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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT (Optional)

Talking Points: Options for Attacking the Usama Bin Ladin Problem

FROM

Extension

NO.

DATE

24 November 1998

TO (Officer designation, room, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICIAL'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

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FORM 9-97

610 (EF)

USE PREVIOUS EDITIONS

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: 25-April-2012

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24 November 1998

[redacted] **Options for Attacking the Usama Bin Ladin Problem**

[redacted] Following are the range of options that are available for US policymakers to choose from to address the Usama Bin Ladin problem:

CONTINUE CURRENT PLAN: We are keeping our tribal assets deployed [redacted] wait for an opportunity to ambush and capture him as he moves around [redacted] [redacted] continue to try to bring Bin Ladin to justice.

- **Upside:** Little or no collateral damage to noncombatants [redacted]
- **Downside:** We are in a responding-to-events mode; we cannot take the initiative; limited likelihood of success.

TRIBAL RAID ON ONE RESIDENCE: [redacted]

[redacted] the tribals have completed plans for an armed, nighttime raid of one of the residences [redacted]

- **Upside:** Restores the initiative to us; plays to the paramilitary talents of the tribals; increases chances of success [redacted] the tribals prefer this option to an ambush because they believe it is less dangerous to their forces both during the operation and after. The assets, for example, believe they can better control the operational setting when attacking a single house than when attacking a multi-vehicle convoy. They also believe that a raid has a better chance than an ambush of being executed quietly, thereby decreasing the chance that nearby Taliban security forces will be alerted.
- **Downside:** Increases risk of collateral damage to noncombatants; increases the risk of casualties among our operatives; scenario lends itself to a quick response by Taliban forces [redacted] one-shot deal: if Bin Ladin is in the house he will either captured or killed—if the tribal assets achieve surprise capture is likely; if surprise is not achieved, Bin Ladin and his guards will resist and likely die in the engagement.

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

US MILITARY I: We are providing the military with the locations of the residences Bin Ladin is shuffling among. [Redacted]

[Redacted] A simultaneous cruise missile attack on each would increase the likelihood of catching Bin Ladin at one of them.

- **Upside:** Restores the initiative to us; no risk of US casualties; high chance of success if Bin Ladin is in one of the residences; little risk of casualties to our assets; clear signal of U.S. resolve.
- **Downside:** High risk to noncombatants; clear exposure of the US hand [Redacted] [Redacted] might miss some/all of the targets. Acute embarrassment if information inaccurate.

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

[Large redacted area]

[Redacted] Masood is an outstanding guerrilla commander whose northern Afghanistan-base has an agent network to kill Bin Ladin [Redacted] Masood agents/operatives might be able to kill Bin Ladin [Redacted] but would have a more difficult time capturing and then exfiltrating Bin Ladin [Redacted]

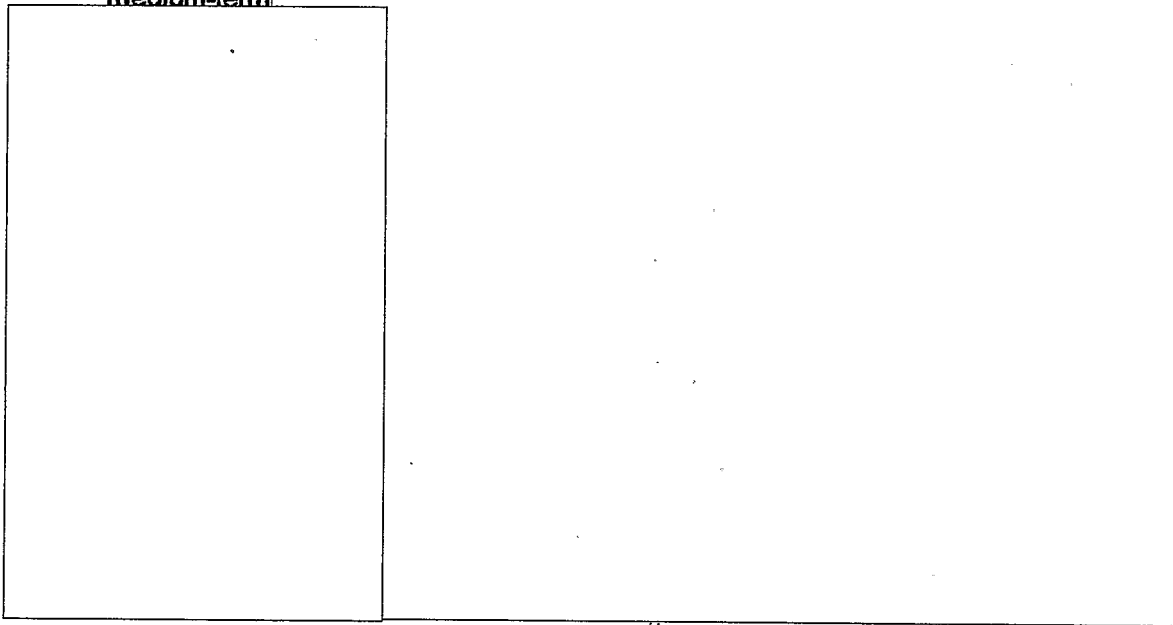
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- **Upside:** Gives us new Agency-run options; likely increase in FI on Bin Ladin; no risk to US lives.
- **Downside:** Low chance of success in capturing (as opposed to killing) UBL; reduced US ability to control asset actions; unlikely to produce results in near- or medium-term



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