY BEEN CHOSEN TO LEAD  
DELEGATIONS TO OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING ONE TO THE U.S. IN EARLY  
1997.

-- MULLAH ABDUL JALIL: JALIL, WHO SERVES AS A "DEPUTY FOREIGN  
MINISTER," IS ALSO KNOWN TO BE CLOSE TO OMAR. JALIL'S LINKS WITH  
OMAR ARE SAID TO DATE BACK TO THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE WHEN THE TWO  
PARTICIPATED IN SOME OPERATIONS AGAINST SOVIET AND AFGHAN COMMUNIST  
FORCES NEAR KANDAHAR CITY. LIKE WAKIL AHMED, JALIL REPORTEDLY HAS  
RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE PERSONNEL AREA.

[REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF THAT HE  
HAS BEEN IN JALIL'S OFFICE WHILE JALIL DRAWS UP LISTS FOR OMAR'S  
REVIEW OF POSSIBLE CHOICES FOR OFFICIAL POSITIONS.

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-- HAJI BASHIR: BASHIR COMES FROM A WELL-KNOWN FAMILY IN THE  
KANDAHAR AREA. WHILE A MEMBER OF THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT, HE IS NOT  
KNOWN TO HOLD ANY OFFICIAL POSITION IN THE ORGANIZATION. CLOSE TO  
OMAR, BASHIR IS SAID TO BE A SOURCE OF MONEY FOR THE TALIBAN.  
THERE ARE NUMEROUS REPORTS THAT BASHIR'S MONEY COMES FROM OPIUM  
POPPY PRODUCTION.

-- MULLAH MUTTAQI: POLOFF HAS BEEN TOLD THAT ANOTHER IMPORTANT  
ADVISER TO OMAR IS MULLAH MUTTAQI, THE TALIBAN "ACTING MINISTER FOR  
INFORMATION AND CULTURE." MUTTAQI, WHO RECENTLY LED A DELEGATION  
TO THE U.S. AT THE INVITATION OF UNOCAL, IS SAID TO BE EVEN MORE  
EXTREME ON SOCIAL ISSUES THAN MOST TALIBAN. IN ADDITION, HIS  
BITING COMMENTS ON THE "VOICE OF THE SHARIA'H" (THE TALIBAN RADIO  
STATION), BBC AND VOA ATTACKING THE "CORRUPT NORTHERN LEADERS" HAVE  
SERVED TO FURTHER INFLAME RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TALIBAN AND THEIR  
OPPONENTS.

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## TALIBAN LEADERS WITH INDEPENDENT POWER BASES

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6. (C) ALTHOUGH NONE OF THEM COULD BE CONSIDERED A SERIOUS RIVAL TO OMAR WITHIN THE TALIBAN FOR LEADERSHIP AT THIS TIME, THERE ARE SEVERAL TALIBAN LEADERS WHO MAINTAIN INDEPENDENT POWER BASES DISTINCT FROM OMAR'S. THESE INCLUDE:

-- MULLAH MOHAMMAD RABBANI: RABBANI IS THE DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT. HE ALSO SERVES AS THE "CHAIRMAN OF THE CARETAKER COUNCIL" IN KABUL. SOMETIMES HE IS ALSO REFERRED TO AS "PRESIDENT" OF THE TALIBAN "GOVERNMENT." A TALL, RUGGED MAN, RABBANI SERVED AS A COMMANDER IN THE RESISTANCE BEFORE JOINING OMAR IN 1994 IN FORMING THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT. SOME OBSERVERS HAVE ASSERTED THAT RABBANI IS A RIVAL TO OMAR FOR LEADERSHIP OF THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT AND THAT MEMBERS OF THE MOVEMENT COULD BE DEFINED AS "PRO-OMAR" OR "PRO-RABBANI." HOWEVER, AT THIS TIME, THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT RABBANI MAINTAINS SERIOUS DISAGREEMENT WITH ANY OF OMAR'S POLICIES OR THAT HE IS IN A POSITION TO LAUNCH A LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE, EVEN IF HE WANTED TO.

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TAGS: PGOV, KISL, PINR, AF

SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: TALIBAN DECISION-MAKING AND LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

-- MULLAH HASSAN RAHMANI: HASSAN, THE REGIONAL GOVERNOR OF SOUTHWESTERN AFGHANISTAN (FIVE PROVINCES, INCLUDING KANDAHAR), IS A CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF MULLAH OMAR. HE FOUGHT IN THE AFGHAN RESISTANCE AND HELPED FOUND THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF THAT HASSAN MAINTAINS CLOSE LINKS TO TRIBAL GROUPS IN THE KANDAHAR AND HELMAND AREAS. AS REGIONAL GOVERNOR, HASSAN MAINTAINS CONTROL OF TALIBAN SOLDIERS IN HIS AREA.

-- MULLAH HASSAN AKHUND: HASSAN FORMERLY SERVED AS THE "DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF THE CARETAKER COUNCIL." CURRENTLY, HE SERVES AS THE TALIBAN'S "ACTING MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS." HE IS NOT KNOWN TO BE ESPECIALLY CLOSE TO MULLAH OMAR. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF THAT, BASED ON HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH TALIBAN OFFICIALS, HASSAN IS A "HARD-LINER" -- "HASSAN IS CONFIDENTIAL

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SETTING HIMSELF UP TO BE THE CHAMPION OF THOSE WHO WANT A MILITARY VICTORY AT ALL COSTS."

=====  
THE COMMANDERS  
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7. (C) WHILE OBSERVERS CLAIM THAT THAT THE TALIBAN'S CHIEF MILITARY STRATEGIST IS MULLAH OMAR HIMSELF, THEY MENTION A NUMBER OF COMMANDERS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HOLD KEY POSITIONS IN THE TALIBAN MILITARY STRUCTURE, INCLUDING:

-- MULLAH ABDUL KHALIQ: KHALIQ REPORTEDLY HEADS THE TALIBAN'S MILITARY BASE IN KANDAHAR. ACCORDING TO [REDACTED] HE ALSO HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOGISTICS FOR TALIBAN MILITARY OPERATIONS AND IS OMAR'S CHIEF BRIEFER ON THE MILITARY SITUATION. IN HIS LOGISTICS ROLE, [REDACTED]

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-- MAULAWI JALALUDDIN HAQQANI: FORMERLY A KEY COMMANDER IN THE RESISTANCE, HAQQANI IS THE TALIBAN'S LEAD COMMANDER ON THE FRONT-LINE NORTH OF KABUL. WHILE ADMITTING THAT HAQQANI HAS HAD HIS DIFFERENCES WITH THE TALIBAN ON MILITARY STRATEGY, [REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF THAT HAQQANI'S ABILITIES ARE GREATLY RESPECTED BY OMAR. HAQQANI REPORTEDLY MAINTAINS CLOSE LINKS TO ARAB AND KASHMIRI MILITANTS BASED IN KHOST PROVINCE.

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-- MULLAH YAR MOHAMMAD: THE TALIBAN GOVERNOR OF GHAZNI. FORMER GOVERNOR OF HERAT AND A FORMER RESISTANCE COMMANDER. YAR MOHAMMAD COMMANDS A LARGE NUMBER OF SOLDIERS FROM HIS POPALZAI SUB-TRIBE.

[REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF THAT YAR MOHAMMAD HAS IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES IN CONTAINING THE HAZARA SHI'A HEZB-

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I-WAHDAT IN THE HAZARAJAT BORDERLANDS OF WARDAK, GHAZNI, URUZGAN, AND GHOR PROVINCES, AND MAINTAINING CONTROL OF THE KANDAHAR-KABUL HIGHWAY.

-- MULLAH DADULLAH: DADULLAH IS A KEY TALIBAN COMMANDER IN KUNDUZ PROVINCE AND PLAYED A KEY COMMAND ROLE IN THE TALIBAN'S ADVANCE ON MAZAR-I-SHARIF IN SEPTEMBER. (NOTE: TALIBAN FORCES WERE PUSHED BACK TO KUNDUZ IN EARLY OCTOBER.)

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THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK  
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8. (C) THE TALIBAN HAVE CREATED FOUR MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES THAT TECHNICALLY MAINTAIN THE ABILITY TO WEIGH IN ON POLICY ISSUES AND POLICY IMPLEMENTATION. THEY ARE:

-- THE "INNER" SHURA: THE INNER SHURA USED TO BE CONSIDERED THE TALIBAN'S COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, SINCE MULLAH OMAR ASSUMED THE TITLE OF AMIR AND DEVELOPED HIS HIGHLY-PERSONALIZED LEADERSHIP STYLE, THE INNER SHURA HAS LOST MUCH OF ITS IMPORTANCE. THE INNER SHURA REPORTEDLY HAS 23-MEMBERS, INCLUDING MOST OF THE TALIBAN LEADERS MENTIONED ABOVE. OTHER WELL-KNOWN TALIBAN,

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INCLUDING FORMER "ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER" GHAUS, ARE ALSO MEMBERS.  
[REDACTED] A MEMBER, TOLD POLOFF THAT THE INNER SHURA MEETS  
"OCCASIONALLY AND DURING CRISES."

-- THE "OUTER" SHURA: THIS SHURA IS BELIEVED TO HAVE OVER 100-  
MEMBERS, INCLUDING MANY RELIGIOUS FIGURES AND PROVINCIAL NOTABLES.  
IT IS CONSIDERED RELATIVELY UNIMPORTANT AND WE NOT KNOW WHEN IT  
MEETS. [REDACTED] ASSERTED THAT THE OUTER SHURA IS MEANT TO ADVISE THE  
INNER SHURA.

-- "THE CARETAKER COUNCIL": THE CARETAKER COUNCIL IS HEADED BY  
MULLAH RABBANI, ALTHOUGH ABDUL KABIR, THE DEPUTY HEAD, HAS CHAIRED  
MOST OF ITS MEETINGS OF LATE. THE COUNCIL, WHICH WAS FORMED AFTER  
THE TALIBAN CAPTURE OF KABUL, DOES NOT HAVE ANY POLICY-MAKING ROLE.  
ITS ROLE IS PRIMARILY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: IT HAS RESPONSIBILITY

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FOR ISSUING DIRECTIVES TO TALIBAN "GOVERNMENT" MINISTRIES BASED IN  
KABUL.

-- THE "ULEMA" SHURA: NOT MUCH IS KNOWN ABOUT THIS SHURA, WHICH  
MEETS IN KANDAHAR. IT IS BELIEVED TO HAVE SOME INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL  
POLICIES AND TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN ADVISING MULLAH OMAR ON ISLAMIC  
LAW. [REDACTED] TOLD  
POLOFF IN A BRIEF MEETING IN KANDAHAR IN MAY THAT IT HAS 24-MEMBERS  
AND ITS PURPOSE IS TO "IMPLEMENT SHARIA'H (LAW) IN AFGHANISTAN."

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WHAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO OMAR?  
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9. (C) ALTHOUGH MULLAH OMAR IS FIRMLY IN CHARGE OF THE TALIBAN AT  
THIS TIME, GIVEN THE VOLATILE POLITICAL/MILITARY SITUATION IN  
AFGHANISTAN IT IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE THAT SOME UNEXPECTED EVENT OR  
CHAIN OF EVENTS COULD REMOVE MULLAH OMAR FROM THE SCENE. FOR  
EXAMPLE, IF MULLAH OMAR WAS KILLED IN AN INTERNAL COUP, WHICH NO  
ONE SEES AS LIKELY AT THIS TIME, LEADERSHIP OF THE TALIBAN -- IF IT  
DOESN'T SPLINTER -- WOULD PROBABLY BE WON ON THE BATTLEFIELD.  
HOWEVER, IF OMAR DIES IN AN ACCIDENT OR IS KILLED BY A LONE GUNMAN  
ACTING WITHOUT POLITICAL SUPPORT, THE TALIBAN COLLECTIVE  
LEADERSHIP, I.E., THE INNER SHURA AND THE ULEMA SHURA, WOULD  
PROBABLY MEET TO CHOOSE A NEW LEADER. (NOTE: IT IS NOT KNOWN  
WHETHER OMAR HAS DESIGNATED A SUCCESSOR OR WHETHER HIS CHOICE WOULD  
BE RESPECTED BY SHURA MEMBERS, IF HE HAS NAMED ONE.) AT THIS TIME,  
MOST OBSERVERS SAY THAT MULLAH RABBANI OR REGIONAL GOVERNOR MULLAH  
HASSAN RAHMANI WOULD PROBABLY BE CHOSEN TO ASSUME LEADERSHIP.  
WHILE HE AGREED THAT RABBANI OR HASSAN ARE THE FAVORITES, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] OBSERVED THAT IT IS POSSIBLE THAT A NUMBER OF DARK HORSE

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CANDIDATES COULD EMERGE IN A LEADERSHIP CONTEST. QUERIED FOR MORE  
INFORMATION ON THIS POINT, [REDACTED] REPLIED THAT OMAR HAS FORCED  
NUMEROUS TALIBAN FROM POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE BECAUSE OF PERSONAL  
DISLIKE OR DISPLEASURE WITH THEIR PERFORMANCE AND IT IS POSSIBLE  
THAT SOME COULD BE REHABILITATED, SUCH AS MULLAH GHAUS, WHO WAS  
BLAMED FOR THE TALIBAN'S DEFEAT IN MAZAR-I-SHARIF IN MAY. [REDACTED]

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ADDED THAT THE ULEMA SHURA IS A "SHADOWY ORGANIZATION" THAT COULD PRODUCE A CANDIDATE FOR LEADERSHIP WHO DOES HAVE WIDE NAME RECOGNITION.

=====  
COMMENT  
=====

10. (C) THE TALIBAN LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE IS OPAQUE -- IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT GOES ON WITHIN THE WALLS IN KANDAHAR OR HOW THE TALIBAN RELATE TO ONE ANOTHER. WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT AS A WHOLE HAS ACCEPTED THE INCREASINGLY PERSONALIZED RULE OF MULLAH OMAR. IN THE PROCESS, OMAR'S ROLE APPEARS TO HAVE PREEMPTED THE GROWTH OF TALIBAN INSTITUTIONS, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF THE ULEMA SHURA, WHICH APPEARS TO MAINTAIN SOME INFLUENCE ON RELIGIOUS ISSUES. ALTHOUGH THE TALIBAN MOVEMENT IS UNDER THE SWAY OF OMAR, IT DOES NOT APPEAR

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ACTION SA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-08	ACDE-00	INLB-01	AID-00	ACQ-01	CIAE-00
	SMEC-00	INL-01	OASY-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00
	EAP-01	EUR-01	FBIE-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	L-01	ADS-00	M-00	NEA-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02
	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	P-00	CIO-00

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SP-00 SSO-00 TRSE-00 T-00 FMP-00 SNIS-00 NISC-00  
PMB-00 DSCC-00 PRME-01 DRL-04 G-00 /026W

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O 301405Z DEC 97  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2911  
INFO AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
AMEMBASSY ALMATY  
AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE  
AMEMBASSY BISHKEK  
AMEMBASSY TASHKENT  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY RIYADH  
AMCONSUL JEDDAH  
AMEMBASSY ANKARA  
DIA WASHINGTON DC  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR  
AMCONSUL KARACHI

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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/CCJ3/CCJ5/POLAD//  
USIA WASHDC 7938  
AMEMBASSY DHAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 05 OF 05 ISLAMABAD 011233

DEPT FOR SA/PAB, INR, EUR/CACEN, AND NEA/NGA; PARIS FOR  
POL/RAVELING; LONDON FOR POL/TUELLER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/29/07  
TAGS: PGOV, KISL, PINR, AF  
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: TALIBAN DECISION-MAKING AND LEADERSHIP  
STRUCTURE

RELIANT ON HIS SURVIVAL, HOWEVER -- AFGHANISTAN'S MULLAHS HAVE BEEN

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MOBILIZED AND UNLESS ANOTHER FORCE CAN DISPLACE THEM, WHICH APPEARS UNLIKELY FOR THE NEAR-TERM, THE TALIBAN AS A MOVEMENT WILL PROBABLY REMAIN THE LEADING FORCE IN THE PASHTUN COMMUNITY INTO THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

SIMONS

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