

Counter-Terrorism in South Asia

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ORF-Heritage Dialogue



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Introduction

The ORF-Heritage Foundation Counter-Terrorism Dialogue that took place in New Delhi on July 20-21, 2010, brought together top Indian experts led by Ambassador M. Rasgotra, President, ORF Centre for International Relations and a distinguished American delegation led by The Heritage Foundation's Vice President for Foreign and Defence Policy Studies, Dr. Kim Holmes, to exchange ideas for expanding US-India counter-terrorism cooperation.

The main themes of the conference included the differing policy approaches of Washington and New Delhi in grappling with terrorist threats; growing alliances among insurgent groups, criminal networks, and terrorists; lessons learned from the Obama Administration's Afghanistan-Pakistan policies in its first eighteen months in office; influence of radicalism in the institutional structures and armed forces in the region; and nuclear and non-nuclear threats to India and the US from transnational terrorist groups.

The 2010 conference was the second in a series of ORF-Heritage dialogues, inaugurated in Washington, DC in May 2009 – just six months after the horrific terrorist attacks in Mumbai, and shortly before the October 2009 arrest of Pakistani-American David C. Headley, who was charged with conspiracy in the Mumbai attacks. The first seminar provided an opportunity to take stock of the significant increase in cooperation between US and Indian investigative and intelligence agencies immediately after the Mumbai attacks, and to reflect on the way forward.

The official signing of the US-India Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Initiative in July, 2010, is testament to the commitment of the two governments to work together to combat terrorism and ensure the safety of their citizens. A robust counter-terrorism relationship between the US and India is not only critical to each country's national security, it is a key building block in the broader partnership.

As Dr. Holmes said in his opening remarks, "...a strong, strategic partnership between the United States and India is critical – not only for security in Asia, but also for advancing freedom and prosperity in the region." It is the hope of ORF and the Heritage Foundation that this book will contribute to enhancing understanding between our two nations on how best to confront and overcome the terrorist scourge in South Asia.

Contributors

Ms. **Polly Nayak** is a longtime senior US government expert on South Asia. She has been an independent consultant in the Washington, DC area since her retirement from public service in 2002. She lectures often on US foreign policy, South Asia, and terrorism and serves as an outside adviser for several research organisations. Ms. Nayak's recent publications include a chapter in a book on domestic and regional drivers for Pakistan's foreign policy ("The Impact of Pakistan's and Bangladesh's National Strategies on US Interests," in *Strategic Asia 2008-2009*) and *US Crisis Management in South Asia's Twin Peaks Crisis*, co-authored with Michael Krepon and published by the Henry L. Stimson Center in 2006. A sequel—on US crisis management in the wake of the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai—is in preparation. She is working on a book about how senior US foreign policy-makers receive and use information and insights from foreign area experts and 'learn' about foreign regions, specifically South Asia.

Mr. **Vikram Sood** is Vice President, Centre for International Relations at the Observer Research Foundation. Mr. Sood joined the Indian Postal Service in 1966 and the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) in 1972. He headed RAW from January 1, 2001, to March 31, 2003 (till his retirement). Since May 2004, he has been regularly writing for *Hindustan Times* on matters concerning security and India's neighbourhood. Mr. Sood holds a Masters degree in Economics from St. Stephen's College,

New Delhi. He has also attended various national and international conferences on South Asian security.

Ms. **Lisa Curtis** is Senior Research Fellow for South Asia in the Asian Studies Center at The Heritage Foundation. Since joining Heritage in August 2006, Curtis has appeared on major broadcast networks, including CNN, Fox News, PBS, and BBC, and testified over a dozen times before Congress on US policies toward the region. Her commentary has appeared in *The Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Times*, National Public Radio, and National Review Online, and in South Asian publications such as *The Mint*, *India Outlook*, *The Friday Times*, and *The News*. She co-chaired the Pakistan Policy Working Group, an independent, bipartisan working group comprising US-based experts who published a report in September 2008 titled “The United States and Pakistan: The Next Chapter.” Curtis previously worked as Professional Staff Member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (2003-06), Senior Adviser in the State Department’s South Asia Bureau (2001-03), Intelligence Analyst at the Central Intelligence Agency (1998-2001), and Diplomat at the US Embassies in Islamabad and New Delhi (1994-98).

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Pakistan: Struggle Within (Longman Pearson, 2009), *Investigating the Mumbai Conspiracy* (Pentagon, 2007) and *Coming Blowback: How Pakistan is Endangering the World* (Rupa, 2010).

Mr. **Kaustav Chakrabarti** is Junior Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation. Since joining ORF in 2008, he has conducted research on different aspects of Pakistan, including the Taliban insurgency, nuclear security, India-Pakistan relations, and political violence. His main interests are in understanding the dynamics of civilian participation in violence. Mr. Chakrabarti has authored papers on Indo-Pak relations, insurgency in Pakistan's Swat Valley, terrorism and crime, among other issues. His articles have been published in international and Indian media such as *Small Wars Journal*, *Open Democracy*, *Rediff* and *The Pioneer*. He holds a Bachelors degree in computer engineering.

Sheriff **Lee Baca** commands the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's 17,000 sworn and professional staff. He, along with the former Los Angeles Police Chief Bill Bratton, developed the Joint Regional Intelligence Center that serves Southern California. Sheriff Baca created a Muslim Community Relations Unit staffed by Muslim deputy sheriffs. He is the State of California's Emergency Mutual Aid Coordinator for 13 million people within Los Angeles and Orange Counties.

Lieutenant **John Stedman** is a 30-year veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department where he is currently assigned to the Emergency Operations Bureau, Counter-Terrorism Unit. In addition, he oversees Sheriff's Department personnel assigned to the Joint Regional Intelligence Centre (JRIC) which serves the Homeland Security needs of seven California counties. Lieutenant Stedman has testified in front of the United States Senate and trains investigators statewide on issues of terrorism funding.

Lieutenant **John Sullivan** is with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department where he is currently assigned to the Transit Services

Bureau. In addition, he conducts research on counter-insurgency, intelligence, terrorism, transnational gangs, and urban operations. He is co-editor of *Countering Terrorism and WMD: Creating a Global Counter-Terrorism Network* (Routledge, 2006) and *Global Biosecurity: Threats and Responses* (Routledge, 2010).

Mr. **Siddharth Varadarajan** is one of India's leading commentators on foreign affairs. He has reported extensively from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Nepal, and Bangladesh, the former Yugoslavia, as well as from Kashmir and India's northeastern region. Prior to joining *The Hindu* in 2004, he was the Foreign Affairs editor and Deputy Chief of Bureau of *The Times of India*. He is the recipient of the Elizabeth Neuffer Memorial Prize for excellence in journalism, awarded by the United Nations Correspondents Association in 2005 for a series of articles on Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency. A trained economist, he taught at the New York University for a number of years before returning to India in 1995 to work as a journalist.

Ambassador **Leela K. Ponappa** was Deputy National Security Adviser and Secretary, National Security Council Secretariat, Government of India, from May 2007 till October 2009. A career diplomat, Ambassador Ponappa joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1970. In a distinguished career, she served as Ambassador to the Netherlands and Thailand. She was also Permanent Representative to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) (2002-04). Her earlier assignments included several positions at the Ministry of External Affairs, where she was in charge of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Maldives (1998-2001), and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) from 1986-90. Her brief also included assignments on Pakistan and Afghanistan from 1975-78. During her vast career, Ambassador Ponappa acquired expertise on issues such as border negotiations; national security issues like terrorism and narcotics; sharing of river waters, disaster management and infrastructure projects; economic affairs, including

India-US trade and investment, negotiations like the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement, and regional cooperation frameworks like SAARC, BIMSTEC and UNESCAP. Ambassador Ponappa taught at the National Defence College, New Delhi, from 1995-98 as Senior Directing Staff, and was Research Associate at the Center for South and Southeast Asia, University of California, Berkeley.

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Keynote Address

Shiv Shankar Menon

Thank you very much Mr Rasgotra, Dr Holmes, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for asking me to speak to your ORF-Heritage Dialogue on Countering Terrorism in South Asia. I could not resist the invitation since I was so impressed by the quality of what you did in your dialogue last May and I am glad to see that you are taking up many of the themes that you discussed then much further, whether it is counter-terrorism, the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan, or other related issues. Looking around this room and at the list of participants, I am not going to try and tell you your business. You know counter-terrorism, most of you, better than I do. But what I would like to do is to flag some lines of enquiry that I hope, that in the course of what you do and in the course of your dialogue, you will look at a little more closely. For us in India, what you do is crucial, situated as we are beside the epicentre of global terrorism.

Looking at the situation around us since you met last year, two or three things stand out. One is, unfortunately, that much of what you discussed, and what you foresaw, has actually come through – in more virulent forms. It is today actually even less possible to be optimistic about the success of existing counter-terrorism strategies in South Asia, in Pakistan or in Afghanistan, not because we don't understand the problem, or because strategies are intrinsically flawed. I think we know what needs to be done and I think we also know who is responsible for terrorism. But I think what has happened is that we have a much clearer picture today of the infrastructure of terrorism, of the ecosystem

that supports terrorism, which frankly is not just confined to South Asia but affects the entire world. For us, it has been brought home most recently by what we learnt from Headley which confirmed many of the things that we knew before, and it is really the links with the official establishment and with existing intelligence agencies, it is that nexus which makes it a much harder phenomenon for us to deal with; unfortunately, what we know and what we see suggests that these links or this nexus will not, in fact, be broken soon – if anything, it is getting stronger.

The other aspect, which I think is something that is worth looking at, is how, over time, over the last few years, terrorist groups in South Asia have actually got fused, not just operationally but in ideological terms; they train together, they use the same communications, and you have a phenomenon where frankly it is impossible to segment these groups any more, and the traditional distinctions that were used about groups that are targeted differently or their composition, are different. I think those distinctions have become meaningless and I think we know that they have. The third thing that I would like to flag at this stage, right at the beginning of what you are doing, is the role of nuclear weapons in terrorist hands and the likelihood of that. I notice you have a separate session on that and I think that is really a very important issue. For us again that is a problem which has just not gone away and is probably more serious than it has been before.

But rather than spreading gloom and listing all the terrible things that we should be looking at, there are two respects at least in which we are better off than we were when we met last year. Firstly, we have learnt lessons, both the US and India, and I think what we have both been trying to do is to put in place the institutions, the policies, the practices, which would help us to deal with these matters. In India, for instance, we have not just established the National Investigation Agency to investigate terrorist crimes but we have also created a multi-agency centre which collates and disseminates information on terrorism to the forces and the agencies concerned and we have set up a National Intelligence Grid. We are also in the process of designing a National

Counter-Terrorism Centre. So, both of us have evolving structures and I think it would be useful if we talk to each other about how these work in both our countries. We need to certainly improve the instruments that we have. We are involved in police reform of various kinds but it is more than just police reforms. This is an aspect on which I think it would be very interesting to hear your views and to see where we can take this.

The other respect in which we have succeeded – may be not much, but certainly, is the much better state of counter-terrorism cooperation between India and the US. We have had several successes which our modesty forbids us from speaking about, but more than that, I think it has helped to make both of us safer and it would be useful to hear from you where you think we should be going with this cooperation. This is something that has been building over several years but I do think we have now reached the point where in a sense we have reached critical mass where we can look forward to much closer cooperation and much better work together. But counter-terrorism is no exception. In fact, this is one important part of the larger transformation of India-US relations that we have witnessed over several years and under administrations of various colours in both the US and in India. Ours is a relationship which today is better in both depth and quality than it ever has been before and it covers the entire range. As we look forward to the Presidential visit later in the year, I think what you are doing here will be very useful as an addition to the relationship and to its increasing relevance to us both in India and the US. In fact, we bring different strengths, different experiences to the table but similar values; the same values actually give us a much higher level of complementarity and congruity, and counter-terrorism is one area where that congruence is most evident. So, I wish you well in your deliberations. I have the advantage of speaking first and, therefore, being able to say what you should do. But all the best and thank you very much.

Foreword

Brajesh Mishra

Mr Rasgotra, other members of the ORF family and distinguished guests, you heard the current National Security Adviser's address this morning and now you are going to hear a former National Security Adviser. How lucky or unlucky can you get! After that very feeble attempt at humour, let me get to the serious subject of terrorism. If I repeat the points which were made this morning, I apologise. We have faced terrorism sponsored and abetted from outside our borders for three decades now. If you want to go still further back, you have the Naga insurgency, which started with India's independence and which was also supported by external forces. So, insurgency and terrorism is nothing new to us. But what has aggravated this problem for us today is the unmitigated hostility of Pakistan and China towards India. This is creating a situation which gravely affects our national security. I say this with some sadness that various Governments of India have paid very little attention to national security and to enhancing our military prowess. We are told about the concerns of the *aam aadmi* – the common man – and the need to empower him, give him money and set up various employment schemes for him. But our rulers forget that the first duty of a state is to protect the person and property of its citizens. That remains far from their minds and we pay for it with our lives. We have had terrorism coming out of Pakistan for three decades now, starting with the Khalistan movement, going on in 1989 to Kashmir and then spreading to other parts of India. We must seriously examine and find out why we have not been able to put a stop to Pakistan's adventurism.

After all, when we know that one particular country is responsible for this, then we have certain means to act against that country, but we have not done that. We have been talking about negotiations and discussions, but as the latest attempt at negotiation shows, such methods will always fail because we have not yet grasped the hard reality that the Pakistan Army will never allow peaceful relations with India because its very existence – its reason for existing – depends on keeping up the tempo of hostility towards India. Today, its influence extends right from the Army House to the villages. They have various foundations, such as the Fauji Foundation, Shaheen Foundation, among others, that are veritable business corporations. The Fauji Foundation, I believe, employs about 22,000 ex-Army people. We need to fully grasp the fact that the Pakistan Army's hostility is not because of its Bangladesh, Siachen or Kashmir experiences, but because it needs to spread this paranoia vis-s-a-vis India for its survival. Until we realise this, we will never be able to deal with Pakistan.

I must refer with some regret to a grave error made by the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government. We were able to conclude an agreement with President Musharraf in January of 2004, in which we had two essential points. One, that terrorism and dialogue cannot go together. Two, based on that, we resumed the composite dialogue, which included the issue of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and not just Kashmir, as was demanded by President Musharraf in Agra in July 2001. Now, look at the situation as it then prevailed in Agra. General Musharraf had just become President a few days before coming to India because he wanted to stay in the Rashtrapati Bhavan. In Agra, he said he would not accept any reference to cross-border terrorism and India must give primacy to Kashmir in the joint statement. That is why the talks failed and he left in a huff, without going to Ajmer for paying homage at the *dargah*. He conceded exactly the same points in Islamabad in January 2004 and what have we done now? In April 2005, Musharraf came to India on the excuse that he wanted to watch some cricket match or the other, but the visit resulted in a joint statement which, apart from other things, had a one-sentence paragraph to the effect that “terrorism

shall not be allowed to impede the peace process.” And then in New York, in Havana, Pakistan talks about Pakistan too being a victim of terrorism and the need for a joint mechanism to combat it. How long are we going to keep on saying that Pakistan is also a victim of terrorism and, therefore, we have to work together when the terrorist activity is directed against us? We have to be absolutely clear that if we want to tackle terrorism, to guarantee respect for the person and property of the citizens of India as much as any government can guarantee, then we cannot just depend upon economic reforms and economic growth. It is meaningless without the military, the defence counterpart, being given equal importance. Starting from Nehru, I am sorry to say, we have not done this. Now, we are facing a situation in which terrorism is going to increase because, for the first time, China has now come out openly in favour of Pakistan’s position on Kashmir, the issuance of visas on separate pieces of paper, the projects in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) and, of course, the military and nuclear assistance which is being given to Pakistan.

Before I conclude, I want to say a few words about the US in reference to Mr Rasgotra’s remarks this morning. For nearly nine years now, the US has been giving financial and military aid to Pakistan in order to win the cooperation of Pakistan, particularly the Army, to tackle the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. During the Presidency of Bush, \$12 billion were given, apart from the military assistance. The new Obama Administration is offering about \$5 or 6 billion or even more. By the time it is over, it will come to perhaps \$25 billion. But, in return, what is the US getting? Nothing. We must take a lesson from this that Pakistan, which is dependent upon the US and Western countries for its survival, has cheated them, and if we think that we can have friendship and cooperation with an Army dominated Pakistan, we are living in a fool’s paradise. Now, you must all have heard about the meeting in Kabul today [on July 20, 2010]. A friend of mine here said we should be happy with the communiqué. But what is happening in regard to negotiations with the Taliban must cause us great concern and this is the last point I am going to make before I end. If the Taliban

succeeds in getting back power to Kabul, as had happened in 1996, we are going to have a tremendous problem of fundamentalism and extremism in South Asia, Central Asia and other parts. Of course, we can't do anything about that because Mr Karzai and perhaps others in Afghanistan are keen on having some kind of an understanding with the Taliban and the US is not opposed to it, provided certain conditions are met. Of course, those conditions can never be met. Terrorism is going to increase once the situation in Afghanistan returns to what it was in the mid-90s. What do we do in such a situation? The answer is that we must make sure that our borders are secure and do as much as possible to keep terrorism in check. It will be very difficult because, we don't, like the US, have supportive neighbours (Canada in the north and Mexico in the south). Instead, we have land borders with countries that are inciting or abetting terrorism in India. We should never compare our situation with that of the US. Our only answer is strong, impregnable defence.

Lots of people say that we are slowly rising to the level of China, but they are talking only about economic reforms, forgetting that Deng Xiaoping had delineated the four roads of modernisation, which included the Army. Some point to Japan and Germany and my reply is that they enjoy the security of the nuclear umbrella. India does not. After the demise of the Soviet Union and the lapse of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, as far as security is concerned, our nation is friendless. You are not going to get any support from anywhere because they all have their own axes to grind. My message is clear: we cannot ignore the grave danger to our national security and territorial integrity – I am talking about Kashmir, and the Northeast – by not paying equal attention to defence.

Prospects for US-India Counter-Terrorism Cooperation: An Historical Perspective*

Polly Nayak

Counter-terrorism cooperation between the United States and India has been cast as a prime mover in plans to advance bilateral relations to a more strategic level, specifically in the security arena. Both sides have voiced hopes that the productive collaboration between Indian and American officials in the investigation of the late November 2008 militant attacks in Mumbai (widely referred to in India as ‘26/11’) will mark the start of a new era in counter-terrorism ties.¹ Drawing on analysis of past US-India counter-terrorism cooperation, this paper identifies some enduring dynamics of the relationship and sources of change, emerging opportunities and remaining constraints

Flagged as a priority area for security partnership in the joint statement by President Obama and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the latter’s state visit to Washington in November 2009,² US-India counter-terrorism cooperation already has had a long but bumpy past that merits scrutiny as we look to the future.³ The fact of decades

* This paper draws heavily on analysis of US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation before 2006 in Polly Nayak, “Prospects for US-India Counterterrorism Cooperation: An American View;” Sumit Ganguly, Brian Shoup and Andrew Scobell, eds., *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation Into the 21st Century: More Than Words* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), ch.7.

of nearly continuous US-India counter-terrorism cooperation at the tactical level – even when bilateral ties writ large were stymied by Cold War politics – offers insights about how counter-terrorism relations can survive bilateral stumbling blocks. That history, however, also raises questions about why, although counter-terrorism has seemed a particularly promising area for deepening US-Indian relations since the 1990s, this goal has proved elusive to date.

After a brief thematic review of past US-India counter-terrorism relations, this paper will examine several questions regarding post-26/11 cooperation:

- Does the cooperation on the Mumbai case really represent a new pattern – and, if so, in what respects?
- What factors account for any changes, and how durable are these factors likely to be? Conversely, what obstacles may limit our ability to build on recent cooperation, and what might conceivably remove them?
- Taking account of lessons from the past, what sorts of bilateral projects might help expand the ‘common space’ on counter-terrorism issues?
- Finally, what sorts of developments, including some beyond the control of either side, might push US-India cooperation on terrorism in new directions?

The first section of this paper describes the Mumbai attacks and initial reactions, concerns, and responses on the Indian and US sides, as Washington prepared for a Presidential transition in the winter of 2008. The next several parts of the paper review the record of prior US-India cooperation on counter-terrorism. Section II looks at the long road to the formalisation of counter-terrorism relations in January 2000 – including the effects of the Congressionally-mandated US sanctions imposed on India following its May 1998 nuclear weapons tests. Section III examines US-India counter-terrorism cooperation from immediately after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, in the United States (‘9/11’) until November 25, 2008, the eve of the Mumbai

attacks. Section IV discusses the dynamics of bilateral cooperation after 26/11 in relation to the prior history. Section V assesses the short-term prospects for counter-terrorism cooperation, identifies a few examples of collaborative activities and projects that might help ‘prime the pump,’ and speculates on some future developments that could reshape bilateral cooperation on counter-terrorism.

I. The 26/11 Attacks: Initial Reactions and Responses

The facts of the 26/11 attacks have become common knowledge. On the evening of November 26, 2008, 10 terrorists launched coordinated attacks on multiple targets in Mumbai, India’s largest city and financial capital. Among the targets were two luxury hotels and a café frequented by Mumbai’s business elite and by international tourists, a Jewish Centre, and a major railway station.

Over the ensuing 60 hours, the attackers killed more than 160 people and wounded hundreds of others before the Mumbai Police, aided by National Security Guard commando forces arriving from New Delhi, brought the situation under control. In the process, nine of the terrorists were killed and one captured.

The 26/11 attacks on Mumbai left many Indians with a weary feeling of *déjà vu*, after years of terrorist attacks on civilian targets imputed to Pakistan-based militant groups. If the default assumption for Americans is that any major attack must be the work of Al Qaeda, the default Indian hypothesis, based on history and geo-politics, has been that Pakistan did it.

While tempers flared in Mumbai and some politicians gave voice to their suspicions about a Pakistani role in 26/11, India’s senior leaders were guarded in their initial public statements and actions. This judicious stance was doubtless buttressed by pleas from the United States, United Kingdom, and other friendly governments to avoid fanning tensions with Pakistan. In addition, India’s leaders were mindful of the weakness of the new civilian government in Pakistan relative to the powerful Army and reluctant at first to push the civilian side.⁴ Another possible reason for the initial caution shown by India’s leadership was

uncertainty about whether local citizens might have been responsible for the attacks. Previously sceptical that Indian Muslims at home or abroad would mount attacks triggered by ideology rather than local grievances, some Indian counter-terrorism experts had concluded by 2008 that their country confronted a growing internal challenge from groups such as the 'Indian Mujahideen' that were both Indian and inspired by "global *jihadism*."⁵ Seeking to discourage any terrorist impulses in their communities and to underline the latter's loyalty to the Indian state, numerous Indian Muslim religious leaders took public stands against terrorism even before 26/11.⁶

While Indian officials asserted after 26/11 that all options for responding to the attacks were still on the table, their list probably did not include repeating New Delhi's ultimately-costly reaction to the December 13, 2001, militant attack on India's Parliament. At the time of that attack, Indian officials were still reeling from a devastating militant assault two months earlier on the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) State Assembly in Srinagar. They reportedly were frustrated by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage's single-minded emphasis, when he visited New Delhi, on India keeping the peace with Pakistan – a formulation that seemed to equate India, a victim of terrorism, with the font of terrorism next door.⁷ Furious after the December attack at the involvement again of two Pakistan-based groups that had long been part of the Pakistan Army's proxy war against India – the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) – India deployed troops to the frontiers with Pakistan starting in late December 2001. Islamabad's quick response in kind left India with an unpalatable choice between mounting attacks that could quickly lead to all-out war and withdrawing its forces with no tangible gains.⁸ Post-mortems of these events led the Indian military to adopt and disclose a new plan for rapid offensive mobilisation, the "Cold Start" doctrine,⁹ viewed by some as a deterrent to rash moves by Pakistan.

Although differing in many respects from 9/11, 26/11 similarly sparked public criticism of government performance and demands for improvements of government abilities at all levels to forewarn of,

and to prevent, attacks – not just to respond to, and investigate, them. The Indian public was said to be especially angry about the failure of officials to act on intelligence warnings in advance of 26/11 and to stop the attackers more rapidly. In India, as in the United States after 9/11, reform proposals zeroed in immediately on communication and coordination problems among federal, state, and local authorities. In India's case, the fact that policing is constitutionally defined as a "state subject" poses some unique challenges to improving coordination. Even so, barely three weeks after 26/11, India's Congress-led coalition government announced an overhaul of the national security system, including establishment of a national investigative agency to coordinate with state and local law enforcement and oversee the modernisation of police forces and improvements in coastal security.¹⁰ Many more changes were subsequently outlined by P. Chidambaram in his new post-26/11 capacity as Home Minister. In addition, New Delhi – concerned anew about India's air and naval surveillance capabilities, after the undetected arrival by sea of the 26/11 attackers from Pakistan – reportedly stepped up purchases of radars and early-warning systems from Israel.¹¹ Analysis of India's post-26/11 institutional reforms and security acquisitions is beyond the scope of this paper, however.¹²

The 26/11 attacks evoked *déjà vu* feelings of a different sort among senior officials in the Bush Administration. For them, too, the salient reference point was the December 13, 2001, assault on India's Parliament by militants based in Pakistan. Enmeshed in responding to 9/11, these officials barely had a chance to focus on the string of militant attacks in India that preceded the December 13 assault. As the Americans saw it, while the assault on India's Parliament had fortunately failed in its objectives, it had brought the two nuclear powers unacceptably close to war and undercut US efforts to keep Pakistani troops focussed on counter-terrorism operations on the border with Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.¹³ The 2008 attacks in Mumbai seemed again to have targeted an important symbol of India's rising power – this time, the country's financial centre. Once again, war seemed disquietingly possible.¹⁴ As in 2001-02, any moves toward war between

India and Pakistan would put US operations in Afghanistan at risk. As the 2008 attacks unfolded, US officials – particularly those at the US Embassy, New Delhi, and the US Consulate in Mumbai – focussed on the immediate threat to American lives in Mumbai.

For most of the US public, the November 2008 attacks in Mumbai – broadcast live on national television for days – seemed to come from nowhere. The high profile of 26/11 for Americans caused a few in the broader Washington defence community initially to suppose that the 26/11 terrorist attacks must be the worst ever in India and, therefore, must pose an unprecedented risk of an Indo-Pakistani War, with escalation to nuclear use.¹⁵ Many South Asia specialists in the United States saw the 26/11 attacks as a continuation of a longstanding pattern – but a pattern that carried a variety of risks. Reflecting India’s long-term view of the issue, veteran Indian counter-terrorism expert B. Raman pointed out, in his year-end retrospective on 2008 terrorism in India, that the Mumbai attacks, although terrible, were by no means the most lethal in the country’s history; indeed, even counting 26/11, 2008 was not India’s most “terrorism-hit” year.¹⁶ Rather, the uniqueness of these attacks in Mumbai lay in the fact that Westerners, including Americans, were specifically targeted.

The attacks on 26/11 occurred just as President-elect Obama was preparing to announce his national security team in preparation for taking office eight weeks later, on January 20 (2009.) Obama’s initial post-26/11 public message of sympathy for India consequently was delivered by a spokesman for his transition team.¹⁷

Thus, in the weeks before the Presidential inauguration, it was outgoing Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice who, with the initial evidence uncovered by the investigation of 26/11 in hand, shuttled from Washington to New Delhi to urge restraint toward Pakistan, and to Islamabad, to press Pakistan to cooperate in the Indian investigation of the 26/11 attacks.¹⁸ Rice was accompanied by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral Mike Mullen on one trip; Deputy Secretary John Negroponte followed up with a separate visit days later. In her discussions with New Delhi, Rice reportedly drew on rapport she had

established with Indian officials over the preceding years and on trust earned by the Bush Administration while working on the bilateral nuclear deal with India, a deal intended to signal India's unique importance to Washington.¹⁹

Although dwarfed by Indian casualties in Mumbai, particularly from the attack on the train station, the fact of American deaths guaranteed significant involvement by US law enforcement officials in the investigation. As the attacks were winding down, the Indian press reported that the United States was rushing Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI) investigators and forensic scientists to Mumbai to "coordinate...about the planning and evidence collected on the attacks."²⁰ As described subsequently in testimony by an FBI official before the US Congress, "The FBI objective was to assist the Indian government with its investigation, determine who was responsible for the deaths of Americans in the attacks, uncover any possible US nexus to the attacks and any other related threats to US citizens or interests abroad, and share intelligence and other lessons learned with rest of the US intelligence and law enforcement communities." Additional FBI personnel were sent to Mumbai in mid-December to assist in the on-the-scene investigation, while "FBI HQ and FBI LA established 24/7 command posts to support the FBI team in Mumbai. These command posts also helped to process information obtained from the investigation and related interviews, as well as process tactical and strategic analysis to define the overall intelligence picture."²¹

The interrogation by Mumbai Police of the lone attacker who was captured alive quickly led to the identification of two known leaders of the Pakistan-based militant LeT, who evidently had stage-managed the attack from different Pakistani cities.²² FBI investigators on the scene reportedly likewise concluded in December 2008 that the 26/11 attacks were the work of LeT.²³ There was "no doubt" that the attacks originated in Pakistan, Rice asserted publicly on December 7.²⁴

Thus, as 2008 and the Bush Administration drew to a close, US and Indian diplomacy and investigative efforts on 26/11 were in tune; Indian observers were uncertain about what to expect of the incoming Obama

team, however. One Indian strategic analyst, K. Subrahmanyam, hoped that the new President would be willing to countenance a “showdown” with Pakistan “unless Pakistan is prepared to mend its ways.”²⁵ Others worried that India was about to experience a *de facto* demotion by the incoming Obama Administration. International Relations Professor Amitabh Mattoo of Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi, for example, expected a “more sophisticated, less benign treatment under Obama; he surmised that India ‘won’t get the kind of *carte blanche* you got with the Bush administration.....I don’t think the wow factor is going to be there.”²⁶

Having briefly examined the 26/11 attacks and their immediate implications for Washington and New Delhi, we turn now to the *pre*-26/11 record of US-India counter-terrorism cooperation and the patterns it revealed.

II. 1980-9/10/2001: The Long Road to Structured Counter-Terrorism ‘Partnership’

The formal launch of the US-India Joint Counter-Terrorism Working Group in January 2000 aimed to transform a previously obscure and ad hoc aspect of bilateral ties into a lead element of the haltingly expanding relationship. Then, as now, counter-terrorism was assumed to be easier and less contentious than other potential areas of security cooperation.

The Working Group was to have been initiated two years earlier. In 1997, the Clinton Administration had decided on a new India-focussed South Asia policy emphasising economic ties and deemphasising nuclear proliferation concerns. At the maiden meeting of the new ‘strategic dialogue’ between senior US and senior Indian officials in December 1997, counter-terrorism was high on the list of issues to pursue in an expanded relationship. Progress on the new bilateral agenda, however, was interrupted by the 1998 tests and imposition of US sanctions. The inauguration of the Joint Counter-Terrorism Working Group in early 2000 signalled President Clinton’s resolve to get bilateral ties back on track and sanctions lifted, as well as a general desire to raise the profile of international counter-terrorism cooperation in the face of a growing terrorist threat.

New Delhi, too, welcomed the official launch of the Joint Working Group as evidence of renewed engagement with Washington, as well as a channel for engaging US officials regularly on India's terrorism concerns, specifically Pakistan. At the strategic dialogue meetings of 1997, Foreign Secretary K. Raghunath had underscored India's concerns about cross-border terrorism; Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral highlighted Pakistan-sponsored terrorism as the cause of Indo-Pakistani tensions. The tone of the meetings cheered some Indian observers. Political commentator Raja Mohan, for example, described comments by Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Thomas Pickering as "mark[ing] a new American sensitivity to the profound impact terrorism has had on India's security in the last decade and a half. India has welcomed the new American approach and wants more follow-up action."²⁷ The first follow-up finally occurred two years later.

As an arena in which to build US-Indian ties after decades of bilateral tension, counter-terrorism seemed particularly promising in the late 1990s for three reasons. First, years of *de facto* bilateral cooperation on specific terrorism issues had built up a reservoir of goodwill. Second, terrorism was an issue important to both governments. Each had long supported the expansion of international counter-terrorism mechanisms. For example, in 1994, then Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee pressed for a new UN counter-terrorism convention,²⁸ and in 1995, both India's Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and President Bill Clinton urged the UN to spearhead a push against global terrorism.²⁹ Third, the issue of counter-terrorism was relatively free of the 'baggage' associated with US nuclear non-proliferation policy toward South Asia, although the sanctions imposed on India in 1998 did limit US security assistance. The sections below briefly examine each of these three initial bases for expanding bilateral counter-terrorism relations.

History of De Facto Cooperation

As the two sides began formalising and expanding existing counter-terrorism ties, the goodwill already accumulated by low-profile day-to-day official cooperation on terrorism proved to be the strongest of the

three advantages. During the 1980s and early 1990s, India had sought and received US cooperation on Sikh terrorism, then its premier challenge. While welcoming the conclusion of a US-Indian extradition treaty in 1997 as a landmark in bilateral counter-terrorism relations, India's then Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Salim Sherwani, emphasised that the treaty merely formalised a tradition of "surprisingly good" *de facto* cooperation with the United States, including the extradition of several Sikh militants wanted for violent acts in India.³⁰ Foreign Ministry Joint Secretary Alok Prasad noted that the accord – which followed similar agreements with Canada and the United Kingdom – would facilitate the deportation of criminals sought by either country and send a strong message to terrorists.³¹

Indian officials also welcomed a new law signed by President Clinton in 1996 that barred fund-raising in the United States by named terrorist groups, including the Indian Sikh separatist Babbar Khalsa and Khalistan Liberation Front. The law, of course, also encompassed terrorist fund-raising from other diaspora communities in the United States. The 1996 law did not wholly reassure Indian officials. An unidentified Indian diplomat in Washington told the *Los Angeles Times* that terrorism "aimed from the United States" remained a problem for India and cited as an example the Council of Khalistan, which functioned as a lobbying group in Washington but whose founders were wanted by India for their role in blowing up an Air India flight over the Atlantic in 1985. Implicitly agreeing, US counter-terrorism experts observed that concerns about stifling legitimate fund-raising activities had blunted the implementation of such US legislation in the past.³²

In the mid-1990s, US counter-terrorism officials similarly sought and received assistance from Indian counterparts following the abduction in early July 1995 of two American tourists by Al Faran militants in Kashmir. A German, a Norwegian, and two Britons also were kidnapped several days later. Al Faran threatened to kill the hostages unless India released jailed Kashmir separatists. One of the Americans subsequently escaped, but the Norwegian was beheaded as a warning to the Indian government.³³ In November 1996, a year after

negotiations between Indian officials and Al Faran broke down, the US State Department announced that the Government of India and state authorities were developing a rewards programme for information leading to the location of the hostages, complementing the work of a Government of India investigative team.³⁴ The US Ambassador to Pakistan announced a parallel rewards programme there. In 1997, the chief of India's elite 'Black Cat' commando forces reportedly consulted with visiting US, British, and German counter-terrorism experts on the search for the hostages³⁵ amid unconfirmed reports that they had been killed.³⁶ Their fate was never ascertained, and the issue faded from the bilateral agenda.

US-India counter-terrorism cooperation weathered a tiff in 1997 between Washington and New Delhi over alleged unauthorised meetings between a senior Indian intelligence officer and American intelligence officials. The squabble seemed to have little practical effect on the relationship, in part because it was so low key and expectations on both sides, so modest. New Delhi expelled two US intelligence representatives from the US Embassy; Washington countered by demanding the withdrawal of two Indian intelligence officers from consulates in the United States. The episode blew over despite warnings by an unnamed senior US diplomat – reported by *India Today* – that the expulsion of the Americans would “impair” information sharing on counter-terrorism; the reporter concluded that “no diplomatic feathers were ruffled in New Delhi's South Block” by the tit-for-tat US demand.³⁷

The professionalism both sides brought to ad hoc US-India counter-terrorism cooperation clearly was a plus in an up-and-down bilateral relationship. It could not, however, reduce fundamental differences between the US and Indian perspectives on terrorism.

Shared Emphasis on Terrorism – But Conflicting Threat Perceptions

While terrorism was and is a high priority for both the US and India, their divergent preoccupations and threat perceptions have put them at odds repeatedly; in addition, the relationship has been burdened by parochial expectations on both sides. India has been disappointed with

the US approach to Pakistan, while Washington has been unhappy with India's attitude toward "rogue states" such as Iran and (before 2003) Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Each side has suspected bias in information received from the other regarding its terrorism nemeses.

New Delhi's Preoccupations: For India, terrorism has been largely a homeland security issue. This focus was evident in the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Act of 2002 (POTA), which identified terrorists as persons intending to "threaten the unity, integrity, security or sovereignty of India or to strike terror in the people or any section of the people." POTA's definition of terrorists covered individuals belonging to banned organisations or involved in raising funds for terrorist groups, and terrorism included virtually any type of attack on a wide variety of targets, including Indian government property.³⁸ Repealed after the Congress Party-led coalition came to power, POTA and an earlier-repealed piece of legislation, Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Prevention Act (TADA), were effectively reinstated by Parliament immediately after 26/11 as the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 2008.³⁹

India's neighbours have figured prominently in its terrorism concerns. By the late 1990s, India had faced violence linked to ethnic, ideological, and religious insurgencies in its northeast and to Sikh separatism in Punjab state,⁴⁰ the 16-year-old Kashmir autonomy movement,⁴¹ and Naxalite rebellions in the south and east.⁴² The second and third of these had attracted cross-border support from Pakistan.⁴³ In more recent years, New Delhi has pressed Burma (Myanmar), Bhutan and Bangladesh⁴⁴ to deny sanctuary and weapons shipments to militants in India's northeast and has accused Islamabad of meddling there, as well. Thus, New Delhi's worries about terrorism have focussed on the unhelpful roles played by surrounding countries – above all, Pakistan.

Indian observers have long monitored official US views on terrorism for evidence of progress toward adopting New Delhi's optic on Islamabad. For years, they were frustrated by what they saw as inconsistencies and backsliding in public statements and in the State

Department's annual *Patterns of Global Terrorism (PGT)* concerning Pakistan's terrorist threat to India.

- In 1997, for example, India welcomed as a recognition of "ground realities" in South Asia, the State Department's addition to its list of terrorist organisations of the Harkat-ul-Ansar (HuA), a Pakistan-linked organisation with reported ties to the Al Faran militant group that abducted the Western tourists in Kashmir in 1995. An Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman emphasised India's hope that the United States would soon recognise the "true nature" of other such organisations operating in Jammu and Kashmir.⁴⁵
- In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, the Indian press trumpeted sections of the newly published *PGT* for 2000 that described Pakistan as having provided bases for anti-American terrorists as well as for militant groups active in Indian-held Kashmir such as the Harakat ul-Mujahideen (HuM), some of which engaged in terrorism.⁴⁶
- An *Economic Times of India* editorial, however, found the *PGT* of 2002 disappointing from the Indian perspective because it failed to make "even a veiled suggestion that the Pakistani establishment may in any way be abetting the terrorists," yet lauded Islamabad's counter-terrorism efforts. The article faulted the United States for not letting "the principle of opposition to all forms of terrorism override its immediate objectives."⁴⁷
- In 2004, Indian counter-terrorism expert Ajay Sahni, editor of the *South Asia Intelligence Review*, was outraged by what he saw as the newly published 2003 *PGT*'s soft-peddalling of Pakistan's role in regional terrorism.⁴⁸

Washington's Focus: In contrast to India, US senior officials before 9/11 viewed terrorism mainly as a threat to US interests abroad. The investigation of the 1993 attack on the World Trade Centre in New York by Islamist terrorists uncovered plots for multiple bombings and assassinations there, highlighting the threat to homeland security. Some US counter-terrorism experts, notably Bruce Hoffman, turned their attention to the shifts underway from secular to religiously-

based terrorism, from state-supported terrorist groups with traditional structures to networks, and from targeting Americans abroad to targeting them in the United States.⁴⁹ The US counter-terrorism community's all-out but transient effort to foil 'millenium' attacks on the United States in December 1999-January 2000 reflected the new concern about the homeland, but the attacks on Khobar Towers and on the *Cole* drew official American attention back to the overseas threat.

In Washington's global but US-centric view of terrorist threats before 9/11, Pakistan appeared more benign than to India. Moreover, American officials had their own yardstick for Pakistani cooperation on counter-terrorism, to New Delhi's irritation. In 1991, citing Pakistani support for violence by Kashmiri separatists, New Delhi officially asked Washington to declare Pakistan a state sponsor of international terrorism.⁵⁰ India must have taken heart, however briefly, when Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Woolsey stated in April 1993 that the United States was on the brink of listing Pakistan along with Sudan as a state sponsor of terrorism for supporting Muslim militants associated with Kashmir and Sikh separatists in Punjab against the Indian government. State Department officials, however, reportedly opposed listing Pakistan, arguing that this would isolate and drive it into the arms of radical anti-Western states.⁵¹

When US officials announced Washington's decision later in 1993 not to list Pakistan, they cited Islamabad's responsiveness to US concerns about the Kashmir militants; its promise to "flush out" militant organisations to which it admitted only providing moral support; and its cooperation with US officials in apprehending Mir Aimal Kansi – a Pakistani later executed in the United States for slaying several Central Investigation Agency (CIA) employees outside the agency's headquarters. In addition, the Nawaz Sharif Administration reportedly replaced the Director of its leading intelligence service, the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISID), in response to US concerns about his role.⁵²

Washington also was pleased with Pakistan's cooperation on the extradition to the United States of Ramzi Youssuf in 1995 after his

indictment for the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing, and with the joint investigation of the murder of four US oil executives in Karachi in 1998.⁵³ Thus, Pakistan characteristically ended up on the US terrorism watch list, not on the list of state sponsors.

US-Indian differences on militant terrorism were reflected in divergent approaches to Indo-Pakistani tensions.

- New Delhi insisted that Islamabad end militant infiltrations across the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir before the two countries could talk peace.
- Washington saw Pakistan's hand in the Kashmiri militancy as part of a tit-for-tat pattern between India and Pakistan since partition in 1947 – hence, a result of regional tensions.

Consequently, Washington repeatedly prescribed the reduction of Indo-Pakistani tensions as a means of ending terrorism against India, as well as averting the risk of general war between nuclear powers. In 1993, for example, Principal Deputy Assistant John Malott identified regional security and counter-terrorism as two of the top priorities for US South Asian policy.⁵⁴ The Clinton Administration planned to conduct parallel dialogues on Indo-Pakistani tensions and terrorism with India and with Pakistan, Malott said. Reflecting similar assumptions, the Bush Administration adopted the same approach after militants linked to Pakistan attacked India's Parliament in New Delhi in December 2001, sparking a massive Indian military deployment to the border.

If India found the US approach to Pakistan unpalatable even before 9/11, New Delhi's agnosticism on Iran's and on pre-2003-Iraq's support for international terrorism, rankled US officials. While Washington shunned both Iran and Saddam Hussein's Iraq as state sponsors of terrorism, India maintained cordial relations with each as part of its complex multilateralist post-Cold War foreign policy.⁵⁵ In 1993, when DCI James Woolsey was describing the Iran-backed Hezbollah organisation – based in Lebanon – as the greatest threat to US and other Western interests,⁵⁶ New Delhi was expanding ties to Tehran, driven largely by India's expanding appetite for energy and trade.⁵⁷ US

observers worried about the potential transfer of sensitive advanced Indian technologies to Iran by means of scientific exchanges.

US and Indian threat perceptions also diverged on Iraq under Saddam Hussein. Washington viewed Iraq as an instigator of terrorism against the United States and its allies as well as a threat to stability in the Middle East; many Indians disapproved of the US attack on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in 1991, although New Delhi permitted US military aircraft to refuel in India during the Gulf War.⁵⁸ Similarly, many in India saw the 2003 Iraq War as a peculiarly US mission, not a response to threats posed by Iraq. Senior Indian officials pointedly cited terrorism at home, which they blamed on US counter-terrorism ally Pakistan, as the reason for declining to send troops to aid the US-led campaign in Iraq.⁵⁹

Thus, while both the United States and India pushed for tighter international controls on terrorism from the 1990s on, their reasons and proposals for doing so differed importantly.

- Washington sought through international cooperation to isolate “rogue” nations and to end passive support by states around the world for terrorist groups, to raise the costs to these groups of doing business, and to deny them the use of territory.⁶⁰
- For India, delegitimising terrorist tactics regardless of their cause meant, in effect, denying Pakistan’s rationale that it supported freedom fighters who were trying to throw off the yoke of Indian oppression in Kashmir. India’s concern was reflected in the argument made by an Indian representative at the UN in 1998 in favour of a new convention on terrorism with no “conditionalities such as subjecting extradition requests to the domestic law of the requested state.”⁶¹

Mutual Misperceptions and Suspicions

Prejudices on both sides made it difficult for senior Indian officials to discuss with American counterparts, let alone narrow, these differences on counter-terrorism. B. Raman noted in 1997 that the United States had a tendency to underestimate India’s capabilities and reliability and

to project “superpower” arrogance in the relationship, while Indian officials suffered from an “obsessive urge” to be critical of the United States and to deny it credit where credit was due. A residual chill on both sides from the Cold War era contributed to these problems. “We, rightly, criticise the Americans for not declaring Pakistan a state sponsoring international terrorism, but we do not have the generosity to acknowledge the US assistance in counter-terrorism,” Raman wrote.⁶²

New Delhi’s suspicion of US intentions in the region also constrained Washington’s counter-terrorism cooperation with India’s smaller neighbours in the mid-1990s. Sri Lankan officials, for example, worried about New Delhi’s opposition to the US provision of counter-terrorism training and satellite imagery assistance sought by Colombo, although they ultimately accepted the US help.⁶³ In July 1996, an unnamed Sri Lankan official told *India Abroad* that relations with India had improved significantly under President Chandrika Kumaratunga’s Administration because it had abandoned the pro-West policies of the previous United National Party (UNP) government. The UNP, the official said, had failed to grasp the true import of “dynamic neutralism.” Relations with India had faltered when Western and Israeli military advisers were brought in to help fight the “Tamil Tiger” insurgents, he claimed, whereas Kumaratunga and her Foreign Minister had revived Sri Lankan-Indian ties based on “mutual and continuous recognition of each other’s sensitivities and needs.”⁶⁴

Thus, through much of the 1990s, differences in foreign policy perspectives still fettered US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation, despite the ebbing of Cold War-related tensions and the growth of shared concerns about terrorist groups and regional stability. It would take outside events to provide new impetus for the relationship.

May 1998-September 10, 2001: Impeded by Sanctions

In May 1998, just as global and regional developments were starting to narrow the gap between US and Indian terrorism threat perceptions, India’s nuclear tests and their diplomatic fallout again dampened prospects for expanding counter-terrorism cooperation. Among the

factors encouraging some convergence of threat perceptions was the public identification by Al Qaeda's leaders of both India and the United States as enemies of Islam and, hence, targets for attack by "true Muslims." The classified US indictment of Bin Laden in 1998 following the investigation of the US Embassy bombings in East Africa reportedly named groups already believed to be operating under Al Qaeda's umbrella in India, among other countries.⁶⁵ Also increasing the common ground between New Delhi and Washington on terrorism were the shared perceptions of Afghanistan as a font of terrorism and rising US frustration with Islamabad's refusal to end support for the Taliban despite the latter's ties to Al Qaeda.

Sanctions or no sanctions, US sympathy for India and anger at Pakistan prompted the Clinton Administration to go public about Pakistan's ties to the hijackers of an Indian passenger aircraft from Nepal in December 1999. The US' role in resolving the hijacking broke new ground in "real-time engagement" on counter-terrorism between New Delhi and Washington, in the words of Naresh Chandra, India's Ambassador to the United States. He added that it took a crisis of this proportion to "refamiliarise" Washington with India's battle against terrorism.⁶⁶ Chandra cited his frequent consultations with senior US officials; US diplomatic support for India with the Taliban and with third-country governments; and other US assistance that "could not be disclosed."⁶⁷ Unnamed US officials told reporters that evidence of HuM's responsibility for the hijacking had come through US "intelligence channels." Assistant Secretary of State Karl Inderfurth and two other American officials reportedly had just returned from demarching General Musharraf in Islamabad on indications that HuM "operated openly and clandestinely" with support from Pakistan's military and intelligence services. LeT, like HuM, was used by Pakistan's military against India's in Kashmir, the US officials added.⁶⁸ The goodwill won in New Delhi by this initial US help on the hijacking soured subsequently, as Indian Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials blamed the FBI and US diplomacy for failing to gain the extradition of the hijackers from Pakistan for trial in either India or the United States.⁶⁹

By precluding military sales and cooperation for a time and freezing the annual bilateral defence dialogue, the Congressionally mandated US sanctions imposed on India after the nuclear tests closed some avenues of counter-terrorism cooperation. The sanctions postponed proposed joint exercises and temporarily foreclosed US sales of military items such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and night vision equipment that were sought by India for its counter-terrorism units.⁷⁰ The suspension of US-Indian Defence Policy Group (DPG) meetings held up the planned formalisation of the counter-terrorism relationship. Jointly headed by India's Defence Secretary and the US Assistant Secretary of Defence for International Security, the DPG represented the two sides' defence interests in US-Indian Working Groups on counter-terrorism and peace-keeping. Thus, in late 2001, as sanctions were about to be lifted, senior officials in the Bush Administration and their Indian counterparts busily planned the December DPG meeting that finally would pave the way for expanded counter-terrorism cooperation.⁷¹

US sanctions appear also to have helped spur India's counter-terrorism partnership with, as well as arms purchases from, Israel. In August 2001, Israel's *Jerusalem Post* – quoting *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor* – described broad-gauge counter-terrorism cooperation between New Delhi and Tel Aviv, encompassing law enforcement, military, and intelligence ties. The two governments reportedly began discussing a Joint Indo-Israeli Working Group on cross-border terrorism in 2000; the group was officially launched in 2002. Prime Minister Shimon Peres' high-visibility visit to India in early 2001 reportedly followed that of an Israeli counter-terrorism team that included military intelligence specialists and senior police commanders. The Israeli group – led by Eli Katzir of the Counter-Terrorism Combat Unit in the Prime Minister's Office – was said to have visited Kashmir and other troubled areas to help assess India's security needs.⁷²

At least as important as US sanctions in driving India's counter-terrorism partnership with Israel was the view that they had parallel terrorism concerns, similar threat perceptions, and compatible approaches to counter-terrorism. Both governments were focussed on

homeland security; each faced attacks launched from disputed territories; both confronted hostile neighbours. The *Jane's* report quoted an Indian official as saying: "We've told the Israelis that we're prepared to help safeguard their interests in the region. The source of our mutual nuclear threat is the same" – presumably a reference to radical Islamists.⁷³ The two countries reportedly later discussed possible joint exercises; "their [the Israelis'] experience in counter-terrorism methods can be invaluable to us," India's then-Defence Minister, George Fernandes, remarked publicly in September 2003.⁷⁴ Israel's relationship with India is second only to that with the United States, the Chairman of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee, Yuval Steinitz, told a United Press International reporter in 2003.⁷⁵ India's perceived convergence of interests with Israel also fuelled joint lobbying efforts in Washington, some of them brokered by the American Jewish Committee. Israel sought India's help in influencing US policy on Israel; India sought the US Jewish community's support in opposing US military sales to Pakistan.⁷⁶

Thus, although the imposition of US sanctions had encouraged counter-terrorism cooperation with Israel along with broader security ties, the removal of those sanctions did not slow the growth of the security relationship. Neither did changes of government in Israel as well as India. By some accounts, Israel by 2008 had edged out Russia as India's top defence supplier,⁷⁷ despite some political opposition in India to Israel. Counter-terrorism ties between India and Israel, on the other hand, assumed a lower profile. Beyond some intelligence cooperation, the Indo-Israeli counter-terrorism relations were "more about technology and equipment and less about other activities" such as training, former Israeli military Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak told a reporter. Much of the India-Israel dialogue on counter-terrorism was said to be non-governmental.⁷⁸

III. 9/11/2001-25/11/2008: Widening – But Not Deepening – US-India Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

The 9/11 attacks – after initially diverting Washington from establishing

the intended “strategic partnership”⁷⁹ with India – ultimately stimulated growth in the pace and scope of US-Indian interaction on counter-terrorism. Indian officials, having offered virtually unqualified assistance to the United States, appeared to feel slighted by the US decision to make Pakistan the mainspring for the US response to the 9/11 attacks. For a time, Washington’s drive to link up with Pakistan on counter-terrorism seemed to be replacing non-proliferation as an obstacle to US-Indian cooperation. Officials of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government of the day regrouped, however, and pressed ahead with efforts to build on common concerns about security and ‘*jihadi* terrorism.’ New Delhi shared Washington’s desire to see the end of Taliban rule in Afghanistan, in large part because of the Taliban’s close ties to Pakistan’s military.

Most positively, from New Delhi’s vantage point, as a result of 9/11, Washington was finally moving closer to India’s view of the so-called ‘Kashmir’ militants based in Pakistan as international terrorists – a diplomatic triumph for India.

- In an October 2001 interview, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage cited Washington’s recent imposition of sanctions against the Jaish-e-Mohammad as evidence that US concerns with terrorism in the region went “beyond Afghanistan.”⁸⁰
- Statements in November 2001 by senior US officials seemed to repudiate any distinction between terrorists and freedom fighters; India had been working hard to impress on Washington the links between the so-called Kashmir militants supported by Pakistan and international terrorist groups like Al Qaeda. Indian officials particularly welcomed the US designation of the Pakistan-based LeT and JeM as terrorist organisations a few days before a planned visit to the United States by then-Prime Minister Vajpayee.⁸¹
- After militants with ties to Pakistan attacked India’s Parliament in December 2001, Indian officials charged Washington with practising a double standard on terrorism. In response, Washington began describing militant violence against Indian targets as part of global terrorism, to Pakistan’s chagrin.⁸²

- In mid-January 2002, under US pressure, President Pervez Musharraf announced that he would ban LeT and JeM, although he cited their militant activities in Pakistan as the reason.⁸³
- In 2003, 11 young Muslims in the Washington area, some of them US-born, were charged with belonging to LeT, by then listed as a terrorist organisation. The charges cited LeT's involvement in multiple terrorist attacks on Indian targets.⁸⁴
- In late September 2003, at the end of the Bush-Vajpayee talks on the fringes of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Condoleezza Rice reportedly told journalists that the President had talked with Musharraf about the “need to stop cross-border terrorism in Kashmir”⁸⁵ – precisely the formulation sought by New Delhi at the time.

These developments reduced one longtime obstacle to closer US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation: New Delhi's perception that Washington was indifferent to India's terrorism concerns.

Partnering on New Areas

9/11 spurred the opening of numerous new avenues for bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation. The initial focus on international terrorism expanded to include narco-terrorism, Afghanistan, and the Taliban.⁸⁶ As Ambassador Robert Blackwill, a leading advocate of US-Indian strategic cooperation, described the relationship in 2003:⁸⁷

With respect to intelligence exchange and law enforcement, together we are going hard after the bad guys. The FBI and US Customs Service have intensified beyond recognition their cooperative activities with Indian colleagues to investigate terrorism, major crimes, money laundering, smuggling and customs violations. *We regularly share information to detect and counter potential terrorist attacks, and strengthen our respective homeland security.* In October 2001, we signed a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty, that we hope will soon come into force, to

counter criminal activities more effectively. In April 2002, a US-India cybersecurity forum was launched to boost our bilateral cooperation in this domain. (Emphasis added.)

From a qualitative perspective, the growth of information sharing on terrorism stood out as particularly important.

The steady expansion of US-Indian defence ties after 2001 added other dimensions to the counter-terrorism relationship.⁸⁸ The lifting of US sanctions allowed the United States to offer India equipment to help apprehend militants crossing the Line of Control in Kashmir, as well as sales of conventional military supplies. Joint counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency exercises raised at least the possibility of future joint operations. US Army troops took part with Indian troops in jungle warfare exercises in India's northeast and Guam in 2003 and 2004; in summer 2004, a senior-level US Army delegation visited India's 15 Corps Battle School (CBS) near Srinagar with an eye to adopting its training techniques on anti-militancy and unconventional operations for US troops heading to Iraq.⁸⁹ Counter-terrorism elements were incorporated into joint naval exercises,⁹⁰ and the two sides broadened their cooperation on aviation as well as maritime security.

These trends continued unabated even after the advent of a Congress Party-left coalition government in New Delhi in 2004, led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, reflecting the *de facto* broad acceptability in India of counter-terrorism cooperation with the United States. The US-India defence framework agreement signed in June 2005 specified "defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism" as one of four top security objectives for which mutual defence capabilities should be enhanced.⁹¹ The new accord drew no political fire in India, even as the Congress' leftist coalition partners rallied against the bilateral civil nuclear deal announced by President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Singh in July of that year. By 2009, the regularly scheduled, Indian-hosted bilateral Yudh Abhyas Army exercise had grown in size and complexity to a live-fire, multi-echelon combined UN peace-keeping operation scenario aimed at promoting interoperability.⁹²

Acknowledged Gains from Cooperation

US and Indian observers publicly acknowledged some concrete gains from the growth of US-Indian counter-terrorism ties after 9/11. Bilateral cooperation influenced the way India organises against terrorism, according to B. Raman; the two sides also exchanged training materials and methods.⁹³ Raman lauded an Indo-US Workshop on the use of science and technology in counter-terrorism, held in Goa in India in January, 2004, as an instance of information sharing with clear potential payoffs, notably in interrupting clandestine terrorist financial networks.⁹⁴

Information exchanged by US and Indian officials reportedly proved valuable to their respective pursuits.

- An unnamed Indian official claimed in October 2001 that India's external intelligence service, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), had provided critical information to US officials, including the cell phone number of terrorist Omar Sheikh, according to India's *Daily Excelsior* newspaper.⁹⁵
- The United States evidently contributed intelligence on growing Maoist activities in India and on efforts by Maoist groups worldwide to forge a grand alliance. Indian police sources noted in 2004 that the US decision to put some of these Indian groups on a watch list would help prevent them from seeking external support.⁹⁶

Persistent Obstacles

Despite gains in the five years following 9/11 and the benefits for bilateral ties of inducting a new generation of officials on both sides into cooperative ventures, the counter-terrorism relationship continued to suffer from some familiar ailments. These included differing views of, and equities in, regional issues, as well as lingering mistrust on the Indian side.

Beginning in 2004 and 2005, revived tensions between Washington and Tehran over Iran's nuclear programme also showed signs of complicating US-Indian relations again. Indian commentators were alarmed by rumours from Washington of possible US military

action against Iran. Washington opposed a proposed Iran-Pakistan-India gas line, viewed by some Indian and Pakistani officials as a confidence-building measure between their two countries, as well as a solution to their energy needs. In mid-March 2005, an unnamed Bush Administration source reportedly stated that "...the last thing we would want to see is Iran getting more revenue to fund its nuclear weapons program."⁹⁷ In an indirect response to US objections to the pipeline, then-Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran politely challenged the international community to help India tap nuclear energy for its growth, despite past disagreements on nuclear issues.⁹⁸

In late summer 2005, dismay about India's ties to Iran added to the controversy among Republican as well as Democrat Congressmen about the proliferation consequences of the newly unveiled US-India civil nuclear agreement. India rebuffed Bush Administration requests to join the United States and Europe in pressing Iran to give up its nuclear programme, just as Administration officials were defending their proposal to seek waivers of international non-proliferation guidelines to permit US assistance to India's civil nuclear sector on the grounds that India is a responsible nuclear state.⁹⁹

US and Indian officials also butted heads on Nepal and Bangladesh. Washington's and New Delhi's common concerns about instability in South Asia spurred information sharing on terrorist bases and training camps in Nepal and Bangladesh, according to the US-published *Armed Forces Journal*.¹⁰⁰ The Americans and Indians sometimes disagreed strongly on the implications of such information, however. On Nepal, for example, US and Indian officials generally had seen – and continue to see – eye to eye on the nature of the problem. Both worried about the rapid spread of the Maoist insurgency and the Nepal King's suspension of democracy in early 2005, but differed on the advisability of cutting off counter-terrorism aid. Moreover, US officials generally have deferred to Indian policy preferences on Nepal, recognising New Delhi's greater stake in the outcome.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, according to one Indian report, in fall 2004, Indian officials feared that US advisers were encouraging Nepal's King to use military force against the Maoist insurgents, rather

than negotiating. Indian security personnel reportedly searched a Bulgarian aircraft chartered by the State Department to deliver a US diplomatic consignment of arms and ammunition to Nepal's counter-terrorism police when the plane refuelled in Ahmedabad. New Delhi was said to be embarrassed by press reports concerning the detention of the aircraft but still nettled by US involvement in India's zone of influence.¹⁰²

Disagreements between Washington and New Delhi over Bangladesh turned on differing assessments of the country's two feuding leaders and their respective commitment to combating terrorism, some of it aimed at India. Friction between New Delhi and Dhaka had risen since Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's return to power in 2001 as head of the first coalition government in Bangladesh to include the militant Jamaat-e-Islami.¹⁰³ In 2004, Indian officials variously declared Bangladesh to be hostile to India, or in denial about its emerging role as a "hub for international terrorism" and a sanctuary for terrorists.¹⁰⁴ US officials publicly held to Washington's longtime view of Bangladesh as a moderate, if politically chaotic, friend. Asked on the fringes of the sixth Indo-US Working Group meeting on Counter-Terrorism about these differences, US Counter-Terrorism Coordinator Cofer Black remarked: "We're not on the same sheet of music with the Indians on this..." Washington, he said, was still trying to determine both whether Bangladesh was itself at risk and if it was a potential platform to "project terrorism internationally."¹⁰⁵ The subsequent return to power of Sheikh Hasina Wajed in December 2008 improved counter-terrorism cooperation with New Delhi, reducing tensions all around in spite of continuing evidence of terrorist activity in Bangladesh, some of it aimed at India.¹⁰⁶

Despite closer coordination between New Delhi and Washington on regional as well global issues, differences on Pakistan still constrained some types of counter-terrorism cooperation. On cyber-security, for example – the focus of a sub-group of the Joint Indo-US Working Group on Terrorism – "the enthusiasm for deep engagement with India... was less than overwhelming on the US side because of the perception that

New Delhi's interests centered primarily on expanding its capacity for information warfare or interdiction of terrorism involving Pakistan," according to Ashley Tellis. US Under Secretary of Commerce Kenneth I. Juster, meanwhile, had underscored the importance of better cyber security to bilateral trade and technology cooperation in remarks at the India-US Information Security Summit in 2004.¹⁰⁷

Unease About Partnering with the United States on Counter-Terrorism

Apart from such differences of opinion between the two sides concerning India's neighbours, near and far, some Indian officials reportedly remained uncomfortable about working closely with US counterparts on terrorism. Some worried that the United States had withheld from India information on Al Qaeda operatives suspected of having ties to Kashmir militants to avoid the political costs of sharing intelligence that was collected in Pakistan with host government assistance, according to Praveen Swami of *The Hindu*. A senior Indian official reportedly complained that much of what India received from the United States was "vague in the extreme and almost never of operational use."¹⁰⁸

Other Indian officials worried that American officials were exploiting the counter-terrorism partnership in India to collect information on India; the reported defection to the United States of a senior Indian intelligence officer was said to have sharpened their concerns.¹⁰⁹ One Indian newspaper, citing recently declassified National Security Agency documents, published an article titled "Beware, Uncle Sam's Watching You."¹¹⁰ Counter-intelligence fears on the Indian side reportedly brought meetings of the bilateral cyber security forum to an end after 2006,¹¹¹ at least provisionally.

Finally, some Indian officials feared that they were being patronised. Ambassador David Mulford's offer to the Chief Ministers of Assam and Nagaland of help from the FBI to apprehend the perpetrators of bombings in fall 2004 drew a prickly response from the Special Secretary in the Indian Home Ministry, according to *India Abroad*: "Thank you very much for the offer, but we have the expertise to deal

with such incidents.” Other Indian officials variously criticised Mulford for departing from established channels or for making an intelligence matter public. Mulford’s letters reportedly also raised some suspicions among Indian officials about the reasons for US interest in the northeast and concerns that FBI assistance to the troubled states might encourage *jihadis* to target India.¹¹²

A former Joint Intelligence Committee Chairman, on the other hand – dissenting from what he termed the “MEA [Ministry of External Affairs] view of the nonaligned era” – recommended that India consider the offer. Agreeing, former intelligence officer B. Raman noted that the FBI has the most comprehensive database on explosives worldwide, according to the same article.¹¹³

Thus, areas of discomfort remained in the bilateral counter-terrorism relationship even several years into the post-9/11 era of expanded cooperation. Some of these difficulties had bureaucratic roots; others stemmed from domestic politics in India. It was easy to lose sight of the distance already travelled, including the several-fold increase in the tempo of bilateral interaction on counter-terrorism and expansion of the relationship across institutions in both governments.

IV. US-Indian Counter-Terrorism Cooperation Since 26/11

Expectations ran high as the Obama Administration opened for business.

In just a few weeks, the 26/11 attacks had seemed to inject new momentum into US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation at several levels. The deaths of Americans in the November 2008 attacks by LeT had brought a sense of common victimhood with India and focussed US officials anew on evidence of the Lashkar’s aspirations beyond South Asia.¹¹⁴ US law enforcement officers worked overtime with Indian colleagues on the investigation, and US diplomats pressed Pakistan to cooperate.

Welcome US Diplomatic Moves

New Delhi reportedly had welcomed signals from the incoming Obama

team to Islamabad, even before the new President's inauguration, that US pressure on Pakistan to cooperate on 26/11 investigation and to crack down on militants would not abate:

Clearly, sources said, Pakistan has been careful not to contradict US findings, particularly after the Obama Administration seemed to have conveyed that a change of guard in Washington would not lead to any easing up on this issue. As for India, it has provided some room to cool down temperatures and also created the right atmosphere for [US Special Envoy Richard] Holbrooke's visit starting Sunday.¹¹⁵

Pressure from the Obama Administration evidently prompted a carefully worded acknowledgement that same week by Pakistan's civilian Interior Minister, during Holbrooke's visit to Islamabad, that parts of the Mumbai terrorist attacks were planned from Pakistan. While the Minister did not acknowledge LeT's involvement in 26/11, two of the six suspects he said who had been detained in Pakistan's probe were known LeT members. An unnamed US State Department official characterised the Pakistani admission as a "political decision" designed to ease tensions with India.¹¹⁶

US intelligence efforts to broker information exchanges between Indian and Pakistani intelligence officials, reportedly begun days after 26/11, also continued under the new Administration. "Officials from both countries said the unparalleled cooperation was a factor in Pakistan's decision to bring criminal charges against nine Pakistanis accused of involvement in the attack," according to the *New York Times*.¹¹⁷ This timely cooperation helped reduce tensions during the critical weeks after 26/11. The exchange of information between Indian and Pakistani intelligence officials, however, evidently tailed off within a few months amid mutual recriminations, leaving communications about the 26/11 cases in the hands of law enforcement personnel on the two sides.¹¹⁸

For New Delhi, the *sine qua non* was preventing Pakistani authorities from releasing militants arrested in response to US and Indian evidence concerning 26/11; Indian officials bitterly recalled

Islamabad's release in 2002 of leading militants who had been arrested that January under pressure from Washington, after the assault on India's Parliament. Indian officials initially zeroed in on two individuals who appeared to have been key players in the 26/11 attacks. The first was Hafiz Muhammed Saeed, head of the Jamaat-ud-Dawa, the charitable organisation under whose cover LeT's political arm reportedly continued to operate; the second – Zaki ur-Rehman Lakhvi – was allegedly LeT's operations chief.¹¹⁹ Over time, the Indians focussed increasingly on Saeed as the probable mastermind of the 2008 Mumbai attacks.

US-Indian Cooperation in the Investigation and on Capacity-Building

By all accounts, the scope and depth of operational cooperation between Indian and US counter-terrorism officials in the 26/11 investigations broke new ground. Indian and US officials alike characterised the relationship on the ground as exceptional.

The FBI described as “unprecedented” the access to 26/11-related evidence and intelligence provided by the Indian Intelligence Bureau and Mumbai Police. This included “access to most of the attack locations and to technical evidence recovered from the scenes. The FBI was able to use advanced forensic and technical exploitation techniques to develop critical leads for both the Indian and US investigations.” Those interviewed by the FBI in Mumbai included witnesses to the attacks and security personnel who responded to them.¹²⁰

In turn, Indian officials reportedly credited the FBI with a number of breakthroughs in the investigation – chief among them, successfully extrapolating from the global positioning system (GPS) equipment employed by the terrorists their starting points in Karachi, and tracing the outboard motor in the rubber dinghy used by the terrorists to a Pakistani importer. Other, unspecified US assistance was said to have been vital to linking an e-mail claiming responsibility for the attacks to a Russian server and thence to an e-mail account that had been opened by the communications chief of LeT. The e-mail was signed by the hitherto-unheard-of “Deccan Mujahideen.”¹²¹ The LeT provenance of

the note reinforced the growing evidence that the 26/11 attackers were not locals, unlike the devastating 1993 bombings in the same area of Mumbai.¹²²

In addition, “Indian and the US intelligence agencies were able to intercept all communications passing between the terrorists who had occupied the two hotels and the Nariman House and their controlling officers in Pakistan,” according to B. Raman; Raman reported that Israel, too, was monitoring telephone calls from and to the areas under attack, in real-time; Israelis were among the foreign hostages taken (and killed) by the terrorists.¹²³

Indian press accounts also detailed a variety of US advice and assistance to Indian officials in support of post-26/11 remediation efforts. US security experts were invited to advise on upgrades to the security of South Block, the President’s residence, and Parliament, key facilities in New Delhi whose proximity to one another raised concerns that they comprised easy targets for terrorists, according to Siddharth Srivastava of the *Asian Times*. The upgrades at South Block – where the Prime Minister’s Office, Armed Forces Headquarters, and the key Defence, Foreign and Home Ministries are co-located – were to be modelled on those at the Pentagon. These were said to include new physical barriers; surveillance, access control, and monitoring systems for visitors, staff, and vehicles; and electronic visitor management systems. “Mobile phone deactivators are also being installed to jam mobile networks in case of an attack,” according to Srivastava, who recalled that the 26/11 attackers in Mumbai used cell phones to coordinate their attacks and receive to orders from “handlers based abroad.”¹²⁴

Other reports from both sides emphasised new Home Minister Chidambaram’s fruitful visit to Washington in September 2009 and his decision to include in India’s revised counter-terrorism line-up a National Counter-Terrorism Centre similar to the US version he had toured. US experts were said to be quietly helping Indian counterparts on a number of fronts. The Chidambaram visit was followed by a spate of counterpart exchanges, including travel by US rail experts to New Delhi and Mumbai to observe the challenges of securing India’s huge

railway system, and a subsequent visit by Indian government and law enforcement officials to New York City and Washington D.C.¹²⁵

US Ambassador Tim Roehmer described these exchanges as reflecting “our shared commitment to learning from each other to ensure the safety of our citizens.”¹²⁶ In fact, US officials were “on receive” partly because 26/11 stirred concerns about the possibility of similar commando-type attacks in the United States. Deeply worried about US vulnerabilities to assaults on hotels, rail stations and trains, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security scheduled hearings in January 2009 on the lessons of the Mumbai attacks for the United States.¹²⁷

Friction Over Pakistani Backtracking and the Headley Case

Backtracking by Islamabad: As articulated by then-Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar, India had two principal goals regarding the 26/11 case: “One is bringing the perpetrators to justice and, secondly, India would like to see credible action by Islamabad to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism in Pakistan,” he reportedly said.¹²⁸ By ‘infrastructure,’ Shiv Shankar probably meant militant training camps, key leaders of militant groups such as LeT and JeM, and their front groups. New Delhi’s reliance on US pressure on Islamabad to achieve these ends was evident in National Security Adviser Narayanan’s dual message to the Obama Administration in February 2009. After expressing gratitude for the intense US efforts to “get Pakistan to do what we finally want: deliver criminals who were responsible,” he went on to suggest that, if these efforts failed, the United States might use its leverage on Pakistan, “such as curbing the funding to the military, which would probably hurt them more than anything else.”¹²⁹

Indian fears that Pakistan would backtrack on the case were realised several months later when a Pakistani court ordered Saeed’s release. The civilian government in Islamabad appealed the ruling in July 2009.¹³⁰ The appeal failed, effectively dead-ending the case in Pakistan, to India’s disgust.

The Headley Case: The FBI’s discovery that US citizen David Headley had played a key role in reconnoitering 26/11 targets numerous

times during the two years before the attacks filled important gaps in the continuing Mumbai investigation, specifically regarding how the militant attackers had gained the detailed knowledge they displayed of their targets in Mumbai.¹³¹ Headley, a Chicago resident, had been arrested there in October 2009 for allegedly plotting to attack a Danish newspaper. In December 2009, the US Department of Justice unsealed additional charges against Headley of scouting targets in Mumbai for LeT.¹³² Headley reportedly was cooperating with the FBI.

The Headley case briefly threatened to become a lightning rod for Indian concerns about partnering with the United States on counter-terrorism. Indian officials initially assumed that Headley could be extradited to India for trial. Headley's plea agreement, announced in March, was premised in part on his promise to provide additional information regarding his association with LeT and surveillance of targets in Mumbai in the two years before 26/11, at Lashkar's behest.¹³³ Indian authorities also wanted to question Headley regarding his casing of an area near the bakery in Pune that was bombed in February (2010).¹³⁴ Following a series of contradictory signals and miscommunications between US and Indian officials, US Attorney General Eric Holder clarified to Home Minister Chidambaram by telephone that Headley could not be extradited to India under the terms of his plea agreement; moreover, it was also unclear if Indian officials could interrogate Headley directly.¹³⁵ Indian officials – current and former – were upset. Some saw in the US position an attempt to deprive New Delhi of evidence that the state of Pakistan was complicit in the 2008 LeT attacks on Mumbai.¹³⁶ Angst on the Indian side abated after Indian officials spent a week in the United States in June 2010 freely questioning Headley.¹³⁷

Echoes of the Past: Duelling Perspectives on Pakistan (and Iran)

Even before tussling began between New Delhi and Washington over progress on, and processes for, the 26/11 case, Indian officials were working overtime to keep the Obama Administration focussed on Pakistan's support for militants – rather than Indo-Pakistani tensions – as the cause of the Mumbai attacks. New Delhi particularly wanted

to head off any thought of a “regional approach” (such as had been attributed to Presidential candidate Obama) that might call for Indian negotiations with Pakistan on Kashmir to reduce Indo-Pakistani tensions and refocus Pakistan on Afghanistan. Underscoring the point in a February 2009 interview, then-Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee reportedly said: “This is a problem of fighting against terror. One need not look at terror through the prism of Jammu and Kashmir.”¹³⁸

Neither did Indian officials welcome the take on regional solutions to terrorism subsequently offered by Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke during a trip with Admiral Mike Mullen to brief Indian officials on US strategy in Afghanistan. While acknowledging that the Mumbai attacks originated in Pakistan, Holbrooke argued that India, Pakistan, and the United States faced a common threat from Al Qaeda and the Taliban and must cooperate to counter the shared threat.¹³⁹ From an Indian perspective, Pakistan remained the source of America’s and India’s difficulties in Afghanistan, as well as much of India’s terrorism problem.

Prime Minister Singh’s state visit to Washington in November 2009 provided him a platform to restate that India’s military restraint, despite incontrovertible evidence that the 26/11 attacks were linked to Pakistan, was premised on US commitments to keep up pressure on Islamabad to close down militant groups operating on its territory. In Singh’s words, “There was enormous pressure on me at that time. I resisted that pressure, and I think the decision that I and our government took was on balance, the right decision....As regards the future, I hate to speculate. I hope such an eventuality does not arise, and that’s why I believe the world community has an obligation to impress upon Pakistan that it must use all its influence to curb the power of terrorist groups.”¹⁴⁰ Some Indian sceptics were less subtle. Referring to Indian “dissatisfaction” with US cooperation on counter-terrorism under the Obama Administration, Brahma Chellaney asserted that while the strategic partnership was on a “solid footing,” greater cooperation on areas of common interest was required to counter the impression that China got US respect, Pakistan got billions of dollars in US aid, while India got only a dinner.¹⁴¹

Differences between Indian and US criteria for judging Pakistani cooperation on terrorism also have remained a latent source of friction. Indian officials have been increasingly frustrated by Pakistani stonewalling on promised trials of individuals identified as complicit in the 26/11 attacks,¹⁴² amid reports that Pakistani officials are still protecting LeT.¹⁴³ For Washington, the yardstick for counter-terrorism cooperation from Pakistan has included its widening efforts against multiple pro-Taliban actors on the border with Afghanistan. Asked in March 2010 by members of the Senate Armed Forces Committee about Pakistani cooperation on the 26/11 cases, General David Petraeus, Commander of the US Central Command, acknowledged that “there are elements in Pakistan that have not yet been the focus of the Pakistani counterinsurgency efforts,” specifically Lashkar-e-Tayebba; he added, however, that the Pakistan Army had been moving against Al Qaeda and the Taliban in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan (presumably a reference to the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, often described as “the Pakistani Taliban”).¹⁴⁴

Indians have been incensed by a string of lethal attacks on Indian nationals in Afghanistan in which New Delhi suspects Pakistani complicity.¹⁴⁵ US officials reportedly confirmed contacts by Pakistani officials with militants who bombed the Indian Embassy in Kabul two months before 26/11.¹⁴⁶ Paradoxically, from an Indian perspective, the US campaign against the Taliban, which New Delhi lauded, had made US forces dependent on access to, and through, Pakistan – reinforcing the US need for Pakistan’s goodwill.¹⁴⁷ The US troop surge planned for 2010-2012 would only increase that dependence. Of particular concern to Indian officials has been US pressure on India to keep a low profile in Afghanistan and to forgo Indian ‘boots on the ground’ – despite Washington’s praise for Indian aid to Kabul and infrastructure construction – to avoid tripping Pakistan’s fears of a threat from India on two fronts.¹⁴⁸

On the US side, concern about friction with India over ‘AfPak’ issues has been matched by disappointment about New Delhi’s close ties to Tehran, despite continuing US efforts under the Obama Administration

to sway Indian policy.¹⁴⁹ New Delhi's decision in the spring of 2010 to reopen discussions on the India-Pakistan-Iran pipeline drew a terse but dismayed comment by Assistant Secretary of State Robert Blake at a press conference on his return to Washington from a trip that included India.¹⁵⁰

Post-26/11 Cooperation in Perspective

As we have seen, counter-terrorism cooperation has proved no easier than other arenas for expanding US-Indian relations. It might be tempting to conclude that the growth of bilateral counter-terrorism ties has hit a ceiling. A longer look at the relationship suggests otherwise, however.

Briefly summarised, over the past decade, bilateral counter-terrorism relations have expanded from a declarative policy of partnership in 2000, to diverse levels and through multiple departments, agencies, and working groups in 2010. This progress built on a legacy of goodwill from ad hoc working-level cooperation on counter-terrorism during and soon after the Cold War. 9/11 proved to be one turning point in the relationship; 26/11 probably will turn out to have been another. The US-Indian civil nuclear deal has reduced a longtime irritant in the relationship (differences over India's *de facto* nuclear weapons status) and increased the sense of possibilities on both sides. This shift undoubtedly contributed to the receptivity of Indian officials to collaborating closely with Americans on the 26/11 case, in contrast to the frosty reception to US Ambassador Mulford's 2004 offer of FBI forensic help after bombings in Assam and Nagaland.

Counter-terrorism relations have piggy-backed also on a lengthening list of bilateral agreements and arrangements, including military-to-military cooperation. The habit of working together on terrorism-related issues has grown as channels for doing so expanded.

If these seem like humble accomplishments, it may be helpful to measure them against some characteristics of a longstanding 'special relationship' such as that between the United States and United Kingdom. I have loosely excerpted these from a check list proposed

by Sumit Ganguly in 2003 in a thoughtful essay on the distance yet to be travelled by the US-India partnership.¹⁵¹ Topping the list of characteristics is (in other words) strategic convergence, which arguably remains a work-in-progress between Washington and New Delhi. Bilateral counter-terrorism relations have provided evidence of progress on a second criterion, however: cooperation against a common threat. US and Indian officials have worried about *jihadi* terrorism together for years. 26/11 cemented Lashkar-e-Tayebba's status as a bilateral concern. In this era of heightened vigilance, the volume of travel between the United States and India alone will make better real-time information sharing on these issues a common objective.

The expansion of bilateral counter-terrorism ties described above represents progress on a third criterion for 'special relationships' – broad routine working relations at multiple levels on a sensitive subject. Good working relations between governments are sometimes assumed to be an outgrowth of political agreement at the top, but the record of US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation to date illustrates how momentum also can build from below. Military-to-military ties are already contributing to this counter-terrorism relationship; there is separate value in routinising working-level civilian contacts.

V. Short-Term Prospects and Projects – and Long-Term Possibilities

Short-Term Prospects

Bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation remains a high priority for both sides. Indian officials have counted on help from US counterparts in working on the 26/11 case. Counter-terrorism led the list of strategic issues for bilateral cooperation identified by the Democratic and Republican co-chairs of the US Senate's India Caucus, as they invited fellow Senators to join the support group for strong US ties to India.¹⁵²

As we have seen, US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation has remained somewhat circumscribed by perceived differences in national interests, as well as mistrust among some officials. Even if US-Indian

relations were to sour under future leaders on one or both sides, the high standard of on-the-ground cooperation set by the 26/11 case has raised the 'floor' for counter-terrorism relations outside the formal bilateral foreign policy process. Over the long haul, cooperation between US and Indian officials probably will work best when it is low-profile.

While regular contact among counter-terrorism officials is likely to continue to increase their mutual comfort over time, it will remain easier in the near term for the two sides to agree on tactical agendas than on strategic missions, given their foreign policy differences. India's traditional preference for multilateral intervention and scepticism about some US policies and practices still make joint US-Indian military operations against terrorism elsewhere in the world unlikely in the near term, except perhaps to counter maritime threats. India probably will remain particularly opposed to any US counter-terrorism activities that would bring American Special Forces close to India's borders, let alone to Indian territory. Some Indians still worry that the United States will crowd India in its own backyard or in the Indian Ocean, limiting Indian foreign policy or naval options in India's home region. India's security consciousness – as well as its pride – was evident in its refusal to let Western troops help with tsunami relief on the stricken Andaman Islands several years ago.

US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation is also likely to continue to be limited by differences in focus. The spread of the Naxalite insurgency into new states and urban and industrial areas will certainly continue to preoccupy the Indian authorities and to absorb national counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency resources, as well as state and local policing assets. Although more geographically confined, home-grown separatist or ideologically-based groups like those in the northeast likewise will remain a major focus for New Delhi. The fact that these groups use neighbouring countries for sanctuary will make India's relations with those governments a priority for years to come. India will doubtless continue closely monitoring developments in Nepal for evidence of a Maoist resurgence there that could further inspire or lend material support to India's Naxalites. Thus, the distinction between

insurgency and terrorism as internal security challenges to India is likely to blur further in the coming years.

Both Indian and US counter-terrorism experts are increasingly concerned about home-grown *jihadism*, as evidence comes to light about the magnitude of the problem. In both countries, the issue is politically sensitive. The international connections of such terrorists will provide ample reasons for international cooperation but not necessarily amplify US-Indian counter-terrorism ties in particular.

Some Opportunities for Bilateral Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

The discussion to this point suggests a number of areas in which bilateral counter-terrorism relations could fruitfully play a role outside the glare of publicity.

Routinising Working-Level Ties Between Civilian Officials:

As suggested earlier in this paper, expanding ties between working-level civilian counterparts offers a natural avenue for strengthening the official counter-terrorism relationship. Increasing the frequency of meetings, instituting joint training, and amplifying dialogues on terrorism-related issues between counterparts across civilian ministries/departments and agencies would add further substance to the channel-building of recent years and increase familiarity with each other's organisational cultures, potentially easing future relations between parallel institutions.

Opportunities Opened by Institutional Changes: New opportunities and issues of interest to both sides may emerge from ongoing changes in the US and Indian counter-terrorism establishments. If India follows through on Home Minister Chidambaram's proposal to create a National Counter-Terrorism Centre, for example, exchanges on data management issues would be a natural, even though the distinctive federal-state arrangements within each country mean that the roles of the respective organisations will differ. While B. Raman has rightly reminded us that there is no "MacCounter-Terrorism,"¹⁵³ a number of thoughtful individuals have suggested that India might benefit by the post-9/11 US experience with fusion centres that bring together national intelligence and law enforcement officials with state and local counterparts.

The continuing evolution of India's military doctrine to include diverse categories of conflict, including sub-conventional war, civil/revolutionary war, low-intensity conflict operations/proxy war, insurgency, no-war-no-peace and non-combat operations, as well as conventional war on two fronts – doubtless, will affect counter-terrorism cooperation with the US military, as well as the domestic division of labour.¹⁵⁴ The choice of General V.K. Singh as India's new Army Chief as of April 1, 2010, seemed to underline the growing importance of counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism to India's security calculations, internal and external; General Singh reportedly is the first trained commando to lead the Indian Army. A potential boon to furthering US-Indian security cooperation and counter-terrorism interoperability is the fact that the new Army Chief's military education included the US Army War College in Carlisle and a Rangers course at Fort Benning.¹⁵⁵

Strengthening Public-Private Sector Interfaces to Protect High-profile Soft Targets: US-Indian counter-terrorism discussions have begun to focus on best practices for improving coordination among government entities. An issue of growing importance to the private sectors in both countries is how best to engage the government as a partner in protecting soft targets.

As in the United States, many high-value soft targets in India (including hotels and prominent commercial and residential real estate) are in private hands, highlighting the importance of seamless communications and collaborative planning between private security personnel at these facilities and law enforcement and intelligence at all levels.¹⁵⁶ Like their colleagues in India, senior managers from these sectors in the United States are grappling with how to put into place cooperative prevention, planning, and crisis response strategies that evolve along with new threat information and trends.¹⁵⁷

There is undoubtedly scope for dialogue between private sector players on the two sides as well as between government counterparts on options for improving government-private sector cooperation on these important issues. In addition, both Indian and US private sectors

have discussed co-training and joint gaming of attack scenarios by local authorities and key hotel/real estate security staff.

Given the tendency for new security measures to respond to the last attack, Indian-American collaboration in devising plausible but forward-leaning scenarios – ideally, including law enforcement as well as private sector players – might materially improve the planners' contingency deck.

Leveraging Think-Tank and Academic Research: Universities and think-tanks in the United States and India already contribute to the study of terrorism and help foster non-government cooperation on counter-terrorism issues. Given the state of play on official bilateral cooperation, examples of projects that seem especially likely to bridge the gap between US and Indian perspectives on terrorism and inform government choices include the following:

- Both governments might profit from a joint evaluation by thoughtful non-government experts of the growing literature and track record on the demobilisation of identified terrorists. Some counter-terrorism specialists, such as John Horgan of Pennsylvania State University, argue that demobilisation is far more feasible than deradicalisation.
- Think-tanks might foster candid for-official-use-only exchanges between former officials on the lessons of past counter-insurgency campaigns waged by the respective sides as adjuncts to counter-terrorism. A study conducted several years ago by the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS) in New Delhi, for example, reportedly extrapolated lessons from the US counter-insurgency in Iraq for India's new military doctrine, which accords a greater role for special forces in countering internal violence.¹⁵⁸

Some Developments That Could Alter US-Indian Counter-Terrorism Relations

What could dramatically change prospects for US-Indian counter-terrorism cooperation in either direction five to ten years from now? Here are a few examples of how 'tectonic' shifts might occur:

Convergence of US and Indian Stakes in Combatting an Unprecedented Threat: A specific crisis whose resolution seems to both New Delhi and Washington to demand bilateral action could provide the springboard for a breakthrough to new kinds of cooperation, such as joint commando operations. The perceived stakes of the two sides in doing so would need to be closely matched, and each would need to see the other as a trusted and indispensable partner. The interoperability that is being developed now would be a prerequisite, but India also would have to be willing to shed its preference for strategic autonomy from the United States; the United States would need to be willing to rely on Indian security capabilities. Strictly hypothetically, a hostage situation involving senior US and Indian officials in a South Asian country whose government was unfriendly to New Delhi and Washington might provide such an opportunity. Once the taboo on such cooperation was broken – assuming an outcome acceptable to both parties – the threshold for future collaboration might well be lowered.

Identification and analysis of ‘what-if...?’ situations that might require unprecedented forms of US-India cooperation – not necessarily of the kinetic sort – could be undertaken through off-the-record bilateral tabletop gaming involving senior officials from both countries. To paraphrase futurist Peter Schwartz, what has not been thought of and planned for in advance by potential partners will not be averted in time.

Diverging Regional Foreign Policies and/or Cooling Relations: Flaring foreign policy differences might reduce leadership enthusiasm for expanding US-India counter-terrorism cooperation, even in the near future. This could occur, for example, if new leaders on either side gave less priority to managing differences with the other on Iran, Pakistan, or Afghanistan. Alternatively, domestic pressures could drive policy shifts unacceptable to the other government. On the US side, cuts in funding by the legislature—perhaps motivated by concerns about the economy—could force a US president to alter plans on Afghanistan in ways seen by New Delhi as inimical to India’s interests. Severe energy shortages in India might incline a future government there to expand ties to Iran despite US entreaties. In a different vein, a broad military

response by New Delhi to a future terrorist attack in India that was launched from Pakistani territory could stoke US angst over the risks of conflict escalating to nuclear confrontation, potentially taking regional terrorism off the table in US-India discussions.

Bilateral counter-terrorism cooperation might revert to a primarily working-level effort in the event of a broader, longer cooling of US-India relations. Although difficult to imagine in late 2010 after a decade of warming, such an outcome is conceivable even without any rupture. This could result, say, from neglect of the relationship by inward-looking populist leaders in the United States and/or India. Shifts in foreign policy strategies on either side also could dilute bilateral counter-terrorism ties. As an example, India's longtime affinity for multilateral cooperation could decrease New Delhi's interest in bilateral cooperative arrangements, especially if international and regional counter-terrorism efforts became more robust.

Changes in the 'Shape' of Terrorism: The nature and geography of terrorist activity could change dramatically despite – or perhaps in response to – the two countries' counter-terrorism efforts. Such shifts often seem unlikely to officials and publics caught up in current trends. In the early 1980s, after all, it seemed likely to many that left wing terrorist groups such as the Red Brigades in Italy and Shiite groups modelled on Hezbollah would continue to dominate the terrorist scene for decades to come; similarly, some Indians during that period saw Sikh separatist terrorism as a semi-permanent threat.

New patterns of terrorism could again alter US and Indian threat perceptions and change the incentives for bilateral cooperation – for example:

- A protracted upsurge of terrorism against soft targets in the United States or elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere – perhaps linked to a group such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC) – could draw Washington's attention away from South Asia. Alternatively, existing international terrorist cells could open up a new front in the United States, or home-grown environmental terrorists could step up their campaigns.

- Evidence of a resurgence of the earlier global Maoist movement might provide incentives for New Delhi to broaden cooperation with Washington. Consider, for example, the imminent prospect of a Maoist rebel victory in Nepal, coupled with the spread of Naxalism in India into major urban areas and growing operational ties to like-minded organisations in the Americas and Southeast Asia. Concerned that rampant disorder and instability might provide fresh openings for meddling by Pakistan or China, India might even consider joint US-Indian counter-insurgency operations along the border with Nepal under these circumstances.
- Major terrorist attacks in the United States linked to militants based in Pakistan could turn Washington's relations with Islamabad upside down; some would see this as opening more space for US-Indian cooperation.

Changing South Asian Regional Dynamics: Peace between India and Pakistan could help open up new spaces for both US-Indian cooperation and for intra-regional South Asian counter-terrorism efforts. While the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has adopted a counter-terrorism protocol similar to that of the United Nations, trust among South Asia nations has been particularly low on terrorism-related issues. Indo-Pakistani tensions have stymied SAARC-based efforts to expand cooperation in numerous areas. Enduring détente between India and Pakistan might help clear the way for South Asian joint institutions akin to the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism (SEARCCT) at Kuala Lumpur and the newly created Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Counter-Terrorism Task Force.¹⁶⁰ In addition to providing another forum for US-Indian cooperation, such structures might allow Washington to play a role in South Asian regional counter-terrorism without exciting Indian anxieties.

Notes

1. See "Remarks by US Ambassador to India David C. Mulford," Confederation of Indian Industry, New Delhi, January 9, 2009, at <http://newdelhi.usembassy>.

- gov/ambjan0909.html; also Embassy of India, Washington, DC, "Briefing Points by MEA Official Spokesperson for the Media," November 25, 2009, at http://www.indianembassy.org/newsite/press_release/2009/Nov/37.asp
2. "Joint Statement by President Obama, Indian Prime Minister Singh: US, India Reaffirm Partnership to Address Challenges of 21st Century," State Department Documents and Publications, November 24, 2009, accessed via Nexis.com on 031010.
 3. Definitions of terrorism and counter-terrorism vary even within the US government. We have chosen the widely-used definition from Title 22 of the United States Code, Section 2656f(d), cited at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/65464.pdf>:
 - (1) the term "international terrorism" means terrorism involving citizens or the territory of more than one country; (2) the term "terrorism" means premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents; and (3) the term "terrorist group" means any group practising, or which has significant sub-groups which practise, international terrorism.

Interpretation and Application of Key Terms:

....The term "non-combatant," which is referred to but not defined in 22 USC. 2656f(d)(2), is interpreted to mean, in addition to civilians, military personnel (whether or not armed or on duty) who are not deployed in a war zone or a war-like setting.

The State Department's *Patterns of Global Terrorism, 2002* recognised that this definition omits any mention of attacks on infrastructure that are intended to harm civilians indirectly, let alone of cyber-terrorism. See Office of the Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism, *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2002*, US Department of State Publication 11038 (Washington, DC: State Department, April 2003), xiii. Accessed online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/20177.pdf.

Counter-terrorism' for purposes of this paper means, "Operations that include the offensive measures taken to prevent, deter, preempt, and respond to terrorism." (from DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/dod_dictionary/DoD.)

4. Somini Sengupta, "India Presses Pakistan on Terrorism but Finds Its Own Options Limited," *New York Times*, December 12, 2008 (late edition), A-16, accessed via Nexis.com
5. See, for example, how the views of one Indian counter-terrorism, expert, B. Raman, evolved: in "London Blasts: An Analysis," South Asia Analysis Group (SAAG) Paper no. 1452, July 9, 2005, at <http://www.saag.org/>

- papers15/paper1452.html, he describes “angry [Indian] Muslims” as reacting mainly to perceived injustices in India or in the western countries to which they had migrated. In “Self-Styled Indian Mujahideen Strikes in New Delhi,” South Asia Analysis Group Paper No. 2844, September 13, 2008, at <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/papers29/paper2844.html>, Raman worries about growing *jihadi* activities by Indian Muslims.
6. See, for example, Agence France Presse (English), “Indian Muslims Endorse Anti-Terrorism Edict,” November 10, 2008, accessed via Nexis.com.
 7. Sumit Ganguly, “The US-Indian Courtship,” in Sumit Ganguly, ed., *India As an Emerging Power* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), pp.17-18.
 8. See Polly Nayak and Michael Krepon, *US Crisis Management in South Asia’s ‘Twin Peaks’ Crisis*, The Henry L. Stimson Foundation, Report #57, Washington DC, September, 2006.
 9. Walter C. Ladwig III, “A Cold Start for Hot Wars? The Indian Army’s New Limited War Doctrine,” *International Security*, 32, No. 3, Winter 2007/08, pp.158-190.
 10. Sengupta, n.4.
 11. “Israel Replaces Russia as India’s Top Military Supplier,” *World Tribune*, March 25, 2009, at http://www.worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2009/me_military0246_03_25.asp
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 16. B. Raman, “2008 is Not Our Worst Terrorism-Hit Year,” Rediff.com, December 31, 2008, at <http://www.rediff.com///news/2008/dec/31raman-first-the-good-news-this-is-not-our-worst-year.htm>, accessed on 031010

17. "Obama Condemns Mumbai Attacks, Evidence of 'Grave and Urgent' Terrorist Threat," ABC News, November 26, 2008 at <http://blogs.abcnews.com/politicalpunch/2008/11/obama-condemns.html>
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high unemployment, growing Hindu-Muslim tensions, and repression by police and military personnel. Beginning in the early 1990s, militants who infiltrated Indian-held Kashmir from Pakistan-controlled Azad Kashmir with official Pakistani support assumed a dominant role in fighting Indian troops there. Islamabad continues to claim that it has provided only moral and political support to homegrown Kashmiri separatists, but some Pakistani officials have acknowledged Pakistan's sponsorship of foreign militants opposing Indian rule. See, for example, Karl Vick and Kamran Khan, "Pakistani Ambivalence Frustrates Hope for Kashmir Peace," *Washington Post*, June 29, 2002, p. A-18. For a brief comment by a former US official on Pakistan's deployment of militants along with Pakistan Army regulars during the 1999 Kargil conflict, see Bruce Riedel, *American Diplomacy and the 1999 Kargil Summit at Blair House* (Philadelphia: Center for the Advanced Study of India, 2002), pp. 1-2, online at www.sas.upenn.edu/casi. For excellent historical analyses of Kashmiri separatism and its implications, see Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir* (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1997), and Robert G. Wirsing, *India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Dispute: On Regional Conflict and Its Resolution* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), pp. 113-132.

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In India, the term "Naxalite" refers to a variety of revolutionary rural struggles. The Naxalite movement shuns participation in electoral politics and attacks the landed classes directly in a bid to liberate entire territories from feudal and capitalist exploitation....The Naxalite movement, which started in the late 1960s [in the West Bengal village of Naxalbari], has undergone numerous splits due to ideological and personal reasons. The efforts by the various state governments have contained the movement but "liberated zones" continue to exist. The Naxalites operate in areas that, on the one hand, have very low levels of income and very low human development indicators, and, on the other hand, suffer from extreme forms of economic and social polarisation. The state governments, rather than addressing the security needs of the landless labourers most affected by the violence or providing protection to villagers at risk, have approached it as a law-and-order problem. Civil-society sympathy for the Naxalites' cause and concern about the repression by police and the private armies of landlords (the so-called *senas*) is mixed, with misgivings about the more extremist tendencies within the Naxalite movement.

By early 2005, Naxalite activity had spread to 13 Indian states; the two main Naxalite organisations had merged into one, with a single command-and-control structure; and these organisations appeared to be coordinating with the increasingly powerful Maoist insurgency in Nepal. Elizabeth Baldwin-Jones, "Naxalite Clash Set to Escalate Into Fringe States," *Lloyd's List International* (online), Issue #58813, December 20, 2004, p. 12. By 2009, with Naxalite activity evident in 20 of India's 29 states, Home Minister P. Chidambaram ordered a 70,000-man paramilitary campaign against Naxalites in the "Red Corridor," comprising parts of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Bihar. Paramilitary operations were to be complemented by intensive development activities. Amarnath K. Menon, "Tackling the Red Terror," *India Today*, October 15, 2009, at <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/66450/Tackling+the+Red+Terror.html?complete=1>

By 2010, sabotage of, and operations against, trains by Naxalite fighters had become a growing concern to authorities in several states. After Indian paramilitary forces took heavy casualties at Naxalite hands in Chhattisgarh, the government's strategy for dealing with the problem came under heavy criticism. See "Something has Gone Drastically Wrong, says Shocked Chidambaram," on rediff.com, April 6, 2010, at <http://news.rediff.com/report/2010/apr/06/something-has-gone-drastically-wrong-says-chidambaram.htm>

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Counter-Terrorism: The Indian Experience

Vikram Sood

The Problem Briefly Stated

International concern over terrorism today is about a global *jihad*, but for countries like India, the threats range from left wing extremism, ethnic separatism to religious militancy. A weak state uses asymmetric warfare as a force equaliser against a powerful opponent. This is exemplified by Pakistan's use of terrorism against India for most of the 60 plus years since partition, a practice it has intensified since the 1990s. New strategies need to be evolved and capacities built and sustained to counter the new modes of terrorist attacks.

Some have expressed the need to reach the root of this problem, but this is a mistaken notion: for, there can be no justifiable root cause for killing innocent people. And, there is no sense in trying to distinguish between 'my' terrorists and 'yours', or in asserting that killing of security forces, targeting government institutions and its officials is a legitimate course of action to show dissent in any society.

That said, terrorism, as a violent manifestation of present-day disaffection and disenchantment, in the context of exploding expectations, is something the modern world will have to live with, in the sense that it can never be completely eradicated as new sources of conflict, real or perceived emerge. Ideally, it should be prevented, but this does not happen because states have the habit of remaining in

denial till it is too late; the next best option is to defeat terrorism in such a manner that it ceases to be a threat.

There are two very obvious differences between the threats the US and India face from terrorism. First, the threat to India emanates essentially from its own territory, though with the collusion of our neighbours, Pakistan (which continues) and China (in the past). For the US, the source of terrorism is thousands of kilometres away. Second, the US has the capability and the freedom to strike at the source. India finds itself in a position where it is well nigh impossible to resort to the principle of 'hot pursuit', considering its consequences – an escalation of the conflict to a flashpoint scenario.

Broadly, one would describe the various insurgencies and terrorism India has experienced as follows:

- Jammu and Kashmir (J&K): Islamist separatist movement that has become extremist with Pakistani assistance.
- Punjab: Religious separatism.
- Northeast: Mainly seeking independence on the premise of ethnicity – with smaller groups seeking autonomy.
- Left wing extremism: As the name implies, a radical movement spreading across nine major states of India seeking the overthrow of the democratic government to establish extreme left wing rule.

Each needs to be tackled with different policy and strategic options.

Although two major terrorist/insurgency threats, Kashmir – spreading outwards to other points of the country (New Delhi and Mumbai, to name just two) – and left wing extremism in central India continue unabated, India has successfully tackled the other major trouble spots. The point to note is that in these regions, it took decades of hard work, often necessitating the use of counter-force, to come to a positive conclusion. The Nagaland and Mizoram insurgencies lasted 19 years before being brought under control and had required concerted counter-insurgency operations involving the Army at some stages. The Punjab insurgency, which too had external support, lasted 14 years. It was finally brought

under control through effective use of state force. Left wing insurgency, currently in its most virulent phase, has dogged the country almost since independence.

The lesson learnt is that insurgencies tend to last for decades and can be controlled by launching a counter-terrorist offensive and simultaneously cutting off foreign assistance – be it funds, weapons, shelter or training. It is a fallacy to assume that terrorism can be controlled by first offering politically expedient palliatives like development assistance without having first brought violence to heel. The durability of the movements demands an equally durable and unshakable political will. The government has to continue with the campaign even when the situation looks impossible and politically unpopular. The start point of any counter-terror action is obviously the firm determination to keep grappling with the problem in the face of reversals.

Terrorism has spread its wings to cover suicide bombings, maritime and airborne offensives, and has its eye constantly on weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

Surrounded by failed or failing states, India has to contend with the hostile policies of Pakistan that are threatening that country itself. This increases the fear that faced with its own problems, Pakistan will seek the usual diversion – ‘threat’ from its eastern neighbour.

It is the sequencing of the counter-terrorist actions that is important on the basis of five requirements: detect, deter, destroy and then develop and negotiate. Any attempt at dialogue before achieving reasonable success in the first three steps would be interpreted by the opponent as a sign of weakness—a gesture of appeasement. Therefore, the timing of the last two aspects has to be carefully nuanced.

Responses to an outbreak of insurgency, first and foremost, have to be force related; the state must consider any discussions with the insurgents as unacceptable unless they are non-negotiable, even if the demands are known.

We need to look back at India’s experience in handling the four major upheavals that have afflicted the country in Punjab, the northeastern states, J&K and the central states.

Punjab

This has been a success story, but only after a series of initiatives that were not only ineffective but also counter-productive. The 1980s were marked by counter-terrorism policies that showed confusion and indecision. The attempts at use of force following the unbridled violence of that period were half-hearted and futile. They merely confirmed the basic principle that premature negotiations from a position of weakness not only strengthen the terrorist and stiffen his resolve, but also weaken and confuse the counter-terrorist forces. Each period of truce for peace talks only gave the terrorists that much breathing space to recoup and regroup.

Besides, the terrorists continued to receive extensive support from Pakistan strongman Zia-ul Haq at a time when all the major powers' attention was focussed on the Afghan War against the Soviets. Insurgency against the Soviets received wide support and the West was not in any position to ask its ally Pakistan to curb its activities against India, a long time friend of the Soviet Union.

Then, in the 1990s, after realising the futility of peace talks amidst the heat of violence and conflict, the counter-terrorist policy was given a radical turnaround. The strategy now was to focus only on relentlessly hunting down the terrorists through concerted and coordinated use of force. The policy began to show remarkable results with the appointment of K. P. S. Gill as the Police Chief in Punjab in 1988. The first success came when Operation Black Thunder in May 1988 flushed out the terrorists holed up inside the Golden Temple without much loss of life or damage to the Temple. This was a joint operation involving the Army, elite forces like the National Security Guards and the Punjab Police.

One of the first counter-terrorist measures Gill took was to revitalise the battered, demoralised and neglected Punjab Police. It was strengthened with new recruits and the men's confidence was given a boost with a package of welfare measures for them and their families. The policemen were quick to respond.

The next step was to ensure close cooperation among the military,

the local police, the Punjab Armed Police (PAP) and the paramilitary forces like the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and the Border Security Force (BSF). Joint command centres and a tactical headquarters were set up and communications were interlinked and shared. The police led most of the campaigns, with Army units on the alert for supportive action.

This surge in the activity of the police had become possible because they were better armed and equipped, capable of greater mobility and were given better personal protection. The training of the PAP and the Army units deployed was upgraded to focus on urban as well as rural terrorism. Seizure, and search and rescue drills were conducted to give the counter-terrorist units a decisive edge and self-confidence.

Once the earlier policy of striking political deals and negotiating with the various terrorist groups was abandoned, the terrorists lost any chance of indulging in their favourite game – playing one group of the community against the other. Greater energy was devoted to protecting the population and providing better facilities to the police and paramilitary force. Simultaneously, it was ensured that democratic elections were not abandoned. The initial response was poor, but by 1993, the local body elections recorded a huge rise in voter participation to more than 80 percent. The battle had been joined and largely won by then.

Across the border, there was a change in the attitude of the Bhutto government, which had till then been giving asylum to Sikh terrorists, besides substantial assistance. Internationally, one of the factors that weighed down anti-terrorist activities was that the major countries turned a deaf ear to India's repeated protests – specially to the UK, the US and Canada – that a segment of the Sikh immigrants in their countries were no less a participant in terrorism, as they were raising funds for, and politically supporting, the terrorists. As can be seen, for India, terrorism had become an international malaise long before the world saw it as such.

The Northeast

Ethnic insurgency has dogged northeast India for more than 50 years, beginning with the revolt by A.Z. Phizo, the Naga leader who had taken shelter in the UK and demanded independence for his people. Assam, Nagaland and Manipur are the main affected states today. A major problem for the counter-insurgency forces in this region was the Chinese support, first for the Naga rebels and then to the other various groups that cropped up later. The Nagas have received training and weapons from the Chinese since the 1960s; East Pakistan and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) had assisted them and other insurgent groups and have continued to do so even after Bangladesh came into being in 1971. This was because post-independence, Dhaka's ties with New Delhi soon reverted to hostility and the former was more than willing to allow the insurgents to operate from Bangladesh territory. According to figures available with South Asian Terrorism Portal, New Delhi, there were as many as 104 terrorist, militant or insurgent organisations of various strengths operating in the Northeast in 2002. Their numbers have substantially come down, but this indicates the intricacies of the problem the successive governments have had to face. Other organisations like the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) and the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) continue their sporadic acts of violence.

The typical reaction of the politician and the local bureaucrat to the manifestations of insurgency has usually been to first deny the existence of the problem and then to offer economic and financial palliatives which only encouraged the ethnic trouble-makers to further action. This policy confusion continues even today. As was the case initially in Punjab, the approach of the central government has been an unwieldy baggage of economic aid, negotiations, adjustments and spurts of military action.

If the situation is somewhat under control today, it owes itself only to the use of force, accompanied by tight border control to check the illegal influx of Bangladeshis and the arms-running from that

country and China. Admittedly, though, the attacks by insurgents continue. Another aspect has been the changed attitude of the present Bangladesh government towards the Indian insurgents who had taken shelter in Bangladesh and towards its own Islamic extremist terrorists. International cooperation, thus, plays a significant role in controlling and eliminating terrorism.

Numerous problems remain – chiefly of illegal migration, which vastly affects the socio-economic and demographic pattern of the region/district where these migrants settle down. It spawns corruption and smuggling, creating a criminal-terrorist nexus that straddles both sides of the border. The arrest and detention of important leaders of the ULFA and NDFB have had a debilitating effect on these organisations, but they have not been completely subdued yet. The various movements continue and the states remains incapacitated, especially their ill-trained and under-staffed local police forces that are quite incapable of tackling the situation.

Jammu and Kashmir

This insurgency has managed to last for more than 20 years mainly because of Pakistan's continued support. Apart from the ideological content, it has provided funds, weapons, training and logistical equipment for communications. And then, since the late 1990s, Pakistan-based terrorists of the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), Al Badr, Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) were dispatched to fight alongside the primarily Kashmiri, pro-Jamaat-e-Islami unit, Hizbul Mujahideen. The United Jihad Council, comprising various terrorist organisations, is based in Muzaffarabad, while organisations like LeT and JeM have linkages with the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Al Qaeda.

Table1: Fatalities in Terrorist Violence 1988-2010

	Incidents	Civilians	Security Force Personnel	Terrorists	Total
1988	390	29	1	1	31
1989	2,154	79	13	0	92
1990	3,905	862	132	183	1,177
1991	3,122	594	185	614	1,393
1992	4,971	859	177	873	1,909
1993	4,457	1,023	216	1,328	2,567
1994	4,484	1,012	236	1,651	2,899
1995	4,479	1,161	297	1,338	2,796
1996	4,224	1,333	376	1,194	2,903
1997	3,004	840	355	1,177	2,372
1998	2,993	877	339	1,045	2,261
1999	2,938	799	555	1,184	2,538
2000	2,835	842	638	1,808	3,288
2001	3,278	1,067	590	2,850	4,507
2002	NA	839	469	1,714	3,022
2003	NA	658	338	1,546	2,542
2004	NA	534	325	951	1,810
2005	NA	521	218	1,000	1,739
2006	NA	349	168	599	1,116
2007	NA	164	121	492	777
2008	NA	69	90	382	541
2009	NA	55	78	242	375
2010	NA	19	45	144	208
Total	47,234	14,585	5,962	22,316	42,863

Source: Data from South Asia Terrorism Portal, New Delhi. Compiled till July 12, 2010.

The figures show a declining graph of violence and fatalities, but this could be cyclical and it is still too early to even hope that the insurgency is tapering off. More likely, the tactics may have been changed. As the figures indicate, violence peaked in the 1990s and remained high till about 2001. Then there was a downward trajectory. There were a few reasons for this. In the 1990s, the state's response was heavily militaristic, partly because there seemed no other strategy at that time, and partly because there was inadequate intelligence available. Civilian

casualties, at the hands of both the terrorists and the security forces, who had inadequate intelligence, were high.

The state's policy of dialogues, negotiations and financial incentives in the early years came a cropper. The rebel groups took full advantage of these appeasement attempts and continued with their activities. Such moves are at best short-term and usually counter-productive. Nor is the use of excessive force of much use and can prove counter-productive, given the power of the media and its right to information in a democracy. It is no longer the print and electronic media, but the Internet that have to be managed. It is, thus, imperative for the state to first attain a high ground, both in terms of physical superiority over the terrorists and its ability to wean away the population from the grip of the insurgents/terrorists. Another factor was that, post 2002, Islamabad became wary of being seen as too active in its support of terrorism, not only in J&K but elsewhere in the country. However, Pakistan has not yet given up its basic cult of violence as a means of resolving disputes with India, as is amply proven by the Mumbai train blasts of July 2006 and the Mumbai massacre of November 2008.

Infiltration of terrorists from Pakistan has been a major problem. They have easy access not just from the western border, but via the porous borders of Nepal and Bangladesh. Here too, better border management and intelligence gathering through cooperation with the two governments would be of great help.

The absence of the option for hot pursuit into Pakistan or of intelligence cooperation from Pakistan greatly slowed down India's response to infiltrations in the early years. Fences were put up along the borders, except in the J&K region, where the terrain did not allow any effective cover. Intelligence and counter-strike capabilities improved after a semblance of security was given to the local people and former terrorists were effectively turned around to play the counter-strike and intelligence roles. Once specific intelligence was available, the success rate of the security forces increased and, with that, the confidence of the people. This, in turn, led to a greater flow of intelligence. The reverse cycle had set in.

The difficult task is to break the funds supply route through *hawala* deals. This requires the cooperation of the source countries, Pakistan

and the Gulf states which, as can be well surmised, is not forthcoming. Ultimately, there has to be a political solution to the problem.

Left Wing Extremism

As for the extreme leftist movements that stretch over nine states, from Bengal in the east to Maharashtra in the west and Karnataka in the south, Tables 2 and 3 below speak for themselves. A little over six months into 2010 and the fatalities indicate that the figures this year could well rise substantially above those of last year.

Table 2: Statewise Fatalities, 2010

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	6	0	7	13
Bihar	30	6	7	43
Chhattisgarh	58	135	69	262
Jharkhand	41	12	20	73
Karnataka	0	0	1	1
Maharashtra	6	2	2	10
Orissa	29	18	13	60
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	243	33	40	316
Total*	413	206	159	778

Table 3: Statewise Fatalities, 2009

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	10	0	18	28
Bihar	37	25	16	78
Chhattisgarh	87	121	137	345
Jharkhand	74	67	76	217
Maharashtra	12	52	23	87
Orissa	36	32	13	81
Uttar Pradesh	1	0	2	3
West Bengal	134	15	9	158
Total*	391	312	294	997

Table 4: Statewise Fatalities, 2008

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	28	1	37	66
Bihar	35	21	15	71
Jharkhand	74	39	50	153
Karnataka	3	1	3	7
Chhattisgarh	35	67	66	168
Maharashtra	2	5	7	14
Orissa	24	76	32	132
West Bengal	19	4	1	24
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	2	2
Tamil Nadu	0	0	1	1
Total	210	214	214	638

Table 5: Statewise Fatalities, 2007

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	24	4	45	73
Bihar	23	21	5	49
Jharkhand	69	6	45	120
Karnataka	1	1	6	8
Chhattisgarh	95	182	73	350
Maharashtra	9	2	8	19
Orissa	13	2	8	23
West Bengal	6	0	1	7
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	1	1
Total	240	218	192	650

Table 6: Statewise Fatalities, 2006

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	18	7	127	152
Bihar	16	5	19	40
Jharkhand	18	47	29	94
Karnataka	0	0	1	1
Chhattisgarh	189	55	117	361
Maharashtra	13	3	33	49
Orissa	3	4	16	23
West Bengal	9	7	4	20
Uttar Pradesh	0	0	2	2
Total	266	128	348	742

Table 7: Statewise Fatalities, 2005

States	Civilian	SF	Naxal	Total
Andhra Pradesh	132	21	167	320
Bihar	25	29	52	106
Jharkhand	49	27	20	96
Chhattisgarh	52	48	26	126
Orissa	13	1	3	17
Maharashtra	2	17	8	27
Karnataka	2	6	4	12
Uttar Pradesh	1	0	6	7
West Bengal	5	1	0	6
Total*	281	150	286	717

* Data till July 12, 2010.

Source: South Asia Terrorism Portal, New Delhi.

Maoists' ideology is hostile to the democratic essence of the Indian Constitution and seeks to replace it with an extreme left form of government. Inspired by Mao's thoughts, leftist guerrillas exploit the economic and governance grievances of the tribals and use violence and terror to achieve their goals. The main affected region snakes across the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. The Maoists are working towards creating a North-South "Red Corridor" from Kathmandu to Andhra Pradesh. Government forces operating in Chhattisgarh have faced serious reverses in recent months, indicating both the growing capabilities of the Maoists, and the inability of the state forces to handle this growing menace. Intelligence has been poor, inter-state coordination slack; the kind of trained and specialised counter-terrorist force required for the task has just not been put in place. Again, there is greater stress on providing economic and social support to the disgruntled populace of the region. Again, past lessons seem to have been forgotten, that security must first be enforced before the state can bring infrastructural and economic benefits to the people of the region. The tendency is to make populist gestures, the beneficial effects of which are seldom felt by the local people.

- Violence in general and terrorism in particular is the creed of the Maoists and at least 194 districts in 22 states have been variously affected by left wing extremism.

- The Maoists have elaborate plans to coordinate their armed struggle with other groups in India in J&K, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur and other parts in northeast India.
- They seek a broad United Front with other religious minorities. They also aim to create mass organisations comprising peasants, workers, students and women.
- The Maoists are busy building up a rural people's militia in the guerrilla dominated zones to prepare for an armed class struggle in which the targets would be mainly in urban areas.
- For this, they have urban infrastructural targets such as highways, the special economic zones in the industrial and mineral rich belt of central India.
- They have taken over the instruments of administration and law and order in the remote, inaccessible forests areas. The rapidly growing problem over such a vast region demands a very different treatment from those the state adopted in other insurgency situations. There is no foreign hand, and almost all the arms and ammunition acquired have been stolen from government forces and armouries. The Maoists have established 'liberated zones' and it would be futile to try and 'liberate the liberated zones'. The sheer size of the casualty potential makes such an attempt unacceptable. The insurgents must first be contained before trying to make inroads into their strongholds. The strategy demands a long gestation period – a period in which the forces are fully trained and equipped for the gigantic task. No less important, roads and communications with 24/7 security should be built and ready for the troops and support forces to move in. Since the problem is spread over several states, there is need to have instant and real-time coordination, modernised police stations and civil-military coordination under a unified command in each state.

Intelligence Capabilities – And Coordination

This brings us to the vital need to build the capacity to detect and preempt acts of terrorism – which means the creation of a first

rate intelligence grid that combines both technical intelligence (TECHINT) and human intelligence (HUMINT) capabilities. Absence of hard data, intelligence and, therefore, inadequate follow-up invariably results in failure to prevent a terrorist act and, if an act has already been committed, the confused reactions are of no help to the follow-up action. In federal structures such as in India, where law and order is a state subject, it is imperative that there be coordination between the Centre and the states because the first intelligence information will emanate either from the state or would need to be developed and pursued by the central intelligence agencies.

The review committee, set up post Kargil, recommended certain organisational reforms in, and updates to, the intelligence and security set-ups, these being the creation of a department Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and a dedicated TECHINT collection facility, the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO), and the Multi-Agency Centre (MAC) for collecting and coordinating terrorism-related information from all over India. There was also the Joint Task Force on Intelligence (JTFI) responsible for conveying in real-time intelligence information back to the states so that they could respond to a situation with speed and efficiency. However, the implementation of the schemes remained inadequate and the desired goals were not achieved. In the wake of the November 2008 Mumbai attacks, the government decided to set up a National Counter-Terrorism Centre which is expected to be functional by the end of the year.

Since the Mumbai attacks had exposed various weaknesses in the counter-insurgency (CI) system, several steps were taken to revitalise the entire CI grid in a different way. The MAC has been made functional with total online connectivity with the Centre, as also with its 30 important subsidiary units in the states. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has been established and the strength of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) augmented. Decentralised hubs for the National Security Guards (NSG) have been established in Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata.

In a related development, it is proposed to establish a National Intelligence Grid, wherein organisations like the IB, NIA and the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence would be given access to 20 databases held by public authorities like banks, airlines, railways, insurance companies and immigration and income tax department. The ambitious project would have a long gestation period after it is approved. It would involve intricate systems of coordination and the existing databases would not cover the entire population. And, the issue of impingement into privacy is bound to be raised.

The strength of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) – stretched as it is beyond its limit by the spread of its deployment in the North-East (NE), J&K and the “Red Corridor” in central India – will be increased from the present 267,000 to more than 300,000. It has suffered considerable casualties fighting the left extremists in recent months. There have been questions about the appropriateness of using the CRPF for such a gigantic task, handicapped as it is by inadequate training, lack of equipment and the resultant ebb in morale.

It is not just the superstructures that are important. While intelligence coordination remains a challenge that each state government handles in its own way, another problem is the low capacity levels. India’s military-population ratio is 1:855. In Pakistan it is 1:255 and in China, 1:591. Similar adverse statistics prevail for the police force, making India one of the most under-policed states in the world, with an all India average of 125 per 100,000, as against the recommended UN figure of 222 per lakh. The US figure is as high as 315. This obviously results in the retreat of law enforcement men from uncontrollable areas and the vacuum is swiftly filled by anti-state elements.

The pacifist policy of trying to ‘weed out the root causes’ through development assistance, without first having brought the insurgents to heel is a strategic blunder. It is like offering carrots to a wild bucking horse. In any such situation, the stick comes first and then the carrot. It is, therefore, not enough to improve the superstructures; the whole system has to be built up from the ground first and then upwards.

Even the tightest of security arrangements cannot ensure that some

form of terrorist attack will not occur. The strongest deterrent at that juncture will always be the manner and sharpness with which the state, the people and the media respond. Quick response mechanisms, which first seek to neutralise the attack through specialised forces and then restrict the fallout through administrative mechanisms have to be in position all the time. This is not an easy task in a vast country like India, where the threat is vastly diverse, geographically and in its nature. Some of these weaknesses showed up in the 2008 Mumbai carnage, although the government has sought to remedy some of the flaws.

As earlier noted, force has to be the first response to any eruption of insurgency. After that, once the state has made it clear that any negotiation has to be non-negotiable, even if the demands are known, then talks may be held.

What is needed is a formulation of a new strategic policy that broadly incorporates the following:

First, reinvent the police force, which is one of the most neglected, underpaid, overworked and maligned forces in the country. Restore its faith and pride in itself by rejuvenating its ability to interact with the population; intelligence will then flow forth. For decades, there has been nothing but airy talk of police reforms.

Second, the police must be equipped and trained in the latest techniques, an aspect that gets neglected due to shortage of manpower, and funds, and to political indifference. It is possible that in some cases and some states there would be a need to glean counter-insurgency expertise from the armed forces.

Third, mere deterrence or quelling of the insurgent forces is not enough. It is the rehabilitation of destroyed lives, the rebuilding of the shattered economy and the end to exploitation that are the keys to a final solution. This process, wherever possible, has to be carried out more or less simultaneously with the fight against insurgency. If this does not happen, the insurgency will resurrect itself. What is needed is a multifaceted approach that involves all the arms of the government, especially the infrastructure and economic agencies of education, health, agriculture and communications, extending beyond just the law and order aspect.

Fourth, since the insurgents say they are fighting a people's war, the authorities must win the people over by showing that it is the government forces that are fighting the war for the people. Since spreading fear is the key to terrorist tactics, media coverage is oxygen to them even if some operations are failures. Reports of massive deployment massages the insurgents' ego and they will seek to replicate their acts. The media, therefore, have a vital and a very responsible role to play; their principle should be: "Report, but do not reveal."

Fifth, a functioning National Counter-Terrorism Centre is a must for coordinating the anti-insurgency operations.

Sixth, terrorism went global decades ago. Unless there is close international co-operation among the international intelligence agencies and counter-terrorist establishments across national frontiers, it will be impossible to counter the threat effectively. There has to be a common definition of the word terrorism before any effective co-operation can emerge. Co-operation has been below the desired levels because of political and strategic considerations which have only helped the terrorists/insurgents.

The government decided on July 14, 2010, to establish a Unified Command for four of the affected states – West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Orissa. There will be an augmentation of police forces, vacancies in the force (estimated to be 97,000) will be swiftly filled, 400 new police stations will be built, air logistic support strengthened and communications and connectivity improved. As one can imagine, these have their own gestation periods and it will be some time before they begin to show results.

The Role of the Army in Counter-Terror and Counter-Insurgency

The Indian Army has been performing internal security duties almost since independence. It was first called in to tackle the Communist insurgency in the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh from 1949 to 1952. Earlier in 1947, it had dealt with a Pakistani guerrilla invasion in Jammu and Kashmir. It has long been involved in the northeast

insurgencies that started in the 1950s and the 1960s, and have not yet fully died out, such as the Bodo and Assamese movements. The Army was called in for action in Punjab in the 1980s and has been in Jammu and Kashmir since 1990.

The Army and security forces have lost 5,962 personnel in the J&K terrorism from 1990 to July 5, 2010. This year alone, 45 security forces personnel have died in the state fighting terrorists. Elsewhere, as many as 939 officers and men lost their lives in Manipur; 783 in Assam; 81 in Meghalaya; and 22 in Mizoram. In addition, 1,226 security forces personnel have died fighting the Maoists between 2005 and 2010; this year, till July 5, we have lost 204 men in uniform.

Since 1990, the security forces have faced 1,511 cases of human rights abuse. These were investigated by various agencies, including the National Human Rights Commission; 1,473 cases were proven false and 104 men found guilty have been punished.

The Army is deployed for counter-terror/insurgency action when the police and paramilitary forces are overwhelmed by the opponent. The Armed Forces Special Power Act is enforced to legalise their internal security activities. The Army invariably finds itself in unfamiliar and difficult terrain without adequate intelligence support. There are the problems of civil-military coordination and proprietary rights over the various forces involved. The police answer to the local government, the paramilitary forces to the Ministry of Home Affairs in New Delhi and the Army has its own command structure under the Ministry of Defence. There is also the problem of coordination among central and local intelligence agencies. In Jammu and Kashmir, the concept of Unified Headquarters was introduced in 1994. It was tried out in Assam in 1997 and in Manipur in 2004, but without statutory authority, it was not much of a success. The political parties were chary of the structure as it would give the forces the power to plan counter-insurgency strategies that might be at variance with their political priorities. What still remains elusive is an effective mechanism for civil-military coordination, so necessary for evolving a cohesive long-term plan that would not only contain but eliminate insurgency.

The Future of Terror

Over time, terrorist entities have evolved new techniques and widened their range of operation. For instance, intelligence and security agencies will continue to grapple with the menace of suicide bombings. A terrorist can no longer be identified by his regional or class background. There is no stereotype. He may have indoctrinated himself on the Internet and may even have taught himself some of the techniques of terrorism. This means he needs minimum back-up support and will not leave behind any intelligence trail.

Conventional terror targets had, till a while back, been land-based and static. They have hit civilian or troop concentrations using improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Cars and trucks laden with bombs have been used for suicide attacks. Buildings, trains and buses have been targeted. 9/11 saw the attacks become airborne. The 2008 Mumbai attackers came from the sea. If David Coleman Headley is to be believed, then the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba was planning more such raids. With a 7,500-km-long coastline, and innumerable, far-flung islands, India has cause for worry.

Maritime terror on the high seas has not yet taken place, nor have the high seas been used again after the USS *Cole* incident and no country's strategic assets on the high seas have been targeted. The police force and intelligence agencies have very little expertise in this area. What is needed now is a different kind of security machinery composed of the Coast Guard, the Navy and Air Force (backed by the land-based police). Physical security measures like the International Port Facility Security Code and the Container Security Initiative are some of the preventive measures that have been introduced.

Intelligence sharing amongst countries is at the core of international cooperation. India is at an obvious disadvantage because it would be ridiculous to expect any cooperation from Pakistan's intelligence services. There is, however, another way. This relates to how Pakistan needs to be handled in the evolving situation in the region. There is a strong belief that, while Pakistan needs to be engaged, it has to be deluded from the belief that it is so indispensable to US objectives that

it has to be coddled all the time and can demand a price of its choosing. Writing for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in May this year, Frederic Grare said:

Last but not least, Pakistan will be central in the agreement-making process vis-à-vis the present quagmire in Afghanistan. In a political environment where the political pressures to exit Afghanistan are on the rise, there is the temptation to view Pakistan as a destabilising factor only as long as – and because – it feels threatened by its neighbors. For this reason, concessions to a Pakistan that will not renounce terrorism as a means of pursuing its foreign policy objectives is likely to lead to a resurgence of the very organisations the coalition has been trying to eliminate for the past eight years. In a regional context, where the political balance might have been altered in favor of Pakistan, such concessions would constitute regression and would make little sense from a security perspective.

This quote accurately sums up one of the steps the US would need to seriously consider as it works for a favourable outcome in Afghanistan, as also to tackle the source of much of the present terrorism that afflicts the globe.

Afghanistan-Pakistan: Lessons Learned and Future Directions

Lisa Curtis

Eighteen months into the Obama Administration, the US is struggling in Afghanistan and there is growing scepticism that the current counter-insurgency strategy can succeed in reversing the Taliban battlefield momentum. June 2010 was the deadliest month of the nine-year war for coalition soldiers, with 101 killed. A US-led military operation launched in February to uproot the Taliban from a major poppy-producing region in southern Helmand province has so far met with mixed results. The outcome of the coalition's effort to reduce Taliban influence in their traditional stronghold in Kandahar this fall will likely determine the future course of US troop commitments in Afghanistan.

Last December, US President Barack Obama approved sending 30,000 more US troops to Afghanistan after drawn-out inter-agency discussions over whether the focus of US involvement in the country should be on counter-insurgency or counter-terrorism operations. Those in favour of pursuing a robust counter-insurgency strategy prevailed in the debate, but President Obama signalled his impatience with this strategy when he declared that US troops would begin withdrawing from Afghanistan in July 2011, less than a year after the new troops are fully deployed.

The circumstances surrounding the recent departure of General Stanley McChrystal from command of US and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces in Afghanistan reflect the lack of unity

among US civilian and military leaders regarding US strategy in Afghanistan. President Obama felt compelled to accept McChrystal's resignation after *Rolling Stone* magazine published an article quoting McChrystal and his senior aides harshly criticising civilian leaders, including the President and Vice President. In his June 23 speech announcing that McChrystal would be replaced by General David Petraeus, Obama said the article had undermined the "civilian control of the military that is at the core of our democratic system."

Although General McChrystal's unrestrained remarks demonstrated a lack of judgment in dealing with media affairs, his counter-insurgency strategy is sound and should be given time to succeed. Obama must discard the artificial deadline for beginning US troop withdrawals, which has contributed to the tensions between US civilian and military leaders by placing commanders under enormous pressure to achieve results in an unrealistic timeframe. The deadline has also undermined US strategy by signalling to our partners and enemies alike that the US lacks resolve to complete the mission in Afghanistan.

The appointment of a seasoned General like David Petraeus to succeed McChrystal helps provide a sense of continuity to US policy in Afghanistan and signals that Obama continues to favour a counter-insurgency approach, at least for now. Petraeus is credited with developing and implementing the counter-insurgency strategy that helped turn the Iraq War around in 2007-08 and has repeatedly said any US troop withdrawals from Afghanistan should be driven by conditions on the ground. Thus, the US still has a window of opportunity to make gains against the Taliban in the coming six months.

The tensions within the Obama Administration over Afghanistan policy that were starkly revealed in the *Rolling Stone* article have led Obama to take a defensive position on the timeline issue. The day after he fired McChrystal, Obama emphasised that the July 2011 date to begin withdrawing troops does not mean the US will "suddenly turn off the lights and let the door close behind us."

If the US and coalition forces can demonstrate success within the next six months, there is a chance that US public support for the war will

stabilise and President Obama will stay the course with both military and economic investments in Afghanistan. If, on the other hand, there is no discernible progress in US/NATO efforts to combat the Taliban insurgency in this timeframe, President Obama may shift to a narrower strategy that favours less US boots on the ground and centres on operations that primarily target terrorist bases. In this scenario, the Taliban would almost undoubtedly gain influence and quite possibly retake power in Kabul.

There are several aspects to the Afghanistan strategy beyond the military surge that require closer US attention and resources. Military operations in Afghanistan alone will not prevent the return of the Taliban to power. The US needs an effective Afghan partner that has enough legitimacy with the people to compel them to support the government over Taliban insurgents. Furthermore, the US requires sincere cooperation from Pakistan in closing down the Taliban's sanctuary on its territory. The US must employ a mix of diplomatic, military, and financial carrots and sticks to compel Pakistan's leadership to support the goal of a stable Afghanistan free of Taliban domination. Pakistan has made strides in the last year in confronting Pakistani Taliban extremists bent on weakening the Pakistani state. Still, the Pakistan military continues to hedge on its support to the Afghan Taliban and to tolerate terrorist groups linked to Al Qaeda.

The current efforts of the Pakistan military to negotiate a peace settlement with Afghan President Hamid Karzai are dangerous to US interests in that they are likely to strengthen the hands of militants currently allied with Al Qaeda, like the core leadership of the Afghan Taliban as well as the Jalaluddin Haqqani network. Pakistan's efforts to push the interests of its Taliban proxies in the peace process could also result in alienating Afghan ethnic minorities who fear a return to the atrocities carried out against their communities during Taliban rule in the late 1990s. The US must take a more proactive role in guiding any negotiations aimed at ending the war in Afghanistan or risk jeopardising the entire coalition strategy of stabilising the country. Karzai is politically weak and approaching negotiations out of desperation, and the Pakistan

military is advocating for its own proxies – still closely linked to Al Qaeda – to regain power.

Give New Strategy Time

The US-led war in Afghanistan has long suffered from lack of troops, resources, funding, and strategic direction at the expense of the Iraq War. Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 represents the first year that US spending on Afghanistan will exceed that on Iraq. The total funding request for FY 2010 was \$72.9 billion for Afghanistan and \$65.4 billion for Iraq. In cumulative terms, the US has spent a total of \$748 billion in Iraq compared to \$299 billion in Afghanistan.¹ As of November 2009, US troop levels in Iraq (124,000) were still twice those in Afghanistan (66,000). In May, the number of US troops in Afghanistan (94,000) finally outstripped those in Iraq (92,000) for the first time since 2003. The allocation of troop levels for each war will continue to move in this direction and by January there will be about 102,000 US troops in Afghanistan and about 44,000 in Iraq.

The security situation in Afghanistan has deteriorated sharply in the last five years, and it will take time to reverse the Taliban gains. The areas under Taliban influence increased substantially during this period, particularly from 2007–09. In December 2009, one report acknowledged that the Taliban had in place “Shadow Governors” in 33 of 34 provinces. Taliban insurgents perceived 2009 as their most successful year of the war and are confident that they are winning a war of political attrition.² The Taliban viewed the 2009 election, which was marred by low turn-out and accusations of widespread voter fraud, as a success for the insurgent campaign. According to recent polls, 43 percent of Afghans acknowledge that the Taliban have grown stronger in the past year, while only 24 percent believe the movement has weakened. Projecting the inevitability of their victory is a major focus of the Taliban’s information operations as well as a key source of their strength.³ The first step for coalition forces to stem Taliban gains is to weaken the perception that Taliban victory is inevitable.

One of the biggest impediments to weakening that perception is the stated July 2011 date for the beginning of the withdrawal of US troops, first raised by President Obama during his speech at the West Point Military Academy last December. In an apparent attempt to placate domestic constituencies opposed to the war, President Obama awkwardly stated in his December speech that “it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 US troops to Afghanistan. After 18 months, our troops will begin to come home.” The pledge to begin withdrawing troops before they had even begun deploying has provided a psychological boost to the enemy by signalling a lack of long-term US commitment to the mission. The announcement of a withdrawal date also discourages Pakistan from breaking ties to its Taliban proxies on whom it believes it will need to rely in the event coalition forces depart the region prematurely.

Given his clarity about the threat posed to US national security by a Taliban-dominated Afghanistan, it is difficult to comprehend why President Obama would have designated an early date to begin withdrawing US forces – particularly since most observers acknowledge that it will take at least three to four years to fully train and equip the Afghan National Army to a level sufficient to engage the Taliban.

Senator McCain, speaking during a recent hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee, emphasised the downsides of the troop withdrawal announcement when he said:

In South Asia, meanwhile, the pledge to begin withdrawing our forces by July 2011 has injected unnecessary doubts about US commitment in the minds of friends and foes alike – from Afghan fence-sitters, to Pakistan’s leaders, to our strategic partners in India. The reports over the weekend that reconciliation with Taliban leaders is now being explored, before the vast majority of the 30,000-troop surge has even arrived in the country, only feeds the perception in the region that the US government is more eager to leave Afghanistan than to succeed there.

US military leaders emphasise that any troop withdrawals will be driven by conditions on the ground. The divisions between military and civilian advisers within the Obama Administration over the meaning of the 2011 deadline were highlighted by the *Rolling Stone* article and could become even more pronounced as the date draws closer. If, by December, new NATO and US Forces Commander for Afghanistan General David Petraeus can point to successes with the 2010 military operations, it will strengthen his hand in pushing for continued commitment of US forces in Afghanistan and for allowing any US troop withdrawals to be driven solely by conditions on the ground.

US military leaders are under pressure not only to bring positive results quickly but with less troops than General McChrystal originally deemed necessary to provide the best chance for success. While President Obama's commitment in December of an additional 30,000 forces for Afghanistan was welcome, it fell far short of the level of troops (around 60,000 – 80,000) General McChrystal indicated would provide the highest chance of success. Even with the troop additions from NATO nations and other allies, including Georgia and South Korea, totalling about 7,000, the number of new troops is well below what US military leaders wanted. In his August 2009 assessment, McChrystal emphasised the need to focus limited International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) military and civilian resources where they would likely have the greatest impact on the people.⁴ He noted that ISAF strategy would be to focus initially on critical high-population areas that are either contested or controlled by insurgents.

Operation Moshtarak: Battle for Good Governance

The first area coalition forces are focussing on as part of the new counter-insurgency strategy is Marjah, a city of about 80,000 in southern Helmand province. US-led Coalition forces, in tandem with their Afghan counterparts, launched Operation Moshtarak (“together” in Dari) in mid-February to oust the Taliban from control of this major centre of poppy cultivation. Aside from uprooting the Taliban, another major goal of Operation Moshtarak is to link together different towns

in the area to encourage trade and transit, which had been disrupted by the Taliban. In the words of ISAF spokesperson Brigadier General Eric Tremblay, “If you are connecting the dots, you are increasing security, creating opportunities for transport, for societies to connect, to exchange supplies, and general economic development.”⁵

The offensive, which involved more than 15,000 troops from the US, UK, and Afghanistan, was announced weeks prior to its launch, in order to alert Afghan citizens. This tactic also gave time to Taliban insurgents to blend in with the rest of society. Cautious rules of engagement for coalition soldiers also helped the Taliban disguise themselves as civilians, since insurgents could drop their weapons in ditches and blend in with the population, only to walk to another weapons cache.⁶ The US military strategy of prioritising the protection of civilians has led it to tighten the rules of engagement to avoid civilian casualties and win public support for the coalition forces. These tighter rules of engagement, however, have frustrated soldiers on the ground under fire from the Taliban. General Petraeus is currently reviewing the rules of engagement and is expected to make clarifications in a new directive that will balance the need to protect civilians with that of providing the soldiers the ability to defend themselves appropriately.

Coalition forces and unmanned aircraft attacked Marjah on February 13, 2010, and within a day they held a small flag-raising ceremony, and newspaper outlets published that the world’s biggest opium centre had fallen. Since then, the operation has consisted of house searching, disarming improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and clearing out snipers and remaining insurgents.

Today, the battle is primarily for the trust of the civilians. Most civilians are not ideologically aligned with the Taliban, but merely want security and good governance. While Marjah’s residents are eager for a new start and recognise the Taliban offered only hardline religious edicts and no prospect for future development of their society, they also are demanding honest and attentive local government from the new authorities. They fear the Karzai government will hand their city over to corrupt politicians or former warlords.

The Taliban had captured Marjah in 2007, taking over from a former anti-Soviet Mujahideen Commander Abdul Rahman Jan. The locals in Marjah have made clear they do not want Jan to return, given his reputation of corruption and involvement in the drug trade.⁷ If coalition forces are able to provide security for Marjah's residents, it will go a long way to building the trust of the population with the local Afghan government and coalition forces, and begin to change the perception that the Taliban is winning the war.

The overall success of the Marjah operation is still undetermined. Insurgent resistance has been tougher than expected and US officials have had difficulty recruiting government workers and gaining the cooperation of locals who fear retaliation by the Taliban. In mid-April Brigadier General Larry Nicholson, who led the assault, said the security situation was still fragile, that the Taliban continued to visit villagers at night, and government presence in the area remained limited.⁸

High Stakes in Kandahar Offensive

An expected offensive in Kandahar this summer has been delayed until fall, when more coalition forces will arrive in the theatre. By October, there will be about 8,500 Afghan forces operating alongside 11,900 US and NATO forces in Kandahar. The outcome of the effort to oust the Taliban from their traditional stronghold in Kandahar will be a decisive moment for the US and coalition forces. US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mullen has called the Kandahar offensive "the cornerstone of our surge effort and the key to shifting the momentum" in the nine-year-old war – as important to the Afghan struggle, he said, as pacifying Baghdad was to Iraq.⁹

Kandahar is located in Afghanistan's conservative Pashtun heartland and is considered the birthplace of the Taliban movement. The Taliban made their debut in Afghanistan by capturing Kandahar in November 1994 after freeing a Pakistani convoy that was blocked by Afghan warlords. One month after taking Kandahar, the Taliban had captured the provinces of Helmand and Uruzgan, and finally took Kabul in 1996, thus, running the country until they were ousted by

coalition forces in November 2001. Kandahar city is Afghanistan's second largest city, with a population of about 1.2 million. In General McChrystal's August 2009 assessment, he notes that the Quetta *Shura* Taliban (the Taliban leadership council located in the city of Quetta in Pakistan's Baluchistan province) has been working to control Kandahar city and its approaches for several years.¹⁰

As in Marjah, the goal of the offensive is to uproot the Taliban, while protecting the local civilian population, and to improve Afghan governance and public opinion towards the international forces. Kandahar has remained under formal Afghan government control since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, but the Taliban's presence in Kandahar has remained strong. The Taliban have made their presence felt in Kandahar primarily through a campaign of assassination and intimidation and periodic attacks. But support for the Taliban also has been fuelled by a weak Afghan government that is perceived as predatory and corrupt. Some observers argue that the government in Kandahar requires fundamental restructuring since the current corrupt system led by Ahmed Wali Karzai is perpetuating the insurgency. They note that the insurgency provides the only means of opposition for the majority of the population that is opposed to Ahmed Wali Karzai,¹¹ half brother of President Hamid Karzai.

Taliban fighters will most likely mix in with the local civilian population and draw out the fight in an attempt to tax American and international will. The Taliban's deep roots in Kandahar will also complicate the coalition forces' efforts to win support from the local population. Five of six Kandaharis view the Taliban as their "Afghan brothers," according to a recent survey by the United States Army's Human Terrain System.¹² The study also found that in five districts of Kandahar, the Taliban have more influence than the government.

Pursuing Taliban Reconciliation/Reintegration from Position of Strength

While local reintegration of Taliban militants back into Afghan society should be pursued with vigour, the US should not expect negotiations

with the senior Taliban leadership to bear fruit until the Taliban have been weakened on the battlefield. In the US State Department's "Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy" released in January, it supports Afghan-led reintegration of local insurgents who renounce Al Qaeda, cease violence, and agree to participate in the constitutional process.¹³ It is also necessary to distinguish a process of reintegration or reconciliation from one that would legitimise the Taliban's ruthless ideology. The enhanced focus on supporting Afghan-led reintegration of the Taliban has fuelled speculation in the region that the US is seeking a political deal with senior Taliban leaders as part of an exit strategy from the region. Taliban leader Mullah Omar himself has indicated that calls for negotiations with the Taliban in Western capitals indicate that the will of the international coalition is breaking.¹⁴

The Obama Administration must actively counter the perception that the US is war-weary and ready to strike a grand bargain with the Taliban. Such perceptions weaken the US position in the region and dampen prospects for overall success of the new counter-insurgency strategy. The US instead must continue to assert a vision for the region that strengthens those who support democracy, human rights, and religious pluralism and weakens those who adhere to destructive, extremist ideologies. Premature talks between the US and Taliban leadership would provide the movement with legitimacy, while discrediting peaceful political players and rewarding those who have relied on a violent, ruthless path to power.

The US should avoid repeating past mistakes of misreading the intentions of the Taliban and underestimating the strength of their bond with Al Qaeda as it did when it sought to engage them before 9/11. Michael Rubin, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, detailed in his recent article, "Taking Tea with the Taliban," how US State Department officials were repeatedly misled by Taliban officials harbouring Osama bin Laden even after Al Qaeda attacked two US Embassies in Africa in 1998. As Rubin notes, "Face-to-face meetings with Americans served only to reinforce the Taliban gang's pretensions as a government rather than as an umbrella group for terrorists."¹⁵

The fundamental question is whether the Taliban and Al Qaeda can now be split apart after supporting each other on the battlefield for the last eight years. The Taliban have benefited significantly from their relationship with Al Qaeda, receiving strategic direction and ideological inspiration, access to international financial networks, and recruits and training for suicide attacks inside Afghanistan.

Some indications point to a Taliban leadership that has become so fused with Al Qaeda and its virulently anti-West, pan-Islamic ideology that it would be nearly impossible for the leadership to break those ties without losing its *raison d'être*. As Barbara Elias, Director of the Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Taliban Project at the National Security Archives at George Washington University, argued in November 2009 in *Foreign Affairs*, the Taliban cannot break their relationship with Al Qaeda “without also surrendering their existing identity as a vessel for an obdurate and uncompromising version of political Islam.”

Local reconciliation efforts have been underway for several years in Afghanistan but have been stymied by lack of coordinated and cohesive international support and financial resources to back them up. The Afghan Independent Department of Local Governance (IDLG) and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) like Oxfam have encouraged local reconciliation efforts. The Afghan National Solidarity Plan (NSP), created in 2003 to help Afghan communities implement development projects, also provides an opportunity for reconciliation at the local level through a network of more than 21,000 village development councils.¹⁶

The US should support local Afghan reconciliation efforts on the ground in Afghanistan diplomatically and financially, and, at the same time, militarily squeeze the Taliban leadership based in Pakistan that is still closely linked to Al Qaeda. These actions should occur simultaneously so that the local Taliban fighters view the US, NATO, and Afghan authorities as being on the winning side, and simultaneously see a process through which they can switch sides.

Pakistan's Bid at Reconciliation Undermines US Interests in Afghanistan

Recent media reports indicate that the Pakistan military is negotiating with Afghan President Hamid Karzai for a peace settlement in Afghanistan. While a genuine thaw in relations between the two countries would be welcome, the US needs to be directly involved in any effort to negotiate an end to the war in Afghanistan.

President Karzai is negotiating from a position of political weakness and many Afghans believe he will not protect the position of Afghanistan's ethnic minorities in the negotiations. According to media reports, the Pakistani military is offering to mediate a solution by bringing the deadly Jalaluddin Haqqani network into the negotiations. Meanwhile, the US continues to press Pakistan to take on Haqqani's forces in North Waziristan through military operations. General Petraeus, in a Congressional testimony in late June, told US law-makers that US officials had briefed Pakistan's military Chief General Ashfaq Kayani on information suggesting Haqqani fighters were involved in a raid on the US Bagram air base in mid-May.

The Obama Administration's lack of a clear policy on reconciliation is contributing to Karzai's unhelpful approach to reconciliation and the Pakistani confidence that it will play the final arbiter in an Afghan peace settlement. Karzai recently fired respected Afghan intelligence chief Amrullah Saleh over differences on the Taliban reconciliation issue. Saleh had said negotiations with the Taliban would "disgrace" Afghanistan. As Carl Forsberg of the Institute for the Study of War points out in his recent monograph, *Politics and Power in Kandahar*, "Serious questions surround the realism of the Karzai administration's vision for reconciliation in southern Afghanistan." Forsberg notes that for both Hamid Karzai and his half-brother, Ahmed Wali Karzai, reconciliation has the "element of an exercise in escapism" from the fact that Ahmed Wali Karzai, in particular, lacks support from a large portion of the population in Kandahar.¹⁷

Senior US Administration officials have repeatedly said that any reconciliation with the Taliban must be Afghan-led, and they have failed

to assert a clear US role and vision for this process. The Administration must be more forthright about what a political settlement in Afghanistan should involve and take a leadership role in the process.

Compelling full Pakistani Cooperation – is it Possible?

In a recent Congressional testimony, General David Petraeus provided a dire assessment of the situation along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, describing the region as a terrorist safe haven occupied by Al Qaeda, Taliban, and a “syndicate of militant groups” that are fighting against the people and Governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Pakistan military leadership appears to take a different view of the situation in the tribal areas, viewing it with far less urgency than its US partners. Pakistani security forces are engaged in military operations against many of the militant strongholds in the tribal areas, particularly against the bases of the Pakistani Taliban. However, Pakistan continues to hedge on its support for the Afghan Taliban and related militants, like the Jalaluddin Haqqani network. Rather than viewing the various groups as connected and, thus, posing an existential threat to the country, Pakistani military strategists are more worried about India trying to encircle Pakistan by gaining influence in Afghanistan. They calculate that the Taliban and the Haqqani network offer the best chance for countering India’s regional influence.

When asked about the potential for Pakistan to undertake major military operations in North Waziristan, the base of Al Qaeda and the Jalaluddin Haqqani network, the Director of the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies in Islamabad, Muhammad Amir Rana, recently told *The Washington Post* this was unlikely since the status quo in the tribal areas works for Pakistan. He said Pakistan had an agreement with these groups and that they had refrained from perpetrating terrorism inside Pakistan. Indeed, Rana indicated, the terrorists could be Pakistan’s ally in Afghanistan at some point in the future, so it made no sense for the military to take them on at this point. The spokesman for Pakistan’s military, Athar Abbas, provided slightly different reasoning for Pakistan’s ambivalence toward dealing with the terrorist base in

North Waziristan. He indicated that the Pakistani military feared taking on too many fronts at once.¹⁸

Pakistan believes that ethnic Tajiks and other members of the former “Northern Alliance” in the Afghan government receive support from New Delhi and that India foments separatism in Pakistan’s Baluchistan province from its Afghan Consulates near the Pakistan border. US officials say they have no information to substantiate Pakistani claims that India foments violence in Baluchistan.

Role of Other Regional Players

While the US seeks to convince Pakistan to end all support for the Taliban and related extremists, it should also work with other regional players interested in Afghan stability, particularly the Central Asian states, India, Russia, and China. Indeed, some analysts argue that a regional solution involving these other nations is the only way to guarantee stability in the country over the long-run, given the history of outside interference. Washington must also continue to build up the Northern Distribution Network in order to reduce its dependence on Pakistani territory as a means of resupply for US troops in Afghanistan.¹⁹ Currently, about 60 percent of ISAF supplies are routed through Pakistan while another 30 percent are moved via train through Russia and the Central Asian states. The US has already opened five supply routes from countries north of Afghanistan, and a more robust dialogue with Russia could help the US secure even more routes through the north, thus, reducing its dependence on Pakistan.²⁰

Central Asian States: The Central Asian Republics, by and large, support the US goal of promoting stability in Afghanistan but each country has varied in the degree to which it offers its territory to facilitate US logistics and supply into Afghanistan. Russian pressure to limit US presence in Eurasia and perceived American support of human rights and democracy are the defining factors which limit the Central Asian regimes’ cooperation with the US. After having shut down the American air base at Karshi-Khanabad in July 2005 following the Andijian Revolt, the Uzbek government agreed in April 2009 to allow US non-military

supplies to pass through Uzbekistan to Afghanistan. Kyrgyz President Kurmanbek Bakiyev forced the US to triple its payment for use of its Manas air base near Bishkek in 2009 after going back on a promise to Moscow to shut down the base altogether. Moscow repeatedly pressured Kyrgyzstan to shut Manas down, or at least to control the fuel supply to the base. The base is used for transport, refuelling, and supply. Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan allow US overflights for humanitarian purposes.

Russia: Russia is critical to establishing an effective Northern Distribution Network. Moscow has an interest in seeing a stable Afghanistan, where Islamist extremism is contained. Russian territory has been targeted by Islamist extremists and terrorists who receive foreign financing and training. At the same time, Moscow's deeply-held resentment for being defeated by the US-supported Mujahideen in Afghanistan in the 1980s and its suspicions of current NATO involvement in the region impact its calculations on Afghanistan policy.²¹ Russia considers the Central Asian states its "exclusive sphere of national interests," to use President Medvedev's term, and is generally opposed to these countries negotiating separate deals with the US. Last summer, during the Obama-Medvedev Summit, Russia agreed to allow overflight of its territory of lethal US equipment for Afghanistan.

India: India's traditionally cordial ties to Afghanistan have been consciously strengthened over the past six years, and India is now a major donor for the reconstruction of the country, pledging over \$1.3 billion. New Delhi has developed a wide array of political contacts and provided assistance for the new Parliament building, a major highway in Nimruz province, and a major electricity project in Kabul. India has invested in the Iranian port at Chabahar to gain trading access to Afghanistan, given Pakistani reluctance to allow Indian goods to transit Pakistan. An estimated 4,000 Indians are in Afghanistan working on development projects. India has sent about 500 Indo-Tibetan Border Police personnel to guard its workers. There have been four major attacks on Indian interests in Afghanistan in the last two years, the most recent being an attack on a guesthouse in Kabul in February that

killed seven Indian citizens. Indian officials blamed the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Tayyiba terrorist group for the February attack.

China: While China is wary of a long-term US military presence in the region, the volatile situation with its Muslim Uighur population in the western Xinjiang province bordering Afghanistan also shapes its policy toward Kabul. China won a \$3.5 billion contract to develop the Aynak copper field in Afghanistan in 2008, marking the largest foreign direct investment in the country's history. The Chinese government is reportedly "studying" the US proposal for Beijing to participate in the Northern Distribution Network.²² While China has shown commercial interest in Afghanistan and may be willing to increase its economic stake in the country, thus, facilitating economic development and stabilisation, Beijing has been unwilling to assist US and NATO forces directly.

Iran: There is strong reason to believe that Iran does not want a stable Afghanistan aligned with the US to emerge from the current fighting. Such a state would be an obstacle to the establishment of Iranian regional hegemony and could assist possible future efforts to undermine the Iranian regime. US Defence Secretary Robert Gates has accused Iran of playing a "double game" of both supporting the Afghan government and providing assistance to the Taliban, while US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen in April acknowledged that a significant shipment of weapons had moved from Iran into Kandahar.^{23 24} These accusations show that Iran is carefully watching the action unfolding in Afghanistan and is looking for an opportunity to expel American influence and increase its regional geopolitical profile. Former US Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad says that Iran may use Western Afghanistan as a "bargaining chip" if conflict should erupt over its nuclear ambitions.²⁵

At the same time, Iran is worried about Sunni extremism, hostile warlords, and cross-border drug trafficking, and has taken action to protect its porous border with Afghanistan.²⁶ Afghanistan's opium trade has helped create an estimated 4-5 million Iranian drug addicts. Therefore, Iran has a vested interest in cooperating with the Afghan

government to secure the border and reduce drug smuggling. But Tehran would prefer a weak and pliable Afghan government that would be open to Iranian influence. For this reason, it would like to see a US military defeat in Afghanistan and a United Nations-led effort to stabilise the country, thus, minimising US influence in the region.

Conclusion

The current US counter-insurgency strategy, if fully resourced and given the appropriate amount of time, has a reasonable chance of succeeding. Yet given US domestic economic and political realities, General Petraeus must show signs of success within the next six months to maintain US public support. Benchmarks to look for in Marjah and Kandahar include enhanced security and greater trust among the people in the coalition forces and Afghan authorities.

If the US and coalition forces can demonstrate some success within the next six months, there is a chance US public support for the war will stabilise and President Obama will make long-term investments, both military and economic, in Afghanistan to ensure it does not again serve as a safe haven for terrorists with global ambitions. If, on the other hand, there is no discernible progress in US/NATO efforts to combat the Taliban insurgency in this timeframe, President Obama may shift to a narrower strategy that favours less US boots on the ground and centres on operations that primarily target terrorist bases.

In this scenario, the Taliban would almost undoubtedly regain influence and possibly even retake power in Kabul. The objective of the Taliban is to dominate Afghanistan at the expense of minority ethnic groups. Since there are no signs that senior Taliban leaders have broken ranks with Al Qaeda, we must assume that an Afghanistan dominated by the Taliban would be a safe haven for international terrorists intent on attacking the US homeland.

With regard to Pakistan, the US needs to demonstrate that a Pakistani policy of continuing to support the Afghan Taliban and Jalaluddin Haqqani network will come at a cost to Pakistan's foreign policy interests. The US must be willing to use its leverage with

Pakistan -- both American influence on global opinion toward Pakistan and its substantial economic and military aid -- to convince the Pakistan military to shift its strategy in Afghanistan so that it does not invest in the Taliban and instead develops political alternatives. Washington should make clear to Islamabad that it is prepared to devote substantial military, economic, and diplomatic resources to the goal of preventing a Taliban-dominated Afghanistan.

The US should recognise that the Pakistan military's ability to make strategic decisions in the interest of long-term stability in Pakistan is clouded at present by its fixation on India. A sustained and multifaceted Indo-Pakistani dialogue could help reduce Pakistani fears of India's regional influence. But, ultimately, Pakistani strategists must decide that a robust economy and a moderate and cohesive society provide the most assured path to maintaining Pakistan's national strength and regional influence. These goals will remain elusive, however, so long as Pakistan tolerates extremism and fails to enforce the rule of law against terrorists and their supporters.

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Radical Influences in Institutional Structures and Armed Forces in the Region: An Assessment

Wilson John

This paper is an examination of the complex challenges posed by the presence of radicalised elements in the state institutions that are, otherwise, expected to play a critical role in any effective, long-term counter-terrorism strategy.

The primary reason for such an inquiry is that the existence, even if miniscule, of radicalised elements or sympathisers of extremist groups in the civilian and military institutions in South Asia (arguably the epicentre of transnational terrorism) could seriously undermine any counter-terrorism (CT) strategy which is based, largely, on the presumption that the state's interests would be contiguous to the interest of the larger international community, and that it is both willing and capable of addressing the challenges.

There are a few additional provocations for this inquiry which must be stated beforehand. Although it is quite well known that terrorist groups cannot either exist or grow without the tacit or open support of the state or its people, the policy-makers in the West have so far remained largely shy of addressing the possibility that they are working with just such a duplicitous ally. This has quite often resulted in forfeiting long-term gains for short-term victories as even a cursory scrutiny of the Global War on Terror would reveal.

Another factor, often quite critical but least understood, is the support the terrorist groups have in the civil society, either by way of ideological affinity or through social welfare organisations like schools and charity. In most cases, both these factors play a major role in helping extremist and terrorist groups grow deep roots within the society which offer an extraordinary level of immunity from punitive actions.

Complexities of State Support

The state can be broadly categorised as the civilian institutions of governance and the armed forces. The civilian institutions can be further sub-divided as the legislature, bureaucracy and non-combatant security forces. The support for terrorist groups, their ideologies and objectives among these constituents of a sovereign state could take the form of a sponsor, enabler and cooperator. Whatever might be the size and shape of support, the partnership is almost always driven by a strategic impulse. The madness is not without a method.

What really undermines any attempt, regional or global, to cut this umbilical cord of terrorism is often the blurred distinction between overt and covert support, particularly in the case of Pakistan, where it has created a parallel security and intelligence structure to initiate proxy wars to achieve certain openly stated strategic objectives, even as it maintains an overall cloak of deniability. Such a configuration of non-state actors is not in the real sense ‘non-state’; they are actually ‘para-state’ actors who do not exist legally and, hence, require an altogether different approach to counter their influence and activities.

What muddies the water further in this context is a set of new actors on the scene – ‘lone wolves’ like Faisal Shahzad¹ or individual terrorist leaders who operate more like ‘*jihadis* for hire’. These individuals are quite different from groups like Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT), which have a clear pecking order, agenda and operational principles and strategies and, of course, fairly well endowed training and recruitment infrastructures. These ‘freelancers’, Illyas Kashmiri for instance, have had a state connection at some point of time, but had broken away

to operate autonomously, switching their loyalties and ideologies back and forth.²

Having laid out the overall context in which we can discuss the issue of radicalisation among the constituents of a legitimate state, a deeper probe of the individual constituents of the state would offer a better understanding of the problem itself.

Extremist Persuasions

Religion has always played a critical role in the region, shaping cultures and attitudes over centuries. Religion even today is a fundamental *raison d'être* for the countries in South Asia. Although there is considerable space given to secularism, like in India, by and large, such discourses have so far been confined to the select elite groups. Although the founding fathers of independent India and Pakistan – Muhammad Ali Jinnah, M. K. Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru *et al* – were not exactly religious fundamentalists, they were acutely aware of the religious proclivities of the divided people. Despite the presence of such enlightened leadership, the assassination of Gandhi by a Hindu radical in 1948 and the anti-Ahmeddiya riots of 1953 in Lahore and other parts of Punjab in Pakistan brought to the fore the presence and influence of radical elements in the polity of both the newly independent nations.

In Pakistan, the radical elements had considerable success in the formative years largely because of the early death of Jinnah (1948) and the failure of successive political leaders to bring together a sense of coherence and commitment to nation-building. Although religious parties like Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), with an overt radical agenda, struggled to usurp the political space, it was the overweening ambition of the Pakistan Army which propelled the radicalisation process. The failure of the civilian government to quell the anti-Ahmeddiya riots in 1953 brought the Army to the centre-stage of politics, with General Ayub Khan taking over the reins of Pakistan through a coup in 1958. The event also marked the beginning of radicalisation of the society in Pakistan.³

Since then, both the Army and the religious parties have had an abiding influence on the political life of Pakistan, encouraging radicalism in state structures with certain common as well as divergent objectives. The growth and wider acceptance of religious parties like the JI and its offshoots in Pakistan could provide important clues about this phenomenon in the region.

Jamaat-e-Islami and its Influence

Of the 58 religious political parties in existence since Pakistan's birth, the two most powerful ones are Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), led by Qazi Hussain Ahmed (till recently) and its splinter group, Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam led by Maulana Fazlur Rehman (JUI-F).

The JI-Pakistan Army alliance began in the late 60s when Bengali Muslims in East Pakistan raised the banner of revolt. The Army leadership sought the help of JI in launching a brutal campaign against the Bengali intellectual and political leadership. The religious party created two of its first militant organisations, Al Badr and Al Shams, to confront the Mukti Bahini, an armed secessionist group which campaigned to free the eastern wing of Pakistan.⁴ It was a significant change for JI, which had preferred *dawa* to violence till then. The JI's active role in East Pakistan made it the Army's preferred choice as an effective instrument for covert military campaigns.

This new-found role, and utility, made JI the preferred choice of outsourcing terror when the US and its allies sought out President Zia-ul Haq to evict the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. The recruits to the holy war came from JI-run *madrassas* across the country. One of the prominent *madrassas* that took part in the *jihad* was Dar-ul Uloom Haqqania at Akhora Khattak, in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), headed by Maulana Samiul-Haq, chief of another JI splinter group, and friend and teacher of a large number of the Taliban leadership. Throughout the 1980s, when the call for *jihad* in Afghan went far and wide, terrorist recruits of various nationalities – Palestine, Bangladesh, Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and Africa – reached JI safe-houses in Karachi en route to the training camps of

Khost and Khaldan in Afghanistan run by Hizb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.⁵

The first Pakistani *jihadi* martyr in Afghanistan was Imran Shaheed, an undergraduate at a government college in Karachi and an active member of the JI's student wing, Islami Jamiat Tulaba (IJT).⁶ The group ran a systematic campaign to mobilise public opinion for the Afghan *jihad* and took part in militant activities with full zeal, producing 72 'martyrs' between 1980 and 1990. In fact, outside the IJT office in Lahore, a large billboard once listed the names of hundreds of 'martyrs'.

The JI's close relations with the Pakistan Army and intelligence agencies facilitated its enormous growth during the Afghan *jihad*.⁷ It was able to expand its infrastructure and activities with generous contributions from the government and private individuals in the Gulf states in return for hosting Arab and other Mujahideen in Pakistan. JI cadres, including those in IJT, benefited from training with foreign fighters. This association helped JI, with over 100 *madrassas* in Punjab and other provinces, to establish ties with Islamist groups throughout the world.

Institutional Subversion

A matter of greater concern has been the radical group's infiltration of the civilian and military institutions of the country. For half-a-century, the JI and its student wing have been active in Sindh and Punjab, particularly in the universities, from where the majority of the civilian and military officers and cadres were recruited. The possibility of JI and its radical ideologies gaining some level of acceptance among the civilian leadership, therefore, cannot be entirely discounted. Scholars like Syed Vali Nasr have pointed out that JI members and sympathisers recruited into government service have managed to find their way to key Ministries like Finance and Foreign Affairs.⁸

This 'radical infiltration' has been prompted by the systematic weakening of the bureaucracy by both the civilian and military leadership over the years, as well as through the lateral induction of an increasing number of military officials to key bureaucratic positions in

the government. In fact, President Zia-ul Haq's administrative reforms attempted to redefine the ideological orientation of the civil servant by introducing measures like a uniform dress code and prayer breaks during office hours.⁹ So successful had been JI in infiltrating the policy-makers that General Zia-ul Haq's Islamisation programme was based on the blueprint drafted by JI founder, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi¹⁰ (*The Islamic Law and Constitution*, Islamic Publication, Lahore, 1954).

Several JI members today occupy high positions in other mainstream political parties like the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). For instance, a senior leader of PML-N, Javed Hashmi, was elected as the president of the Punjab University Students Union on an IJT ticket.¹¹ Interestingly, one of the main campaign leaders for Hashmi was LeT chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, who was then an IJT *nazim* or director. The JI's tie-up with PML-N in 1988 to form the Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI)¹² to defeat Benazir Bhutto, at the instance of the Pakistan Army, further strengthened the party's hold over the political space.

Although JI on its own has not been able to capture political power, it has been quite successful in influencing policies and attitudes of not only military rulers like Zia-ul Haq and Pervez Musharraf, but also those of PML-N and Pakistan People's Party (PPP). For instance, PPP founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto chose religious symbols and themes like "Islam our Faith, Democracy our Polity and Socialism our Economy" to strengthen his hold over the electorate.¹³ Bhutto championed Islamisation of the military in many ways – he allowed officers to keep beards, banned alcohol from military messes and changed the weekly holiday from Sunday to Friday.¹⁴ It was Bhutto who picked up an obscure and obscurantist General, Zia-ul Haq, to become his Chief of Army Staff. Nawaz Sharif, once he came to power for the first time in 1990, decided to follow the JI-line of transforming Pakistan into an Islamic state and introduced the *Shariah* Bill or the 15th Amendment in May 1991 which sought to make the *Shariah* the supreme law in Pakistan.¹⁵ Sharif's reported meeting with Osama bin Laden only strengthened his radical leanings. Although Benazir Bhutto projected a more liberal image in comparison to Sharif, she

could not remain free of the influences of the JI-Army combine in promoting the Kashmir *jihad*.

The Bangladesh Case

The JI had a far more impressive gain in Bangladesh where it managed to usurp considerable political space despite the initial loss of face and influence, following the secession of East Pakistan. It is today the third largest political party, with enormous clout in rural Bangladesh. In fact, like in the case of Pakistan, the radicalisation of politics and bureaucracy in Bangladesh can be studied by tracing JI's fortunes.

JI began asserting itself as a political force after the assassination of the first Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, and his family in 1975. General Zia-ur Rahman, who came to power in the first coup actively promoted Islamisation of the political institutions.¹⁶ A little more than a decade later, President H.M. Ershad, another General who took over power through a coup in 1982, made Islam the state religion, strengthening the hold of radical groups like JI on the political life of Bangladesh.

These groups also gained considerably from the bitter feud between the two main political parties, Awami League (AL) and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). Both the parties have been courting JI to settle political scores. The BNP even partnered with JI to run a government between 2001 and 2006.¹⁷ The Awami League, which claims to be more secular of the two, had, in 2006, allied with a radical group, Bangladesh Khelafat Majlish (BKM), which sought ministerial berths for five of its nominees, two of them members of Harkat-ul Jihad al Islami (HuJI). The alliance, however, fell apart because of strong opposition from within the Awami League.

The JI-BNP combine had its own set of *jihadis* in the stable – Jamatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB), who called themselves “soldiers of Allah.” The two leaders of the group, Shaykh Abdur Rahman and Sidiqul Islam alias Bangla Bhai, who were executed in 2007,¹⁸ were active JI members and had the support of some senior BNP Ministers. In fact, a BNP parliamentarian, Abu Hena, accused Telecommunication Minister

Aminul Haque and two other Ministers of patronising the terrorist group. Hena was expelled from the party for raising the allegations. HuJI leader Mufi Hannan told a Dhaka court in October 2005 that former Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury had assured him of safe shelter in the country. In fact, Hannan's mercy petition was recommended by the State Minister for Water, Gautam Chakraborty.

Investigations into a conspiracy to assassinate the Awami League chief and the present Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, in 2004, revealed the deep alliances the political parties like BNP and JI had developed with militant and terrorist groups in Bangladesh.¹⁹ Among those who took part in the planning of the attack were State Minister for Home Lutfozaman Babar, Deputy Minister Abdul Salam Pintu, Prime Minister's Political Secretary Harris Chowdhury, a top JI leader, two HuJI founders and one leader of Al Markajul Islami. Pintu's brother Moulana Tajuddin²⁰ was a member of LeT's Bangladesh chapter.

The conspiracy also laid bare the extent to which not only the political leadership was influenced by radical groups, but also the police and bureaucracy. Senior Home Ministry, intelligence and police officials, working under Babar, went about destroying evidence and blaming the attack on a criminal gang. In fact, more than 20 people were arrested for the attack that killed 23 on August 21, 2004. Even the one-man inquiry commission by a serving judge blamed the attack on a "foreign country". So blatant was the manipulation that an alleged confession by a criminal, Joj Miah, was made public to press home the point that the attack was the handiwork of a criminal gang. One of the police officers, it was later discovered, paid Taka 2,000 a month to Joj Miah's family during his detention. Some of the senior police officers, including a Deputy Inspector General and an Inspector General of Police involved in manipulating the investigations, are currently under investigation.²¹

Another intriguing militant-politician link in Bangladesh can be traced to a senior BNP leader, Tarique Rehman, whose links with JMB leaders were well-known. Rahman is former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's son. In 2005, Rahman visited the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) headquarters and the Pentagon along with National Security

Intelligence Chief Major General Rezzaqul Haider Chowdhury.²² The details of the meeting are still secret. What is public knowledge is that Chowdhury and Rahman had also visited Dubai to meet with the criminal don, Dawood Ibrahim, in March 2006. General Chowdhury is today under detention for his involvement in another case which has left no doubt about the nexus between the civilian and military leadership with criminal and terrorist groups – the Chittagong arms case.²³

In April 2004, weapons worth \$6 million,²⁴ including rocket launchers, grenade launchers, rockets and ammunition, were seized from 10 trucks. The weapons, loaded on to the trucks under the command of BNP leader Salauddin Quader Chowdhury from two fishing trawlers, were meant for militant groups like the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) operating in the northeastern parts of India. The arms transfer was facilitated by the Directorate General of Field Intelligence and National Security Intelligence.

Besides the National Security Intelligence Chief Major General Rezzaqul Haider Chowdhury, his Director General (DG) Brigadier General Abdur Rahim and National Security Intelligence Director, Wing Commander Shahbuddin Ahmed, were arrested in the case. Shahbuddin later said the arms consignment was funded by a Dubai-based firm, the Abdul Razzaq Yaqoob (ARY) Group. He said Rahim had a meeting with ARY Managing Director, Salman Yousuf Rahman, at a safe house in Dhaka in 2003 where ULFA leader Paresh Barua, along with a staffer from the Pakistan High Commission, was present. Another person who attended the meeting was senior BNP leader Tariq Rahman. The BNP government's role in the arms transfer could be gauged from the fact that it asked Brigadier Rezzaqul Haider Chowdhury to investigate the case who, a year after the case, was promoted as Major General.

Both Chowdhury and Shahbuddin said the arms were funded by the ARY Group as well as the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka. They said they were in touch with two Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) officers in the High Commission, Brigadier Mogisuddin and Colonel Shahed Mahmud. Wing Commander Shahbuddin said he had met ISI officials²⁵ in London to discuss a payment of 2.5 crore Takas to buy mobile phone bugging devices.

Among the ISI officials was one Colonel Abdus Salam, who happened to be a relative of National Security Intelligence DG Rahim.

The Chittagong arms investigation has also exposed the role of the top civilian leadership in Bangladesh. Besides the Minister of State for Home Lutfuzzaman Babar, Home Secretary Omar Faruque, Industry Secretary Nurul Amin, Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Limited Managing Director Mohsin Talukdar, General Manager Enamul Haq, Deputy Police Commissioner of Chittagong Port Abdullah Hel Baki²⁶ are being questioned for their involvement.

To complete the incestuous nexus, which both the Chittagong arms haul and the August 2004 bomb blasts clearly underlined, was the involvement of JI *Ameer* or Chief Matiur Rahman Nizami in the arms case. Nizami was the Industry Minister in the BNP-JI government and was aware of the arms consignment. In fact, the weapons were released by the local police on the directions of the Industry Minister.

Pakistan Army and Terrorism

One of the most powerful institutions in the region, the Pakistan Army also happens to be perhaps the most radicalised of them all. In fact, it would not be wrong to believe that the birth and rise of *jihadi* ideology and groups would have been stillborn but for the Pakistan Army, which found in Islam a strategic instrument to unite disparate elements of the state during the early years of Pakistan's history.

It was Colonel Akbar Khan, Military Secretary to Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan, who first invoked the spirit of *jihad* and gathered tribesmen from the Mehsud and Waziri tribal strongholds in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) (the same set of tribesmen now fighting the Pakistan Army) to launch an 'irregular war' to free Kashmir from India within months of independence.²⁷ Those Mehsuds and Waziris, who were stopped short of Srinagar by the Indian armed forces, could be, perhaps, called the first set of non-state actors created by the Pakistan Army.

The 1953 anti-Ahmeddiya riots benefited the Army more than JI as it culminated in the first coup and takeover of the government by

General Ayub Khan.²⁸ Though Ayub kept groups like JI at arm's length, he was not shy of using religious symbols and clarion calls to encourage his officers and troops in the battlefield. During the 1965 War, (Field Marshal) Ayub Khan, in a broadcast to the nation, invoked the *Kalima-e-Tayyeba* "to project the war as a virtual *jihad*: a conflict between Islam and *Kufr*".²⁹ This was the first time that the *jihadi* theme found a place in a soldier's vocabulary.

As Ayub struggled with a litany of failures, first the war and then the economy, JI took to the streets against his "modernist religious policies", adding to his woes and finally forcing him to hand over the reins to another Pathan officer, Yahya Khan. Like his predecessor, Yahya was also not enamoured of JI and its ideological persuasions either. One of his senior officers, Major General Sher Ali Khan, was of a different mould though; he was a strong JI supporter.³⁰

So when Sher Ali Khan, after his retirement, was appointed by Yahya Khan as the Minister of Information and National Affairs, he took it upon himself to work for the glory of Islam. He persuaded the Army to recruit 'volunteers' from JI and its student wing, IJT to fight the Bengali insurgency in East Pakistan.³¹ A large number of these 'volunteers' were drawn from IJT cadres from Punjab University and were well-educated; these men were trained by the Army to crush secessionists – political leaders, journalists, artists, writers, activists and judicial officers – in East Pakistan. JI also formed peace committees in East Pakistan to facilitate intelligence gathering for the Army. In return, the Army rewarded JI with seats in the East Pakistan Assembly.

The Army had also begun using Islamic slogans during the East Pakistan crisis. For instance, during the fight for East Pakistan, the local commander, Lt. General Tikka Khan,³² quoted freely from Islamic texts in his talks to the beleaguered West Pakistani garrison, reminding his forces of "the great battles against infidels [are] a proof of what Muslims could do."

Nicknamed *maulvi* (preacher) among his peers, it was Zia-ul-Haq, son of an overtly religious Army clerk, who systematically and radically changed what was, till then, essentially a professional Army in

the tradition of the British days. He invoked the triple motto of *Taqva* (piety), *Iman* (Islamic faith) and *Jihad-fi-Sabil-Allah* (Fight in the name of Allah). To encourage a faster Islamic transformation of the Army, Zia saw to it that new mosques were built within cantonments and training areas; Islamic texts were introduced into training courses; staff college libraries stocked with books on Islam, Islamic military ideology and practices; and middle-level officers were made to study and give examinations on Islam and Islamic military doctrine. Islamic teachings were introduced in the Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul.³³

Changes were made in the curriculum at Staff Colleges where new officers began studying and researching Islamic military practices, doctrine and strategy. A lecture series run by officer-scholar Colonel Abdul Qayyum, at the Command and Staff College formed the intellectual basis for the Islamic drive. Qayyum lectured on Islamic theology and doctrine but adopted a more open and rationalist approach that made him a much sought after ideologue. The post of Army '*mullah*' was created to act as a bridge between the profession and faith. The *mullahs* accompanied units into combat zones. A Directorate of Religious Instruction was established at the General Headquarters (GHQ) and religious handouts were published occasionally for the troops.³⁴

Zia was the first Army Chief and head of state to attend the annual meeting of the Tablighi Jamaat at Raiwind in Punjab. Zia believed that "nobody but Allah made him the Chief of Army Staff and that he was on a divine mission to impose Islam in Pakistan."³⁵ He encouraged officers and troops to frequent Tablighi meetings more openly. Zia encouraged his men and officers to pray, fast and distribute Islamic literature within the force.³⁶ Those who prayed five times a day, though it was not mandatory, found themselves in the shortlist for promotions more easily than others. Religious fervour became a passport to higher ranks and membership of JI and IJT proved to be useful. In selection boards for officers, religious knowledge and habits received positive marks.

Recruits during this phase were made to take an oath on the Quran and were taught Islamic subjects. They were also tested regularly for their grasp of religious knowledge to raise the level of religious

awareness among Pakistani troops and ensure indoctrination. Many officers in the Army became attracted to JI's ideology and Maududi's teachings. Zia, in fact, used to reward men and officers with a copy of Maududi's books. Zia even wanted to redesign the national flag by inserting Arabic inscriptions and shift the Independence Day from August 14 to its equivalent in the Islamic calendar.

Zia also incorporated religious groups like JI as part of the Pakistan Army's broader strategic objectives, both at home and abroad – at home to control ethnic and sectarian separatists who challenged the Army's writ and outside (specifically India) to initiate a proxy war to annex Kashmir as part of an “unfinished agenda”. In 1977, Zia met with the JI leaders and discussed the party's possible role in Pakistan's Afghan policy. JI utilised its links with Afghan warlords like Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and helped Zia in crafting a policy that benefited the party's Islamic cause and fulfilled part of its objective of influencing, if not entirely controlling, the policies of the state.

Post-Afghan *Jihad*

The Afghan *jihad* saw an overt use of Islamic concepts and symbols by the Army to raise a force of mercenaries, Mujahideen, with funds and weapons generously supplied by the US and its Western allies to evict the Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Middle-rung officers (General Pervez Musharraf was one of them) took charge of the covert operations in Afghanistan; new recruits in large numbers joined the Army as well as ISI. A number of men were recruited from *madrassas* for the ISI. Saudi Arabia stepped in with enormous funding for the operations and, packaged in this generosity was the Wahhabi ideology, a extremely radical school of thought. The Afghan *jihad* saw the birth of terrorist groups within Pakistan with links to global terrorist networks and the emergence of a more radical set of officers and men in both the Army and ISI.

Though Zia's successors were not obsessed with the radicalisation project, they continued with the policy of using terrorist groups to pursue the Army's agenda in Kashmir and other parts of India. These

terrorist groups acted as frontline troops who infiltrated into Kashmir and other parts of India to set up terrorist cells, create a wide network of supporters and carry out sabotage, espionage and terrorist activities.

As a result, over the years, the Army and the ISI became, if not entirely radicalised, “culturally sympathetic to the extremists.” There are numerous instances of regular officers and men from the Army involved in terrorist activities either directly or indirectly as facilitators and trainers for groups like Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM). Tanzeem-ul Ikhwan, for instance, is a radical group of retired Army men and officers which has been advocating a “one-per cent” formula to convert Pakistan into an Islamic country.³⁷ Ikhwan has often trained and sent cadres to train with LeT. The fact that its leaders were all retired senior Army officers drew hundreds of serving officers and soldiers to the group’s ideological training sessions. Among its cadre were Major General Zaheerul Islam Abbasi, Brigadier Muntazar Billa, Colonel Mohammad Azad Minhas and Colonel Inayatullah Khan, all jailed for taking part in the 1995 coup attempt. Lt. General Hamid Gul, a former chief of the ISI who was involved in the Afghan *jihad*, called it a “soft Islamic revolution.”³⁸ He argued that “Pakistani Army soldiers have always been religious, but now a growing number of officers have turned Islamist.”

How Radical is the Army Today?

At this point, it would be useful to make an assessment, based on relatively few studies carried out on this subject, on the extent of radicalism in the Army’s officer cadre.

The present Corps Commanders (2009) and the Army Chief (General Ashfaq Kayani) were commissioned during or after 1971 and, therefore, are those who had either participated in the war with India or those who were deeply impacted by the trauma of the surrender at Dhaka. Quite naturally, therefore, they carry a certain attitude – a particular deportment – where India is concerned. All of them are certain to have passed through Zia’s Islamic pipeline, although it will be difficult to plumb the depth of influence the fundamentalist General’s

indoctrination and training had on the individual officers. It would be fair to believe that not all officers were taken in by Zia's *jihad* project.

However, there were, as subsequent events showed, quite a few officers who were influenced by Zia's Islamic drive. The 1995 Rawalpindi Conspiracy involving senior Army officials, the sacking of several Generals during Musharraf's regime (including some who were quite close to him) and the arrest of several middle-ranking officers for their links with Al Qaeda could be taken as an indicator of the Zia effect on the officer corps.³⁹

Of particular interest would be those who were commissioned during Zia's tenure – 1977-88. Most of them would be in the rank of Colonels and above and, therefore, in key positions at the Brigade, Division and Corps levels. A simple calculation would show that for the next decade or so, one Zia recruit or another would lead the Army, unless a coup or a major round of supersession were to take place in the years ahead.

According to Shuja Nawaz, out of 804 officers granted commission in 1978-79 period, 29 were recommended for promotion to the rank of Major General in 2006. A select number of them would, in all probability, take over as Lt. Generals (or have already). These officers, known as Zia *bhartis* or Zia recruits are certainly a more conservative and ritualistic lot than their predecessors. Many of them had been part of Zia's experiments with Islamic ideology in the Staff Colleges and academies, and been witness to *jihad* in Afghanistan and Kashmir.⁴⁰ They also, according to Nawaz, "suffered at the hands of the US and western European embargo of aid to Pakistan. Not only (were they) deprived of advanced overseas training during their formative years, (they) were denied exposure to the world outside till late in their careers, by which time their worldview had been formed and in many cases, become entrenched."⁴¹

It is obvious that these shifting alliances and loyalties have had some impact on the officers, but whether these factors made them more radical, less professional, or both, can at best be a guess. Some stray clues, however, could be located in a study carried out by a Malaysian Air Force officer as part of his doctoral thesis. He analysed the extent of

religious influence in the militaries of three Muslim nations, Malaysia, Indonesia and Pakistan.⁴² His findings can be useful in studying the possible trajectories of the influence of religion on the Pakistan Army. “Employing random observations of military personnel and supported by the opinions of interviewers,” the dissertation said the Pakistan military was split between the ‘orthodox’ and the ‘moderate’. It quoted serving officers as stating that, despite Musharraf’s ‘enlightened moderation’, “the institution is still a strong Islamised institution as [before] and nothing has changed.”

More significant for our analysis is the observation made by him that there was a possibility that officers who were either secular or moderate in their outlook could adopt extremist attitudes “depending on the degree of indoctrination.” Such a probability might be unlikely, but shades of such a transformation among the officer cadre cannot be discounted altogether. “One thing can be safely concluded through experience,” wrote a Pakistan Army officer in a thesis submitted to the US Army College, “that Islamic practices are much more common and regular in the present Army as compared to what they were after independence.”⁴³

Mumbai, November 2008

One of the most visible signs of radical influences in the Army is its covert alliances with terrorist groups like LeT. Since there has been considerable documentation of the history of such partnerships, a more contemporary examination is being attempted here.

The involvement of LeT in the Mumbai attacks⁴⁴ has been admitted even by the Pakistan government. What has not been acknowledged by Islamabad, so far, is the embryonic relationship which exists between LeT and the Pakistan Army. In 1999, it was the LeT cadres, along with others, who formed the first line of intrusion into the Indian territory in Jammu and Kashmir as part of the Pakistan Army’s plans to capture key heights along the Srinagar-Leh Highway.⁴⁵ These terrorists were armed, trained and pushed into the high mountains along Kargil to act as cover for the regular troops to hold ground, largely through the 62

Brigade Headquarters in Skardu. The officer in charge of the Brigade was Brigadier Tahir Mahmood. He is today a Lt General and heads the Rawalpindi Corps Command. Interestingly, in September 2009, little less than a year after the Mumbai attack, General Mahmood invited LeT *Ameer* Hafiz Saeed to his *iftar* party in Islamabad.⁴⁶

It would not be fair to point a finger at General Mahmood alone. There are quite few others in the present Army leadership who too require equal attention. For instance, General Ashfaq Pervez Kayani. Three months before the Mumbai attack, LeT was involved in an attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan.⁴⁷ The July 2008 bombing was carried out by a suicide bomber who was subsequently identified as an LeT member. The conspiracy was masterminded by the ISI⁴⁸ and there were reports (*The New York Times*, September 12, 2008) which indicated that Army Chief General Kayani may not have been ignorant about the attack plan.

It would not be out of place to probe a little deeper into General Kayani's career to understand his commitments and attitudes under the camouflage of a "golf playing, chain smoking professional soldier" – a line played up repeatedly by the Pakistani and Western media. As DG ISI, Kayani was responsible for the release of Harkat-ul Mujahideen chief Fazlur Rehman Kahlil (December 2004) and Harkat-ul Jihad al Islami chief Qari Saifullah Akhtar (May 2007), two of the Afghan *jihād* veterans who were instrumental in reorganising terrorist strategies and operations on behalf of the ISI and the Army⁴⁹. Akhtar was an adviser to Taliban chief Mullah Omar till October 2001.⁵⁰ No less important is the fact that a close confidante of Akhtar was Ilyas Kashmiri, whose role in several recent terrorist incidents is no secret.

In 2006, Ahmed Rashid quoted a North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) report on Operation Medusa (September 4-17, 2006) in Panjwal district, Afghanistan, which accused the ISI of shoring up the Taliban's military capability. So intense was the firefight that the Taliban, according to NATO, used 400,000 rounds of ammunition, 2000 rocket-propelled grenades and 1,000 mortar shells.⁵¹ The ammunition dumps discovered by the NATO

and Afghan forces revealed that the Taliban had over two million rounds of ammunition in Panjwal alone. The NATO force captured 160 Taliban, most of them Pakistanis who detailed the ISI's support for the Taliban, including setting up two training camps outside Quetta. It was also revealed that the Taliban recruits were housed and indoctrinated in *madrassas* run by JUI-F.⁵²

Kayani was also aware of several ISI officials, forcibly retired in a purge carried out by his predecessor, Lt. General Ehsan-ul Haq, returning to work for the agency as contractual employees to aid the Taliban network in Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁵³ These reemployed ISI officials were part of the clandestine group or division created to pursue the Pakistan Army's two-track policy. According to Ahmed Rashid, several offices were established in private homes in Peshawar, Quetta and other cities. The group did not maintain any contact with ISI HQ in Aabpura in Islamabad or the Rawalpindi GHQ. This organisation worked more like a non-governmental organisation (NGO) with minimum hierarchy and casual working hours and an untraceable system of command and control. One such officer, whom the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) tracked down was 'General Yusef,' who recruited and trained men to fight in Nuristan and Kunar provinces. He reported to an ISI office in Chitral and received a monthly stipend.⁵⁴ The training camp was run by LeT.

Kayani, as the ISI chief, could not have been uninformed about the new training camps set up by his agency in NWFP for terrorists leaving for Kashmir and Afghanistan. The *Herald* (English monthly published by the Dawn group of publications), reported in June 2006 about the fresh recruitment drive launched by the terrorist groups and the sprouting of training camps.⁵⁵ Dozens of aspiring recruits from the Frontier and FATA towns were sent each month to training camps in Wana in South Waziristan. According to the report, at least three major terrorist groups maintained their liaison and recruitment offices in the Timergara area of Lower Dir District. These included the Hizb-ul Mujahideen (HM), Al Badr Mujahideen, renamed as Al Suffa Foundation, and LeT, renamed as Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD).

Was it a mere coincidence that it was during Kayani's tenure as the ISI chief that India witnessed three major terrorist attacks? On October 29, 2005, three powerful serial blasts killed over 70 people in New Delhi. Four months later, on March 7, 2006, three synchronised terrorist attacks killed over 20 people in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. The biggest attack, which the Indian authorities accused the ISI of plotting, was the July 11, 2006 serial train bombing in Mumbai which killed over 200 persons.⁵⁶

The officer who succeeded Kayani as the ISI chief was Lt. General Nadeem Taj, a close confidant of General Pervez Musharraf. Taj was instrumental in implementing Musharraf's duplicitous game of supporting the Taliban elements in Afghanistan and Pakistan while claiming to be a strategic ally in the US-led Global War on Terrorism. Taj, for instance, "allowed Kashmiri terrorist groups like Harkat ul Mujahideen, al Badr and JeM to set up new offices, changing their names, putting up flags and posters, holding large rallies, and delivering sermons in mosques to publicise the groups' activities."⁵⁷ *Stratfor* said these developments implied "ISI returning to commissioning attacks in Kashmir."⁵⁸ Taj was removed under pressure from the Bush Administration as it became clear that the ISI was sharing the intelligence with the terrorist groups. The US government, in fact, presented a dossier to Prime Minister Yousuf Reza Gilani containing information about contacts between the ISI and the Taliban through the Haqqani network. Taj today heads the Gujranwala (XXX) Corps Command, quite close to the Indian border.⁵⁹

One of the key officers who worked under both Taj and Kayani was retired Brigadier Ijaz Shah, a close confidante of Musharraf. He was the head of the ISI bureau in Lahore in 1999 when Musharraf overthrew Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Shah was closely associated with the ISI's networking with anti-India terrorist groups like HuJI and JeM. He had, in fact, persuaded the Taliban to hand over two of its training camps in Khost to Al Qaeda to train Kashmiri groups.⁶⁰ Ijaz Shah had worked closely with Lt. General Mahmoud Ahmad, the ISI chief at the time of the 9/11 attack. Mahmoud was under a cloud for his suspected links

with Al Qaeda and the Taliban and was retired by Musharraf, only to be reappointed, in 2003, as the head of the Fauji Fertiliser Company, a cash rich organisation run by the Army's welfare organisation, the Fauji Foundation.⁶¹

Shah, who could not become the Chief Secretary of Punjab, was also rehabilitated as the chief of the Intelligence Bureau in 2004. Musharraf, in fact, had tried his best to appoint him as the Ambassador to Australia but failed as the Australian government refused to accept the nomination because of his links with LeT and JeM.⁶² Despite the rejection, Musharraf took him along on his 2005 official visit to Australia.

Shah's active involvement in Kashmir is well documented. He was handling Syed Omar Sheikh, the JeM mastermind behind several terrorist attacks in India besides the brutal assassination of American journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002.⁶³ Omar Sheikh had surrendered to Shah at his home and remained with him for five days before his arrest was made public by Musharraf in Washington.

A telling pointer to Shah's nexus with terrorist groups was made by former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in an interview to *Daily Times* on August 13, 2007: "Brigadier Shah and the ISI recruited Omar Sheikh, who killed Danny Pearl. So I would feel very uncomfortable making the Intelligence Bureau, which has more than 100,000 people underneath it, run by a man who worked so closely with militants and extremists."⁶⁴

Another retired ISI officer named by Bhutto was Brigadier Riazullah Khan Chibb. She had accused Chibb along with his friend Ijaz Shah, of setting up a rigging cell in Islamabad. Chibb and Shah had become close when the former headed the Anti-Narcotics Force at a time when Shah was the chief of ISI Punjab. Benazir was to hand over a confidential report on the cell and its activities to US Senator Patrick Kennedy, a Democratic Congressman, and Arlen Specter, a Republican member of the Senate Sub-committee on Foreign Operations, at a dinner on December 27, 2007, the day she was assassinated.⁶⁵

Chibb, before his retirement, was a senior officer in the ISI's Joint Intelligence Bureau (JIB) which dealt with the internal security matters, Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan. Before being renamed Directorate S, JIB was one of the most powerful divisions of the ISI and its primary agenda was to target India. Brigadier Chibb, reemployed after his retirement early 2007, was awarded with a *Sitara-i-Imtiaz* (military) on December 17, 2007 for meritorious services in the operational field.

Chibb's name surfaced in India in August 2006 when Delhi Police arrested one Abu Anas in August 2006⁶⁶ who said he was the Personal Security Officer (PSO) of Zaki-ur Rahman Lakhvi, the key conspirator in the Mumbai attacks. Anas disclosed that LeT commanders, Army and ISI officers met every month to share information. ISI officials briefed LeT commanders about regular updates on the Indian security forces and discussed plans to counter the Indian strategy. The US agencies have documented regular meetings between ISI and LeT leaders in the past to share intelligence on Indian counter-insurgency operations in Kashmir.⁶⁷ One of the officers Abu Anas named was Brigadier Riaz Chibb. Chibb's boss in the ISI was Major General Sikander Afzal, head of JIB and Director-General for Strategic Analysis, who reported to Lt. General Kayani, the ISI Director General. Lt. General Afzal today heads the Multan Corps Command (July 2010)⁶⁸.

Conclusions

An overwhelming conclusion which comes across with clarity is the entrenched, and growing, relationship between the state agencies and various types of violent non-state actors in South Asia who pose a unique challenge to counter-terrorism strategies. What makes the situation more complex, and grave, is the tacit and overt alliance that exists between the constituents of policy-making institutions and these violent non-state actors. This incestuous nexus deeply erodes the viability of any conventional counter-terrorism strategy in the region. It is, therefore, imperative to review the current strategies and policies to evolve a more comprehensive set of actions to stem this cancerous liaison that is likely to drag the region deeper into a morass of violence and instability in the years ahead.

Notes

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Growing Alliance of Insurgent, Terrorist and Criminal Organisations – A Case Study of The Pakistan Taliban

Kaustav Dhar Chakrabarti

Abstract

This paper attempts to explain the increased violence in Pakistan by studying the dynamic alliance between different insurgent, terrorist, and criminal groups based in the country. Theoretical definitions distinguish the three groups, based on their level of involvement in mass civil action, among other factors. A case study of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, the focal group involved in violence inside Pakistan, describes the nature of the networks in detail. Subsequently, the analysis concludes that Pakistan's selective approach to counter-terrorism, along with underresourced operations, has brought about a synthesis of previously independent groups, under an apparent strategic direction provided by Al Qaeda. As a result, 'terrorism' and 'counter-terrorism' have inadvertently formed a negative feedback cycle, enforcing each other. Finally, the paper predicts that an increased counter-terrorism mandate, without significant capacity and consensus building, will further expand the militant human terrain, raising the spectre of 'proxy' groups merging with militant groups hostile to Pakistan's pro-Western government.

Keywords: Pakistan Taliban, counterinsurgency, terrorism, criminal groups, tribal areas.

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Introduction

Since 2007, pro-Taliban¹ militants have launched an incessant campaign of terrorism in Pakistan. Internal security took a nose dive, prompting many analysts to argue that the stakes for international and regional security lay more starkly in Pakistan than in Afghanistan.²

Pakistan's persecution of militant groups, no matter how selective or half-hearted, has made it a target of many militant groups. In the aftermath of the ill-fated assault on the Lal Masjid³ in Islamabad in July 2007, each subsequent year has witnessed greater violence, symbolised by the growing number of suicide attacks. In 2009 alone, 87 suicide bombings took place and more than 3,000 people were killed in violent incidents. Radical groups have progressively launched a determined assault against the security forces, particularly the military. They have been successful at subverting sizeable sections of local population, thereby creating pockets of extremist influence, bereft of any vestige of state control.

These pockets, often called "No Go Areas" or "Islamic Emirates," have effectively become a staging ground for militants of diverse orientations, such as those engaged in Kashmir and Afghanistan, sectarian terrorist groups within Pakistan and transnational groups like the Al Qaeda and Islamic Movement for Uzbekistan (IMU). Most worrying is a new generation of Western educated Muslim youth willing to travel from afar to these terror sanctuaries in Pakistan. According to the British government, more than two-thirds of all attempted terror plots in the United Kingdom have been traced back to Pakistan's tribal areas⁴, justifying the view that it is the "epicenter of the violent extremism practised by Al Qaeda."⁵

Even after impressive gains made in Swat Valley and Waziristan, where military operations have reestablished the writ of the state, there has been no let up in pro-Taliban militants' strikes in other areas across Pakistan. In fact, the geographical reach of terrorist groups has only widened, as underlined by strikes in Muzaffarabad (Pakistan administered Kashmir) and Karachi that had, till recently, remained relatively untouched by the terrorist groups.

Pakistan remains important for many reasons. Its cooperation is essential for lasting stability in Afghanistan. Its own stability is a prerequisite to normalising ties with India, including solving the Kashmir dispute and halting the growing arms race in South Asia. In its own right, Pakistan holds an important place in the Muslim world, standing as it does at the cusp of the population dividend. This necessitates the study of the growing capabilities of militant groups that are responsible for the current security deficit in Pakistan. There is a view that the current violence is but a manifestation of Pashtun resistance against the ingress of the Punjabi dominated Army into areas that have remained practically independent for more than sixty years. No doubt, the Pashtun community holds a long and often romanticised tradition of resistance against foreign occupation,⁶ but in the past, their agitation has been confined to Pashtun territories, and had never crossed to the east of the river Indus.

Since its creation in 2007, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan's campaign of terrorism in major cities like Islamabad and Lahore has been, indeed, unprecedented in its nature, scale and motivations. The militant human terrain in Pakistan has, over the years, been formed into a "multilayered cake,"⁷ comprising groups driven by localised grievances that are often socio-political in nature; terrorist groups that have benefited from Pakistan's dual policy of "fermenting and countering" militant groups;⁸ transnational terrorists seeking refuge in ungoverned spaces, and; on top, global *ihadists* led by Al Qaeda.

This paper argues that the Pakistan Taliban draws much of its strength not from the much-feared Pashtun resistance, but rather from an intricate network of alliances between insurgent groups, homegrown terrorist organisations, state-managed proxies and transnational terrorist groups like Al Qaeda.

Definitional Nuances

In simple terms, an insurgency is defined as an "organised movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict."⁹ French counterinsurgency

theorist David Galula offers a more precise definition: “a protracted struggle conducted methodically, step by step, in order to attain specific intermediate objectives leading finally to the overthrow of the existing order.”¹⁰ The asymmetry of resources between the insurgents and security forces obliges the insurgents to protract the conflict – known popularly by the cliché “death by thousand cuts” – and use the population as an “active instrument of operation.”¹¹ In order to build a sustainable support base, insurgents spend considerable energy on political organisations and reinforce socio-political structures favourable to them, before launching guerrilla action.¹² Alternatively, they might adopt a “bourgeois-nationalist”¹³ pattern, in which insurgents skip the process of political mobilisation and carry out spectacular terror attacks in order to weaken the government. In the process, they argue, passive sections of the populations will join the movement out of subversion rather than political affinity.¹⁴ The degree of political mobilisation in today’s insurgencies, in fact, has tended to reduce. As argued by David Kilcullen, “Insurgents favor strategies of provocation and exhaustion rather than displacement of the government...The insurgents seek to expel foreigners, but have little to say about what might replace the current government.”¹⁵ Therefore, insurgent strategy has focussed more on the destructive aspects of discrediting the incumbent government and less on the constructive aspects of creating parallel governments. Nevertheless, the support of the population, voluntary or coerced, remains central to the actions of all the protagonists. In the final analysis, thus, *the people continue to remain the prize.*

‘Terrorist’ groups too articulate their grievances and goals in similar terms. They too offer greater social equity¹⁶, safeguard native culture and identity, and resist foreign occupation. In fact, classical theorists considered terrorism as synonymous with insurgency, using the former as a political term to discredit the movement. Terrorism emerged as a separate field of study in the 1970s after the surfacing of “disembodied terrorist groups comprising cells of alienated individuals within Western society, rather than insurgent movements with definite achievable aims... with little apparent link to any mass movement or insurgency.”¹⁷

Terrorism, in its classical sense, represented groups like the Baader-Meinhof Group, the Italian Red Brigades and the Japanese Red Army. However, passionate media debate that follows spectacular terror acts, and competing political narratives – “one man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter” – has entrenched the term in public discourse and made it a convenient vocabulary in world capitals. Experts, on the other hand, continue to view terrorism as a subset of insurgency.¹⁸

‘Terrorists’ and ‘insurgents’ differ on the point of their relation with the population. Insurgents seek greater traction with the local population that they claim to represent. This involves four parameters: geography, culture, effect of punitive military operations and most importantly, commonality of goals.

First, most insurgent groups operate essentially in the same “conflict ecosystem”¹⁹ from where they draw their membership.²⁰ Second, family and kinship ties, shared culture, language, and historical narratives forge a common sense of identity between insurgent groups and the civilian population. Third, the insurgents’ cause, especially in the first stages of the movement, is often viewed as legitimate and worthy by the local population, even as their acts – discriminate violence, revenge killings, vigilantism – are despised by them. Fourth, the punitive and indiscriminate nature of military operations, often misguidedly based on attrition or ‘body count’ metrics, fashion shared experiences of adversity. The resultant changes in existing political, social and economic systems further build social capital in favour of the ‘home team.’ The four factors, thus, make insurgency a movement that demands the population’s participation. Terrorism, on the other hand, is a process, and does not ride on the population’s approval.

Insurgents, therefore, incorporate local stakeholders, create military commands, run parallel civilian administration, offer social services, and concentrate on mass action aimed at local issues. Pure terrorist groups, on the other hand, focus on ideological (Islamic Caliphate, International Communism *et al*) objectives that are often disconnected with local realities. Terrorists, therefore, have to rely on clandestine cell structures and have minimal contact with the local population.

The principal insurgent group in Pakistan, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) came into existence in December 14, 2007. Since its creation, the TTP, or Pakistan Taliban, has claimed to be a participant of *jihad* or an armed struggle sanctioned by the Islamic scripture, the inviolable Quran. Its stated goals are: to evict foreign troops from Afghanistan and reestablish the 'Islamic Emirate' with Mullah Omar as its leader; and, in Pakistan, fight a 'defensive *jihad*' against Pakistani security forces, and enforce the *Shariah* rule, thereby establishing a Taliban-like state instead.²¹ The TTP is regarded as an insurgent group since it operates in the area where it belongs – the Pashtun belt located in northwestern Pakistan. It shares a common Pashtun identity with the local population. As evidenced during the unrest in Swat Valley, the local community despised the insurgents for their oppressive measures, but they still supported their objective of enforcing *Shariah* rule. Lastly, the episodic nature of operations has only served to strengthen the Pakistan Taliban's sway over the community over the years. Therefore, the Pakistan Taliban is termed as an insurgent group, even though it has gained notoriety for a string of terrorist activities in Pakistan since 2007.²²

Groups like Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) that have traditionally focussed on India, anti-Shiite groups like Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), and transnational groups like Al Qaeda, that have clearly distinct objectives and *modus operandi*, are termed as terrorist groups in the arguments that follow.

Needless to say, criminal groups are organised entities that carry out a wide array of activities ranging from car thefts, kidnapping, high profile bank heists, illegal money transfers to narcotics and contraband trade. They are the least political of the three and are almost always a consequence of the state's inability to maintain a modicum of law and order.

Taliban-Crime Nexus

Insurgents generate funds through a variety of means—donations from local and foreign sources, confiscation and taxation, legitimate businesses and criminal activity. In theory, insurgent movements and

organised criminal groups have contradictory objectives. Insurgents aim to replace the state with a parallel counter-state, and, hence, seek instability and chaos. For an insurgent, the best way to attract passive sections of the population is to discredit the government, create security deficits and ultimately offer a better option.²³ Criminal groups, on the other hand, are driven by a profit motive and prefer to maintain the status quo. After spending considerable time and energy to coopt corrupt officials and find loopholes within the existing framework, it would indeed make bad business sense for the criminal syndicates to forgo these assets and start all over again with an insurgent parallel state that is eager to build social capital among its new constituents.²⁴

Other mutual disincentives also limit insurgent-criminal alliances. The criminal groups, that enjoy a degree of *de-facto* immunity from corrupt officials, risk inviting government prosecution once they ally with anti-state insurgent groups. For insurgents, profit motives might corrode their political goals and 'seduce the faithful'. In fact, groups like Al Qaeda and Hezbollah have ideologically resisted direct involvement in criminal activity.²⁵

Insurgent groups end up supporting crime because it generates far greater wealth than taxation. It also makes logistical sense to outsource collection of funds to auxiliary groups in exchange for protection and an expanded area of operation. A hefty treasury enables insurgents to project power and influence over the local population, attract more recruits,²⁶ and undermine the writ of the state. Kidnapping, extortion, bank robbery and drug trafficking, hence, have become the favoured means of generating funds.²⁷ Other criminal activities include money laundering, human trafficking, arms trade, contraband, smuggling and petty crimes.

Crime and narcotics makes up for almost 90 percent of the Pakistan Taliban's revenue, officially put at Rs. 4 billion.²⁸ The group benefits hugely from poppy cultivation and the heroin industry in Afghanistan. Protection money from smugglers constitutes a major chunk of the group's funding. Besides narcotics, contraband trade in goods such as cigarettes has also added to the Taliban's coffers. It is also believed to have

built capabilities to carry out high paying robberies. It has reportedly formed 'commando squads' for the purpose of committing robberies, vehicle snatching, and kidnappings.²⁹ As a result, the frequency of bank robberies has increased dramatically in Pakistan. Forty-two bank heists occurred in 2007, as compared to six in the previous year, most of them in Karachi, Pakistan's financial capital.

However, the exact nature of the Pakistan Taliban's alliance with criminal groups is difficult to ascertain. Emulating the strategy of the Afghan Taliban in the 1990s, the group has been harsh on criminals. But, the same time, it has itself committed robberies and bank heists. Based on limited information, it appears that the Pakistan Taliban has adopted a strategy of allying with criminal syndicates in areas outside of its direct control while strictly opposing crime in areas under its writ. As an exception, it has unambiguously supported high paying criminal activities like drugs trade, illegal trade in timber, etc, irrespective of the area of operation.

Several factors further corroborate this argument. First, Pakistan Taliban's rhetorical cause – enforcing *Shariah* rule – is Islamist in nature. Many of its leaders belong to the conservative clergy and have generously used Islamic idioms in their public statements. Hence, in order to prove their credentials as 'better Muslims', they have made it incumbent to carry out vigilante acts against criminals. In doing so, they also present politically neutral sections of the population with a crime-free society.

Second, by supporting petty criminals who operate in government controlled areas, the Pakistan Taliban creates further instability and serves to discredit the government. Third, the Pakistan Taliban is a highly decentralised organisation, loosely framed along tribal allegiances. The result is that many criminal elements find easy entry into its rank and file. Fourth, the Pakistan Taliban, unlike the Afghan Taliban in the 1990s, is not known to enjoy state support³⁰ and, hence, is forced to explore all possible means to generate funds. Fifth, as a result, they have supported resourceful criminal groups like the timber mafia in order to generate revenue. Lastly, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), a

crucial ally of the Pakistan Taliban, has historically been criminal in its composition. Alliance with LeJ, has created a further influx of criminal elements into the Pakistan Taliban.

The group's strategy of simultaneously opposing crime in 'home territory' and carrying out sophisticated crimes in 'away territory' also explains increased crime in Karachi even as it remains relatively immune from insurgency and suicide bombing. Police officials in the port city believe that 80 percent of bank heists are related to the Pakistan Taliban. The squads' tactic of choice is to infiltrate the firms that provide security to the banks, gain access to the necessary contacts and on its strength carry out the robbery. Another remarkable feature of crime in Karachi is the fact that the 10 percent of kidnappings in the city that involve the group generate more ransom than the other 90 percent put together.³¹

In the recent years, the Pakistan Taliban has also exploited natural resources to generate funds. Swat, one of the 24 districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa became affected by the insurgency in 2007. The region not only produces half of Pakistan's high end timber, but also possesses vast deposits of precious stones. The Pakistan Taliban and its predecessor, the Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) long benefited from illegal trade in these resources. In 1994, TNSM launched an insurrection in Malakand, demanding *Shariah* rule. For five days, it blocked the only road leading to the valley. In less than a week, more than 80,000 logs of high quality timber were smuggled out of the region. In 2007, the Swat Taliban started to give protection to the timber mafia. Local sources say 70 percent of Swat's forest cover was deforested during the two years in which the insurgents were in control.

In March 2009, militants took control of the emerald mines in Swat and began to hire locals for mining³², assuming the role of employers. A month later, they occupied the mines of the adjoining Shangla district, and employed 1,000 locals as against the 100 employed by the American firm which was operating the mines earlier³³. Besides earning Rs 4 million in a week, they made a huge gain in social capital amongst the locals.³⁴

Pakistan Taliban and Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda appears to have adopted a strategy of working behind the scenes to bring together different militant groups in three ways: (1) providing ‘religious justification’ for actions against Pakistani security forces; (2) providing militant expertise to given projects; and (3) serving as an interlocutor between disparate militant groups.³⁵

Al Qaeda ratcheted up its media campaign against the Pakistani state following the military raid in Lal Masjid in Islamabad in July 2007. Previously too, the group had made several personal attacks on Pervez Musharraf, which culminated in two assassination attempts on the former President. It had also called upon the soldiers of the Pakistani security forces to disobey orders and mutiny. Since the assault on the radical mosque, however, Al Qaeda has deliberately sought to blur the theological distinction between “near” and “far” enemy³⁶. In its mass messages, senior Al Qaeda figure Abu Yahya al-Libi termed the United States, Afghanistan and Pakistan as “a single entity, a single enemy, and a single army.”³⁷ Al Qaeda’s number two, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, too urged ordinary Pakistani’s to rebel against their government. Calling the Pakistan Army a “security service agency...which kills Muslims to please those who pay it, the neo-Crusaders in Washington,” al-Zawahiri said that “beneath the ruins of the Red Mosque [Lal Masjid] the ‘Theory of Pakistan’ was buried and the goal of its creation was lost and over the dead bodies of those martyrs the American, Zionist and Indian flags were raised.” His calibrated speech was clearly intended to appeal to the distinct militant groups present in Pakistan.³⁸

Immediately following the Taliban’s defeat in 2001, thousands of *Talibs* and their international compatriots known locally as “Arab Afghans” escaped to safe shelters in the tribal areas straddling the Pak-Afghan border demarcated by the Durand Line. Between then and the commencement of military operations by Pakistani forces, the Taliban and Al Qaeda set up their centre in the border village of Angoor Adda, the site of a cross-border US commando raid later in September 2008.³⁹

They closely interacted with their fellow Pashtun brethren and leveraged widespread discontent against the US invasion. Financial incentives, along with the camaraderie that followed episodic raids by Pakistani forces further brought the Afghan rebels closer to their local hosts.

The Pakistan Taliban's rise to power betrays its strong affiliations with Al Qaeda. Its growth trajectory coincides with Al Qaeda's expulsion from Iraq. Following the defeat of Al Qaeda in Iraq in 2007, the group shifted its focus to Afghanistan and Pakistan, the tell-tale signs being the eruption of suicide bombings in both the countries. Suicide bombing is alien to the fighting traditions of both the Pashtun and the Punjabi groups. In their ten-year fight to oust the Soviets, the Afghan militants never once took recourse to suicide bombings. Al Qaeda has also been directly and indirectly involved in many militant attacks inside Pakistan. At least one of the two assassination attempts on Pervez Musharraf was ordered by Al Qaeda and carried out by Jaish-e-Mohammad. Local journalists insist that Al Qaeda played a key role in sabotaging many of the peace deals that Pakistan unsuccessfully tried to forge with local militants with the aim of isolating the foreign elements. In fact, following the death of Pakistan Taliban leader Baitullah Mehsud in a US drone strike in 2008, Zawahiri again urged Pakistanis to support militants in the tribal areas and in Swat. Not doing so, he said, "is in fact standing with, backing and supporting the Crusaders against Islam and Muslims."⁴⁰

'Punjabi Taliban'

Since the Iranian Revolution, and the commencement of the Afghan *jihād* in 1979, the Islamic world has witnessed the spawning of innumerable radical militant groups. This is particularly true for Pakistan. These groups seek to make the country into an Islamist state by enforcing their interpretation of *Shariah* and, hopefully, create a transnational super-state, or a Caliphate. Noted scholar Oliver Roy explains:

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan imparted a new dimension to the idea of *Jihad* in Pakistan, which till then had only been employed by the Pakistani state in the context of mobilizing the population against India. However, from the beginning of the 1980s, the concept of *Jihad* was to become 'privatised'. Radical groups emerged out of the large traditional movements and embarked on armed operations..... For the Jihadists, *Jihad* is the way by which Muslims can be united and recalled to the true practice of Islam. The view is that *Jihad*, even if it should fail, is instrumental and sets an example: this is because it allows the Muslim masses to be aroused to consciousness, and [to draw] a distinction between true Muslims and the rest.⁴¹

Traditionally, militant groups based in Punjab, Pakistan's most important province, belong to two distinct orientations – sectarian, (anti-Shiite), and anti-India (pro-Kashmir).

The first major sectarian group, Sipah-e Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) was created in 1985 with covert state support, as a bulwark against perceived Iranian interference. The group, affiliated to the political party Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam, drew popular support from Punjab, especially its south. It launched a systematic ethnic cleansing campaign by targeting Shia businessmen and professionals in Sindh and Punjab. Hundreds of Shias were killed in target killings carried out by SSP and its more violent progeny, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ).⁴² It was the first Punjab-based group to have moved base to Afghanistan immediately after the Taliban seized power in the mid-1990s. The two groups fought for the Taliban against the Northern Alliance and were jointly responsible for the massacre of the Hazara community as well as the killing of Iranian diplomats in the town of Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan in 1998.

Post 9/11 when the US began bombing the Taliban-Al Qaeda hideouts in Afghanistan, LeJ actively helped the fleeing Al Qaeda and Taliban cadres in finding shelter in Pakistan. LeJ, with its wide network of safe houses and associates, managed to camouflage the presence of Al Qaeda and Taliban leaders in Pakistan for several months. This alliance came out into the open for the first time during the investigation

of American journalist Daniel Pearl's murder in early 2002. LeJ was finally banned in August 2002.

The India-centric groups have also nurtured relations with Al Qaeda that predate 9/11. In 1998, Osama bin Laden announced the creation of the international Islamic Front for *jihad* against the "crusaders" (Christians) and the Jews. Among the signatories of the fatwa were Lashkar-e-Tayyeba as well as Harkat ul-Mujahideen. Laden is believed to have personally provided seed money to raise LeT and spoke to the annual convention of the group between 1995-97 by phone. Immediately after 9/11, many prominent Al Qaeda leaders like Abu Zubayda, Ramzi Binalshibh and Khalid Sheikh Mohammad were arrested from LeT safe houses.

Over the past few years, several militant groups from Punjab, who had earlier refrained from carrying out acts of terrorism inside Pakistan, have grown increasingly impatient with Pakistan's decision to freeze cross-border militancy directed at Kashmir. In 2004, Pakistan pledged to take greater counter-terrorism measures so as to facilitate better bilateral relations with India. As a show of good faith, many training camps, and infrastructure and recruitment programmes were shut down. But there was no sincere attempt to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure created largely by the Pakistan Army. Thousands of militants were rehabilitated and training camps were relocated to lesser known places and given new identities and cover. Many of these camps worked as charities and schools.

While the present whereabouts and the doings of the thousands of youth trained for the Kashmir conflict remain murky at best, what is sufficiently clear is that many of the Pakistan Army's former proxies have gradually turned against their former benefactor. This turnaround was demonstrated first in December 2003 when the Punjabi group, namely Jaish-e-Mohammad, carried out an assassination attempt on Musharraf.

This tacit and triangular collaboration of the Pakistan Taliban, Punjabi groups and Al Qaeda has witnessed rapid momentum since 2007. More than 200 suicide attacks shattered the incestuous

relationship that traditionally existed between the state and its armed proxies. The local expertise was provided by the ‘Punjabi Taliban’. According to former Director of the Federal Investigative (FIA) Agency Tariq Pervez, “Ideas, logistics, cash [come] from the Gulf. Arab guys, mainly Egyptians and Saudis, are on hand to provide the chemistry. Veteran Punjabi extremists plot the attacks, while the Pakistan Taliban provides the martyrs. And it all came together in the Marriott case.”⁴³

Analysis – Making Sense of the Swarm⁴⁴

In the past, the different militant groups were based in separate regions. Their membership was drawn along ethno-linguistic cleavages. Most importantly, their construction of the *immediate enemy* was almost entirely mutually exclusive. The likes of LeJ, belonging to southern Punjab, engaged in sectarian violence. JeM, from western Punjab, focussed more on the insurgency in Kashmir. The militant ‘Talibs’, who emerged from the chain of *madrassas* in the Pashtun belt, almost entirely channelled their resources to aid the Taliban. Even though certain intermingling occurred – JeM participated in sectarian violence in Pakistan and LeJ found safe haven among the Taliban – these were exceptions rather than trends.

In post 9/11 Pakistan, as the paper has attempted to illustrate, the militant groups in Pakistan have ceased to restrict themselves to their previous exclusive silos, and have found strategic unison in targeting Pakistan. Four major factors have contributed to this phenomenon.

First, unlike in the past, most militant groups today view the United States as their principal enemy. Successive opinion polls⁴⁵ have made it clear that the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan antagonised the diverse militant cadre into proclaiming America as their biggest enemy. The presence of US troops in the region further encouraged these different groups to pool their resources to fight this new found common enemy. Concurrently, Pakistan’s alliance with the US in Afghanistan since 2001, and its withdrawal of active support to the Kashmiri insurgency since 2004, further convinced the militants that the government and security

forces of Pakistan were surrogate to the United States, and hence, as apostate entities, legitimate targets.

Second, Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy has a serious systemic constraint that is unlikely to change in the near future – inadequate resourcing.⁴⁶ Rather than eliminating militancy, under-resourced military offensives have only expanded the militants' reach and encouraged them to network. More than 80 percent of the Pakistan Army is placed along the border with India, which, given the current state of affairs, is unlikely to change. As such, much of the counter-insurgency has been carried out by the relatively poorly trained Frontier Corps.

Till recent years, consistent victories of the insurgents over the paramilitary forces led to the former gaining control over the local population and carrying out greater recruitment. Tactical battlefield victories have also attracted the attention of militant cadre across Pakistan, thus, facilitating the different groups to network.

The relative success of military operations in Swat and Waziristan, during 2009 had a positive impact on the public perception in these areas, particularly about the Pakistan Army's willingness and capability to protect the local population. But it must be kept in mind that many insurgents managed to shift bases to safer places and are playing a wait-and-watch game with the security forces.

Third, the resource crunch is not the only factor that inhibits Pakistan's fight against the militancy. Pakistan, over the past eight years, has targeted only those groups that have become a security threat to Pakistan, while ignoring groups like LeT that have refrained from mounting attacks inside Pakistan. Rather, they have used Pakistan's territory, and perhaps, the active support of state elements to target India and Afghanistan. The extent of state support to these groups is a matter of debate among experts and cannot be authoritatively explained by using open source data. However, such a strategy, apart from debilitating regional security, has also become the Achilles' Heel of Pakistan's strategy.

Pakistan's selective approach has two implications on its own drive against 'anti-Pakistan' militants. The 'pro-Pakistan' and 'anti-Pakistan' militants certainly have different near-term agendas, vis-à-vis their

selection of targets. They are most often ethnically homogenous and are drawn together through kinship and personal networks. Therefore, at any given time, militants pursued by the security forces have found shelter among the 'pro-Pakistan groups'. The Mehsud militiamen, after being attacked from three sides in October 2009, were able to avoid annihilation as they found shelter with militias lead by Hafiz Gul Bahadur and Mullah Nazeer in Waziristan, which enjoy immunity from military strikes under peace deals.

Pakistan's inability to persecute anti-state groups in Punjab, despite their involvement in many suicide bombings, can also be ascribed to the fact that the province is also home to several groups that Pakistan has used as state tools to coerce India, and arguably, continues to view favourably. An inevitable byproduct of expanded military operations will be an even greater collaboration between active and dormant militants.

Besides, the history of the past eight years strongly suggests that contact between active 'anti-Pakistan' militants and dormant 'pro-Pakistan' militants has consistently led to the former influencing the latter. Progressively, many groups and individuals who were earlier allied with Pakistan have switched sides and participated in violence against the state. The most notable examples are the cases of Omar Sheikh and Ilyas Kashmiri. Interior Minister Rehman Malik's recent indictment of JeM as an anti-state group is further evidence of this trend. Moreover, as frustration mounts over the fact that the security forces were targeting their fellow Muslim brethren, the rank and file of these dormant militant groups could sever their ties with their patrons, and become 'rogue'.

Four, Pakistan's ability to enforce its writ over the people of Pakistan, channel dissent and prevent armed non-state actors from forging a parallel contract with the population has depleted over the years. Groups like the Jamaat-ud-Dawa have for long run a sophisticated system of schools, ambulances and other social services that has won them considerable goodwill. Continuous under-funding of these critical sectors means that these non-state actors have a significant head-start in the race for 'hearts and minds'. Any attempts to nationalise the

schools, *madrassas* and hospitals, therefore, will cause large sections of the population, that are currently politically latent, to mobilise in favour of these non-state groups. Such a scenario, if not handled carefully, can easily turn disastrous.

As discussed earlier, a confluence of Punjabi extremists, Pashtun rebels, and foreign Al Qaeda militants has created a unique data bank of skills and seemingly endless resource pipelines that run deep into West Asia. Therefore, availability of skills, weaponry and finances has made militant groups in Pakistan relatively more difficult opponents.

Conclusion: The Al Qaedisation of the Militant Terrain

In spite of its brutality in carrying out fratricidal violence, the strategic brilliance of Al Qaeda's plan becomes evident in the changing nature of militant networking in Pakistan, along with the near unison in the militants' understanding of the *enemy*. To borrow counter-insurgency guru David Galula's terminology⁴⁷, Al Qaeda has been successful at converting the *accidental mosaic* of the disparate militant terrain in Pakistan into an *intentional mosaic*; has identified the US as its enemy, and views the government and military of Pakistan as an equal enemy. Through conviction that the government and the military of Pakistan is a mere 'puppet of the crusader enemy', traditionalist, nativist local groups have, for all practical purposes, become pseudo agents of Al Qaeda without even explicitly making that realisation.

If the bitter experiences of the past eight years can in any way foreshadow future pattern of terrorism and counter-terrorism, it becomes clear that a greater counter-terrorism mandate in Pakistan will arguably lead to widening of the militant human terrain. Dynamic networking among the militant groups will act as a force multiplier, thus, requiring Pakistan to further broaden its counter-terrorist mandate. Paradoxically, more expanded counter-terrorist actions are likely to generate greater militancy, thus, developing into a negative feedback cycle. Clearly, this does not augur well for Pakistan, its neighbours and the United States.

Notes

1. Pashtun insurgents in Pakistan, who united under the banner of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in December 2007, are known by the terms “neo-Taliban” and “Pakistan Taliban” to draw a distinction between their ideological mentor in Afghanistan.
2. See Daniel Markey, “From AfPak to PakAf: A Response to the New US Strategy for South Asia,” *Council on Foreign Relations*, April 2009. Available at http://www.cfr.org/publication/19125/from_afpak_to_pakaf.html#
3. In 2007, after pro-Taliban extremist clerics had taken control of the Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) in Islamabad and began imposing their view of Islamic conduct on the neighbouring communities, the military mounted a raid on the mosque complex that killed more than 90 people. While the raid was largely welcomed by the English media, it greatly infuriated the more conservative class in the tribal areas. As news broke that many of the killed in the operation were, in fact, children, who belonged to the Pashtun areas, many tribal militias broke existing peace deals with the government. They resorted to a massive campaign of suicide bombing in major cities of Pakistan and, at the same time, worked up an alliance to expel all organs of the state from FATA and adjoining settled areas. This alliance was later named the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan.
4. “Pakistan and Afghanistan: Gordon Brown in Urgent Need of a Plan,” *The Telegraph*, April 27, 2009. Available at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/telegraph-view/5232255/Pakistan-and-Afghanistan-Gordon-Brown-in-urgent-need-of-a-plan.html>
5. President Barack Obama termed the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan as the “epicenter of the violent extremism practised by Al Qaeda.” Full text of President Barack Obama’s May 2010 speech at the Westpoint military academy in which he announced the Afghanistan strategy can be found online at <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/05/22/national/main6509577.shtml>
6. For an authoritative account of the history of the Pashtun Frontier, read Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans* (Oxford University Press, 1984).
7. Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (Viking Adult, 2008).
8. Haider Mullick, *Pakistan’s Security Paradox: Countering and Fomenting Insurgencies* (Joint Special Operations University, 2009).
9. *US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
10. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 1964), p.4.

11. Ibid., p. 5.
12. For example, the Pakistan Taliban assassinated more than 600 tribal chiefs or *Maliks* since military operations began in 2003. *Maliks* who represented the traditional form of leadership constituted the delicate links between the autonomous tribes and Islamabad. Likewise, moderate members of the clergy have been targeted both in Pakistan and in Kashmir.
13. Galula, n. 10, p. 39.
14. The *US Counterinsurgency Manual* calls it the “military focussed approach,” *US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p.10.
15. David Kilcullen, “Counterinsurgency Redux.” Available at: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/kilcullen1.pdf>
16. Mariam Abou Zahab and Oliver Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Pakistan-Afghan Connection* (London: C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2004).
17. David J. Kilcullen, “Countering Global Insurgency,” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 4, August 2005, pp. 597-617.
18. Ibid., pp. 597-617.
19. David Kilcullen, “Three Pillars of Counterinsurgency,” Remarks delivered at the US Government Counterinsurgency Conference, Washington D.C., September 28, 2006. Available at www.usgcoin.org/docs1/3PillarsOfCounterinsurgency.pdf
20. As a break from the past when different insurgents learnt from each other’s experience, their modern counterparts have assumed a more transnational character wherein insurgents from one region often migrate to another region. Al Qaeda militants in Pakistan’s tribal areas are locally known as “guest” while indigenous Kashmiri militants referred to their Pakistani fellow fighters as “*mehman (guest) Mujahideen.*”
21. For a detailed profile of the Pakistan Taliban, see Hassan Abbas, “Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network,” *Combating Terrorism Center Sentinel*, vol. 2, issue 4, April 2009.
22. Definitions do depend on a reference frame. In the context of Punjab, for example, the Pakistan Taliban ceases to behave like an insurgent group and assumes all the idiosyncrasies of a classical terrorist group.
23. It is quite well known that Taliban insurgents allow aid workers to operate in areas controlled by them, but attack government schools and other development infrastructure in government controlled areas.
24. The author is grateful to Dr. Ajay Darshan Behera (Associate Professor at the Academy of Third World Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi) for pointing out this interesting anomaly.

25. John Rollins, Liana Sun Wyler and Seth Rosen, "International Terrorism and Transnational Crime: Security Threats, US Policy, and Considerations for Congress," *Congressional Research Service*, January 5, 2010, p.6.
26. For a first-hand account of how greater funds attract more recruits, see Mohammad Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *Afghanistan, The Bear Trap: The Defeat of a Superpower* (Havertown: Casemate, 1992).
27. According to the *US Army Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, "Sustainment requirements often drive insurgents into relationships with organised crime or into criminal activity themselves. Reaping windfall profits and avoiding the costs and difficulties involved in securing external support makes illegal activity attractive to insurgents. Taxing a mass base usually yields low returns. In contrast, kidnapping, extortion, bank robbery, and drug trafficking – four favorite insurgent activities – are very lucrative..... Similarly, failed and failing states with rich natural resources like oil or poppies (which provide the basis for heroin) are particularly lucrative areas for criminal activity. State failure precipitated by violent regime change further encourages criminal activity because of the collapse of law enforcement, the courts, and penal systems." *US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
28. "Taliban, Al Qaeda Finances Recovering," *Daily Times*, June 22, 2009.
29. Arabinda Acharya, Syed Adnan Ali Shah Bukhari and Sadia Sulaiman "Making Money in the Mayhem: Funding Taliban Insurrection in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan," *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 32:2, 2009, pp. 95-108.
30. Pakistan claims that the Pakistan Taliban is supported by foreign intelligence agencies, a euphemism for New Delhi, Kabul and even Washington. These claims remain dubious at best. India, Pakistan's traditional rival, has invested heavily in the government of Hamid Karzai, and, therefore, it remains highly improbable that India would support insurgents who owe allegiance to the Afghan Taliban.
31. Sabrina Tavernise, "Organised Crime in Pakistan Feeds Taliban," *The New York Times*, August 29, 2009.
32. "Taliban Tap Into Swat's Mines," *BBC*, March 24, 2009.
33. "Taliban Take Over Emerald Mine in Shangla," *Daily Times*, April 2, 2009.
34. "Taliban Cash in on Untapped Gem Wealth," *The Dawn*, July 5, 2009.
35. Don Rassler, "Al Qaeda's Pakistan Strategy," *Combat Terrorism Center Sentinel*, Vol. 2, Issue 7, June 2009.
36. For a detailed exposition of the idea of 'near' and 'far' enemy, see Khaled Ahmed, "Transformation of Al Qaeda," *Criterion*, Vol. 3, Issue 3, July-September 2008.

37. OSC, Abe Yahya al-Libi, "No Room for International Legitimacy," September 10, 2007.
38. Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, "To Pakistan Army and the People of Pakistan," *The Nefa Foundation*, August 10, 2008.
39. Ahmed Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia* (London: Penguin Books, 2008).
40. "Zawahiri Urges Support in Pak Tribal Areas: SITE," AFP, August 28, 2009.
41. Mariam Abou Zahab and Oliver Roy, *Islamist Networks: The Pakistan-Afghan Connection* (C. Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd, 2004).
42. Hasan Abbas, "Defining the Punjabi Taliban Network," *Combating Terrorism Center Sentinel*, Vol. 2, Issue 4, April 2009. Available at <http://www.ctc.usma.edu/sentinel/CTCSentinel-Vol2Iss4.pdf>
43. Adrian Levy, "On the Trail of Pakistan's Taliban," *The Guardian*, January 10, 2009. Available online at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jan/10/pakistan-taliban-intelligence-report>
44. The term 'swarming' was coined by John Arquilla and refers to "a seemingly amorphous, but deliberately structured, coordinated." Read John Arquilla, David Ronfeldt, *Swarming and the Future of Conflict* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2000).
45. See, for example, "Obama More Popular Abroad than at Home, Global Image of US Continues to Benefit," *Pew Research*, June 17, 2010. Available at <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1630/obama-more-popular-abroad-global-american-image-benefit-22-nation-global-survey>
46. For an authoritative analysis of resource deficiencies of Pakistan's counterinsurgency programme, see Sameer Lalwani, "Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign: A Net Assessment," *New America Foundation*, September 2009.
47. David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 1964).

United States Experience with Domestic Terrorism Cases and Counter-Radicalisation

Sheriff Lee Baca, John Stedman and John Sullivan

Introduction

Domestic terrorism has been a destructive feature of American life that had its origins shortly after the Civil War (1861-65). Early American reconstruction efforts were hampered by groups like the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) which used techniques of fear, intimidation and violence against freed slaves, Jews, and Catholics in an attempt to slow or stave off the changing American political landscape. In the early 1900s, various locations within the United States were scenes of the same type of violence and intimidation carried out by anti-capitalists and radical unionists. In 1910, the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper was bombed by union extremists, causing the deaths of 21 people and wounding dozens more. Ten years later, on September 16, 1920, a horse-drawn cart left by anti-capitalists exploded at the corner of Wall and Broad Streets in New York city, the hub of American capitalism. The blast killed 38 people immediately, and injured more than 400. In 1920, that death toll made the Wall Street explosion the worst terrorist attack in US history.

Over the years, the United States has been traumatised by dozens more terror attacks committed by groups and individuals with extreme ideas about capitalism, government, animal rights, environmental

concerns, religiosity, American imperialism and others. This paper will discuss the American definitions of domestic terrorism, the pathways to the radicalisation of individuals and groups, the more infamous cases and, most importantly, the steps taken by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) to impact these issues.

Definitions of Domestic Terrorism

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defined terrorism as “the unlawful use of force or violence, committed by a group(s) of two or more individuals, against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives.”

The Congressional Patriot Act (2001) authorised that, under current United States law, “acts of domestic terrorism are those which: (A) involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any state; (B) appear to be intended-(i) to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; (ii) to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or (iii) to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnaping; and (C) occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States.”

Much has been written about the process that leads an individual to identify with radical ideology. For some, it is a formal indoctrination by a charismatic leader, for others, the result of the economic or cultural realities of their personal situation and perhaps most frightening, is the phenomenon of radicalisation that can occur over the Internet.

Pathways to Radicalisation and Extremism

Scott Atran, author of “Pathways To and From Violent Extremism: The Case For Science-Based Field Research” believes that traditional, organised groups are not the biggest concern facing homeland security professionals.

... The main security concern no longer comes from any organization or from well-trained cadres of volunteers who typically had some advanced education, often in engineering and medical studies. The

threat today is from an Al Qaeda-inspired viral social and political movement that abuses religion in the name of defending a purist form of Sunni Islam, and which is particularly contagious among Muslim youth who are increasingly marginalised – economically, socially, politically – and are in transition stages of their lives, such as immigrants, students, and those in search of friends, mates and jobs. (Atran, 2010.)

Atran contends that the traditional view of the radicalisation process that requires the personal indoctrination of the individual by a spiritual leader is no longer the primary route to radicalism.

...popular radical Imams serve as “attractors” whose message and presence draws into line a searching soul who has already pretty much chosen his own path. Maj. Hassan, for example, sent over a score of email messages to Awlaki but received only two back, with no operational implications. The boundaries of the newer terrorist networks are very loose and fluid, and the internet now allows anyone who wishes to become a terrorist to become one, anywhere, anytime. (Atran, 2010.)

The New York Police Department (NYPD) has published their experience with radicalisation in a product widely distributed in the United States. Titled “Radicalization in the West: the Homegrown Threat,” this publication identifies indicators of extremism and the process by which radicalisation occurs. Specifically targeting the *jihadi-Salafi* terrorist, the NYPD study serves as a framework to understanding the radicalisation process for many terror groups without regard to their “cause.”

In the NYPD view, ideology and process both play a role in radicalisation. Specifically, NYPD found:

Ideology: *Jihadist* or *jihadi-Salafi* ideology is the driver that motivates young men and women, born or living in the West, to carry out “autonomous *jihad*” via acts of terrorism against their host countries.

It guides movements, identifies the issues, drives recruitment and is the basis for action.

Process: An assessment of the various reported models of radicalisation leads to the conclusion that the radicalisation process is composed of four distinct phases:

- Stage 1: *Pre-Radicalisation* is the point of origin for individuals before they begin this progression. It is their life situation before they were exposed to, and adopted, *jihadi-Salafi* Islam as their own ideology. NYPD found that the majority of the individuals involved in these plots began as “*unremarkable*” – they had “ordinary” jobs, had lived “ordinary” lives and had little, if any criminal history. (NYPD, 2007.)
- Stage 2: *Self-Identification* is the phase where individuals, influenced by both internal and external factors, begin to explore *Salafi* Islam, gradually gravitate away from their old identity and begin to associate themselves with like-minded individuals and adopt this ideology as their own. The catalyst for this “religious seeking” is a cognitive opening, or crisis, which shakes one’s certitude in previously held beliefs and opens an individual to be receptive to new worldviews. The triggers that can serve as a catalyst for this include: economic (i.e. losing a job, blocked mobility); social (i.e. alienation, discrimination, racism – real or perceived); political (i.e. international conflicts involving Muslims); and personal (i.e., death in the close family) factors. (NYPD, 2007.)
- Stage 3: *Indoctrination* is the phase in which an individual progressively intensifies his beliefs, wholly adopts *jihadi-Salafi* ideology and concludes, without question, that the conditions and circumstances exist where action is required to support and further the cause. That action is militant *jihad*. This phase is typically facilitated and driven by a “spiritual sanctioner.” This self-identification may initially be an individual act, but association with like-minded people remains an important factor as the process deepens. Radical views are embraced by the individual and encouraged and reinforced by the group. (NYPD, 2007.)

- Stage 4: *Jihadisation* is the phase where members of the cluster accept their individual duty to participate in *jihad* and self-designate themselves as holy warriors or Mujahideen. Ultimately, the group will begin operational planning for the *jihad* or a terrorist attack. These “acts in furtherance” include planning, preparation and execution. While the other phases of *radicalisation* may take place gradually, over two to three years, this *jihadisation* component can be a very rapid process, taking only a few months, or even weeks to run its course. (NYPD, 2007.)

According to NYPD, while each of these phases is unique and has specific signatures, there are some caveats to over-generalisation:

- All individuals who begin this process *do not* necessarily pass through all the stages.
- Many stop or abandon this process at different points.
- Although this model is sequential, individuals do not always follow a perfectly linear progression;
- Individuals who do pass through this entire process are still quite likely to be involved in the planning or implementation of a terrorist act.
- The subtle and non-criminal nature of the behaviours involved in the process of radicalisation makes it difficult to identify or even monitor from a law enforcement standpoint. (NYPD, 2007.)

NYPD assessed that: “Individuals generally appear to begin the radicalization process on their own. Invariably, as they progress through the stages of radicalisation they seek like minded individuals. This leads to the creation of groups or clusters. These clusters appear almost essential to progressing to the *Jihadization* stage – the critical stage that leads to a terrorist act.” (NYPD, 2007)

Taken in isolation, individual behaviours can be seen as innocuous; however, when seen as part of the continuum of the radicalisation process, their significance becomes more important. Considering the sequencing of these behaviours and the need to identify those entering

this process at the earliest possible stage makes intelligence the critical tool in helping to thwart an attack or even prevent the planning of future plots. (NYPD, 2007.)

Notable Attacks Associated with Traditional Domestic Terrorism

While the NYPD and Mr. Atran focus their analysis on Islamic radicalisation, the United States is no stranger to homegrown radicals who utilise violence to promote their own ideas. Prior to 9/11, dozens of attacks on people and infrastructure have occurred in furtherance of many different philosophies or causes. Government leaders must remain cognisant that Islamic terror is not the only threat to the homeland. Many of these threats have been realised and are included in the following summation of events.

Unabomber Attacks – (Anti-Industrialisation/Anti-Government)

From 1978 to 1995, anti-government radical and former mathematics professor Theodore “Ted” Kaczynski – known by the codename “UNABOM” until his identification and arrest by the FBI, sent 16 bombs to targets, including universities and airlines, killing three people and injuring 23. Kaczynski promised “to desist from terrorism” if the *New York Times* or *Washington Post* published his manifesto decrying the industrialisation of the United States. In 1996, his “manifesto” was published in the *New York Times* under the threat of more attacks. The bombing campaign ended when Kaczynski’s brother, David, reported his suspicions to the FBI. Kaczynski was quickly located and arrested. Kaczynski was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole on January 22, 1998. (*NY Times* 1-1-98.)

Oklahoma City Bombing (Anti-Government)

The April 11, 1995, truck bomb attack by anti-government extremists Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols against the Alfred Murrah federal building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, killed 168 people, making it the deadliest domestic-based terrorist attack in US history. In fact,

before the attacks on the World Trade Centre, September 11, 2001, it was the deadliest act of terrorism in US history. McVeigh was arrested by an Oklahoma Highway Patrol officer following a routine traffic stop shortly after the attack for unrelated charges. While in custody, he was identified as the perpetrator of the attack. McVeigh was executed by lethal injection on June 11, 2001. (Linder 2006.)

Centennial Olympic Park Bombing (Anti-Abortion)

The Centennial Olympic Park bombing was a terrorist attack that occurred on July 27, 1996, in Atlanta, Georgia, during the 1996 Summer Olympic Games. This was the first of four bombings conducted by radical anti-abortionist, Eric Rudolph, a former explosives expert for the United States Army. Rudolph eluded capture for several years until contacted and arrested by a local police officer in Murphy, North Carolina, while conducting routine patrol duties. On July 18, 2005, Rudolph was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole for murder in the first degree. (CNN 4-12-05.)

2001 Anthrax Attacks (Anti-Government)

The 2001 anthrax attacks in the US occurred over the course of several weeks beginning on September 18, 2001. Letters containing anthrax were mailed to several news media offices and two United States Senators, killing five people and infecting 17 others. In mid-2008, the FBI narrowed its focus to a scientist who worked at the government's bio-defence labs at Fort Detrick in Maryland. The primary suspect, Bruce Ivins, was told of the impending prosecution and on July 27, 2008, committed suicide. After Ivins' death, the FBI formally closed its case. (*NY Times* 2-20-10.)

Earth Liberation Front Attack (Eco-Terrorism)

On August 22, 2003, radicals claiming to represent the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), an association of militant environmentalists, destroyed or vandalised dozens of new automobiles in the San Gabriel Valley area of Los Angeles County. The Earth Liberation Front claimed responsibility

on its Website for the attacks, boasting that the organisation had struck three times in one night against SUVs. In a statement before the Senate Judiciary Committee in May 2004, John E. Lewis of the FBI's Counterterrorism Division noted the "upswing in violent rhetoric and tactics" among ecoterrorists and said that in recent years, Animal Liberation Front (ALF) and ELF "have become the most active criminal extremist elements in the United States." William Cottrell, a 24-year-old California Institute of Technology physics student, was found guilty of the arson attacks. (DOJ 4-18-05.)

Holocaust Memorial Museum Shooting (Hate Crime Event)

An elderly man with believed ties to neo-Nazi groups opened fire on June 10, 2009, at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, killing one guard. James W. Von Brunn, 88, who hails from Maryland, reportedly entered the museum shortly before 1 p.m. EDT, took out what appeared to be a rifle and fired at a security guard. Two other security guards returned fire, striking the shooter. Von Brunn subsequently died as a result of his injuries. Prosecutors said that von Brunn, an admitted white supremacist, had been planning the assault for months and that he hoped "to send a message to the Jewish community" that the Holocaust was a hoax. "He wanted to be a martyr for his cause," a prosecutor said in court.

NOTE: In December of 1981, Von Brunn walked into the Federal Reserve with a handgun and threatened to take the members of the Board of Governors hostage. He had hoped his actions would lead to the deportation of all Jews and black people from "the white nations" of the world. He was convicted and served a little more than six years in federal prison. (*Washington Post* 1-6-10.)

Notable Attacks or Planning: Islamic Radicalisation

Since the tragedy of 9/11, the United States has reacted to the new homeland security paradigm. A new set of laws was enacted (Patriot Act), the Department of Homeland Security was created, and local law enforcement was enjoined to partner in a new age of information sharing.

Despite this restructuring, terrorist planning and actual terror attacks have occurred in the United States. American citizens as well as foreign nationals have repeatedly attempted to unleash terror events against the population. A few of the most infamous are described below.

Najibullah Zazi

Zazi, 25, was born in Afghanistan, lived in Pakistan and immigrated to the United States in 1999 where he became a legal citizen. Zazi attended a radicalised mosque in New York City and became interested in fighting against United States military forces in Afghanistan. Zazi admitted that he and others agreed to travel to Afghanistan to join the Taliban and fight against United States and allied forces. In furtherance of their plans, they flew from Newark Liberty International Airport in Newark, N.J., to Peshawar, Pakistan, at the end of August 2008. Although Zazi and others initially intended to fight on behalf of the Taliban, they were recruited by Al Qaeda shortly after arriving in Peshawar. Zazi received training from Al Qaeda on constructing explosives for a planned attack in the United States.

Zazi returned to the United States and used the bomb-making notes to construct the explosives for the detonator components of the bombs. He and others intended to obtain and assemble the remaining components of the bombs and conduct the attack on Manhattan subway lines on September 14, September 15, or September 16, 2009. However, shortly after arriving in New York, Zazi realised that law enforcement was investigating his activities. Zazi and others discarded the explosives and other bomb-making materials. He was arrested on September 19, 2009. On February 22, 2010, Najibullah Zazi pleaded guilty to conspiracy to use weapons of mass destruction (explosive bombs) against persons or property in the United States, conspiracy to commit murder in a foreign country and providing material support to Al Qaeda. (DOJ Press Release 2-22-10.)

Major Malik Nidal Hasan

Hasan, a US-born citizen of Palestinian descent, was a licensed

psychiatrist who joined the US Army in 1997. He was promoted to Major rank in May and was scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan some time soon, but had been telling his family since 2001 that he wanted to get out of the military. US military officials said intelligence agencies intercepted communications between Hasan and Anwar al-Awlaki, a former *imam* at the Dar Al-Hijrah Islamic Centre in Falls Church, Virginia, a Washington suburb. Al-Awlaki, who left the United States in 2002 and is believed to be living in Yemen, was the subject of several federal investigations dating back to the late 1990s, but was never charged.

The independent commission that investigated the 9/11 attacks found al-Awlaki was a “spiritual adviser” to two of the hijackers in that plot, Nawaf al-Hazmi and Khalid al-Midhar, while al-Awlaki was at the Virginia mosque and earlier, in San Diego. The commission report said it was not clear whether the *imam* knew al-Hazmi and al-Midhar were involved in the hijacking plot, but security experts have described him as a radical Islamic fundamentalist who was “very supportive of terrorists in the past.”

On November 5, 2009, Major Hasan, using a legally purchased pistol began indiscriminately shooting at soldiers stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. The shooting left 13 dead, 12 of them US soldiers, and 42 wounded. Pvt. Robert Foster, who was wounded in the hip during the attack, reported Hasan shouted “*Allahu Akbar*” – Arabic for “God is great” – which Islamic terrorists have used as a battle cry. (CNN.)

Lackawanna Six

Sahim Alwan, an American citizen of Yemeni descent, admitted that in April 2001, he agreed to attend a military-type training camp in Afghanistan, along with the five co-defendants named in an indictment. The defendant knew, prior to departing from the United States, that he was going to train for *jihad*. Alwan admitted that he and others travelled from Buffalo, New York, and eventually arrived in Quetta, Pakistan. They then travelled to a guest house in Kandahar, Afghanistan, where Alwan viewed videotapes and heard lectures

which were anti-American in content, and which tried to justify suicide operations. On the fourth day at the guest house, he met Osama bin Laden, and was told that there were people willing to bear their souls in their hands for *jihad*.

Alwan and others travelled to the Al Farooq training camp, associated with bin Laden and Al Qaeda. Alwan received training and instruction in the assembly and use of a Kalishnikov rifle, and fired this weapon several times. Alwan left the Al Farooq training camp after 10 days. The charge, on which Alwan was sentenced, prohibits anyone from knowingly providing or conspiring to provide material support to a foreign terrorist organisation, as designated by the State Department.

Co-defendant Mukhtar al-Bakri was sentenced to 10 years in prison on the material support charge. Yasein Taher was sentenced to eight years in prison. Shafel Mosed was sentenced to eight years in prison, and apologised in court to President Bush and his fellow Americans for his criminal conduct. Yahya Goba was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Faysal Galab was sentenced to seven years in prison, on his guilty plea to a charge of contributing services to Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden. (DOJ 12-17-03.)

Lodi

On September 10,2007, Hamid Hayat was sentenced to 24 years in prison for providing “material support to a terrorist organisation.” Hayat admitted he attended an Al Qaeda-supported training camp in Pakistan and that during his weapons training, photographs of “various high-ranking US political figures, including President Bush, would be pasted on their targets.” Hayat described his training and said he learned “how to kill Americans.” Hayat selected the United States as the turf for his *jihadi* mission.

As a result of the federal investigation, Umer Hayat (Hamid’s father) was found guilty of lying to a federal agent and was sentenced to time served (330 days) and three years formal probation. Both Hayats are US citizens; Hamid Hayat was born in California. Two others in

Lodi – Muslim leaders Muhammed Adil Khan and Shabbir Ahmed – were arrested on immigration violations and subsequently deported. (FindLaw 6-7-05.)

Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman

The *emir* of Egypt's Gama'at al Islamia (the Islamic Group), Rahman is the radical cleric who plotted to bomb New York City landmarks in 1993. Upon being sentenced to a life term, he issued a decree from federal prison, declaring to Americans that "Muslims everywhere [should] dismember their nation, tear them apart, ruin their economy, provoke their corporations, destroy their embassies, attack their interests, sink their ships, ...shoot down their planes, [and] kill them on land, at sea, and in the air. Kill them wherever you find them." Osama bin Laden later claimed that this *fatwa* provided religious authority for the 9/11 attacks. Abdel Rahman has continued trying to run his organisation while incarcerated, and three defendants were convicted of terrorism charges in 2005 for helping him do so. (*Out of the Shadows.*)

Richard Reid

Reid is believed to have converted to Islam and been radicalised by an *imam* while incarcerated in Great Britain. He was later apprehended while attempting to detonate a bomb on a US commercial flight in December 2001. (*Out of the Shadows.*)

The JIS Case

A thwarted plot to attack numerous government and Jewish targets in California was devised inside New Folsom State Prison. The perpetrators were members of an inmate-founded group called Jami'iy yat ul-Islam is Saheeh – JIS (Assembly of Authentic Islam). The leader of this group, Kevin Lamar James, advocated *jihad* against the US government and supporters of Israel. Two men implicated in the plot were recruited from a local mosque by a disciple of James who had been released from the prison. (*Out of the Shadows.*)

LASD Approach to Counter-Terrorism/Counter-Radicalisation Solutions

As with the other major law enforcement agencies within the United States, the events of 9/11 initiated a reexamination of our role in the overall security of the homeland. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LACSD) accepted the additional responsibilities related to homeland security and anti-terrorism functions. Various components within the Department were reorganised, including the creation of our Homeland Security Division. Additionally, the Sheriff's Department contributed resources to local, state and federal task force operations to ensure that lines of communication between public safety partners were enhanced. The previously underserved Muslim community was engaged to become part of the solution to issues of radicalisation and terrorism. Through reorganisation, new focus and creative solutions to complex issues various functions within the Department serve to lessen the opportunity for our enemies to exploit our open, democratic society.

Muslim Community Affairs Unit

The Muslim Community Affairs Unit was established in August 2007 with the purpose of developing an outreach programme for the Muslim community in Los Angeles County, and to complement the efforts of the Muslim American Homeland Security Congress which was created in July 2005.

The Muslim Community Affairs (MCA) programme is managed by the Muslim Sheriff's Department staff members with language capabilities (Arabic, Farsi, Urdu and Pashto). The staff consists of full-time and part-time employees who engage with their community on behalf of the Department and our public safety partners.

The Muslim Community Affairs outreach programme consists of five components:

- Building personal relationships with the mosques, Islamic centres, *imams* and community leaders throughout Los Angeles and its surrounding, southern California, counties.

- The Young Muslim American Leaders group was developed and meets on a monthly basis for bilateral education and to provide inputs on potential policy change. Some of the activities for the group include jail tours, patrol “ride alongs,” and visits to their local Sheriff’s Station.
- Education, seminars and training sessions are held in mosques, community halls and Islamic schools on topics such as domestic violence, identity theft, hate crimes and terrorism. In addition, LASD and independent agency recruits (new hires) at the academy receive a two-hour class on Islam during their cultural awareness and sensitivity training programme. The programme teaches recruits about Muslim culture, customs and beliefs while reinforcing our Department core values to enforce the law fairly and impartially.
- The Outreach Coordinators Group was created by the LASD. It consists of representatives of local law enforcement agencies, the state of California and federal agencies that have personnel assigned to outreach efforts. The objective of the Outreach Coordinators Group is to facilitate activities and events jointly with the Muslim community to enhance the communication at all levels of government.
- A Muslim community outreach website was developed to provide information and transparency to the public. It is web-based and accessible to the public at all times. The website serves as a portal to information on planned and completed activities, a mission statement, photos and connectivity to the various functions of the Department.

The Muslim Community Affairs programme embraces the Sheriff’s Department’s mission of public trust policing and the international diplomacy philosophy of global trust.

Muslim American Homeland Security Congress

While the Department was reaching out to the Muslim community through the efforts of the MCA, the American Muslim community has been working on various ways of supporting and participating in the security needs of Los Angeles county. The Sheriff’s Department saw the need to

organise and formalise these efforts into one umbrella organisation with the help of the Muslim community. Local Muslim leaders were personally recruited with the intent of creating an organisation that would showcase the best of the Muslim community and demonstrate their undying loyalty to the United States. The Muslim American Homeland Security Congress (MAHSC) collaborates with national and local elected officials, law enforcement, civic and inter-faith groups, to prevent terrorism, acts of prejudice and to protect the United States, its Constitution and its people. The Congress (MAHSC) is a non-political, non-governmental, non-religious and non-profit organisation.

MAHSC Mission Statement

The Muslim-American Homeland Security Congress shall foster education and understanding, organisation and empowerment, communication and cooperation with the American public, to protect and defend the United States of America and all people through the prevention of terrorism and any acts of prejudice. As Muslim-Americans, we are faithful to our nation and seek to protect its people, their religions, and diverse economic freedoms that we benefit from.

Goals (as described by the membership)

- Help prevent, protect, and defend the United States of America and all people against terrorism and its backlash by partnering with law enforcement and civic organisations.
- Promote societal partnership and inclusiveness for all Muslim Americans.
- Incorporate the broad base support and involvement of national and international Muslim scholars and religious leaders who have decreed their opposition to terrorism.
- Educate the public on American Muslim contributions to counter-extremism and counter-terrorism efforts.
- Work with youth in order to educate disenfranchised populations by building trust and collaboration.
- Facilitate communication between the community and law enforcement to eliminate hate crimes and incidents.

- Promote the goals of MAHSC by communicating clearly and effectively.

Organisations represented within MAHSC include the Council on Islamic Relations (CAIR), Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), Iranian-American Muslim Association of North America (IMAN), the Omar Ibn-Al Khattab Foundation and the Islamic Shura Council.

Joint Regional Intelligence Centre (JRIC)

The JRIC is a multi-jurisdictional, multi-discipline, regional enterprise that enlists inputs from law enforcement, fire service, public health and emergency medical service representatives. All of the agencies within these services have roles to fulfill should a terrorist attack be planned or occur in the JRIC area of responsibility (AOR). The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department contributes subject matter experts, tactical and strategic analysts and a training cadre to fulfill the mission of the JRIC to prevent, disrupt or mitigate a terrorism event in its AOR. The JRIC serves as the central repository of homeland security information. Its goals are to understand the current threat picture within its AOR, provide situational awareness to field personnel from all participating agencies and monitor trends and potentials that may lead to a terrorism event.

Correctional Intelligence Initiative/Jail/Prison Radicalisation Project

Jail/prison radicalisation is the process by which inmates adopt extreme views, including the belief that violent measures need to be taken for political or religious purposes. The Jail and Prison Radicalisation Project is an initiative conceived by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and adopted/expanded by the Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Centre (JRIC).

The objectives of the project are to build and maintain a network of law enforcement and correctional facility contacts throughout the state of California to effectively facilitate the acquisition, dissemination and exchange of intelligence/information. This process is coordinated

through the Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Centre, particularly as it relates to the issue of inmate radicalisation.

Members of the project conduct research on the issue of radicalisation and the threat it poses to national security and public safety. Members facilitate and deliver training involving radicalisation/terrorism investigations, case studies, indicators of radicalisation (i.e. radical literature, drawings, writings, tattoos, websites, inflammatory or threatening speeches, etc.) to personnel who directly or indirectly serve inmate populations throughout the state of California.

The project provides curriculum to other law enforcement training staff as a force multiplier in the education of additional corrections and custody personnel. Members of the team conduct interviews of inmates within the jail and prison systems to determine how and where inmates are radicalised, which religious or inmate leaders may be extreme in their views and then monitor the movement of inmates known to be radicalised

Counter-Terrorism Investigations

Mission: Disruption of Criminal Activity Related to Terrorism. Disruption may occur in any number of ways but in most instances will be through the application of traditional police practices. This will include things such as search/arrest warrants, probation searches, parole searches, consent searches, surveillance (overt and covert), buy/bust operations, undercover operations, reverse stings, “letter of the law” enforcement actions or simply through overt interview techniques.

Because the emphasis is on disruption, team members conduct themselves as “first preventers”. Waiting for a case to fully develop over the course of several weeks or months is the exception rather than the rule. The unit mission is the development of solid probable cause of illegal activity followed quickly by some type of enforcement action. That process focusses on the *disruption* of criminal/terrorist groups. We believe that the arrest or detention of suspects can result in confusion among members of the local groups that support terrorism. This confusion may delay or disrupt the planning of further criminality or a terror attack.

Intelligence Collection

Mission: To Support the Collection of Information on Behalf of the JRIC. Human intelligence is a valuable tool for any information collection organisation. To have reliable reporting on potential events BEFORE they occur is the primary goal.

Upon receipt of reliable information, homeland security professionals may be able to prevent, disrupt or mitigate a catastrophic event. The intelligence team is focussed on collecting information from all sources that possess critical, terrorism related information. During the course of these activities, criminal activity is regularly unearthed. Unless disruptive of a larger plan, the information is passed to the appropriate partner (FBI, LASD investigators, etc) for enforcement activity.

Intelligence team members also conduct “assessments” of groups that may be linked to terrorism. Team members conduct research to determine whether the subjects pose a criminal or extremist threat to Los Angeles County. This process may include open source collection (public information), information from other law enforcement contacts, and information from the community, including business owners, religious leaders and government officials. Additionally, team members assist the Sheriff’s Department investigators involved in enforcement actions that may be linked to homeland security issues. They provide subject matter expertise to patrol, custody and investigative personnel and provide guidance on the reporting of potential homeland security activity.

Task Force Engagement

Mission: To Engage with Partnering Agencies in Combating Terrorism.

The United States does not have a national police force. Law enforcement activity is layered between agencies from the federal, state, local and tribal jurisdictions. In order to cooperate effectively, issues of common interest, including terrorism, are addressed through the creation of a Task Force. Impacted agencies provide personnel to

work in concert to address specific crime related issues. Participation on terrorism related task forces is essential to the Sheriff's Department's counter-terrorism mission. Without creating relationships with those agencies that also have homeland security responsibilities, misunderstandings and miscommunication may occur. Through our participation on various task forces, we endeavour to keep a clear line of communication with our law enforcement partners.

Task Force team members normally have their workload assigned from the sponsoring agency. In order to stay fully committed to our goal of cooperation, Task Force team members are particularly observant for instances in which Sheriff's Department investigators, or other county resources, might be helpful to other partnering agencies. Task Force team members also keep LASD command staff apprised of the current "hot issues" being pursued by our participating homeland security partners

Open Source Intelligence (OSINT)

Open source intelligence is information mined from public sources (Internet, newspapers, periodicals, blogs, etc). These sources of information are available to any member of the public and are not protected from review by law enforcement personnel.

The OSINT team comprises dedicated Sheriff's reserves and civilian volunteers who stand ready to assist any Department member with "Open Source" exploitation on any subject. Currently, OSINT is tasked with the following duties:

- Support to Department personnel for detecting upcoming rallies, events or demonstrations that could compromise public safety.
- Support to the JRIC Situational Awareness Group (SAW) in bulletin creation and research for upcoming publications.
- Directed research into social networking sites to detect criminal/extremist activity.
- Support to individual investigators who have interest in specific groups, cultures, ideology.
- Weekly briefings for LASD command staff on the global situation.

Summary

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department does not possess an unending supply of resources, either technical or human. Each mission area selected for engagement has been carefully examined to ensure the Department is focussed on the areas of greatest value while requiring the most reasonable amount of its precious resources to be expended. In some areas such as the community outreach programme and the jail radicalisation initiative, the Department has been an innovative leader. In other areas, we have studied the successes of other agencies and have adopted their best practices into our homeland security paradigm. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department will continue to partner locally, nationally and internationally with other progressive agencies or governments to ensure the safety of the citizens we are sworn to protect.

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Six Lessons from a Flawed 'AfPak' Strategy

Siddharth Varadarajan

In this paper, I will provide an assessment of current American strategy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan from an Indian perspective. In the wake of 9/11, many in India had naively believed that US and Indian interests in Afghanistan overlapped to a considerable degree, especially on the issue of terrorism. This was one of the main reasons why the Government of India – which had looked askance at great power intervention in the South Asian region for more than five decades – openly supported the American invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. In the years since then, India has extended more than one billion dollars in developmental assistance to that country. Though New Delhi is not a part of the US-led “coalition” and has consciously kept off the military grid there, it has seen itself as a net provider of security in the wider sense.

Over the past few years, however, disquiet has set in on the Indian side as policy-makers and analysts sense a growing divergence in goals with the United States. This divergence is perhaps most apparent on the question of Pakistan, where India feels the US Administration is too indulgent towards the Pakistani military establishment despite clear evidence of the latter continuing to support extremist groups of one kind or another. But even within Afghanistan, India is unnerved by the incoherence of US military and political strategy. The excessive and often unintelligent application of military might by the US, combined

with inadequate attention to the creation of Afghan national capabilities in this field, has helped create a situation that the Taliban has been able to benefit from, especially since it has the tacit backing of at least a section of the Pakistani state. On the political front, the US has swung from over-dependence on President Hamid Karzai to an ill-advised and poorly thought out plan to undermine him. And finally, there has been the plan to push for the rehabilitation and reintegration of the Taliban themselves through negotiations, a strategy which has compounded the errors Washington has already made on the military and political battlefields.

India's Interests in Afghanistan

Broadly speaking, India's interests and goals in Afghanistan today are really very simple. First and foremost comes security. Having suffered the ignominy of Pakistani terrorists hijacking an Indian Airlines passenger plane to Kandahar in 1999 and then escaping with the open backing of the Taliban regime which was then in power in Afghanistan, India's primary goal in backing the Karzai government and the US-led coalition is to ensure Afghan territory is never used against India or never becomes a haven for those who have attacked India. In the past, Kashmir-oriented terrorist groups like the Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami (HuJI) were trained on Afghan territory. In other words, New Delhi would like to do all it can to ensure that Afghanistan has a stable government that can provide security to its people and exercise effective control over its entire territory and that is either friendly with India or at least not ill-disposed towards it. A corollary to this goal is that Kabul should not come under the sway of Islamabad or allow Pakistan to determine its India policy. In Indian strategic discussions, this goal is often expressed in the form of a "neutral Afghanistan" free of all foreign forces and foreign domination.

India's second goal is regional integration. As a part of South Asia and a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Afghanistan ought to be better integrated into the rest of the region so as to be able to benefit from, and contribute to, its high growth. This means that Afghanistan and India should be able to trade

with each other and invest, without political impediments or security threats coming in the way. On a recent visit to New Delhi, Afghan Mines Minister Wahidullah Shahrani asked Indian companies to invest in Afghanistan's mining sector. Companies like Nalco, Hindustan Copper and Vedanta are interested in exploring options there but are apprehensive about the security environment. Pakistan's attitude towards Indo-Afghan trade is also an impediment towards regional integration, with Islamabad opposed to the transit of Indian exports to Afghanistan via the land route of Amritsar-Wagah-Lahore-Peshawar-Torkham-Kabul. As a result, the Indian government has invested in an expensive sea-land alternative via the Iranian port of Chabahar. But in the long-term, a key goal of Indian policy is to have a stable trilateral arrangement for trade and transit involving India, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The third Indian goal in Afghanistan is to develop the country as a transit route to Central Asia. As the land bridge between South and Central Asia, Afghanistan can play a crucial role in developing closer economic and strategic ties between India (and Pakistan), on the one hand, and the Central Asian Republics and Russia, on the other.

A fourth goal of Indian policy is regional energy integration, involving India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia. In an ideal world, gas pipelines and high voltage direct current power transmission lines would run from Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic through Afghanistan and down to the rest of South Asia, bringing natural gas and electricity from joint hydroelectric projects involving India, Pakistan, Russia and even China. A stable Afghanistan (and normal India-Pakistan relations) could also allow the integration of Iranian energy equities through innovative joint ventures, for example, the National Thermal Power Corporation of India could set up a gas-fired thermal plant in Sistan Baluchistan in Iran, exporting electricity to the Afghan and Pakistani grids with a further swap of electricity into India.

It should be apparent that none of these four long-term Indian goals should be seen by Pakistan as a threat to its own interests. On

the contrary, since Pakistan lies between India and Afghanistan, New Delhi will only be able to harness the benefits of stability in Afghanistan if its own relations with Islamabad are on an even keel. Similarly, far from seeing Indian involvement in Afghanistan as a zero-sum game that must necessarily be harmful to Pakistan – a view that has some traction in the Pentagon – Washington ought to realise how the pursuit of these long-term Indian goals will help the emergence of Afghanistan as a peaceful, stable country.

That said, the US strategy in Afghanistan has not always been the wisest. I am not talking history here – the funding for the Mujahideen, the grooming of terrorists and extremists from around the Arab world, the support for the Pakistani military – but just about the present. And there are six specific lessons that American policy-makers need to learn from the way in which the situation in Afghanistan has evolved since 2001.

Lesson #1: Don't let Your Attention be Diverted From the Principal Threat

The United States has repeatedly allowed itself to be diverted from its Afghan target despite the fact that the current phase of American military involvement around the world was triggered by an attack on New York and Washington which was planned by terrorists sitting in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The original sin was committed by George W. Bush in 2002 and 2003 when he chose to prepare for, and then actually go to, war against Iraq. At a time when the danger of terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan was, and remains, the most compelling and immediate threat to American national interests, he opened a second front that only undermined the US in military, strategic and even moral terms. The folly of Iraq also allowed Pakistan, which had earlier promised to sever its links with the Taliban and other extremists, to rebuild its 'strategic assets'. In September 2001, the Pakistani military under Pervez Musharraf abandoned its former clients, the Taliban, and allowed the US free access to wage a war against them. But from 2003 onwards, taking advantage of American preoccupations in Iraq, General Musharraf and

other Generals helped reestablish their links with the Taliban and the Haqqani network. By the time the American occupation forces in Iraq managed to turn the corner in that country, the Pentagon was confronted by the new Taliban, better motivated and equipped, and more capable of inflicting harm on coalition forces than ever before.

Even as America's military and political leadership has debated the best strategy to deal with this new challenge, settling finally on a massive surge of troops that will begin to draw down in 2011, there is a danger of the US losing focus again. This is because of the demand being made in many quarters for a tougher line against Iran over the nuclear enrichment issue. Some analysts and former officials like John Bolton or legislators like Senator Chuck Hagel speak openly of military action and the threat of Israeli air strikes is ever present. It hardly needs stressing that the opening up of an "Iran front", whether by the United States or Israel, will lead to a huge setback in the security situation in Afghanistan.

To the extent to which there is also a debate in the American strategic community about how the 'war on terror' – symbolised by Afghanistan – is 'diverting' valuable military resources from the need to deal with the rise of China (the so-called 'Great War' strategists), it is essential that the US not see the challenge posed by radical extremism in the AfPak region and the challenge to its hegemony posed by the emergence of China as a peer competitor as equal causes of concern. The tendency to do so is already manifesting itself in budgetary battles and debates over procurement and the weapon systems of the future. In fact, both challenges do not allow for an easy military solution, but the latter one even less so.

Lesson #2: Get the Politics Right

Right from the Bonn process and after, the United States and its allies erred in crafting for Afghanistan a highly centralised political system that respected neither its ethnic and regional diversity nor indeed created space for a pluralist political culture to emerge and flourish. The resulting political institutions allow little space for the articulation and

reconciliation of regional and ethno-linguistic concerns. Political parties have found it hard to establish themselves; in their place, warlords have reemerged as the principal power brokers, further marginalising and alienating ordinary Afghans.

These structural errors have been further compounded by Washington's ambiguous relationship with President Karzai. For all his faults, and they are indeed legion, Karzai remains the single most important political leader in Afghanistan today. Just as it was unwise for the international community to rely on him to the exclusion of all others, it was ill-advised to try and discredit and abandon him, especially in the run-up to, and the aftermath of, the last Presidential elections. History tells us that a counter-insurgency is very hard to win when the political face that heads the campaign has little or no credibility. The US, unfortunately, has helped to discredit Karzai when it has no viable Plan B in place.

Lesson #3: Don't Neglect the Capabilities of the ANSF and Don't Rely Excessively on Air Power

If the counter-insurgency is to succeed, it has to be on the basis of a strong and robust Afghan National Army (ANA). This was one of the secrets to Najibullah's ability to hold on to power for four years after the Soviets withdrew. But US strategy has erred in various ways. First, not enough attention was paid to developing human resources in the initial years of the intervention. Building up the capabilities and strength of the ANA was not seen as a priority, especially after the initial easy successes of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). Today, despite the surge giving additional heft to the US military presence, it is not at all clear that this has translated into an advantage on the battlefield. The results from Marjah, for example, are mixed to negative. On the other hand, the successes registered by units of well-trained ANA soldiers wherever they have been deployed provide a glimpse into what might have been had the US not neglected Afghan fighting capabilities all these years. Even today, when it is increasingly apparent that the war against the

Taliban will not succeed unless it is owned and led by the Afghans themselves, American and allied funding and training for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) is far less than what is required. The recent report of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) on the reality behind the claims made by the Pentagon on the readiness of the ANSF makes for sober reading. It is also evident that there is poor coordination between the Afghan forces and NATO.

Second, the manner in which military power has been used by the United States has often been counter-productive, causing civilian casualties and thereby creating a fertile ground for the Taliban. General McChrystal recognised this when he argued in his 2009 report against the logic of using combatant body counts as a metric for military success. There has been some change but it is still too early to assess.

Lesson #4: Don't Talk of Reintegration and Reconciliation from a Position of Weakness

Had the proposal of reconciliation been made when the Afghan government and the international forces had the upper hand in military terms, this would have been sensible and logical. Many countries have done this. India certainly has a positive experience of it. An offer to talk even at the time of a military stalemate can still be useful and provide tactical gains, as the case of the dialogue process with Naga insurgent groups has shown. But the present talk of reconciliation in Afghanistan – itself random and opportunistic – has produced a very negative dynamic in the AfPak region. Because this talk is coming at a time when public and political opinion in the West is “wobbling” over continued military engagement, this has emboldened the Taliban and their backers and lowered the morale of all those forces within Afghanistan and the wider region that had stuck by the Karzai government and backed the international intervention all these years. Fence-sitters such as regional warlords and others inside the country listen to this chatter and draw their own conclusions about which side is winning the war.

Lesson #5: Don't Ignore the Need for a Genuinely Regional Approach

Obama's AfPak strategy was supposed to have a strong regional component. But little has been achieved so far, in part, because of the US going off on a tangent over Iran, and also showing a certain willingness to give Pakistan a veto over the extent of Indian involvement.

Even before 9/11, India had been warning the US and the West about the dangers of the Taliban and of Pakistan's support for terrorism and extremism. Since then, and at enormous cost to itself, India has played a major role in supporting the international effort to bring peace and stability in Afghanistan by providing more than a billion dollars in aid and launching countless projects. But the US attitude towards this Indian role has not always been positive. Often, Pentagon officials give the impression that they have bought in to the Pakistani allegation that India has not been transparent about what its actions and intentions are in Afghanistan. This has served to further encourage Pakistan to act against India's legitimate interests there.

The one bright spot has been the American effort to reset relations with Russia, though even before that, Moscow had supported Washington's quest for a northern supply route for material headed to Afghanistan. But suspicions in Moscow and Beijing over the long-term American strategy for Afghanistan and Central Asia remain and the US has not done enough to allay these through a more robust process of consultation and engagement with all regional stakeholders.

Even if security in the interim is handled by the US and its allies, many more countries may be willing to help the ANSF in training and other ways, so that they come up to speed. Yet, Washington has done little to encourage the involvement of other players in these areas.

Lesson #6: Don't Forget that Pakistan is Where the Problem Started and that Pakistan is Where the Solution Lies

The last lesson is, in many ways, the most important, for Pakistan remains a primary source of instability in the region. This is not an argument for taking the war in Afghanistan to Pakistan as some hotheads in the US

and India argue or desire but a plea for finding effective ways to force the Pakistani military to change course once and for all by severing its links with extremist organisations. The US today pays lip-service to the idea that the various extremist groups operating from Pakistan – the Taliban, Al Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, the Punjabi Taliban and the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan function like a “syndicate of terror.” In practice, Washington has done little to incentivise, or goad, or push, the Pakistani establishment into abandoning the selective attitude it has towards these groups. Instead of using the reemergence of an elected government to strengthen the hands of the country’s civilian leadership and institutions, American engagement has actually helped the Pakistani military to tilt the balance in its own favour. One manifestation of this is the lengthy extension General Kayani managed to wrest for himself, a decision that the United States tacitly backed. General Kayani’s extension is a reflection of the military’s upper hand in Pakistan’s polity. So long as it has the upper hand, it will always seek to use surreptitious means to keep the country’s political parties and mass movements at bay, including covert support for radical Islamist and terrorist groups. It is unfortunate that the Obama Administration’s ‘AfPak’ policy continues to assign the Pakistani military establishment such an important role. So long as Washington continues to do that, peace and stability in Afghanistan will remain, for the foreseeable future, a bridge too far.

Security Perspectives on the AfPak Region

Leela K. Ponappa

Thank you, General Malik. I am tempted to take off from where Dr. Richard Falkenrath left, but what I will do is review the major points of the theme for the session, namely “Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Threats to India and the US from Transnational Terrorist Groups” and then I really would like to follow up on some of the issues that he has mentioned.

The starting point in looking at the subject raises the following questions: Who and where is the enemy? What is the enemy’s motivation? What is the enemy’s source of funding? In examining this subject, there are a few general points I will make before I proceed to spell out the threats to the US, threats to India, issues for both countries, areas of variance and commonality and the way ahead – all in 15-20 minutes!

General Points

I make a distinction between the anti-state violence of insurgency based on political alienation, on the one hand, and terrorism which seeks to undermine both the state and society with random attacks on civilians, on the other. While terrorist methods are not necessarily new, their indiscriminate use, the nexus between violent fundamentalist ideology and increasingly sophisticated technology, the combination of these elements is in fact new and related to our times.

A second point is that the conference theme of terrorism in South Asia raises questions about the definition of South Asia. Perceptions vary to include India and some of its neighbours; missing are China, Myanmar, Thailand, and Indonesia with whom we have land and/or maritime boundaries. Another perception is British India and its neighbours; it should then include Iran. If you were to be simplistic and cartographic in your approach and include points south of India's, Pakistan's, and Afghanistan's northernmost tips, you would necessarily have to include parts of Central Asia, southern China, all of Southeast Asia and the Gulf. This expanded context is necessary to understand the full nature of the threat as there is an arc of terrorism that covers all these regions and beyond, from its origins in the Pak-Afghan area.

Thirdly, the focus of this presentation will be on the Pak-Afghan region but there should be no assumed connection with India-Pakistan bilateral relations or issues. The presentation focusses on the security dimension of terrorism as a global threat, indeed as a weapon of mass destruction (WMD) which calls for the kind of multilateral attention and commitment to measures that technology-based weapon of mass destruction (WMDs) – nuclear, biological and chemical – attract. The subject also necessarily covers the use of terrorist groups as an instrument of state policy by Pakistan and the four-fold impact of this policy: against India, within Pakistan, against the United States in Afghanistan and elsewhere including on US soil, and against Afghanistan itself.

Threats to the US

There were early indications of the threats to the United States in the current context well before the defining events of 9/11: the East African Embassy bombings and USS *Cole* are examples. The identification of Al Qaeda also brought into focus a whole range of groups which have transcended the line between religious orthodoxy, Islamic in this case, and the indiscriminate violence of terrorism. The Taliban-Al Qaeda nexus consolidated the 'South Asian' dimension of the problem. But let us remember that till 9/11, the Taliban government in Kabul was tolerated, if not accepted.

US-Pakistan military relations from the 1950s to 2001 did not elicit the kind of resentment that the US faces today from *jihadi* groups in the Pak-Af region. What has changed? The destabilisation of Afghanistan beginning in 1978 and US-Pak-Mujahideen collaboration against the Soviets (1979-89) led after 2001 to the US demand, if not expectation, that post-9/11 Pakistan's attitude towards US forces across the Durand Line would be genuinely collaborative. In fact, however, the thrust from Pakistan is aimed at any foreign force in Afghanistan other than Islamabad's. Pakistan presently sees an opportunity to legitimise the Taliban under its own sponsorship, having failed to do so in 1996.

The threat to US forces in the region also obviously comes from the thrust of the *jihadi* groups which are either based, or have sanctuary, in Pakistan, with institutional support from the Pakistan Army and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to combat the US and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. Recruitment takes place not just through *madrassas* but also through lower levels of the public educational system in Pakistan; there are Pakistani scholars who have studied this aspect. Also, recruitment takes place not just in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) but in the major population centres particularly in southern Punjab. *Jihadi* groups work in concert with each other. Previous speakers have mentioned this so I will not dwell on it but it is important to recognise that in addition to the fundamentalist and terrorist groups active within Pakistan, there is a host of other groups that extend into Central Asia. I particularly have in mind the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), the Hizb-ut Tehrir and the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM). They move between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, western China, as well as into southern Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The 'foreign' elements include Chechens, Saudis, Yemenis, Egyptians, Sudanese and sundry others. A respected Pakistan scholar has in this context spoken of the relentless Wahabisation of his country.

The Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) is of particular significance and I would like to emphasise that its activities are not confined to the region. Wilson John would probably have something to say on this in one of the later sessions but let me just point out that the LeT has sleeper cells in eastern Africa,

western Africa, the Maghreb, Europe and, indeed, the United States. It is well funded and definitely not representative of the wretched of the earth as those who foster the root causes of terrorism argument would maintain. Its newest technique has been the coopting of educated middle class people like David Coleman Headley and Shahzad Faizal, the Times Square bomber.

Within Pakistan, anti-US sentiment appears based on the drone attacks but it masks the more deep-rooted resentment against US pressure on the Pakistani establishment to deal substantively with the terrorist groups based there. The inherent contradictions within Pakistan are fully evident, typified by the growth of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) following the Lal Masjid face-off in 2007; demoralisation within the Frontier Corps involving surrender, insubordination, desertion; the nature of Pakistan Army operations in Swat, Malakand and South Waziristan which from a military perspective would raise many questions, alongside overt official Pakistan connivance if not support of the Haqqani group, the Quetta *Shura* and the various other groups that they have been working with to sustain the thrust into Afghanistan against US forces. *The conjoined Pakistan effort is against US success in Afghanistan and against US pressure on the Pakistan Army to end the activities of terror groups within the country and across the Durand Line. Without such activities, Afghanistan could conceivably have seen peace much earlier.*

The threats to India essentially take shape around India's efforts to maintain a very complex, finely tuned internal balance and equilibrium within its vast diversities and long traditions of both an eclectic society and of old orthodoxies, particularly Islamic orthodoxies, which have ranged from Bengal all the way up to what was then known as the Frontier, today's Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa. The democratic process within India provides great space for internal resolution; it is the external support through ideology, funding, and training which has encouraged home grown terrorism and the spread of Wahhabi values for which secularism is anathema. The threat from transnational groups in India is now fully crystallised, through a learning curve that began in 1947. The process involved Pakistan seeking political gains on bilateral disputes through non-state actors and attempting to legitimise these means. This policy has continued, exemplified by the

Pakistan Foreign Minister's latest position which implies India's acceptance of Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. In fact, it was Benazir Bhutto who very eloquently described the growth of Pak state terrorism under General Zia at the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit in Islamabad in 1988, when she set her speech aside and in response to remarks by Sri Lankan President Jayawardene said, "Let me tell you about state terrorism." Benazir Bhutto herself eventually recognised the folly of pursuing the Pakistan Army's strategy of sponsoring terror in India, in her last months.

The present manifestation of terrorist activities from Pakistan is the fruition of General Zia's plan for the use of non-state actors against India but historically one could say there were two broad phases involved. The first was territorial, starting from the time of partition and the unwillingness of Pakistan, particularly of Jinnah, to go along with neither the popular mandate which the Congress Party had suggested in dealing with the princely states nor with the ruler's decision in the case of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Thus, the very clumsy overall scheme for British withdrawal descended into a power play with the use of tribals and Pakistan Army regulars in Kashmir.

The second phase was the calculated use of terrorism, in Punjab, which Vikram Sood spoke of earlier, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), the rest of India and now Afghanistan. Pakistan has tried to project a selective strategy on terrorist groups but the myth of India-focussed groups pursuing human rights in Kashmir has gone with the evidence of the nexus between the Al Qaeda, Taliban, LeT and others, whether within or beyond the control of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Full blown attacks on Indian assets in Afghanistan have been a new phenomenon after decades of peaceful Indian presence there post-Independence and, culturally, for millennia before. (Likewise – and I find there has been no mention of it this morning – the attacks on NATO convoys within Pakistan raise fundamental questions about what US expectations from a major non-NATO ally in fact are.) Further threats to India come from the funding of terrorist groups by Pakistan and from the Gulf, particularly Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE, the infiltration of counterfeit currency through a variety of routes (Vikram had mentioned Nepal and Bangladesh) and the

training of Indian *jihadis* in Pakistan. Infiltration into J&K continues through areas in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) that are totally under Pakistan Army control and Pakistan's inaction against terrorist groups responsible for the Mumbai attacks is self-evident.

Issues for India and the US

What then are the issues for India and the United States? There are certain variances/divergences. India is dealing with threats to its intrinsic national objective of ensuring a secular, democratic society with a huge Muslim minority population – 150 million at last official count – and a long tradition of orthodoxy in some sections. India has had extensive experience of cross-border terrorism for over 20 years in Punjab by the Khalistanis, in southern India by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in J&K and other parts of India as well. For the US, the threats are an outcome of foreign policy, of oil interests, the revolution in Iran, the nature of state formation in West Asia and in the Indian subcontinent post-1947, and America's inheritance of the mantle of the British Empire and its emergence as the sole superpower. America, like the UK, has come to the latter-day realisation that terrorism affects its own security as well; this is something to build on. Differences in our respective perceptions of Pakistan were referred to earlier this morning but I would particularly like to draw attention to the need for an understanding of the nature of the Pakistan state and how to engage it. India has faced persistent Pakistani policies determined by the Pakistan Army that aimed for substantive strategic and political gains through the tool of terrorism. This has been a steady threat all the way from 1947 onwards. The US view of Pakistan was, I think, partly shaped by the British after 1947. It led initially to the Cold War equations and, subsequently, till today, virtually unstinted support of the Pakistan Army despite the absence of any illusions in America which an earlier speaker mentioned. The Pakistan Army now sees itself as indispensable to the US, whatever the price America has to pay.

What are the commonalities that we can derive? Very clearly, there is an ideological threat to value systems with the aim of impacting

open, tolerant societies. There is a geographical spread and internal subversion. David Coleman Headley is the best example. There is the global agenda of each of these terrorist groups and there are specific threats to India, to the United States, as well as to China, Russia, Central Asia, Iran, the Gulf, Europe and Africa.

The Nuclear Threat

I will speak now of the nuclear threat as a sub-issue of the larger threat scenario. The nuclear dimension in Pakistan's consideration is a legitimate lever for political gain through state blackmail involving the intersection of WMD technology and terrorism. Even if we were to set aside issues of state policy in the absence of a Pakistani nuclear doctrine, or the implications of Pakistan's not having a policy of no first use, the presence and activities of these non-state actors, these terrorist groups, raise concerns involving their aspirations of acquiring fissile material with some capability for a dirty bomb. It is generally assessed that the groups might not have the technical capability to handle a weapon itself but certainly loose fissile material would pose a threat. The nuclear black market, A.Q. Khan and the entire story that is associated with him is equally devastating with regard to proliferation, whether or not it is state driven. There is the risk of the threat of the intersection of elements within the Pakistan nuclear establishment with terrorist groups and I mention this in the context of the very deliberate programme of the Islamisation of the Pakistan Army that General Zia had put in place. Specific nuclear threats would include the acquisition of fissile material by terrorist groups: studies have documented unaccounted material in Pakistan; possible leakage from Russia; and North Korea and China are known proliferators. A nexus between rogue elements in the Pakistan establishment and the jihadi groups would be a clear danger not just to India, not just to the United States, but internationally. Likewise, the possibility of Pakistani blackmail to obtain strategic space in Afghanistan and a role for the Taliban in Kabul under Pakistan tutelage in exchange for Pakistani nuclear responsibility is a threat that we need to watch out for.

In conclusion, let me say that there is sufficient commonality in the threats to India, the US and a host of other countries in the region and beyond to come together and put an end to *jihadi* group activity which is manifested in Afghanistan but has its source in Pakistan. There could be major implications for the state system in the region given the complexities in Afghanistan and the precarious nature of state formation in Pakistan. I do not generally support the theses for the partition of Afghanistan, including the latest one by Ambassador Blackwill, because I think partition is a lazy way of claiming to solve problems. We have seen this in the subcontinent, we have seen it in other parts of the world, in Asia, in Europe: partition does not really solve any problems, it merely creates others. But there could be forces that cause the fracturing of nation states; as events as recent as in the past 20 years have shown us, the international state structure is highly vulnerable to change, whether concerning large states like the Soviet Union or smaller ones as in the Balkans. If this conference agrees that terrorism – like other WMD – must not proliferate and requires elimination, hard decisions are necessary. The US needs a clear understanding of the source of the problem in Afghanistan, where an emboldened Pakistan sees strategic depth within its grasp, witness General Kayani's offer to broker peace between the US and the Taliban. This would lead to a whole new dimension of the legitimisation of terror as an instrument of state policy. As Pakistan's primary financier and arms supplier, the US holds the key. If it is possible to open the financial tap, it is possible to close it as well or to redirect the flow. Both before and after the Mumbai attacks, India restrained it to an extraordinary extent and this government subjected itself to criticism on that point, in order to maintain peace on the International Boundary (IB) and the Line of Control (LoC) so as to enable Pakistan to shift troops to the Afghan border. India needs to see (a) results in Pakistan on action against those behind the Mumbai attacks to be able to proceed on other political issues; and (b) active support from the US and other friends of Pakistan in ensuring an end to infiltration and the dismantling of the terror infrastructure in Pakistan.

Intelligence and Security Cooperation

I would like to comment here on some of Richard's points on the ground level nature of intelligence and security cooperation. Terrorism today has become a multilateral subject. There is a welter of documentation, there are conferences, there are resolutions and such like but at the end of the day, it is intelligence and action that matter. The exchange of hard intelligence is required: not general information that Al Qaeda is around in some region but specific details about a wanted person's movements and a request to partner countries to either pick up the person or track him or find his associates. All it takes is a phone call. This has been done, has provided results and is quite feasible.

I also do believe that the linkage between the topmost diplomat and the ground level intelligence functionary is organic. The two do not function independently of each other. If there is direction from the top, the ground level person will understand the requirement and deliver. Richard was, of course, absolutely right in saying that the strengthening of the intelligence structure has to be at the ground level; in Indian terms, this would mean the beat policeman. This is the point from where the recommendations start in the Group of Ministers report on the review of the national security system after Kargil. But international cooperation on terrorism is equally critical and requires tracking of funding and weaponry together with the ability to undertake timely operations to preempt terrorist activity and attacks. The Iran factor in this whole aspect of the threats that emerge from Pakistan has been discussed earlier so I will not dwell on it. Let me just finally say that both India and the US need to work bilaterally, regionally and internationally to address the threat of terrorist groups through a combination of executive, legal, financial, security and any other necessary measures. Failure to do so would end in the restoration of the Taliban to a position of governance, if not power, in Afghanistan and would merely result in an endless loop by recreating the conditions that existed prior to 9/11.

Reversing Pakistan's Sponsorship of Militancy: A Strategy to Alter The Logic of Pakistan's Use of Terrorist Groups As A Tool of Statecraft

Daniel Twining

Introduction

Is the Pakistani military's sponsorship of Islamic extremist groups a function of growing radicalism within the Pakistani armed forces? Or do the Pakistani security establishment's relations with specific terrorist groups grow out of a hard-headed calculation about Pakistan's strategic interests, irrespective of the ideological content of the extremist groups in question? The latter explanation appears to be closer to the truth: the Pakistani military cultivates relations with selected extremists as a *realpolitik* tool of statecraft rather than with an eye to fomenting a new ideological *jihad*. This is not to discount individual Pakistani military and intelligence officers' sympathies with various Islamic extremist groups, or to argue that radicalisation of the armed forces has not

* Sections of this chapter are drawn from Christian Brose and Daniel Twining, "Our Pakistan Problem: The Nuclear-Armed, Insurgent-Plagued, Swing State of South Asia," *The Weekly Standard*, 14, No. 48, September 14, 2009; he thanks Christian Brose for shaping key arguments contained herein. He is also grateful to members of the Heritage Foundation and the Observer Research Foundation for comments and feedback at the ORF-Heritage Dialogue, New Delhi, July 20-21, 2010.

grown more pronounced over the past 30 years. Rather, it is to argue that Pakistan's relations with particular terrorist groups can be analysed and understood with reference to their utility in furthering Pakistan's strategic interests (as defined by its military leadership) vis-à-vis India, Afghanistan, and the United States.

Ideological variables are secondary to these calculations. They unquestionably animate individual extremist networks, but for the Pakistani security establishment in Rawalpindi, ideational beliefs are subordinate to their ability to facilitate Pakistan's hard security interests. These interests include employing terrorism as an asymmetric tool to pressure India and keep it off balance; dominating Afghanistan to produce "strategic depth" and prevent India from establishing a sphere of influence there; and sustaining flows of military and economic assistance from the United States and other donors by leveraging Pakistan's relations with extremist networks that threaten Western interests.

There are multiple examples of Pakistan's functional rather than ideological approach to extremist groups. On the one hand, Pakistan's security establishment maintains intimate relations with the Haqqani network, the Quetta *Shura*, and Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) – radical groups whose interests dovetail with Pakistan's national interest, as the military high command defines it. On the other hand, the Pakistani armed forces are effectively at war with the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which is not ideologically far removed from the Afghan Taliban – but whose objective of overthrowing the Pakistani state represents a clear and present danger to the position and prerogatives of the Pakistani officer corps within it. Within Pakistani domestic politics, General Pervez Musharraf's military rule witnessed the strategic use by Pakistan's intelligence service of Islamist political parties to weaken civic opposition forces. Under Musharraf, the country's largest Islamist coalition, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, governed two of the country's four provinces. It benefited from the intelligence service's support and electoral manipulation to garner twice the votes it did under civilian rule. State sponsorship of Islamist politics was strategic rather than

ideological in nature, designed as it was to marginalise the civilian political parties opposed to military rule.

This points to a broader dimension of Pakistan's sponsorship of extremist groups: it contributes not only to the realisation of Pakistan's external interests vis-à-vis Afghanistan, India, and the West, but also to the strengthening of the Pakistani armed forces' domestic position. The military's position at the apex of Pakistani society – its businesses and foundations dominate the Pakistani economy,¹ its officers enjoy generous housing and pension allowances, and its leadership is routinely called on to "save" Pakistan from the foibles of its weak and corrupt civilian leaders² – owes much to its positioning vis-à-vis radical networks. On the one hand, the Pakistani armed forces are viewed as the ultimate bulwark against the country's "Talibanisation" in the form of an Islamist takeover of the state. On the other, Pakistan's military leaders calibrate their relations with militant groups so as to maximise their leverage with the United States and other powers, incentivising Western capitals to increase financial assistance and supplies of advanced hardware to the military to keep them in the fight against violent radicals. This external sponsorship contributes significantly to Army dominance over Pakistani politics and society.

Billions of dollars in unconditional American assistance to Pakistan's military have created perverse incentives for its leaders to manage rather than defeat Islamist militancy in order to keep the aid money flowing. Flush with American resources, Pakistan's security services have played a double game: fighting some militant groups while sponsoring others as instruments of strategic influence – including, ironically, against US forces in Afghanistan, as well as against friendly governments in Kabul and New Delhi.

Although its government and armed forces contain many patriots, its dependence on, and manipulation of, foreign aid flows means that Pakistan risks becoming, like some African countries, a rentier state in which predatory elites pursue policies designed to maximise external patronage in service to parochial interests, rather than national ones (though the Army equates its particular

interests to those of the nation at large). The Pakistani military's reluctance to engage Taliban militants in parts of the tribal belt can be understood in this light. The armed forces of Pakistan are most useful as a partner of the United States – one deserving of billions of dollars in new hardware and equipment, naturally – only as long as the militant threat persists. This creates incentives to keep *jihadism* simmering without boiling over.

A Pathway Forward: Altering the Strategic Calculus Behind Pakistan's Support for Violent Extremists

The American vision for South Asia is at odds, even in conflict, with that of Pakistan's military. The United States seeks a comprehensive relationship with a civilian-led, democratic Pakistan to fight extremism and expand justice and prosperity for its people; elements of the Pakistani security establishment undermine exactly these goals by meddling in politics and sponsoring terrorism. America envisions an Afghanistan in which a legitimate, democratic state is capable of defeating the insurgency and fostering opportunity for its citizens; the Pakistani military views Afghanistan as a source of strategic depth against India and backs the Taliban and associated militants to achieve it. The United States envisions a global strategic partnership with a rising India and an enduring peace between New Delhi and Islamabad; Pakistan's military views India as an existential threat to be countered asymmetrically with terrorists based in, and backed by, Pakistan.

This is in some respects a zero-sum game. The realisation of key US goals in South Asia would necessarily come at the expense of the Pakistani military's interests, as it currently defines them, by undercutting the military's political legitimacy and privileged place in Pakistani society. The United States, thus, finds itself in the unenviable position of having major strategic interests in the future of Pakistan, while the internal actor with the most influence over that future is a military establishment with little incentive to cooperate fully with US objectives. Washington can neither compel the Pakistani military to decisively change its behaviour nor impose change directly.

How, then, should the United States further American interests in Pakistan and South Asia? For too long, the US approach to Pakistan has swung sharply between two extreme assumptions: one, that the Pakistani military is really a US ally with which we share common interests and to which America should defer to do the right thing; the other, that Pakistan's military leaders are hostile to US goals, but that Washington can directly compel them to work against their own interests. The former overstates the enlightened self-interest of our Pakistani "partners"; the latter America's ability to change their behaviour.

A better approach would deal with Pakistan as it is, not as we might want it to be. This means accepting that while some interests may overlap and that the US can create incentives to induce Pakistani cooperation, those calling the shots in Pakistan are not our natural allies. Nor can US officials change their worldview directly through actions and appeals or top-down dictates. Rather, the United States must work from the bottom-up, creating incentives that could lead Pakistan's leaders to make new choices. With such an indirect approach, the focus would be less on sweeping initiatives to change Pakistani thinking in one master stroke (like an elusive Kashmir deal) than on incremental steps to create new realities, new facts on the ground, to which Pakistan's leaders would be forced to adapt.

This is as much a challenge of psychology as policy. Few nations are as paranoid as Pakistan – where it is a widespread belief that India is behind every setback, that the United States plans to seize Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, that America is out to undermine Pakistani democracy, and that Washington cannot be trusted. This paranoia explains many of Pakistan's policies: why America is treated as both ally and adversary in national security planning, for instance, or why Pakistan sponsors the Taliban in Afghanistan as a hedge against not only against India, but against America.

Some of this paranoia is baseless; some less so, especially considering past US support for Pakistani dictators. Yet Pakistani paranoia is real in the minds of the country's leaders. The United States should not dismiss Pakistani insecurity or believe it can disabuse the country's leadership of it through rational discourse. Rather, America should

take Pakistan's paranoia as the point of departure for its policies and pursue incremental but sustained actions to create new inducements and constraints that might lead Islamabad to alter its strategic calculus. This would be a slow, systematic, and evolutionary – not revolutionary – approach to changing the strategic context of Pakistani decision-making and thereby nudging Pakistan in a direction more favourable to American interests in South and Central Asia.

Ultimately, such a strategic project requires helping to construct a constellation of forces in and around Pakistan that leads it to redefine the military's definition of the national interest – away from promoting the weakness and instability of its neighbours and towards investing, and sharing, in their vitality and prosperity. It also calls for shifting the basis of Pakistani relations with key external partners like the United States and China – away from that of a basket-case whose weakness and fragility require unlimited amounts of foreign assistance, and towards a relationship of mutual stakeholdership in which Pakistan assumes responsibilities that contribute to good governance at home and shared security in its neighbourhood, rather than benefiting from its pursuit of policies that do the opposite.

A Strategy for Gradually Transforming Pakistan's Cost-Benefit Calculus Away From Terrorist Sponsorship

Given their shared stakes and their confluence of goals in Pakistan and the region, how should the United States and its partners pursue such a project? Fundamentally, they can do so by demonstrating tangibly and irreversibly that the Pakistani armed forces' sponsorship of terrorism as a central tool of foreign and security policy will fail to achieve Pakistan's strategic objectives – and, in fact, undermines both Pakistani security and the position of the armed forces in Pakistani society. What would the elements of such a strategy look like?

Winning in Afghanistan – and Seeing to it That Pakistan's Proxies Lose

First and most important would be defeating Pakistan's terrorist proxies in Afghanistan. Despite new and welcome Pakistani pressure on

militants based in Pakistan's tribal regions, there is still little evidence that Pakistan's military has broken its longstanding Faustian bargain with Taliban fighters in Afghanistan, viewing their fight instead as the ideal path to Pakistan's own security. The best chance to end Pakistani support for terrorism in Afghanistan – and India – is to demonstrate in a visceral way that its allies are losing and that if Rawalpindi does not stop backing them, it will end up with little influence in Afghanistan and less security as a result. Only once the facts on the ground change might Pakistani policies follow suit.

This suggests an opposite way of thinking about the “Af-Pak” challenge from the one the Obama Administration has presented. American leaders should not assume that Pakistani cooperation holds the key to progress in Afghanistan, and that the former is a prerequisite for achieving the latter. To the contrary, the United States and its Afghan and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) allies can make significant gains in Afghanistan without the Pakistani military choosing to fight, instead of supporting, cross-border militancy – a choice it seems unlikely to make anyway.

Moreover, the real benefit of defeating the Pakistan-backed enemies of Afghanistan is less what it means for Afghanistan's development, as important as that is, and more how it would help secure the primary US goal: fostering a creeping realisation among the Pakistani military that the waves of its terrorist allies washing over the Durand Line are breaking against a hardened Afghan state, and that to continue backing violent extremists in South Asia will only leave Pakistan isolated, insecure, and weakened. Ending Afghanistan's status as a playing field for Pakistan's military-intelligence combine will also weaken the security establishment's influence in Pakistani politics, advancing the American objective (shared by most Pakistanis) of strengthening civilian rule.

The Pakistani military's intentions threaten the project of democratic state-building and security in Afghanistan as much as do the Afghan Taliban's objectives in that country. President Obama's July 2011 date for the start of a US troop drawdown has created a perverse incentive

structure that encourages both the Afghan and Pakistani governments to hedge against the United States in this vital region. No matter how talented General David Petraeus is in commanding American and NATO forces, it is hard to see how America's Afghan strategy can be successful without a strategic reorientation by the Obama Administration that creates a different calculus for leaders in Kabul and Rawalpindi with regard to the Afghan endgame.

Pakistan's military-intelligence establishment continues to define national security with reference to the weakness and pliability, rather than the strength, of its Afghan neighbour. Pakistan's sponsorship of Lashkar-e-Tayyeba is today what Pakistan's sponsorship of Kashmiri militants was in the 1980s and 1990s – a strategic tool to target and weaken India through terrorist attacks while enabling Rawalpindi to claim plausible deniability. At the same time, Pakistan's close relationship with the forces of Jalaluddin and Siraj Haqqani and the Afghan Taliban give it critical leverage in its dealings with Washington.

Despite the billions of dollars of assistance the United States provides its South Asian ally, many members of Pakistan's strategic elite believe that, as a result of the influence Rawalpindi derives from its friendship with the United States' enemies, America needs Pakistan more than Pakistan needs America. In this view, if Pakistan severed its close links to selected militants, closed down their sanctuaries in Pakistan's tribal regions, and fully endorsed the Western project in Afghanistan, Pakistani leaders might no longer enjoy the red-carpet treatment from Washington. Pakistan, therefore, derives strength in its dealings with America by pursuing differentiated strategic objectives rather than similar ones. This is a different conception of the notion of "ally" than applies to American relations with other key partners.

This reality, in turn, leads to the internal logic of Pakistani statecraft in Afghanistan. The military-intelligence establishment's position at the core of Pakistani society and politics has been strengthened, not weakened, by Western intervention in Afghanistan over the past 9 years (though the opposite would have been true had the West and our Afghan partners succeeded in building a functioning and accountable Afghan

state that highlighted Pakistan's own political deficiencies). The war against Al Qaeda and the Taliban made General Musharraf's military dictatorship appear indispensable to the United States. Following Pakistan's democratic transition and the subsequent US Presidential succession, President Obama forged a new Afghan strategy that has increasingly come to rely on Pakistan to deliver the Afghan Taliban, and perhaps also the militant networks run by the Haqqanis and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, for an Afghan political settlement that would give these forces – each currently allied in various ways with Al Qaeda – positions of power in a new Afghan constitutional settlement so that Western forces could come home.

This US policy has further elevated the position of the Pakistani armed forces Chief of Staff and his corps commanders in Pakistani politics, as demonstrated by the way General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani openly coordinated the positions of Pakistan's civilian ministries before the 2010 US-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue. Moreover, President Obama's declared exit strategy starting in July 2011 has more widely opened the playing field in Afghanistan to Pakistan's military and intelligence services. They are further empowered internally by the decisive influence they now derive, with Washington's consent, in determining the Afghan endgame in a way that "defeats" India and America and therefore "strengthens" Pakistan. These developments do not bode well for the future of either Pakistani or Afghan democracy.

President Obama's flawed and half-hearted Afghan strategy has also created incentives for President Karzai to look for new friends in a dangerous region – leading to the Faustian bargain he risks making with Pakistan over political reconciliation that brings the Afghan Taliban into government without committing it to uphold the Afghan Constitution, and gives Rawalpindi a guiding hand in determining Afghanistan's future internal and external orientations. Karzai's 2010 firing of his Interior Minister and intelligence chief, both proponents of "hardening" Afghanistan against Pakistani influence, pleased Rawalpindi and worrisomely revealed a tendency in this direction. If American and allied forces are headed for the exits before Afghan security and

political institutions are mature enough to hold the country together and shield it from predation by its powerful neighbours, President Karzai justifiably sees cutting a deal with Pakistan as a preferable option to hanging from a lamppost.

The tragedy is that the United States and its allies went to war in Afghanistan in 2001 to oust a Taliban government with links to Al Qaeda and that was sponsored by Pakistan. A decade and thousands of lost allied and Afghan lives later, it is hard to believe that President Obama is really going to preside over a premature military drawdown leading to a political transition that restores a Taliban-dominated government, some of whose constituent parts have ties to Al Qaeda, that is sponsored by Pakistan.

Managing Pakistan's Strategic Concerns in Afghanistan

In addition to grinding down Pakistan's terrorist proxies in Afghanistan and helping Afghans build a capable state and army, a second way to change Pakistan's behaviour is by a serious diplomatic engagement over its security concerns in Afghanistan. The United States may not always view these concerns as legitimate; many of them are not. But the first rule of dealing with paranoids is not to tell them their fears are baseless, and that they should just get over them. Instead, as Marin Strmecki has written, the United States, together with its Afghan allies, should seek "to draw out from Pakistani military and intelligence leaders what are their strategic concerns and ... how these might be addressed in a manner consistent with a strong and stable Afghanistan."³

This might include establishing a transparent system of understandings – and agreed-upon redlines – to govern how regional actors like India and Pakistan exercise influence in Afghanistan. Another step, even more simply, would be to consult more with Pakistan and show that its concerns are being taken into account on issues of Afghan reconstruction, from building infrastructure to training security forces. Pakistani leaders must accept and reconcile themselves to the fact that regional powers – especially India, with its cultural and economic

magnetism and strong historical and people-to-people ties – will remain important players in Afghanistan.

That said, greater transparency and a set of basic rules governing the role of the neighbours would help demonstrate to Pakistan that diplomatic avenues exist for it to shape peacefully the nature of others' influence in Afghanistan. Signalling clearly to Rawalpindi that the United States and its Western allies are committed to Afghanistan for the long haul would reinforce this message, undermining the rationale for Pakistan to nurture the Taliban as its ally of choice. In this scenario, the United States would assume a greater referee role in safeguarding Afghan sovereignty – thereby channelling Pakistani influence in Afghanistan in more productive directions and beginning to change a strategic culture that identifies the destabilisation of neighbouring countries as a source of national security.

Transforming Pakistan's Region in Helpful Directions

A third avenue for changing Pakistan's strategic calculus is by empowering Islamabad and New Delhi to normalise their fraught relationship. Civilian leaders in both countries – including President Zardari, Prime Minister Gilani, and chief Opposition leader Nawaz Sharif, as well as Indian Prime Minister Singh – at times have been outspoken about the urgency of doing so. Paradoxically, the best contribution America can make to this effort is to stay out of the way while nurturing relations of trust with both countries. The greatest progress in Indo-Pakistani relations to date occurred in secret talks from 2004-07 and were enabled by the strong ties Washington enjoyed with leaders in both New Delhi and Islamabad – attesting to the success of America's "dehyphenisation" of its relations in South Asia and highlighting an under-appreciated effect of the historic US-India strategic rapprochement.⁴

Rather than attempting to mediate an elusive deal on Kashmir, a role most likely to alienate both countries, America today would be better served by focussing on smaller-bore measures to help Pakistan and India overcome internal and external obstacles to peace by

achieving incremental progress where possible. The goal would be to establish new patterns of cooperation that build confidence through functional exchanges rather than an unlikely ideological convergence. On security, this could include greater intelligence sharing via bilateral channels with both India and Pakistan to contain the threat of Pakistani cross-border terrorism that threatens both societies.

Pakistan's future could also be transformed by changes in the regional environment that deepen economic interdependence and mutual prosperity in a natural economic zone artificially divided by political tensions. On border trade, this could include sharing technology to facilitate transit of goods and people in ways that actually enhance rather than diminish border security. On energy, Washington could help push forward regional initiatives like a planned pipeline linking Turkmen gas reserves to Pakistan and India via Afghanistan and a pan-regional framework for managing Himalayan water resources vital to the agricultural economies of South Asia.

In Iran, where international sanctions constrain regional economic integration despite a mutual Indian and Pakistani desire for greater engagement, the United States could be much more forward-leaning in supporting the people's movement for reform of the country's brittle, self-isolating clerical dictatorship. A friendly Iran under new leadership enjoying normal relations with the international community could be a game-changer in supplying energy for South Asia's modernising economies and exploding demographics, linking India and Pakistan to the markets of Central Asia and building landlocked Afghanistan into a rich regional trading network. Given its dramatic youth bulge and the challenges of employing one of the world's fastest-growing and youngest populations, Pakistan's economic future looks bleak without the kind of regional economic integration that has transformed East Asia.

A US Assistance Policy of "More for More"

A fourth element of a strategy of reorienting Pakistan's security horizons is to pursue a policy of "more for more" on military-to-military relations and defence supply. For decades, Washington has swung between two

extremes. On the one hand, America has gone through periods of writing blank cheques to the Pakistani armed forces and taking a Santa Claus-like approach to the hardware wish-lists of the General Staff in Rawalpindi, irrespective of the military utility of those weapons platforms in advancing US policy objectives. On the other hand, the United States has at various times reneged on commitments to supply F-16s and other coveted hardware, severed military-to-military relations with the Pakistani officer corps, and imposed punitive sanctions on their country.

This dualism has socialised a generation of officers to deem the United States an unreliable partner that seeks to weaken Pakistan. This is profoundly counter-productive; we have a compelling interest in ensuring that the Pakistani General Staff views the United States – not Saudi Arabia, China, or the Taliban – as their ally of choice. Reliable American engagement is also essential to inculcate in the Pakistani officer corps an understanding of the role of the military in a democracy as a way of strengthening the civilian government in Islamabad.

America today needs to disabuse Pakistan's military leadership of its prevailing mindset – by being a reliable supplier of military hardware and expanding military training and education with what remains the country's most capable national institution. US policy should endeavour to take off the table the Pakistani military's argument that they do not have enough or adequate defences. Washington should use enhanced military assistance and training programmes as a way of moving the Pakistani military to recognise that violent extremism is the country's primary security threat – and that the United States is best-placed to serve as a long-term partner in training and equipping Pakistani security forces to wage counter-insurgency, a mandate more appealing to the military leadership thanks to the popular support its campaign to retake Swat and Buner from TTP militants garnered from the Pakistani public in 2009.

Such a partnership could include some of the more advanced military platforms the Pakistani General Staff covets – because exacerbating Pakistani insecurity by cutting off weapons sales in ways that increase the regional imbalance of capabilities is counter-productive to American

aims. This is especially true because of the growing divergence of power and strategic horizons between Pakistan and India, a rising world power which now benchmarks its military capabilities against China, not its lesser South Asian neighbour. The urgency of weighing US military sales to Pakistan against the balance of forces in South Asia has become obsolete given the nuclear balance of terror between India and Pakistan as well as the radically different power trajectories of the two countries – in terms of economic and conventional military power, Pakistan is no longer in India's league and will never be. As a result, Washington could use the appeal of additional weapons sales to the Pakistani military as a way to incentivise it to embrace an expanded train-and-equip programme built around a counter-insurgency doctrine that helps secure Pakistan's tribal belt – and thereby strengthens the security of Pakistan, the United States, and India.

Investing in Pakistani Civilian Institutions

The security establishment is not the only sceptic of the United States in Pakistan. The Pakistani people are perhaps even more paranoid, as America's low public approval ratings in poll after poll show.⁵ The Pakistani public, starting with its educated class, believes that the United States pursues a transactional relationship with Pakistani's leaders – above all its military – in ways that have grossly distorted Pakistani politics and society and subordinated Pakistan to Washington's strategic interest in using the country as a bulwark against various American adversaries, from the Soviet Army to Al Qaeda. This critique is overstated. But there is no question that previous American policies have contributed to this opinion, and that American public diplomacy has been woefully incapable of enlightening it.

That is why a fifth element of moving Pakistan's strategic outlook in a direction more favourable to American interests is investing systematically in the welfare of the Pakistani people and strengthening the local and national institutions that more often than not fail to serve them. This is not simply a liberal ideal but a hard-headed American national interest: neither the Pakistani officer corps nor the civilian

leadership will cooperate openly and systematically with the United States if prevailing opinion in Pakistani society rates Osama Bin Laden more highly than Barack Obama.

Realigning Pakistani public opinion in ways more conducive to the objectives of the United States and the international community has several dimensions. In the immediate term, sustained US reconstruction and development assistance for the millions of refugees from Pakistan's epic floods in 2010 could make a significant contribution, particularly given the Pakistani government's own shortcomings in this regard. It is worth recalling that the greatest spike in Pakistani favourability towards America in recent memory occurred during the US military relief effort following the 2005 earthquake there.

More strategically, Washington must commit itself to the same scale and intensity of investment in strengthening Pakistan's economic development and civilian governance as it has to funding and equipping the Pakistani armed forces. The weakness of Pakistan's civilian institutions is endemic; it creates a vicious cycle for American policy in that Washington, despite wanting to distance itself from the Pakistani military's political ambitions, turns time and again to the generals because civilian politics is so often incapable of managing challenges that endanger first-order American interests, from containing terrorism to securing the country's nuclear arsenal. American complicity with military rule in Pakistan, in turn, further debilitates its politics and civilian administration, leading to a dangerous lack of state capacity that compounds Pakistan's governing and developmental dilemmas.

The United States has a strategic interest in investing in Pakistani democracy for the long term. Sceptics in Pakistan (as elsewhere) do not dislike Americans because they espouse democracy, human rights, and other values of an open society. Their hostility more often stems from the United States' own failure to practise what it preaches. Pakistan's woes are largely self-inflicted. But past American support for military autocracy has contributed to the infantilisation of Pakistani politics, with the result that the country has known few instances of the constitutional

transfer of political power. Pakistan's stunted political development contributes to a Hobbesian, winner-take-all political culture featuring pervasive corruption, personalised politics, debilitated civic institutions, and a politicised judiciary and weak legal framework which, combined with feudal relations of production in the countryside, condemns the country to a chronic state of underdevelopment despite its rich human capital and strategic location between the dynamic economies of the Persian Gulf and India.

Many of Pakistan's pathologies with direct security ramifications for the United States – the state's lack of territorial control, failed institutions of governance and development, and the disproportionate share of the national budget that flows to the armed forces rather than the educational, health, and administrative infrastructure of the state – are a function of Pakistan's failure to develop governing institutions that deliver for the Pakistani people and sustain the rule of law. The strategic goal of the United States, reflected in its diplomacy and assistance programmes, must be to strengthen the institutions of the Pakistani state, which necessarily means a primary focus on the civic side given the disproportionate strength of the armed forces.

Friends of Pakistan who believe military rule is an effective bulwark against radical Islam, and the consequences of its ascendance for Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, are mistaken: Islamic extremists enjoyed their greatest popular support during the dictatorship of General Musharraf, precisely because military rule marginalised the country's moderate political mainstream and pushed political dissent to society's ideological fringes. Pakistan today is a proving ground for the liberal belief that an open society is the surest defence against extremism. This is the same principle for which Afghan and Western forces are fighting, and dying, in Afghanistan. It would be a pity if we subscribed to a different standard next door, where the stakes are so much higher.

Conclusion

The challenge for American friends of Pakistan is to pursue policies that strengthen the country's civilian institutions while, at the same time, not

unduly threatening the prerogatives of the Army, working over time to rebalance relations between them while engaging closely with both. But such is the gap between military and civilian capacity that this is the work of decades. For the moment, Washington has a compelling interest in the sustained survival of a civilian government in Pakistan, a country that has been ruled by the military for roughly half its history. Policies that threaten a civilian government by crossing the Army's red lines do not contribute to that end.

America needs to be a better ally of Pakistan's moderate majority of citizens who oppose Taliban or military rule but nonetheless view the United States as an enemy, not an advocate, of liberal values in their country. In the past, the United States has supported military dictatorship in Pakistan: Washington's embrace of General Zia-ul Haq and partnership with him to support the Afghan *Mujahideen* fighting Soviet forces in the 1980s contributed to the rise of a strand of militant Islam that had previously been quiescent in Pakistan. Washington's support for General Musharraf, not only immediately following 9/11 but well after his sell-by date, created political space for opponents of dictatorship to define their dissent with reference to an ideology of anti-American, Islamist zealotry.

Pakistanis lament that their leaders rule only with the support of "the Army, Allah, and America." The US is not responsible for Pakistan's pathologies, many rooted in its violent birth as a nation and the subsequent choices of its political and military elites. But no US policy to stabilise Pakistan can succeed as long as most Pakistanis view Washington as a fickle, disreputable partner that seeks a transactional relationship with their leaders and then abandons their country when narrow objectives sought by Washington are secured.

Pakistan is a paranoid country that conceives of its national security in ways that are destructive to its neighbours, to us, and to itself. The United States should deal with Pakistan as it is, but we should not accept that it has to remain that way. America must sustain a long-term commitment to Pakistan and its region across the political-economic-military spectrum to change some of the intractable ground realities

that lead Pakistani leaders to define their interests in ways inimical to those of its neighbours and the wider world. The goal of such a strategy would be to gradually reorient Pakistan's definition of national security away from its current manifestation – supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan and terrorism against India, for instance – policies destructive to its neighbours, to the West, and to itself. This would be a slow, systematic, and evolutionary – not revolutionary – approach to changing the strategic context of Pakistani decision-making and so nudging Pakistan in a direction more favourable to the interests of the United States – and the welfare of the Pakistani people.

The most important element of such a strategy is for the United States and its Western and local allies to win the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan. Construction of an Afghan state that can defeat the insurgency and govern its people legitimately, in conjunction with sustained investment in Pakistani civic institutions and a reorientation of the Pakistani military's worldview, would, in the long-term, create a dynamic in South Asia in which states like India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan define their security in ways that are positive, rather than zero-sum. It would demonstrate to the *jihadists* intent on undermining civilian governments in Delhi, Islamabad, and Kabul that they have no hope, separating their violent aspirations from those of citizenries that aspire instead to modernity, security, and opportunity.

Proponents of drawing down in Afghanistan on the grounds that Pakistan is the more important strategic prize have it only half right: if Pakistan is the strategic prize, it should be unthinkable not to press for victory in Afghanistan given the spillover effects of a Western defeat there. All of Pakistan's pathologies – from terrorist sanctuary in ungoverned spaces, to radicalised public opinion that creates an enabling environment for violent extremism, to lack of economic opportunity that incentivises militancy, to the (in)security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, to the military's oversized role in political life in ways that stunt the development of civilian institutions – would intensify should Afghanistan succumb to the Taliban as the West withdraws.

These dynamics, in turn, will destabilise India in ways that could torpedo the country's rise to world power – and the strategic dividends that would accrue from India's success. India cannot rise to be an Asian balancer, global security provider, and engine of the world economy if it is mired in interminable proxy conflict with terrorists emanating from a weak or collapsing state armed with nuclear weapons on its border. That is why the normalisation of Indo-Pakistani relations must remain a strategic objective of New Delhi – and why India must do all in its power, including through unilateral trade, exchange, and other initiatives, to create incentives for a new balance of forces to emerge in Pakistan committed to living in peace and prosperity with their giant neighbour.

Notes

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5. See for instance Owen Fay, "Pakistanis See US As Biggest Threat: Al Jazeera Exclusive Gallup Pakistan Poll," *Al Jazeera*, August 13, 2009, <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2009/08/20098910857878664.html>.

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Theme Address	Dr. Kim Holmes, Vice President for Foreign and Defence Policy Studies, the Heritage Foundation
Inaugural Address	Mr. Shiv Shankar Menon, National Security Adviser, Government of India
Dinner Table Address	Mr. Brajesh Mishra, former National Security Adviser, Government of India, and Trustee, ORF

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