

Farewell Ceremony for Douglas Feith,
Undersecretary of Defense for Policy

Remarks by Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Gen. Peter Pace,

Pentagon Auditorium, Washington, DC,
Monday, August 8, 2005.

Mr. Secretary, Mr. Feith, Deputy Secretary England, to my fellow chiefs, and to all of you here in the room, it is my great honor on behalf of Gen. Myers, and myself, and all of us in uniform to take just a minute to say a few words about our good friend, Doug Feith.

This is one of those moments in life where you really want to get it right -- or I know I want to get it right. Here's a man who for more than four years has poured his heart out into his job in support of his country, and those of us in uniform have -- we've benefited in a way that I don't think we can ever really let the American people know about Doug and his family.

But when I first got here in fall 2001, Doug had just begun something called the Campaign Committee, which we called in short Cap Com, and his intent was to ensure that everything that happened between the Secretary of Defense's staff and the Chairman's staff was coordinated before it got to the Secretary.

And that may sound like a very obvious thing to do. But I can guarantee you it has not always been that way.

And Doug's efforts to make that campaign committee come true, come to life, is one of his great legacies. For hours every day, as we worked up to Afghanistan, and then as we worked up to Iraq, and as we worked all the details ever since, Doug's leadership in that committee has ensured that we have been able to work very harmoniously between the Joint Staff and the OSD Staff in preparing policy recommendations for the Chairman and for the Secretary. That does not mean that we were always in great harmony walking into the room.

Doug Feith is a brilliant, brilliant man. And he believes in what he believes with his whole heart. And he speaks persuasively and with great conviction.

And sometimes folks who don't know Doug take that as a sign that he is not willing to listen. But the beauty of Doug Feith is that he listens as hard, or even harder, than he thinks and talks. He's willing to be persuaded. He's willing to have his views changed – not easily – but with persuasion. And that has been his great, great strength.

He has a work ethic that I dare say very few others in this government can hold a candle to. He's up at about 4 a.m. I think. He works at home for a couple hours before he comes to work. He spends a full day at work, leaving around 18(00), 1900, gets home to his family, and then works again at night.

Doug Feith gets more done between 04(00) and 06(00) than most folks get done during a whole day.

Not only does he bring that work ethic to the things for which he is personally responsible, but he also does that for anybody who needs or asks for his help. Combatant commanders have come to him and shown him things and he has very generously taken hours of his time to help them craft properly what it was they were about to go tell the Secretary.

No matter who you are in this building, if you ask Doug Feith for help, no matter how busy he is, he will stop and take time to give it to you.

He's a family man. ... If you have never met one of the Feith kids, I recommend that you do so before you leave this room today. They are incredible young Americans. They reflect the love of their mom and dad and the attention they have received from their mom and dad.

My wife Lynne and I had the great pleasure of going to dinner at their house one Friday night, something not to be taken lightly in a Jewish family. I left that night so impressed with what I saw around the Feith dinner table. A mom and a dad who loved their kids, shared their religion openly and honestly and forthrightly, not only among themselves but with friends, and who clearly, clearly had all the time in the world to ensure that their children knew that they were loved and supported. And to do that on top of a grinding schedule that Doug pursues truly is an amazing accomplishment.

Lastly, Doug Feith is a patriot. It irritates me, not that anyone would question his thoughts or his policies -- that is absolutely fair game -- but that

anyone would question his loyalty or his motives. I have watched this man for four years. He cares only about what is best for the United States.

He works hard to understand as much as he can about the policy arena, and he works hard to articulate what he believes to be true. But as I said, he can be persuaded of different ways to see things. But most of all, at the end of the day, when Doug Feith brought forth a policy recommendation, in his heart of hearts, Doug Feith believed that that was the correct course for this nation. We can ask no more of our leaders.

So Doug, to you my friend, from all of us in this room, thank you for being who you are, for sticking to your guns the way you stuck to your guns, for working as hard as you did. You have made a difference for all of the Armed Forces. And we thank you so much.