

Farewell Ceremony for Douglas Feith,  
Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

**Remarks by Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld**  
Pentagon Auditorium, Washington, DC, Monday, August 8, 2005.

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It is quite a gathering. We have the Vice Chairman and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the in-coming Vice Chairman, Combatant Commander Doug Brown and so many Undersecretaries and Assistant Secretaries. Doug's successor -- sitting down here on the second row.

I just heard Doug thought he was over as of this event. I just heard that the White House is not going to announce Eric Edelman's acting status until tomorrow. So Doug we'll all be calling you this evening.

But this gathering does say a great deal about our friend Doug Feith. About the lives he's touched over so many years as a lawyer, a scholar, a public servant.

I hate to say it, hate to admit it, but I have benefited greatly from my association with Doug.

It's hard to say that. [laughter]

I've learned from him and I caution anyone from challenging Doug with respect to a word or a quotation. Do not do it.

He is, as Pete said, certainly, one of the brightest, and quickest individuals I have ever been associated with. He's got immense knowledge, and intellectual rigor, drive, creativity, and importantly, he has good humor.

And when you work the kind of hours Doug and the folks in this Department do, that's important. Because you want to be around people you enjoy being around or you aren't around them much as you probably should be.

And given the hours all of us work, his unfailing good humor and approach to life is something that has befitted the entire Department.

You know the truth about life is, that if you do something somebody's not going to like it.

The backside of that is also true, and that is that if you don't do much, people won't notice and if you're criticized, it's likely because you are doing something.

If you're not criticized, it could very well be because you're not doing much.

Well, Doug has been doing a great many things.... a great many things that have been of great benefit to the Department of Defense and the United States of America, let there be not doubt.

So it comes as no surprise to me that given his position, in the center of the arena, that there have been some critics, and there have.

I would suspect, in fact I'm persuaded, that there's not been a Department of Defense Policy shop that has had to do so much in such a short period of time under such immense pressure as has been the case these 4½ years. Doug has been one of the true intellectual engines of the Department -- the important work this Department has done in confronting the 21st Century threats.

If you consider what he and his team have done, what they have accomplished in these action-packed four years -- a few examples:

- A plan to revamp America's Global Defense Posture -- move troops, move families, move contractors, and facilities from where they were at the end of World War II to the end of the Cold War to where they're needed and useable today;
- A NATO Response Force, which has long been needed, to counter threats and to deal with crises, and hopefully deter, and dissuade and help in addition to move our Alliance into the future;

- Important new security relationships in Central Asia and South Asia;
- Helping to fashion a new National Security Defense Strategy that helps guide our Department in planning assumptions for the war on terrorism as well as our other responsibilities.
- Less noticed, but among his most important accomplishments, I would say, he has done what Pete Pace said; he along with Pete, has helped to forge a relationship between the civilian and the military sides of this Department. Between, obviously the Chairman and the Vice Chairman and the Policy Shop – but also an example that has been emulated down through the layer of this Department. In important ways, and I would say distinctively new ways.

The Feith-Pace cooperation has been instrumental in linking our Department together and Doug has certainly contribute greatly, not only to that, but ... he has also contributed enormously in working with Pete Pace to see that the inter-agency process was linked together in important ways. Let me give you a couple of examples:

- The training and equipping of foreign forces;
- The creation of an Office of Post-conflict Reconstruction in the Department of State; and
- The Global Peace Operations Initiative, just to name two or three examples of things that are being done.

And this has all been done while our country has been fighting a war in Afghanistan and Iraq and in the global war on terror. Few have contributed so directly, so continuously, and so effectively as Doug Feith.

In my office, as many of you know, I've got the ballots from the Afghan election and from the Iraq election. And you think of all the folks that merit some appreciation and credit for having accomplished those important events -- first and foremost, I suppose, the people of those two countries who have risked a great deal to achieve that. Certainly, the

outstanding men and women in uniform, to our Country and the Coalition Countries who contribute so much. But the events also would not have succeeded without the dedicated effort of so many people in this room. The leadership team that Doug has helped put together in this Department. And certainly it would not have happened as successfully as they have without the leadership of the man we honor today, who led that wonderful policy team.

Teddy Roosevelt was reported to have said that:

“Aggressive fighting for the right is the noblest sport the world affords.”

I would submit to you that Doug Feith understands that in every bone in his body.

Years from now, unfortunately it may be many years, accurate accounts of what’s taking place these past four years will be written and it will show that Doug Feith has performed his duties with great dedication, with impressive skill and with remarkable vision during this perilous and indeed momentous period in the life of our country. Doug, I thank you for it. And I’m absolutely convicted that history will thank you for it as well.

Captain Miller, will you please read the citation for Undersecretary Feith.