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# Pakistan and Terror: The Eye of the Storm

By  
BRUCE RIEDEL

Pakistan almost uniquely is both a major victim of terrorism and a major sponsor of terrorism. It has been the scene of horrific acts of terrorist violence, including the murder of Benazir Bhutto, and it has been one of the most prolific state sponsors of terror aimed at advancing its national security interests. Over the course of the past three decades, Pakistan's army has built a complex network of relationships with numerous jihadist terror groups, including the Taliban, and with terrorists like Osama bin Laden. Fear of India is the driving force behind the army's pursuit of these relationships. For the next American president, there is no issue or country more critical to get right, which means developing a policy that will move Pakistan away from being a hothouse of terror. Engaging Kashmir should be part of that new approach.

*Keywords:* Pakistan; terrorism; al Qaeda; foreign policy; United States; India; Kashmir

Pakistan is the most dangerous country in the world today. All of the nightmares of the twenty-first century come together in Pakistan: nuclear proliferation, drug smuggling, military dictatorship, and above all, international terrorism. Pakistan almost uniquely is both a major victim of terrorism and a major sponsor of terrorism. It has been the scene of horrific acts of terrorist violence, including the murder of Benazir Bhutto in late 2007, and it has been one of the most prolific state sponsors of terror aimed at advancing its national security interests. For the next American president, there is no issue or country more critical to get right,

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which means developing a policy that will move Pakistan away from being a hot-house of terror.

That goal, however, will be exceedingly difficult to achieve. Over the course of a quarter century, Pakistan has developed an extremely complex nexus of terrorist connections. The Pakistani army and its intelligence service, the Inter Services Intelligence Directorate (known as ISI), created many of the terrorist groups that today flourish in the country and assisted in the growth of terrorist groups founded by others. The Taliban and several Kashmiri terrorist groups provide the best examples. Despite promises to cut off ties to these groups, Pakistan continues to provide them safe haven and in some cases direct support. Pakistan's army believes these surrogates are critical to its sixty-year-old campaign against India and to securing Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan. Indeed, the two strategies are interrelated as Pakistani officers believe they cannot afford to confront both India and a hostile Afghanistan simultaneously.

Moreover, ISI and Pakistan have a long and intimate relationship with Osama bin Laden and his terrorist apparatus. Before 9/11, these ties included working together with the Taliban and the Kashmiri terror underground, often against India. Since 9/11, Pakistan has become an enemy of bin Laden and al Qaeda, but the environment Pakistan tolerates inside its borders has allowed bin Laden and al Qaeda to continue to operate there. Indeed, today al Qaeda is thriving in Pakistan's borderlands with Afghanistan and using its base in those badlands to conduct terrorist operations around the world.

Pakistan is undergoing a complex political crisis over the issue of the role of the military in government. This crisis diverts critical resources from the job of fighting al Qaeda and allows the nexus of the Taliban-Kashmir-Qaeda to flourish largely undisturbed. Whatever the outcome, the military will remain a critical player in Pakistan and call the shots on Pakistan's support for terrorism.

Ironically, the United States helped create the ISI relationship with terror more than two decades ago. The United States can only kill Frankenstein's creation by fully understanding the nature of the monster and then developing policies with Pakistan to end its involvement with all the elements of the nexus of terror that afflicts the Pakistani host. Coming to grips with Pakistan's obsession with India and with Kashmir is critical to killing the monster. The time may be ripe in 2009 to move.

## The Origins of the Jihad

The contemporary jihadist terrorist movement has its origins in the war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in the 1980s. For almost a decade the Afghan mujahedin fought the Soviet 40th Red Army in the mountains of Afghanistan. At the beginning of the war, in 1979 and 1980, few observers expected the mujahedin to survive for long. Within the CIA, many expected the Soviets to crush the resistance in a matter of months or a couple of years. Instead,

with critical support from the United States and Saudi Arabia, the Soviets were defeated, and the 40th Army retreated back across the Amur River in defeat.

Pakistan was the key to victory, providing the safe haven and support base for the jihad next door. Pakistan's then-military dictator, Zia ul Huq, was prepared to take major risks to assist the Afghan resistance and probably paid the price with his life. Zia was obsessed with the thought that Pakistan might be threatened with destruction by a Soviet-ruled Afghanistan and a Soviet-aligned India. The Pakistani intelligence service was the manager of the war.

The ISI role in the war has been brilliantly related by the head of its Afghan department in the 1980s, Mohammad Yousaf, who lays out in detail how ISI managed the war, including missions deep into the USSR. He argues that Pakistan was betrayed by the United States at the end of the war, when victory was complete over the Soviets. At that point, he argues, the United States abandoned Pakistan by imposing sanctions for its nuclear program, leaving Islamabad to fend for itself in trying to manage the difficult and ugly outcome of the holy war (Yousaf and Adkin 1992).

Many if not most Pakistanis believe the United States used their country in the 1980s to defeat the Soviet Union and then callously betrayed its ally and ignored the consequences of the forces unleashed by the war against the Soviets. In the summer of 1990, just when the war against the Soviets was ending, the United States imposed sanctions on Pakistan for its nuclear weapons program after the CIA determined that the program had reached a sufficient point where it could confirm a weapon had been produced. This action led to the end of U.S. military assistance to Pakistan, including the suspension of delivery of the F16 fighter aircraft already paid for by Islamabad. Many Pakistanis noted that the CIA could have made this judgment at any time in the past decade and only made it when the United States no longer needed Pakistan's help in the Afghan war.

Pakistan was left to deal with the aftermath of the war. More than 2 million Afghans had taken refuge in Pakistan. This large displaced population bred violence and extremism. A "Kalashnikov culture" developed along the border lands where the refugees and the mujahedin lived, contributing to a growing breakdown in law and order in an area that had never seen strong central government authority.

In Afghanistan, after the Russians withdrew in 1989, the mujahedin tried to march on Kabul but failed to take the city. The ISI told then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto that Kabul would fall in a matter of days; the CIA told President George H. W. Bush the same (Bhutto 2007). Instead, the fall took almost three years.

The Taliban's rise was the response to the civil war that followed among the mujahedin parties. It arose in the southern Pashtun provinces of the country led by a much-wounded (including losing one eye) veteran of the jihad against the Soviets, Mullah Omar. Omar proclaimed a new holy war to purge the country of the warring parties and to install a pure Islamic government that would restore law and order.

Mullah Omar is a shadowy figure, even by the standards of the jihadist movement. He comes from Oruzugan province in Afghanistan, one of the poorest and

most backward parts of a poor and backward country. He is a graduate of one of the most famous madrassas in Pakistan, Darul uloom Haqqania. Omar was outraged by the infighting of the mujahedin and especially by the increasing deprivations they exacted on the Afghan people as they became more and more dependent on crime to finance their activities. Apparently the rape of two small boys by one mujahedin leader was the breaking point for Omar. He organized a group of followers to punish the criminals and hung them from the gun barrel of a tank. From that incident the Taliban were born.

Pakistan began providing support to the Taliban from its birth. While still keeping ties open to the other factions, the Pakistanis saw in the Taliban a mechanism to end the civil war and consolidate their influence over Afghanistan through a proxy. The policy began under Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and continued under her successor, Nawaz Sharif, but the army ran the show. The ISI was confident it could control the Taliban leadership and use the organization to solidify Pakistan's preeminence in the country. Pakistan became the first country in the world to recognize the Taliban government. (Only two countries followed suit: Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.) An ISI cadre began to advise the Taliban militia, with the Taliban recruiting heavily among the Islamic schools in Pakistan. Increasingly, Pakistani advisors assisted the Taliban military and Pakistani experts handled the logistics to maintain and operate the Taliban's more sophisticated weapons, including tanks and aircraft (Byman 2005).

The Taliban were not the ISI's only creation in the 1990s. In the late 1980s, the Muslim majority in Kashmir, inspired by the Afghan victory, became increasingly resistive, and a major revolt against the Indian occupation broke out. Pakistan moved quickly to both support the insurgency and gain control over it. The ISI, fresh from victory in Afghanistan, used the same tactics and strategy against India that it had used against the Soviet Union and provided training and weapons for the Kashmiris. It gradually created its own Kashmiri groups to do the fighting to ensure loyalty to Islamabad's interests first and foremost. ISI also used Afghanistan as a base for training Kashmiri jihadists to support the insurgency in Kashmir. By training operatives in Afghanistan, ISI sought a measure of deniability from Indian charges that Pakistan was a state sponsor of terrorism.

With Pakistan's help, the war quickly escalated. Thousands died on both sides. Pakistani-sponsored terrorists took the battle outside the province and into India proper, conducting hundreds of horrific attacks against targets throughout India. Pakistani-backed groups, with ISI's help, developed staging posts in Bangladesh and Nepal to help undertake these attacks.<sup>1</sup>

More than once these terrorist operations have raised the risk of provoking a general war between India and Pakistan. After the attack on the Indian parliament in December 2001, a standoff developed that lasted for more than a year. More than a million soldiers deployed, eyeball to eyeball, along the border, with the ever-present threat of a confrontation that could escalate to nuclear war. Despite repeated promises, Pakistan has not broken its links to these Kashmiri groups, which still operate both in Kashmir proper and throughout India.

## Enter al Qaeda

In this volatile mix of Afghan and Kashmiri terrorists al Qaeda developed. Osama bin Laden has a long and complex history with Pakistan and the ISI. Bin Laden first arrived in Pakistan in 1980, only a year after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Bin Laden was a rich, twenty-three-year-old volunteer with no experience in military affairs, who began his mission organizing aid from other Saudis. He quickly became a leader in the Arab community in Peshawar, providing funds and equipment to the mujahedin groups.

For the next ten years, bin Laden had a close operational relationship with the ISI. The Pakistani service jealously guarded its position in the Afghan movement, welcoming support from any source but carefully maintaining control of the situation on the ground. It would have been impossible for bin Laden to operate without ISI supervision and constant interaction with its operatives (Lawrence 2005). He was also in contact with the Saudi intelligence service during this period and met on occasion with its leader, Prince Turki bin Faysal. Despite allegations to the contrary, he did not have a link to the CIA, although he was well aware the CIA was funding and arming the mujahedin.

ISI also played a critical role in developing bin Laden's ties with the Taliban when he returned to Afghanistan in 1996. According to the findings of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States (2004), as described in *The 9/11 Commission Report*, ISI set up the first contacts between bin Laden and the Taliban's leader, Mullah Omar, when bin Laden returned in 1996. Part of ISI's motive was to get bin Laden's help with non-Afghan groups they had jointly worked with in the past.

Indeed, bin Laden's interaction with ISI had long gone beyond the Afghan movement. He was also involved in its efforts to create and sponsor Kashmir groups to fight in India. In 1987, the ISI worked with a group of Islamic scholars in Pakistan that included bin Laden and his then-spiritual guide Abdullah Azzam to set up Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, which would become one of the most violent and extreme of the Kashmiri organizations. At first it provided Kashmiri volunteers to fight in Afghanistan, and then it began attacks into Kashmir and ultimately into India's large cities. Bin Laden provided some of the funding to get it started and remained closely connected to the group (Wilson 2007). This relationship with ISI Kashmiri clients would continue after bin Laden returned to Afghanistan in the late 1990s.

On August 7, 1998, bin Laden and his new al Qaeda group carried out their first major operation, attacking the American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. Within hours of the attack, American intelligence had information that bin Laden was going to be visiting a training camp in Afghanistan to meet with some colleagues. President Bill Clinton ordered a military strike to kill him. Unfortunately, bin Laden changed his plans and was no longer at the target when the missiles struck, missing him by perhaps as little as thirty minutes (PBS Frontline 2006).<sup>2</sup> What is revealing is who was at the camp with bin Laden.

The camp was a Kashmiri training facility run by the ISI. The majority of the fighters in the camp were from another Kashmiri group run by ISI, the Harkat ul Mujahedin (HUM). Twenty or so Kashmiris and Pakistani trainers died in the attack (Burke 2003).<sup>3</sup> Despite public protests to the contrary, it is clear that ISI and its Kashmiri cadre were still intimately associated with bin Laden.

In late 1999, the connections between bin Laden, al Qaeda, the Kashmiris, the Taliban, and ISI were even more dramatically illustrated in the hijacking of an Indian airliner from Katmandu in which one passenger was brutally murdered. The hijackers were assisted in gaining access to weapons in the airport by the local ISI station in Katmandu. The hijackers were members of the HUM group and sought the release of one of their leaders, Maulana Massoud Azhar, from jail in India. The flight was diverted to Kandahar, where the Taliban protected the hijackers and negotiated with the Indian authorities. Osama bin Laden was on the ground as well, even hosting the victory dinner when the hijackers got their demands met. The ISI took Azhar on a victory tour around Pakistan after the ordeal was over to help raise funds for the Kashmiri cause.

Jaswant Singh was then the Indian foreign minister who had the unenviable task of going to Kandahar to deal with the hijackers and get the 155 passengers freed. In his memoirs he describes the hijacking of Indian Air Flight 814 as the "dress rehearsal" for 9/11, since the incident involved many of the same characters and marked their first hijacking of a passenger aircraft. The foreign minister learned that the hijackers had even considered crashing the plane into a target in India if they did not get their demands met (Singh 2007).<sup>4</sup>

Some Pakistanis insist that bin Laden's connection with ISI went beyond support for mutual causes in Afghanistan and Kashmir and extended into meddling in internal Pakistani politics. Former prime minister Benazir Bhutto claimed that ISI recruited bin Laden's help to finance her political enemies and that he provided \$10 million to them. Later she claimed that he worked with ISI and others to try to have her assassinated in 1993. She asserted that the mastermind behind the first attack on the World Trade Center in 1993 confirmed this to her when he was captured in Pakistan in 1995 (Bhutto 2007).

The extent of ISI's relationship with bin Laden and his al Qaeda colleagues before 9/11 is impossible to know completely in the absence of cooperation from the ISI itself. Its archives, if they are ever opened, may contain even more evidence of the close partnership between the two.

The United States made a considerable effort in the late 1990s to break up the emerging al Qaeda threat in Afghanistan, using a wide variety of tools. The military option has already been noted. Political tools were used as well. President Clinton raised the issue of Osama bin Laden's safe haven with the Taliban in every meeting he held with Pakistani leaders after the creation of the group, urging and pressing for Islamabad to take action to compel the Taliban to control bin Laden and deliver him to justice one way or another. In March 2000 during his only visit to Islamabad, as Clinton (2004) related, "I told him (Musharraf) I thought terrorism would eventually destroy Pakistan from within if he didn't move against it."

The bilateral track was complemented by a multilateral track. After the East African bombings, the United States secured unanimous United Nations Security Council (UNSC) support for first condemning the Taliban for hosting al Qaeda and then imposing sanctions on their Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan for doing so. UNSC Resolutions 1185, 1214, 1267, 1333, and 1363 called on all countries and especially Pakistan to use their influence with the Taliban. Neither the Taliban nor Pakistan listened to the UN.

### After 9/11—The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same

By coincidence, the head of ISI, Lt. Gen. Mahmood Ahmed, was in Washington visiting the CIA on the morning of September 11, 2001. His mission from Musharraf was to persuade the Americans to ease off on their policy on the Taliban. No one knew more about the extent of Taliban-Pakistan cooperation than Ahmed. He was immediately summoned to the State Department to meet with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage.

According to Musharraf's account of that meeting, Armitage told Ahmed that Pakistan had to choose whether to be with the United States or against it. Should Pakistan stand by its relationship with the Taliban, according to Musharraf, Armitage threatened to bomb Pakistan back into the stone age. Armitage has denied he threatened to attack Pakistan but has confirmed that he gave the ISI leader an ultimatum to either help America or be seen as an enemy (Musharraf 2006).

Almost immediately Pakistan's policy toward the Taliban changed. The Pakistani ambassador in Washington, Maleeha Lodhi, who had been handpicked for the job by Musharraf, told the press, "We will be urging the Taliban leadership . . . to accede to the demands of the international community . . . and to hand over the person that they are harboring, Osama bin Ladin, so that he is brought to justice" (Hussain 2007, 35). General Ahmed was fired from his post a few days later, apparently for lack of enthusiasm in the new policy toward his former clients.

By September 2001, Pakistani aid to the Taliban was critical to the group. Ahmed Rashid, the leading expert on the Taliban, estimated that up to sixty thousand Pakistani Islamic students had fought in Afghanistan supporting the Taliban, dozens of Pakistani military officers were advising the group, and small units of the elite Special Services Group commandos were engaged in combat operations with the Taliban forces. As he put it, "Pakistan's knowledge of the Taliban's military machine, storage facilities, supply lines and leadership hierarchy was total" (Rashid 2001).

Shortly after the start of military action, Pakistan deserted its Taliban ally. Pakistan's military advisors, pilots, tank crews, and other military personnel in the Taliban army fled the country and went back to Pakistan. Without their allies, the Taliban was even more hopelessly outgunned by the U.S.-backed alliance.

The collapse of their resistance came quickly. By the end of the year, the Islamic Emirate was replaced by a government installed by the Northern Alliance. Most of the Taliban fighters simply faded away to their villages in the border region.

Musharraf has explained his decision to abandon the Taliban in his 2006 memoir *In the Line of Fire*. According to his account, Musharraf simulated a war game immediately after Ahmed reported his conversation with Armitage and concluded that Pakistan, even with its nuclear arsenal, could not prevail in a military conflict with the United States. Moreover, Musharraf concluded that the Indians would be the major beneficiary of a Pakistani decision to stand by the Taliban. As he puts it,

I also analyzed our national interest. First, India had already tried to step in by offering its bases to the U.S. If we did not join the U.S., it would accept India's offer. What would happen then? India would gain a golden opportunity with regard to Kashmir. . . . Second, the security of our strategic assets would be jeopardized. We did not want to lose or damage the military parity that we had achieved with India by becoming a nuclear weapons state. (P. 202)

In short, the decision to reverse a decade of Pakistani policy in Afghanistan was a derivative of the underlying Pakistani concern about India. For this reversal, Pakistan was handsomely rewarded. Musharraf was invited for a state visit to Washington in February 2002 and was promised economic assistance and debt relief. In 2003 Musharraf visited Camp David, and President George W. Bush announced a five-year, \$3 billion economic and military assistance package. In 2004 Pakistan was designated a Major Non-NATO Ally, which meant additional technology sharing between the two militaries. In 2005 Pakistan was promised the sale of F16s again to demonstrate the bad old days were truly over. By 2007 more than \$10 billion in aid had flowed to Pakistan.

Musharraf was careful to give only selective support to the United States, however, in the war on terrorism. The Taliban apparatus in Pakistan's madrassas was not dismantled, and many Taliban officials continued to operate in Pakistani cities, particularly Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan. By 2004 Taliban officials were openly fund-raising again in Quetta. No major Taliban official has ever been arrested in Pakistan, and Afghan government authorities claim the ISI is again providing direct aid to the Taliban in its operations against NATO and Afghan army forces.

At first Pakistan was also active in arresting al Qaeda operatives, including the alleged mastermind of 9/11, Khalid Shaykh Muhammad, who was captured in March 2003 in Rawalpindi (ironically, the military capital of Pakistan). Musharraf claims to have captured hundreds of Qaeda operatives. It is important to note where they have been caught. Almost all of the captured Qaeda operatives have been apprehended in major Pakistani cities, not in the badlands on the border. Moreover, most have been caught in safe houses belonging to Pakistani-supported groups like Lashkar-e Tayyiba (LeT). Abu Zubayda, the first major operative wrapped up in Pakistan, was in a LeT safe house in Faisalabad (Hussain 2007). Gary Schroen, who led the first CIA team into Afghanistan to fight the

Taliban and al Qaeda after 9/11, noted that “since 2002 whenever a raid has been conducted in Pakistan against an al Qaeda safe house, al Qaeda members are found being hosted by militant Pakistanis, primarily from the Lashkar-e Tayyiba group, supporters of the Kashmir insurgency” (Schroen 2005, 361).

The Pakistani army has also engaged in a major military campaign in the badlands, especially in Waziristan. Up to seventy thousand troops have been engaged in counterinsurgency operations there in an on-again, off-again battle. Losses on the side of the army have been heavy, inducing Musharraf to try to arrange peace deals with local tribal leaders who have promised to crack down on al Qaeda but never delivered.

The bottom line is that the top leadership of al Qaeda has not only eluded capture; they have thrived. A sophisticated propaganda machine has developed in the badlands producing dozens of high-quality video and audio tapes for al Qaeda leaders and offering them a public forum for speaking out. More deadly, the badlands have been used to train operatives to carry out operations outside South Asia, particularly in Western Europe. Every major operation in the United Kingdom in the past five years, including the July 7, 2005, underground bombings and the foiled August 2006 plot to blow up simultaneously ten jumbo jets outbound from Heathrow Airport over the Atlantic, have been connected by the British security establishment back to Pakistan and to the al Qaeda leaders hiding there. The German and Danish security authorities have also uncovered plots linked back to Pakistan, with the Danish intelligence chief reporting that the plotters were taking their orders from “a leading al Qaeda person” in Pakistan (Hart and Whitlock 2007).

Musharraf also promised to crack down on the madrassas and end their use by extremists to indoctrinate fanaticism. He said he would end the jihadi culture in Pakistan and halt all cross-border terrorist operations into Kashmir and India. None of this has happened. More than one and a half million students still attend unregulated madrassas in Pakistan. Pakistan's LeT militants were involved in the attack on the Indian parliament in December 2001, an attack that diverted Pakistan's military forces away from the Afghan border at the critical moment in the hunt for bin Laden and led them into a year-long standoff with India (Hussain 2007). In July 2006 the police authorities in Mumbai implicated the ISI directly in a bombing campaign on the Mumbai metro system that killed 186 people. Only when the madrassa culture spread directly into Islamabad and threatened to make a mockery of Musharraf's hold on power did he slowly and reluctantly act against their base, the Red Mosque in the capital.

In response to the Pakistani crackdown on their operatives, bin Laden and his deputy Ayman Zawahiri have repeatedly called for Musharraf's overthrow and have plotted to kill him. Two assassination plots have failed. After the attack on the Red Mosque, bin Laden called again for his death and asserted that Musharraf was a pawn of India, Israel, and America. Bin Laden ridiculed Musharraf as a coward who boasts of testing nuclear weapons, but “when the American Foreign Minister Powell came to you, you cowered, bowed and submitted to him like a lowly slave and you permitted the American Crusader forces

to use the air, soil and water of Pakistan, the country of Islam, to kill the people of Islam in Afghanistan, then in Waziristan. So woe to you and away with you” (bin Laden 2007).

## Lessons Learned

Aside from the liberation of Kabul, America’s efforts to persuade Pakistan to take decisive action to control the Taliban, Kashmiri terrorists, and al Qaeda have largely been failures. The record shows that the United States and its global allies have made repeated efforts to encourage Pakistan to act responsibly but have had only limited and temporary success. Even the Pakistani decision in 2001 to break with the Taliban after 9/11 has proven to be short-lived and incomplete. The record also clearly demonstrates that Washington has employed a full range of options in working the Pakistani case, from sanctions to rewards, from unilateralism to multilateralism, and from jawboning to threats. While Armitage’s threat seems to have had the most immediate results, it also produced only a temporary and incomplete shift.

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The next president should use all of these levers, as appropriate, but he or she must do something much more inventive if we are to break Pakistan’s unhealthy relationship with terror. He or she must get into the thicket of the core issue.

Central to Pakistan’s policy calculations throughout have been security concerns about India. Pakistani leaders from Zia to Musharraf repeatedly looked at Afghanistan in the context of their struggle with India. Most clearly, Musharraf’s own memoir underscores that the decision to align with the United States after 9/11 stemmed from his concerns that India would steal a march on Pakistan and that India would both break up Pakistan and destroy its nuclear arsenal if Pakistan did not move against the Taliban and join the U.S. war on terrorism.

The centrality of India in these episodes reflects its dominant position in Pakistani thinking on virtually every issue. The conflict with India affects all aspects of Pakistan's worldview and its self-image. Even the fundamental issue of population growth and population control is perceived largely in terms of competition with India. Pakistan's population is growing at 2.9 percent annually, one of the highest rates in the world; it has grown from 32 million at the time of partition to 170 million today, far outstripping the economy's efforts to maintain an adequate standard of living for many, let alone reduce poverty. Yet, there is no serious approach to birth control in the country because it is seen as weakening the effort to keep up with the country's larger neighbor. As one scholar has noted,

Pakistan's political and social elite—the Establishment—have never paid much attention to the population problem. Their overriding concern is a perceived threat from a much larger and faster-growing India. In their eyes, Pakistan is a relatively small state; to some degree the elite have never shaken off the minority complex that was embedded in the Pakistan movement. (Cohen 2004, 234)

The Pakistani army plays the critical role in the formation of the Pakistani worldview and in national security policy formulation. Unlike India, Pakistan places no civilian controls over military activities. Even during the 1990s, when civilian-elected governments ruled the country, the army was in the position of critical decision maker. Under Musharraf, the army has no serious constraints on its policy formulation role. The army has defined the jihadist nexus as a critical force multiplier, necessary to confront India. The result is a “ground reality in which al Qaeda thrives on a vast, deeply entrenched and integrated jihadi infrastructure that straddles the Afghanistan and Pakistan borders. This network includes more than 50 Pakistan-based radical groups who share deep bonds of an Islamic ideology, common political targets—the United States, India and Israel—training facilities and resources” (Behera 2002).

The army has defined the national security agenda since partition in terms of the threat posed by India. It has naturally determined that to deal with the threat, the military must be given a disproportionate slice of the national income. As a consequence, the military gets a very high percentage of the national budget every year. Just as crucially, the army determines the parameters in which diplomacy with India can be pursued. Critical decisions about foreign and security policy are made in the army and only then implemented by the Foreign Ministry.

Former U.S. Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet, who dealt extensively with this issue, concludes in his memoirs that “the Pakistanis always knew more than they were telling us.” Tenet noted his belief that “what the Pakistanis really feared was a two-front conflict, with the Indians seeking to reclaim Pakistan and the Taliban mullahs trying to export their radical brand of Islam across the border from Afghanistan. A war with India also posed the grim specter of nuclear confrontation, but from the ruling generals' point of view, the best way to avoid having their nation Taliban-ized was to keep their enemy close. That meant not cooperating with us in hunting down bin Laden and his organization” (Tenet 2007, 139-40).

To make matters worse, the Pakistani army has a very deep distrust of the United States, which is seen as a fair-weather friend. A common Pakistani joke is that the United States sees Pakistan as a condom, used and then thrown away. An on-again, off-again arms relationship, symbolized by the F16 saga, has left a bitter taste in the officer corps, whose members are convinced that the United States will always abandon Pakistan when its interests no longer require a close relationship.

The implications for the international community of this Pakistani preoccupation with India and the disproportionate role of the army in Pakistani decision making are profound. The United States has properly identified India as an emerging world power and one of the world's most important economies. Washington and New Delhi are drawing increasingly closer, as the two largest democracies in the world. In turn, Pakistan feels even more deeply threatened by the rise of India.

In a best case scenario, the international community, led by the United States, should seek to disarm Pakistan's preoccupation with India by resolving the underlying dispute between the two countries in Kashmir. From the Pakistani perspective, an optimal resolution of Kashmir would lead to the unification of the province with Pakistan, or at least the Muslim-dominated Valley of Kashmir and the capital of Srinagar. With Kashmir "reunited" with Pakistan, the requirement for nuclear weapons would be reduced, if not removed, and the need for a jihadist option to compel Indian withdrawal from the valley would be gone. This is precisely the outcome that Pakistani leaders have in mind when they urge American leaders to devote diplomatic and political energy to the Kashmir issue.

Of course, it is a completely unrealistic scenario. India has been clear that it will not withdraw from Kashmir. On the contrary, India argues it has already made a major concession by de facto accepting the partition of the state between itself, Pakistan, and China. India is probably prepared to accept the line of control (the ceasefire line of 1948) as the ultimate border with Pakistan but will not accept a fundamental redrawing of borders to put the valley under Pakistan's sovereignty.

But this does not rule out an option that would involve a major effort to resolve the Kashmir problem on a more realistic basis. The basis for such an approach would be to complement the ongoing Indo-Pakistani bilateral dialogue. That dialogue has already produced a series of confidence-building measures between the two countries, reopening transportation links, setting up hotlines between military commands, and holding periodic discussions at the foreign secretary level on all the issues that divide the two. Unfortunately, the dialogue has not seriously addressed the Kashmir issue because of the significant gulf between the two parties and India's refusal to negotiate while still a target of terrorist attacks planned and organized in Pakistan.

The United States has been reluctant to engage more actively in the Kashmir dispute in light of the Indian posture that outside intervention is unwarranted and that Kashmir is a purely bilateral issue. Faced with the likelihood of India's

rejection of outside intervention, American diplomacy has put the Kashmir problem in the "too hard" category and left it to simmer. The results are all too predictable. The Kashmir issue periodically boils over, and the United States and the international community have to step in to try to prevent a full-scale war. This was the case during the Kargil crisis in 1999, after the terrorist attack on the Indian parliament in 2001, and again in 2002 when India mobilized its army for war on the Pakistani border.

A unique opportunity for quiet American diplomacy to help advance the Kashmir issue to reach a better, more stable solution may exist in 2009. The U.S.-India nuclear deal agreed to during President Bush's July 2005 visit to South Asia should create a more stable and enduring basis for U.S.-Indian relations than at any time in history. The deal removes the central obstacle to closer strategic ties between Washington and New Delhi: the nuclear proliferation problem, which has held back the development of their relationship for two decades.

In the new era of U.S.-Indian strategic partnership, Washington should be more prepared to press New Delhi to be more flexible on Kashmir. It is clearly in the American interest to try to defuse a lingering conflict that has generated global terrorism and repeatedly threatened to create a full-scale military confrontation on the subcontinent. It is also in India's interest to find a solution to a conflict that has gone on for too long. Since Kargil, India has been more open to an American role in Kashmir because it senses Washington is fundamentally in favor of a resolution on the basis of the status quo, which favors India.

The United States currently has better relations with both India and Pakistan than at any time in the past several decades. The U.S. rapprochement with India, begun by President Clinton and advanced by President Bush, is now supported by an almost unique bipartisan consensus in the American foreign policy establishment and the Congress. At the same time, U.S.-Pakistani relations are stronger now than at any time since the Reagan years, and the sanctions that poisoned U.S.-Pakistani ties for decades have been removed by legislation supported by both Republicans and Democrats. It is a unique moment.

A Kashmir solution would have to be based around a formula for both making the line of control a permanent and normal international border (perhaps with some minor modifications) and creating a permeable frontier between the two parts of Kashmir so that the Kashmiri people could live more normal lives. A special condominium might be created to allow the two constituencies to work together on issues that are internal to Kashmir, such as transportation, the environment, sports, and tourism.

It is unlikely that the two states will be able to reach such an agreement on their own given the history of mistrust that pervades both sides of the problem. A quiet American effort to promote a solution, led by the next U.S. president, is probably essential to any effort to move the parties toward an agreement.

Resolution of the Kashmiri issue would go a long way to making Pakistan a more normal state and less preoccupied with India. It would also remove a major rationale for the army's disproportionate role in Pakistani national security affairs,

thus helping to restore genuine civilian democratic rule in the country. A resolution of the major outstanding issue between Islamabad and New Delhi would reduce the arms race between the two countries and the risk of nuclear conflict. And it would remove the need for Pakistan to find allies, such as the Taliban, LeT, and al Qaeda, to fight asymmetric warfare against India.

Of course, it would not resolve all the tensions between the two neighbors or end the problem of the Taliban in Afghanistan. But more than anything else it would set the stage for a different era in the subcontinent and for more productive interaction between the international community and Pakistan.

The alternative is to let Kashmir simmer and avoid trying to find a means to advance the Indo-Pakistani dialogue. In the long run, this approach is virtually certain to lead to another crisis in the subcontinent. Sooner or later, the two countries will again find themselves on the precipice of war. In a worst-case scenario, a terrorist incident like the July 2006 metro bombings in Mumbai or the hijacking of IA 814 could spark an Indian military response against targets in Pakistan allegedly involved in the planning and orchestration of terrorism. And that could lead to nuclear war.

The next president must adopt a more sophisticated approach to Pakistan and its terror nexus that goes beyond threats and sanctions, beyond commando raids and intelligence cooperation, beyond aid and aircraft sales. It is time to come to grips with what motivates Pakistan's behavior and make peace.

## Notes

1. For a comprehensive look at this network, see Binalakshmi Nepram Mentschel, *Is the Crescent Waxing Eastwards?* (2007).

2. Schroen was CIA station chief in Islamabad when the strike occurred and estimates bin Laden left the camp between thirty minutes to two hours before the missiles struck it (Schroen 2005).

3. Burke interviewed some of the HUM cadre who survived and confirmed the Inter Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) connection (Burke 2003).

4. Jaswant has also discussed the hijack directly with me and his characterization of it as the stage setter for 9/11. See also Zahid Hussain, *Frontline Pakistan* (2007, 62) for more discussion of the nexus behind IC 814's hijacking.

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