

THE POLICY SCIENCES CENTER, INC.

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August 21, 2011

Mr. Jake Sullivan - Director, Policy Planning Staff
Hon. Marc Grossman - Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan
U. S. Department of State
2201 C St., NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Director: Sullivan and Ambassador Grossman:

I write, as a political psychologist who thinks about international relations, to suggest that Secretary Clinton frame a settlement offer to the Taliban leadership in a cultural language that is more persuasive to them.

Tell the Taliban leadership: "We have killed Osama bin Laden and we have killed or captured 93 of the top 100 al-Qaeda leaders who were responsible for the 9/11 attack against us." ¹ Now, we are ready to have a future of peace between us." ²

Rory Stewart and Crafting Political Narratives

Framing our motives and timing for a negotiated settlement in the language of satisfied revenge is not, strictly speaking, true. However, I am building upon an idea suggested by Rory Stewart in a recent discussion of his new book Can Intervention Work? - i.e., that there could be a way for the death of Osama bin Laden to be part of a political narrative that allows all parties to settle, if they want to do so.

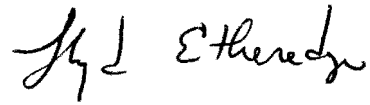
I am extending Stewart's political idea by recognizing that the native Taliban leadership has little direct knowledge of America, our culture of laws, and our logic for making foreign policy. Their nomadic and rural cultures view civilized behavior by a logic of honor/revenge and collective obligations for assured retaliation rather than law. Thus leaders of the Taliban, and others in the Arab world, are more likely to believe us if they see us as acting, in their terms, in a truly civilized and believable manner now that the demands of honor and revenge have been met.³

The Policy Sciences Center Inc. is a public foundation.

The Center was founded in 1948 by Myres S. McDougal, Harold D. Lasswell, and George Dession. It may be contacted c/o Prof. Michael Reisman, Chair, 127 Wall St., Room 322, P. O. Box 208215, New Haven, CT 06520-8215. (203)-432-1993.

URL: <http://www.policyscience.net>

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lloyd S. Etheredge". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lloyd" being more prominent and stylized.

Dr. Lloyd S. Etheredge, Project Director

cc: Harold Koh - Room 6421

1. I do not know the current number, but Woodward's book quotes President Bush as keeping a specific count.
2. The formula also would require elements that already are on the table: E.g., the Taliban must give us enforceable guarantees that they will not attack us or our allies, nor allow attacks to be planned and organized by people inside their country.
3. In the long run, we and our allies also gain power and retain deterrent credibility from a political narrative in which many people in the Arab world understand us to be making peace from strength, and for a principled reason, rather than because American voters have become tired of spending money and because we are stalled on the battlefield.