



U.S. POLICY TOWARD PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN UNDER THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION

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The study examines how the United States has come to deal with Afghanistan-Pakistan, a key foreign policy challenge for the Obama administration. It focuses on President Obama's new policy known as AfPak, the Kerry-Lugar Act, and other U.S. initiatives adopted since 2009 in order to help stabilize the situation in South Asia. The author concludes by arguing that the new initiatives will not substantially improve the situation in Pakistan, because they fail to address the country's core problem: lack of strong democratic institutions.

Pakistan has many internal weaknesses undermining its ability to operate as a normal state. The global jihadi network seems to operate from the Pakistani city of Quetta, and increasing portions of Pakistani territory are coming under the control of militants, both Islamist and tribal in nature. As a result, Pakistan has been experiencing a wave of terrorist attacks in its urban center, unparalleled in Pakistani history.¹ This has had direct bearing on the Obama administration's foreign policy, which, like previous administrations, recognizes Pakistan's importance for maintaining international peace and security.²

Since 2009, a litany of reports and studies have called for greater focus to be placed on Pakistan, seeing it as more important than Afghanistan and arguing that only by solving the problem in Pakistan could stability develop in Afghanistan, since Pakistan has served as a safe-haven to Afghan militants and al-Qa'ida activists.³ There has thus been a greater international commitment to the area with more troops sent to Afghanistan⁴ and improved cross-border cooperation,⁵ as seen with Operation *Panchai Palang* (Panther's Claw) in Helmand Province. The operation saw U.S., British, and Afghan forces taking action against the

Taliban while the Pakistani military sought to prevent insurgents from escaping across the border.⁶

The focus of this article is the political challenge faced by the United States in respect to Pakistan. The author argues that the American approach to Pakistan is fundamentally erroneous, as lack of political stability in Pakistan severely undermines the effectiveness of the military campaign against the Islamists and jihadists that operate within Pakistan and along the Afghan-Pakistan border. Pakistani terror groups may differ in their interests, base of operations, and so on, but they are united in their hatred of the United States and the Pakistani government, which they view as an "American puppet."⁷

A key challenge for American decisionmakers concerning Pakistan is the topsy-turvy nature of Pakistani politics, where the police and the courts operate as tools of politicians' ambitions while the state system remains praetorian in nature, leading to chronic instability.⁸ Thus, although the "kill-ratio" (the number of insurgents killed on a daily and weekly basis) is rising, as drone attacks become more effective,⁹ what the international community fails to understand is that the more money it invests in Pakistan and

Afghanistan, the more unstable these countries become.¹⁰ There is evidence that foreign aid ends up being used for unnecessary projects and programs,¹¹ with the money rarely reaching the people and areas that need it the most. British journalist Jason Burke recounts that in the late 1990s, one could travel in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and the Khyber Agency, something that is no longer possible without an armed escort. Apparent to Burke as he travelled throughout the area, were the dire conditions of the inhabitants, treated by Islamabad as second-class citizens in Burke's eyes.¹²

Thus, in many ways a key challenge in removing the Pakistani Taliban threat from FATA and other areas along the Pakistan-Afghan border is to make the indigenous community feel that it is part of Pakistan; yet considering that the local population tends to identify with its ethnic, Pashtun background, this is not an easy task. Second, experience has shown that at times of political upheaval and instability, the Pakistani army tends to step in and impose order, which raises the specter of a fourth military intervention (the three previous military rulers were: Ayub Khan, Zia-ul-Haq, and Pervez Musharraf). Another military takeover would deal a deadly blow to any democratic hopes that Pakistan might have, not to mention furnish Islamists with more ammunition in pointing to Western hypocrisy, as seen with Pervez Musharraf.¹³ The Taliban knows that the international community would not stay in the region indefinitely--made clear by President Obama in his West Point speech on December 1, 2009.¹⁴ The Afghan Taliban can therefore afford to wait.¹⁵ Thus, sending more troops and money to South Asia without dealing with the political situation in Pakistan means wasting valuable resources at a time when the United States and the international community can ill-afford such profligacy.

THE PRAETORIAN NATURE OF AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

During the 1960s, the prominent Harvard political scientist Professor Samuel P. Huntington argued that newly formed states are more likely to develop a praetorian style of governance than established democracies.¹⁶ Amos Perlmutter's study, which built on Huntington's earlier work, identified the social and political conditions that lead to the emergence of a praetorian state. Perlmutter argued that praetorianism requires low social cohesion within the state in question. This condition stems from a situation whereby personal desires and group aims differ when it comes to management of the society and development. What exacerbates the situation is lack of state institutions or weaknesses within the state institutions that are supposed to promote cohesion.

Second, the state in question must have fratricidal classes, which refers to the gap between the classes. This is normally an upper and lower class, which adds to the fragmentation that exists in the society, as the upper class is composed of traditionalists and modernists, while the lower class focuses on survival.

The third social condition refers to lack of a middle class. This does not mean that there is no middle class, but what there is of the middle class is either too small to effect change or too weak. As Perlmutter states, "The middle classes in most praetorian states are small, weak, ineffective, divided, and politically impotent."¹⁷

The final social condition identified by Perlmutter as being important to the development of praetorianism refers to recruitment and the mobilization of resources: a government in a praetorian state lacks widespread support and is reliant on a few small groups for support.¹⁸ This is why a praetorian state needs to attract people to its cause, and it does so

by allowing them to use certain resources or to exploit positions in society. Thus, for example, a praetorian state allows individuals to control valuable resources.¹⁹ The state also follows the common pattern of higher modernization at the center with much less on the periphery, leading to tensions between these two zones.

Perlmutter identifies a number of political conditions that assist in the development of a praetorian state. These include lack of institutionalism, which ensures that the state has weak and ineffective political parties; a second feature is continuous tensions between the periphery and the center.²⁰ During the Partition of India, the Hindu-led Congress Party had more experience in politics, while the All-India Muslim League was organized very much around a strong, quasi-authoritarian system led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Thus, with Jinnah's death, the league had no one of his caliber to lead it, causing fragmentation, wrangling, and divisions.²¹ This due to the fact that during the pre-independence period, the league had no real base. Mainly, this was because it was very much a product of the United Provinces, which meant that in 1947, it was a party without a base, as the United Provinces remained in India. Finally, India unlike Pakistan had benefited from the state mechanism that the British had created. It was in India that most of the infrastructure was located, whether it was in terms of political machinery or economic conditions. In 1947, Pakistan had to start with very little: no real infrastructure, no wealth, and not much experience in the realm of public administration. These conditions have allowed the military to assume greater control, because it is generally the only Pakistani institution that is reasonably united--not beset by petty factionalism--and able to operate in difficult situations.²²

It is clear that Pakistan is deeply imbued with praetorian characteristics, whether on the social or political level. In

Pakistan, the army wields tremendous power and influence and has direct say in government policies and the management of society, as seen with the way Zia-ul-Haq allowed groups such as Jama'at-e-Islami (JI) to penetrate every facet of Pakistani society, especially the military and later on the Afghan refugee camps. Pakistan lacks social cohesion in that there are tensions between the different provinces and ethnic groups that inhabit the country. All of these factors, coupled with ethnic and social tensions precipitate the development of a quasi-praetorian state system, which fundamentally aims to prevent the growth of a democratic system.

THE AFPAK STRATEGY

The Obama administration's approach to the troubles in Pakistan centers on its "AfPak" Strategy, which recognizes that in order to resolve the problem in one country (Afghanistan or Pakistan), one needs to address what is occurring in the other. Thus, when President Obama announced the adoption of the new policy--AfPak--on March 27, 2009, it subscribed to the view that one could not solve the problems of Afghanistan without addressing what was occurring across the Durand Line. President-elect Obama declared in December 2008:

"...we need a strategic partnership with all the parties in the region--Pakistan and India and the Afghan government--to stamp out the kind of militant, violent, terrorist extremists that have set up base camps and that are operating in ways that threaten the security of everybody in the international community. And, as I've said before, we can't continue to look at Afghanistan in isolation."²³

AfPak emphasizes a substantive change in U.S.-Pakistani relations and is indicative of U.S. impatience with Pakistan's failure to deal with extremism and terrorism.²⁴

President Obama has officially moved away from former President George W. Bush's position of refusing to rebuke Pakistan publically for failing to deal with Islamist militancy in all of its guises.²⁵ The change of policy arises from a perception among members of the Obama administration that rather than deal with extremism, Pakistan has allowed it to grow. The Obama administration has paid special attention to the Inter-Service Intelligence Directorate (ISI), as Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff declared in March 2009, "They [ISI] have been very attached to many of these extremist organizations, and it's my [Mullen's] belief that in the long run, they have got to completely cut ties with those in order to really move in the right direction."²⁶

AfPak's roots lie in the rising violence in southern Afghanistan, which is Taliban-based. Since 2007, Taliban forces have sought to recover ground lost following the American-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. In the south of the country, mainly the Helmand and Kandahar regions, Taliban fighters crossed into to Pakistan, where International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) or American forces could not pursue them. The city of Quetta, which arguably is the home of many leading Afghan Taliban members, is not very far from the Afghan-Pakistan border. Bruce Riedel, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute writes, "The Taliban apparatus in Pakistan's madrassas was not dismantled, and many Taliban officials continued to operate in Pakistani cities, particularly Quetta, the capital of Baluchistan. By 2004 Taliban officials were openly fund-raising again in Quetta."²⁷ Moreover, Mullah Omar comes from the Ghilzai tribe, which is located between Kabul and Kandahar.²⁸

At the heart of AfPak is the acknowledgment that the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan has become dangerous, for America and for the rest of the world, and that there is a need to take

action. The United States is thus determined to remain engaged in the area,²⁹ by adopting an activist campaign designed to prevent the return of the Taliban to power in Afghanistan, as the Taliban allows such groups as al-Qa'ida to operate without impunity.³⁰ AfPak therefore fits in well with General Stanley McChrystal's assessment of the situation in Afghanistan (which came after AfPak was announced), whereby the former commander of Special Operations in Iraq adopts a kinetic-oriented, information operation vis-à-vis Afghanistan.³¹ In other words, McChrystal accepts the principle of AfPak and has a plan to improve the situation in Afghanistan.

Second, AfPak identifies the actors involved in the conflict: the United States, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the international community. The enemies are al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and other radical organizations. The main goal of the strategy is not the long-term occupation of Afghanistan or direct control of the region, but the build-up of Afghanistan to the point where the government can maintain stability. This is for the sake of the Afghan and Pakistani people as well as for the security of the international community. In the words of President Obama:

For the American people, this border region [Afghan-Pakistan] has become the most dangerous place in the world.... For the Afghan people, a return to Taliban rule would condemn their country to brutal governance, international isolation, a paralyzed economy, and the denial of basic human rights to the Afghan people--especially women and girls. The return in force of al Qaeda terrorists who would accompany the core Taliban leadership would cast Afghanistan under the shadow of perpetual violence.³²

The terrorists within Pakistan's borders are not simply enemies of America or Afghanistan--they are a grave and urgent danger to the people of Pakistan. Al Qaeda and other violent extremists have killed several thousand Pakistanis since 9/11. They have killed many Pakistani soldiers and police. They assassinated Benazir Bhutto. They have blown up buildings, derailed foreign investment, and threatened the stability of the state. Make no mistake: al Qaeda and its extremist allies are a cancer that risks killing Pakistan from within.³³

In his statement announcing AfPak and again in his West Point speech (December 1, 2009), Barack Obama argued that greater political action was needed regarding Pakistan's terrorism problem. The Obama administration's position is that by improving the political situation--a codeword for democracy promotion--Pakistan could successfully deal with its internal and external terrorist problem (insurgents, Islamists, and the al-Qa'ida network). For Obama, the removal of Pervez Musharraf from the presidency has not meant an end to Pakistan's political problems, in that it allowed for the restoration of democracy, because the system still fails to address the country's needs and people's demands to a minimal level.³⁴

The final element appearing in AfPak is the role of the international community, which President Obama argues cannot abandon Afghanistan and the region, especially at time of such deep economic crisis.³⁵ The rationale behind the position is that first, President Obama is determined to end America's image as a unilateralist state. The notion is that by cooperating with other countries to improve the situation in Afghanistan, the United States has abandoned the Bush-Rumsfeld methodology. Second, there is also the

issue of cost sharing, in that the United States can no longer afford another costly war as in Iraq, which might be what Afghanistan becomes if the United States has to provide security while paying for reconstruction and development.

More specifically, AfPak focuses on improving intelligence sharing, enhancing military cooperation along the Afghan-Pakistan border, as well as addressing such issues as trade, energy, and economic development.³⁶ In addition to committing greater military resources, Washington has also expanded its non-military assistance, as seen with the large injection of development aid to Pakistan and specifically to the FATA.³⁷ This began with the reentry of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) into Pakistan in 2002.³⁸

The military side of AfPak is different for Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the case of Afghanistan, the focus is on strengthening the American and NATO presence, as well as engaging the Taliban on a multilateral level--NATO and the Afghan army support. For this reason, General McChrystal, the head of ISAF has adopted an active policy of seeking to control territory in order to provide peace and security for the indigenous population so that they are able to develop sustainable communities, making them less likely to join or support the Taliban. Thus, the military's goal is to drive out the Taliban and its interference with the reconstruction process. The United States has adapted to the new situation in southern Afghanistan and in Pakistan's tribal belt by placing greater emphasis on special operations, whether through U.S. Special Forces or drone attacks. U.S. Special Operations Command ensures that U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan are deployed on a 12-month rotation--six months in the war zone and six months at home. The units are expected to monitor what takes place in their area of operations, and when they redeploy they are sent back to their area, allowing them to develop personal

relations with the local community.³⁹ Tied to this campaign is greater cooperation from the Pakistanis, with ISAF taking the position that without pressure from the other side of the border, the situation in Afghanistan will continue along the same lines.⁴⁰

On the non-military side of the “strategy,” there is a strong commitment to reconstruction and development. As James Dao recounts, in the Baraki Barak District, American soldiers are based “...living alongside its police officers and public officials, trying to win friends as it struggles to root out enemies.” During the day, the troops not only patrol the city but also engage with the community, whether it is in dialogue, by purchasing local products, or employing the locals in reconstruction projects.⁴¹ This means that on the Afghan side, the international forces not only seek to establish and ensure security but also undertake confidence-building measures, work on reconstruction, as well as develop and improve ties with the community. Thus, AfPak involves such policies as law and order (increasing the size of the Afghan police as well as training the Pakistani police in law and order procedures), trade development, education, and so on. This is closely linked with the bipartisan Kerry-Lugar Act, which saw the adoption of a policy of increasing American non-military contribution to Pakistan (there is less focus on Afghanistan because the country is already a large recipient of non-military aid as part of the Bonn Agreement, in which the United States is also a key player.⁴²).

THE KERRY-LUGAR ACT 2009

In May 2009, Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Richard Lugar (R-IN) introduced their Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act. The legislation, which began when Joe Biden was chairman of the Senate of Foreign Relations (then known as the Lugar-Biden Act), emphasized the

deteriorating situation in Pakistan and the deep commitment of the United States to the country. The legislation provides Pakistan with large sums of non-military financial aid to assist it in combating the rising tide of terrorism within its borders and outside of them.

The legislation recognizes and declares that the current state of affairs in Pakistan--the lack of security, democracy, and stability--allows militant organizations to use Pakistan as a launching pad for attacks against targets in Pakistan and across the globe.⁴³ The act, which Congress passed on October 7, 2009, provides financial assistance (around \$1.5 billion per annum until 2013) to Pakistan. The goals of the act are also for Pakistan to support and consolidate democracy and the rule of law in the country. Second, the act pledges to help Pakistan establish the conditions conducive for stability, with references made to economic security.⁴⁴ Third, the legislation seeks to provide Pakistan with the means to prevent and combat the usage of its territory for terrorist camps. This includes helping the Pakistanis develop the tools for improving coordination and cooperation among the military, paramilitary, and police action against terrorists. That is, the act recognizes that each branch operates against terrorists in Pakistan, but far too often, there is a failure to communicate between the branches, which undermine the counterterrorism efforts. Finally, the Kerry-Lugar Act hopes to improve relations between Pakistan and the United States, especially as Kerry and Lugar noted that the United States is not widely esteemed in Pakistan.⁴⁵ The act has received support from President Asif Ali Zardari, who called upon Congress to support the bill, because “President Obama understands that for Pakistan to defeat the extremists, it must be stable. For democracy to succeed, Pakistan must be economically viable. Assistance to Pakistan is not charity; rather, the creation of a politically stable and economically

viable Pakistan is in the long-term, [a] strategic interest of the United States."⁴⁶

Yet there are numerous problems with the Kerry-Lugar Act, the key being Pakistani opposition. Pakistanis see elements of the act as unacceptable U.S. interference in domestic Pakistani issues.⁴⁷ Further, the legislation is not groundbreaking; everything it seeks to do has already been tried in respect to Pakistan. In addition, although it allocates funds for anti-corruption purposes, it fails to recognize that this money often ends up in the hands of those engaged in the abuses, as the system does not take into consideration the nature of the Pakistani state, which is tribal and kinship-based. The concept of *biraderi* (extended family) means that one must contend with the idea of the extended family and the obligation that one has for one's extended family.⁴⁸ Thus, what in the West is understood as corruption or nepotism is in Pakistan, simply part of family life and obligations. In practical terms, *biraderi* means that if one is in a good position, this power must be used to assist family members and help them find employment.

FOREIGN MILITARY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Foreign military financing (FMF) has become an important tool for U.S. policymakers. FMFs are congressionally appropriated grants in which the recipient country is provided with funds to purchase American-made weapons, services, and training. In respect to Pakistan, Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gillani has noted the significance of FMF, as the Frontier Corps (FC) has had to face "terrorists" using old, unsophisticated guns.⁴⁹ The FC, a large paramilitary force of around 80,000 men entrusted with border security in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, has received U.S. assistance including financial support and training.⁵⁰ Overall, since 2001, Pakistan has benefited from an increased commitment by

Washington in terms of military equipment that it claims it needs to combat Islamist terrorism. Between 2001 and 2008, the United States has provided Pakistan with \$1.6 billion through the FMF program. Islamabad has used these funds to purchase American military equipment such as 5,600 military radio sets, six C-130E transport aircraft, 20 AH-1F Cobra attack helicopters, 26 Bell 412 transport helicopters, night-vision equipment, and protective vests.⁵¹ In their review of U.S. aid to Pakistan, Cohen and Chollet were critical of FMF, arguing that FMF "...is often justified to Congress as playing a critical role in the war on terrorism, in reality the weapons systems are often prestige items to help Pakistan in the event of war with India."⁵² They add:

Looking at the total approved U.S. weapons sales, including weapons purchased without the benefit of direct U.S. assistance, Pakistan has spent \$8.4 billion between 2002 and 2006. Most of this has been spent on weapons such as F-16s and other aircraft, anti-ship Harpoon Block II missiles, and antimissile defense systems. Few of these weapons are likely to provide much help in rooting out al Qaeda or the Taliban.⁵³

Pakistan is continuously demanding sophisticated weapons from the United States, especially since the military's operation in the Swat Valley when the Pakistani Air Force executed more than 300 combat missions using F-16s. The air force has argued that it needs more advanced F-16s to counter the Taliban, as the newer planes carry better imagery facilities. Air Chief Marshall even admitted that the air force used Google Earth in order to learn the area.⁵⁴ However, what the country's military forces require are counter-insurgency equipment and more importantly a change in outlook.

That is, much of the Pakistani military outlook has remained directed at India and external threats instead of dealing with Pakistan's internal threats that stem from the presence of terrorist groups. Professor Bruce Hoffman recounts a discussion in Islamabad in August 2008, when a diplomat told him that the Pakistani military had no knowledge of a counter-terrorism operation.⁵⁵ Professor C. Christine Fair of Georgetown University, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* in June 2009, noted:

...the army has resisted developing a counter-insurgency doctrine. It prefers to plan and train for conventional battles and views its struggle against insurgents as a "low-intensity" conventional conflict. Washington has been slow to understand that this is not a quibble over semantics but a serious difference in how the army intends to contend with the threat. The Pakistani army believes India is its principal nemesis, not the insurgents who have occupied the Swat valley and destabilized Pakistan and the region.⁵⁶

CONCLUSION

History has shown that in regards to South Asia and the Afghan-Pakistan tribal belt in particular, outsiders cannot impose solutions. The inhabitants of the region proudly recall that the only foreigners that have come close to defeating them were Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan.⁵⁷ Thus, it is highly unlikely that the United States and the international community can solve the problems of Pakistan and Afghanistan. In an interview, a tribal elder in Kunduz, Northern Afghanistan noted, "For 30 years we lived under the rule of war. Only in the last six years have we had some peace. The solution is not to send foreigners--the more foreign troops there

are, the more resistance they create. The Afghan army and police should secure the villages."⁵⁸ The locals join the Afghan or the Pakistani Taliban either because they are drawn to the ideology of the Taliban, due to tribal or filial ties, or they are coerced.⁵⁹ Increasing corruption and criminality has led to growing support for the Taliban, as local Afghans view their own government and security services with nothing but contempt. A classic example was seen in the Wardak Province of Afghanistan, when Taliban forces captured a group who had kidnapped the son of a wealthy merchant. The kidnappers' bodies were found hanging in Maiden Shah, the province's capital with a note: "The same fate awaits others who choose to kidnap for a living." The merchant allegedly provided them with a gift of \$200,000 for freeing his son. In the words of Karimullah, a local shop owner, this kind of policing role explains why Afghans help the Taliban:

It proves the Taliban have no problem with ordinary Afghans. They have a problem with those Afghans who work in high government positions who run crime in this city.... Of course I help them. They never pressure us to support them. They come around once a month and ask for help. We give them charity. People here prefer the Taliban to the government and the kidnappers. They are the ones who will bring security.⁶⁰

While AfPak has attempted to present "new thinking" regarding the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan, it has not brought any substantive change in strategy, which remains: an increased presence of foreign troops to ensure the security of the Afghan people until the Afghan National Army (ANA) is ready to assume the responsibility. The only revision has been to upgrade the projected

size of the Afghan army from a 100,000 to approximately 300,000.⁶¹ The problem with this is that the ANA is far from a well-functioning military force, as its members are part of different ethnic and religious groups that often resent one another. Moreover, it takes more than a few weeks or months to train a soldier. The costs to train and equip foreign troops are also extremely high. In comparison, Afghan soldiers are rushed through the training process. This is the fourth attempt in Afghanistan's history to establish a national Afghan army.⁶² The issue though is that recruitment is low, due in part to threats from the Taliban and other insurgents, ethnic differences (trained Tajiks outnumber Pashtuns 41 to 30 percent),⁶³ and low wages (\$180 a month paid to an Afghan soldier versus \$250 to \$300 month insurgents reportedly receive from the Taliban.)⁶⁴

Second, developing ties with the local Afghan community helps make clear that the United States wants to promote development and reconstruction. To further familiarity with the local population, the U.S. military returns troops to the areas that they operated in previously when they are rotated back into action. The rebuilding of Afghanistan is a huge undertaking, which requires a long-term commitment of years if not decades. For this reason, there has been apprehension over President Obama's West Point speech.⁶⁵ Moreover, although U.S. forces generally behave well, there is a culture of abuse and impunity in both Afghanistan and Pakistan, where men of rank abuse their positions. Thus while Afghans and Pakistanis hear about the American commitment to their respective countries, they rarely enjoy the benefits, which ironically makes them more hostile towards the United States, because they maintain that the United States is in fact fuelling the corruption and lawlessness by handing money to those in power. The Petraeus-McChrystal strategy of providing security to the local population, though

laudable is therefore superfluous, because the Taliban will have strong popular support. Simply put, the failure is not lack of security, but because the Taliban is favored as a military, anti-corruption, religious, and congenial force.

Third, the framework and the Kerry-Lugar Act fail to realize that the Afghan jihad has substantially undermined the traditional nature of Pashtun (along the Afghan and Pakistan border) society. It has led to the emergence of three types of *maliks* (heads of villages or village sections): the traditional "white beard" malik as well as two new types: The "self-made malik," is a man who returned from working in Iran or the Gulf states where he gained additional sophistication and often uses corruption to get his way. The third type is the young *mujahidin* (fighter) who has gained enhanced status by participating in the fight against foreigners.⁶⁶ Moreover, the Afghan jihad along with the Islamic reforms of Zia-ul-Haq, the use of the Kashmir by the ISI to train militants as well as retain pressure on India, and rising anti-American sentiments in Pakistan have ensured a solid base of support for anti-American activity in Afghanistan.

As President Obama declared in his West Point speech:

...I am convinced that our security is at stake in Afghanistan and Pakistan. This is the epicenter of violent extremism practiced by al Qaeda. It is from here that we were attacked on 9/11, and it is from here that new attacks are being plotted as I speak. This is no idle danger; no hypothetical threat. In the last few months alone, we have apprehended extremists within our borders who were sent here from the border region of Afghanistan and Pakistan to commit new acts of terror. And this danger will only grow if the region slides

backwards, and al Qaeda can operate with impunity. We must keep the pressure on al Qaeda, and to do that, we must increase the stability and capacity of our partners in the region.⁶⁷

The problem is that once again, the United States, despite its good intentions and regardless of all the options offered by the Obama administration or Congress, has failed to appreciate that foreigners cannot solve South Asia's problems. None of the options offered by the Obama administration or Congress can help improve the situation.

The situation within Afghanistan and Pakistan is very serious due to a combination of factors, including a decrepit political system; a social system that exacerbates local, regional, and state tensions; and leaders who define their own interests in ways that make progress impossible and stability unlikely. The agenda of leaders and groups is self-preservation rather than cooperation. This became blatantly obvious in the days leading up to the 2008 Afghan national elections, when incumbent President, Hamid Karzai invited the former mujahidin commander Abdul Rashid Dostum to join his administration.⁶⁸ Similarly, in Pakistan, President Zardari has made extensive compromises to ensure his survival, especially in light of growing scrutiny over his wealth.⁶⁹ Thus, until U.S. policymakers accept this precept that South Asian leaders are political survivors first and national politicians second, the United States and its allies will continue to risk the lives of brave women and men as well as pour money into the bottomless pit that is South Asia.

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NOTES

¹ The South Asian Terrorism Portal notes that between January and December 8, 2009, 2194 civilians died in Pakistan as the result of terrorist activities. "Casualties of Terrorist Violence in Pakistan," South Asian Terrorism Portal, <http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/database/casualties.htm>, (accessed December 11, 2009)

² See, for example, Obama's previous speeches on Pakistan since 2009. "Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," March 27, 2009, http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/remarks-by-the-president-on-a-new-strategy-for-afghanistan-and-pakistan/; "Remarks by the President in the Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan," December 1, 2009, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-way-forward-afghanistan-and-pakistan>.

³ "Combating Terrorism: The United States Lacks a Comprehensive Plan to Destroy the Terrorist Threat and Close Safe Haven in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Belt," United States Government Accountability Office, April 2008, (GAO-08-622), <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-08-622>; Report by Stanley M. McChrystal, "Commander's Initial Assessment," Report by Stanley M. McChrystal, August 30, 2009, http://media.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/Assessment_Redacted_092109.pdf?sid=ST2009092003140; "Ex-CIA Riedel to Review Pak-Afghan Policy," *Daily Times* (Pakistan), February 12, 2009, http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\02\12\story_12-2-2009_pg7_11.

⁴ In August 2009, New Zealand Prime Minister John Key announced that New Zealand would send a contingent of SAS troops to Afghanistan. Sharon Lundy, "NZ's SAS Troops Are Headed for War Zone," *The Canberra Times* (Australia), August 11, 2009, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/news/world/world/general/nzs-sas-troops-are-headed-for-war-zone/1592436.aspx>.

Following President Obama's announcement that a further 30,000 U.S. troops would be dispatched to Afghanistan, NATO members declared that would send an additional 7,000 troops. "U.S. Welcomes Europe's Offer of 7,000 Extra Troops to Join Afghan Surge," *Guardian Online*, December 4, 2009. [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/dec/04/us-welcomes-nato-troops-afghanistan>]

⁵ The Americans have created a special unit to assist in coordination. Yochi J. Dreazen, "U.S. Devotes Unit to Afghanistan War," *Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2009.

⁶ Michael Smith, Sarah Baxter and Jerome Starkey, "New British and US Strategy to Break the Taliban." *The Times* [UK], July 5, 2009. [<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article6638092.ece>]

⁷ Isaac Kfir, "A Review of AfPak and the Ongoing Challenge of Pakistan," *Pakistan Security Research Unit* (forthcoming).

⁸ A recent example is the attempt to bring former military dictator Pervez Musharraf to trial for his detention of judges in 2007. See "Musharraf Faces Arrest on Return to Pakistan," *Dawn.com*, August 11, 2009, <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/04-police-register-case-against-musharraf-qs-09>.

⁹ One assumes that the high rate of successful attacks stems from better information, which comes from a desire by local leaders to "take out" potential competitors. For example, in July 2007

when Pakistani security forces killed Abdullah Mahsud, Nek Muhammad's successor, Qari Zainuddin, a local Taliban leader believed that the information came from Baitullah Mehsud. See Mukhtar A. Khan, "A Profile of the Late Qari Zainuddin Mahsud – Waziristan Militant and Opponent of Baitullah Mahsud," *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 7, No. 19 (July 2, 2009),

[http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews\[swords\]=8fd5893941d69d0be3f378576261ae3e&tx_ttnews\[any_of_the_words\]=Baitullah%20Mehsud&tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=35220&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=bd7cbf830e](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[swords]=8fd5893941d69d0be3f378576261ae3e&tx_ttnews[any_of_the_words]=Baitullah%20Mehsud&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=35220&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=bd7cbf830e).

¹⁰ See for example a study by Craig Cohen and Derek Chollet, whereby the two scholars note how little benefit the United States gained from supporting Pakistan between 2001 and 2006. Craig Cohen and Derek Chollet, "When \$10 Billion Is Not Enough: Rethinking U.S. Strategy Towards Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (Spring 2007), pp. 7-19; Anatol Lieven, "Afghanistan: An Unsuitable Candidate for State Building," *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (October 2007), pp. 483-89; Barnett R. Rubin, Amin Saikal, and Julian Lindley-French, "The Way Forward in Afghanistan: Three Views," *International Affairs*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (February-March 2009), pp. 83-96.

¹¹ A study by Azeem Ibrahim found that aid money goes to projects completely unrelated to do development. Ibrahim, a senior research scholar at the European Centre for Advanced Defence and Strategic Studies, found for example, that Pakistan had spent \$121 million on air defense radar, even though the terrorists have no air attack capability. Mark Macaskill, "US 'Aids Pakistani Corruption'," *The Times* (UK), August 9, 2009,

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/scotland/article6788782.ece>.

¹² Jason Burke, "The Taliban Will Survive Baitullah Mehsud," *The Guardian*, August 7, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/aug/07/taliban-pakistan-baitullah-mehsud>; Declan Walsh, "Profile: Baitullah Mehsud," *The Guardian Online*, August 7, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/aug/07/baitullah-mehsud-profile>.

¹³ "Bin Laden Calls for War on Musharraf," *CBS News*, September 20, 2007, <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2007/09/20/terror/main3280501.shtml>.

¹⁴ "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan."

¹⁵ General Sir David Richards, commander of the British forces in Afghanistan, stated that Britain would remain committed to Afghanistan for another four decades, but such a commitment was highly unlikely especially if it would involve a high casualty rate as the British experienced in the month of July 2009. On the 40-year commitment, see Michael Evans, "General Sir David Richards: Afghanistan Will Take 40 Years," *The Times* (UK), August 8, 2009, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article6788043.ece>.

¹⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 196.

¹⁷ Amos Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army: Toward a Taxonomy of Civil-Military Relations in Developing Polities," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (April 1969), p. 387.

¹⁸ Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army," pp. 385-88.

¹⁹ Developed from Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

²⁰ Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army," p. 389.

²¹ This was not the case with the Congress Party, which had plenty of capable leaders.

²² Perlmutter, "The Praetorian State and the Praetorian Army," pp. 385-390.

²³ "Meet the Press," December 8, 2008, transcript at <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28097635>.

²⁴ A distinction is made in that extremism may refer to inflammatory speeches, the role of *madrasas* (religious schools), and the power of organizations such as al-Rashid Trust. Terrorism refers to the more established and proscribed groups such as Lashkar-e-Toiba, Sipah-e-Mohammed Pakistan, and so on.

²⁵ "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan,"

²⁶ Quoted in Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt, "Afghan Strikes by Taliban Get Pakistan Help, U.S. Aides Say," *The New York Times*, March 26, 2009.

²⁷ Bruce Riedel, "Pakistan and Terror: The Eye of the Storm," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 618, No. 1 (2008), p. 38.

²⁸ Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "Understanding the Taliban and Insurgency in Afghanistan," *Orbis*, Vol. 51, No. 1 (Winter 2007), p. 74.

²⁹ "Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan."

³⁰ This is an argument promoted by Bruce Hoffman. See for example, Bruce Hoffman, "Why We Can't Leave," *The National Interest Online*, September 25, 2009, <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=22224>.

³¹ For the kinetic and information operations, see William M. Darley, "Clausewitz's Theory of War and Information Operations," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2006), pp. 73-79; McChrystal, "Commander's Initial Assessment."

³² “President Obama's Speech on Afghanistan and Pakistan,” *US News & World Report*, July 12, 2009, http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/2009/03/27/president-obamas-speech-on-afghanistan-and-pakistan_print.htm.

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³⁴ See for example, *A More Secure World: Our Shared Responsibility: Report of the Secretary-General's High Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change* (New York: United Nations, 2004); “The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy,” General Assembly Resolution 62/272, September 15, 2008.

³⁵ “President Obama's Speech on Afghanistan and Pakistan.”

³⁶ General James Jones, “President Obama's Afghanistan-Pakistan (AFPAK) Strategy,” FPC Briefing, Foreign Press Center, Washington DC, March 27, 2009, <http://fpc.state.gov/120965.htm>.

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³⁸ C. Christine Fair and Peter Chalk, “United States Internal Security Assistance to Pakistan,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (September 2006), p. 339.

³⁹ Max Boot, “General McChrystal's New Way of War,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 18, 2009; Yochi J. Dreazen, “U.S. Devotes Unit to Afghanistan War,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2009.

⁴⁰ Aryn Baker, “TIME's Interview with General Stanley McChrystal,” *TIME Magazine*, July 8, 2009,

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⁴¹ James Dao, “Neighbors by Day, Soldiers by Night in Afghanistan,” *The New York Times*, August 4, 2009.

⁴² Barnett R. Rubin and Humayun Hamidzada, “From Bonn to London: Governance Challenges and the Future of Statebuilding in Afghanistan,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (January 2007), pp. 8-25; K. R. Singh, “Post-War Afghanistan: Reconstructing a Failed State,” *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (2004), pp. 546-60.

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⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Asif Ali Zardari, “Partnering with Pakistan,” *The Washington Post*, January 28, 2009.

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⁴⁹ “America Wants War: A Conversation with Yousaf Raza Gillani,” Council on Foreign Relations transcript, July 29, 2008.

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⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Eric Schmitt, “Pakistan Injects Precision into Air War on Taliban,” *The New York Times*, July 30, 2009.

⁵⁵ Bruce Hoffman, "A Counterterrorism Strategy for the Obama Administration," p. 366.

⁵⁶ C. Christine Fair, "Policing Pakistan," *Wall Street Journal*, June 30, 2009.

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