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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE / COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES
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MASTER OF DEFENCE STUDIES

PAK-AFGHAN TRIBAL BELT IN THE EYE OF THE STORM

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ABSTRACT

Since the start of Global War on Terror, Pakistan and her tribal areas have become the focus of the world attention. The Pak –Afghan tribal belt is considered to be a safe heaven for Al Qaida, Taliban and many other terrorist organizations of the world. After September 11, 2001, Afghanistan once again has become a battle ground for the key regional and international players of the world. Pakistan has emerged out as a key ally of the United States (US) and NATO forces in the ongoing war against terror. US and NATO forces despite best efforts have not been able to control the insurgency in Afghanistan. Tribal areas of Pakistan are also on fire because of the counterinsurgency operations of Pakistan Army and her Para Military forces. As a backlash terrorists have waged an unprecedented wave of terror and suicide bombing in all major cities of Pakistan. A strategic partnership between US, her allies and Pakistan is vital for the success of this war and bringing peace and stability in the region, but despite all efforts an air of mistrust and suspicion prevails on both sides.

During the course of this study an effort will be made to characterize the nature of challenges prevailing in the tribal areas of Pakistan to include the genesis and rise of Taliban in the area, the dynamics of the tribal society, and the effects of wrong policies adopted by US, her allies and Pakistan over the years. An analysis of all these factors will also be done from a regional perspective to highlight the weaknesses present in the current adopted policies of all these key players.

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INTRODUCTION

Terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 (9/11), initiated another chapter in the history of warfare, known as the “War against Terror”. The ferocity of these attacks and resultant new and aggressive foreign policy of United States (US) gave the nations of the world a limited choice, “stand with us against terrorism and deny safe heaven to terrorists, or face the certain prospect of destruction and death.”¹ Or as President George W Bush’s stated more explicitly, “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”² This ultimatum / threat forced Pakistan to join US in the war against terror, rather than facing the brunt of war or economic sanctions / blockades. Although none of the 9/11 terrorists belonged to Pakistan, their linkage with Al Qaida, Afghanistan, and frequent movement in or through Pakistan, immediately focused world’s attention on Pakistan and her primitive tribal belt.

Afghanistan once again became a battle ground for the global and regional powers of the world, the title of the story was different from the past, but the actors remained the same. Friends of yesterday became foes of today, the terrain, the environment, the means to fight and the suffering however was no different. Whether it’s the demarcation of Durand Line (border between Pakistan and Afghanistan), the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, US led and supported mujahidin “jihad” (Islamic war), role of CIA, Inter Services Intelligence Agency of Pakistan (ISI) or Saudi funded madrassa culture or the wrong policies of US, Pakistan and the rest of the world - all are to be blamed for the mess created in this region.

Pakistan has emerged as a key ally in the war against terrorists, Al Qaida and Taliban. Although the crises that this region faces today has partly been because of the neglect and wrong policies adopted by the countries top hierarchy, both political as well as military, it is Pakistan that has suffered the most (other than Afghanistan) in the

¹ Mary Anne Weaver, *Pakistan: In the shadow of jihad and Afghanistan*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 4

² Pakistan Defense Forum, “US War on terror: Implications for Pakistan and Policy Options for Obama Administration” <http://www.defence.pk/forums/strategic-geopolitical-issues/29108-us-war-terror-implications-pakistan-policy-options-obama-administrati.html>; Internet; accessed 30 march 2010.

current war against terror. Despite the enormous efforts put in by Pakistan, and the huge sacrifices given in terms of both civilian as well as military casualties, it is highly criticized by US and the West for not doing enough. According to a latest report, Pakistan witnessed 2,148 terrorist attacks (till 2009) in which more than 7,997 people (civilians) lost their lives and more than 9,670 were injured. On the military side it has lost about 3,000 of her soldiers in the present global war on terrorism (GWOT) out of the 150,000 currently employed in the rugged Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and parts of Swat Valley.³ Despite establishing 1500 check posts along its western borders with Afghanistan, to control cross border movement and rendering so many sacrifices, the trust deficit between Pakistan and her allies has not been bridged. It is also a hard fact that Pakistan's support is vital for US and her allies to win this war, not only because of the ongoing military operations and efforts by Pakistan government and military to control and curb terrorism on their side of the border, but also because 75% of the crucial logistic support / supplies of the US and NATO forces pass through Pakistan to Afghanistan.⁴ It is also worth mentioning that Pakistan is the only country in the World which has contributed the most in capture and elimination of Al Qaida operatives from this region, by arresting 700 Al Qaeda members since 9/11.⁵

What needs to be understood is that the dynamics of this war are much more serious and grave for Pakistan than any other country of the world. Firstly, the war is being fought on Pakistan's own territory and not on foreign ground, as is the case with US / NATO forces. Secondly no one else but its own people are being effected the most by it, whether it is in terms of civilian casualties, internal displacement because of military operations, or adverse affects on economy, law and order and internal peace / stability in the country. Pakistan is fighting a war for her survival as no one else in the world is doing. Although the resources are meagre, the economic situation is bad, the public opinion is negative, and the US and West are unhappy - the reality on ground is

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Daniel Markey, *Terrorism and Indo-Pakistani Escalation*, Contingency Planning (Council on Foreign Relations Memorandum No. 6), January 2010.

⁵ *Ibid.*

that over the years Pakistan's military operations in her tribal belt and success against Al Qaida operatives despite all odds, has proved that the resolve of the country to curb this menace is much greater than what is perceived by the West.

Tribal areas along Pak-Afghan border have assumed great significance during the present crisis as they have become safe havens for Al Qaida and other terrorist organizations operating in the region.⁶ Not only are these areas rugged, mountainous and most inhospitable, they are also governed by a different kind of a society with its own set of traditions and culture. Understanding the norms, customs and lifestyle of the people of this region is the key through which the complex issues associated with the dynamics of the tribal society can be understood. The actions of US and West are governed by their own interpretation of the Afghan or tribal culture and perception and reading of Islam. It needs to be understood that there is a huge array of differences in the thinking and perception of the eastern / Muslim societies and the US / West. These differences are not primarily in terms of seeing / understanding things but also in terms of religious beliefs, life style, practices and socio-economic make up of societies. The pre dominance of religion in all aspects of life coupled with tribal traditions and societal norms has made the culture of this region very complex and difficult to understand. Lack of basic amenities of life, economic opportunities and illiteracy has made people prone to exploitation in the name of religion, monetary benefits or tribal animosity. All these factors have been optimally utilized and exploited by miscreants, terrorists and other religious and fanatic organizations in the region.

In order to break the hegemony of the terrorist elements from the tribal areas along Pak-Afghan border, US must build a very strong relationship with Pakistan based on mutual trust and confidence. For if the thorns present in the relationship are not removed, they may only result in piecemeal cooperation between the two countries and prove to be costly and counter productive for both sides especially American interests in the region. US should also remember that such relationship and cooperation cannot be forcefully achieved and commanded by coercive threats or unilateral military actions; it has to be built on mutual agreement and total trust. For such a strategy if adopted, would

⁶ Khalid Aziz, "Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan," *Criterion Quarterly*, no. 2 (April-June 2007); 16

only strengthen anti US elements present in the Pakistani society (especially the tribal belt), who consider US as an unreliable and egocentric ally, who has always left Pakistan in times of crisis.⁷

This research aims to characterize the nature of the challenges in Pakistan's tribal areas, explain the rise and genesis of Taliban, and highlight the follies committed by US, its allies and Pakistan over the years. It would also analyze these issues from a regional perspective from the point of view of bringing stability and peace in this region.

The paper will first give a historical overview of the tribal areas of Pakistan and explain the tribal culture and dynamics associated with it. It will then give details about the legacy of the Colonial era and problems created by it and then touch upon the genesis of Taliban and other elements / groups present in this area including Al Qaida and their linkage with people of FATA. An effort will then be made to highlight some weaknesses in the policies of US and her allies in addressing and understanding issues related to tribal dynamics in order to bring stability to this region. The paper will also underline the reasons because of which Pakistan government and its military over the years have not been able to resolve the issue in a deliberate and diligent manner. Lastly an analysis of all these issues will be carried out from a regional perspective in order to highlight the weak links and short comings present in the current policies of the players involved in this conflict.

⁷ Danial Markey, *Securing Pakistan's Tribal Belt*, Special report prepared for Council on Foreign Relations, (Center for Prevention Action report no. 36), 2.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF TRIBAL AREAS OF PAKISTAN / AFGHANISTAN AND THE LEGACY OF THE COLONIAL ERA

You go up in there, and you see these hills and the ravines and the valleys, and there is really no place I'm aware of on the face of the earth that's quite as geographically, topographically difficult to operate in from a military point of view.⁸

-Selig Harrison

Pashtuns and the Tribal Belt

The tribal belt between Pakistan and Afghanistan has traditionally been the home of Pashtuns. It is a highly rugged and mountainous area with harsh environment and scarce resources which has been in and out of world's focus and attention since the last 30 years. This area is inhabited by Pakhtuns (also known as Pashtuns or Pathans), an ethno-linguistic group, characterized by the use of a common language, Pashto. They have preferred to be guided by an ancient pre-Islamic indigenous code of behavior, honor and culture known as Pakhtunwali. According to legend, they embraced Islam following conversion to that religion by Qais Abdur Rashid who is said to have met the Prophet Mohammad (May peace be upon him) in Mecca.⁹ With the arrival of Islam, some aspects of Islamic law, known as Shariah, were added to the Pakhtunwali code. It is this mix of Islamic and Pakhtunwali codes that has been governing the way of life of the people of this region for centuries. Traditionally the people of this area have always resisted foreign rule / aggression and have never accepted the central authority of any government that has tried to operate from a distance. They have always believed in their age old tradition of being led by their own tribal elders / leaders and have lived according to their own laws and traditions.¹⁰ The religion they follow fuses Islam with Sufi tradition. The latter believes in music, poetry and dance to celebrate great affection for the deity (Allah) and

⁸ Jackie Northam, "Pakistan's Tribal Areas Provide Haven For Militants", *National Public Radio*; available from <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=101880188>; Internet accessed 20 march 2010.

⁹ Shahid Javed Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan Tribal Belts," *Criterion Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (October-December 2008); p 17.

¹⁰ Shuja Nawaz, "FATA – A Most Dangerous Place" *CSIS CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES*, <http://www.shujanawaz.com/pdf/FATA%20-%20A%20Most%20Dangerous%20Place.pdf>; Internet; Accessed 10 March 2010.

His messenger (the Prophet Mohammad). The Pakhtuns have followed these traditions for centuries even once they were on the move.¹¹

The Pakhtun code has always assigned a strict defined space to the women folk. One of the many contradictions with which the Pakhtuns live, is that women are the custodian of Pakhtunwali – the ancient code of behavior. The women do not see their status as low; only different. They actively participate in the economic life of their community; they look after their herds of sheep and cows, grow crops, tend orchards and look after the family's meager assets. While they manage homes, men are free to roam the world. The traditional Pakhtun woman does not wear the veil and mixes easily with men. What the Taliban did to women was not a part of the Pakhtun code, it was influenced by the encroachment of Wahabism (an extreme or strict form of Islam imported from Saudi Arabia during the Soviet – Afghan war).¹²

The Colonial Era and Durand Line Saga

The British during their rule in India tried to bring the Pakhtuns under their administrative control, but the Afghan wars they waged in nineteenth century failed to achieve this objective. Finally in 1893 they persuaded Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, then King of Afghanistan, to accept a line they drew on the map known as Duran Line. The same line acts as a border between Pakistan and Afghanistan to date.¹³ The Durand Line is named after Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, foreign secretary of the British government of India. It was primarily an agreement of not to interfere beyond the line demarcated between Afghanistan and then colonial British India (now Pakistan) and thus the buffer zone between British India and Russia was created. This line brought the tribal lands (now a part of Pakistan) under British control.¹⁴ Although the line has acted as a border

¹¹Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan....., 24-25

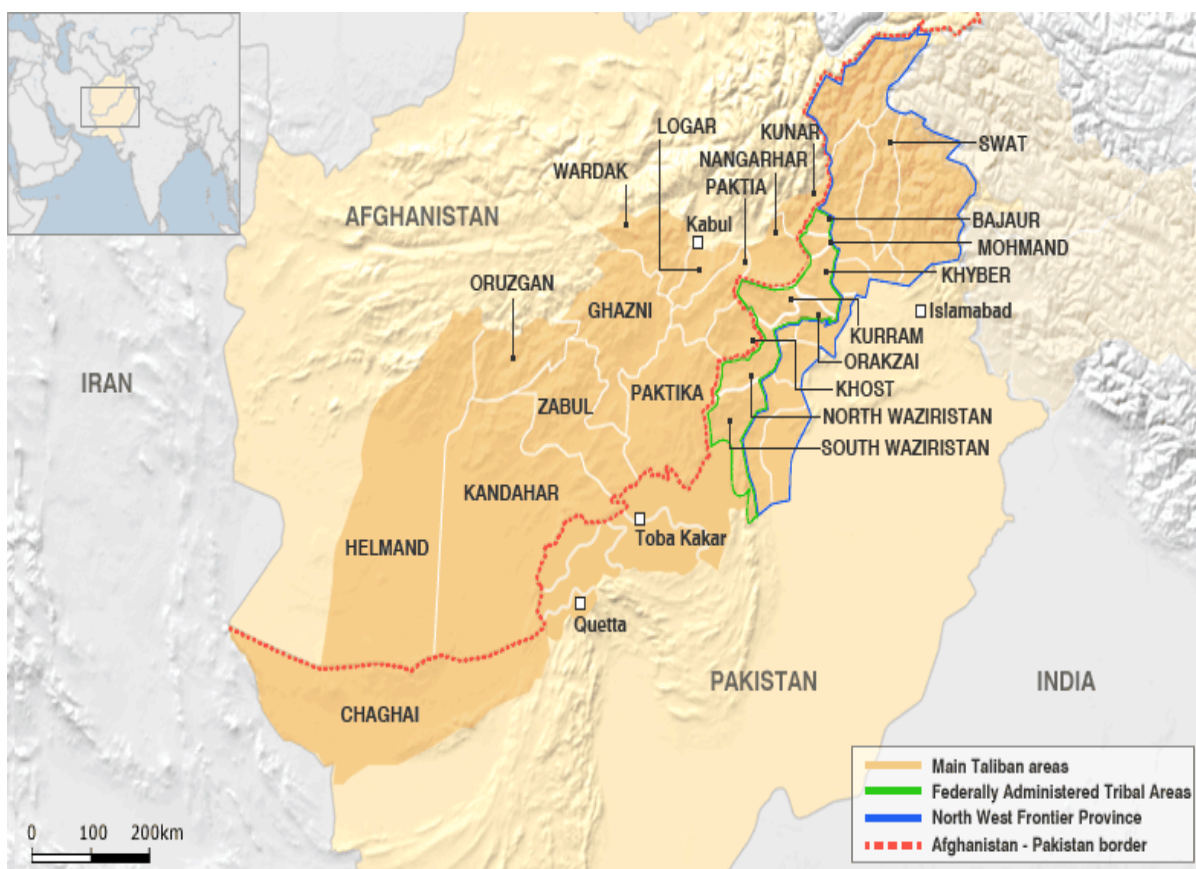
¹²Weaver, *Pakistan: In the shadow of jihad and Afghanistan.....*, 38

¹³Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....,20.

¹⁴Jayshree Bajoria "The Troubled Afghan-Pakistani Border," *Council on Foreign Relations ' Publication* (20 March 2009); available from http://www.cfr.org/publication/14905/troubled_afghanpakistani_border.html; Internet; accessed 15 march 2010.

between Pakistan and Afghanistan since then, it is unrecognized by Afghanistan.¹⁵ To most historians, the division itself is the root cause of many problems that both Pakistan, Afghanistan and now the rest of the world is facing. As per historian Varton Gregorian,

The Durand Line divided the allegiance of many tribes, without regard to the ethnography of the region. It demarcated a no-man's land which became a heaven for the tribal chieftains and sometimes even for entire clans. Moreover, though the agreement pushed the British forward line to modify the basic features of tribal life or to set up some kind of permanent tribal authority that might in turn have affected the position of tribes in Afghanistan.”¹⁶



Map 1.1- Durand Line between Pakistan and Afghanistan ¹⁷

¹⁵ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “Durand Line,” <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/174128/Durand-Line>; Internet accessed 15 march 2010.

¹⁶ Burki, “How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....”,20.

¹⁷ www.maps.com; Internet ; accessed 16 January 2010.

The tribes have never recognized the century-old frontier. Forty percent of Afghanistan's population (approximately 15 million) is made up of Pashtuns; in Pakistan, Pashtuns represent 15 to 20 percent (approximately 25 million) of the country's population.¹⁸ Ethnic Balochis also live on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistani border as well as in neighboring Iran. "People on both sides of the Durand line consider it a soft border," Husain Haqqani, Pakistan's ambassador to Washington, told CFR.org in 2007 (he was then the director of Boston University's Center for International Relations). He adds: "Pashtuns consider it their own land even though there is also a loyalty to the respective states along with a desire to freely move back and forth."¹⁹ Hence despite having Durand Line as a border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, tribes on both sides have had free access to move across the border. People do business, go to schools, do trade, travel freely and have homes on both sides of the border to this day. Being from the same tribes and having so many inter marriages and relationships across the border, restriction of movement across border has become their biggest sensitivity, to which no government in either Pakistan or Afghanistan has ever been able to do anything. There are about half a dozen major tribes in which Pakhtuns are divided. Most of these tribes have people living on both sides of the border, a brief summary of the two largest tribes is as under:-²⁰

Table 1.1

| Name of Tribe | Population | Living in Pakistan | Living in Afghanistan | Remarks |
|----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Durranis | 7 million | 2 million | 5 million | President Hamid Karzai's tribe. |
| Ghilzai | 6 million | 3 million | 3 million | Mullah Omer's tribe. |

¹⁸ Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....,19.

¹⁹ Bajoria "The Troubled Afghan-Pakistani Border, " Council on Foreign Relations Internet accessed 18 march 2010.

²⁰ Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....,18.

After establishment of Durand Line, the British divided the area (towards this side of border, which is now Pakistan) into two parts: the settled areas and the tribal areas. The settled areas were administered like other parts of the country by having district officers with full administrative, magisterial and financial powers and a proper legal and judicial system in place. Whereas the tribal areas were managed by tribal “Maliks” (leaders/elders of the clan / tribe by virtue of family status, wealth and power) who cannot be confused as “chiefs” as their powers were constraint by the presence of “Jirga”- a consultative body of elders, which made decisions and passed judgments to resolve issues concerning personal and community / tribe related problems and issues.²¹ Any serious digression was punished by the authorities; if punishment was meted out it was usually followed by cash compensation. Hence the British retained a loose control over these areas by the use of force through “levies”, local police, whose members were recruited from among the tribes. It was also a tradition that each show of authority by the state was followed by a monetary compensation.²²

Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan

At the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the founding father Mohammad Ali Jinnah, agreed to the demands of the Maliks of the tribal region, that the central government would not disturb the arrangement that the British had made with the tribes during their almost century long presence in the area.²³ Over the year’s difficult terrain, lack of education, and poor infrastructure have created a wedge between the tribal belt and the rest of the country. Its, approximately 27,220 square kilometers of land, which shares nearly three hundred miles of the total 1,640 miles of border with Afghanistan.²⁴ “It is the poorest, least developed part of Pakistan. Literacy is only 17 percent, compared to the national average of 40 percent; among women it is 3 percent, compared to the national

²¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

²² BBC News “Analysis: Pakistan’s tribal frontiers.” Friday, 14 December, 2001; available from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1711316.stm; Internet accessed 12 February 2010.

²³ Khalid Ahmed, “Terrorism in Tribal Area of Pakistan,” *Current Affairs Digest* (March 2009), p 41

²⁴ Markey, *Securing Pakistan’s Tribal Belt*..... 5.

average of 32 percent. Per capita income is roughly \$250, half the national average of \$500. Nearly 66 percent of households live beneath the poverty line. Only ten thousand workers now find employment in the FATA's industrial sector. The FATA's forbidding terrain further serves to isolate tribal communities from markets, health and education services, and many outside influences.”²⁵

Pakistan's tribal belt is governed by certain defined mechanisms of governance. The first is the FATA. It comprises of seven tribal agencies namely Bajour, Mohmand, Orakzai, Khyber, Kurram, North and South Waziristan and six Frontier Regions (FRs) namely Peshawar, Tank, Bannu, Kohat, Lakki and Dera Ismail Khan. The President of Pakistan directly administers FATA through the governor of NWFP and his appointed political agents (PAs). Although there is representation of FATA in Pakistan's National Assembly since the mid-1980s, the area is not governed by national legislation. The political parties are also not allowed to contest seats from here.²⁶ Some basic data of the on the seven tribal agencies of FATA is given in the table below:-

Table 1.2 Basic Data of Tribal Agencies of FATA.²⁷

| Data | Khyber | Mohmand | Bajour | Orakzai | Kurram | North Waziristan | South Waziristan | Total |
|-------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|------------------|------------------|---------|
| Established | 1879 | 1951 | 1973 | 1973 | 1892 | 1910 | 1896 | - |
| Area | 2578 | 2296 | 1296 | 1538 | 3380 | 4707 | 6620 | 17,541 |
| Population | 535000 | 332000 | 597000 | 225000 | 448000 | 361000 | 430000 | 2928000 |
| Population Growth | 3.9% | 4.2% | 4.4% | -2.2% | 2.5% | 2.5% | 2.0% | 3.9% |
| Irrigated (Ha) | 11000 | | | | | | | |
| Literacy | 23% | 11.3% | 13.4% | 10.5% | 19.8% | 15.9% | 19.8% | 16.5% |
| - Male | 39.9% | 19.1% | 22.3% | 19.7% | 33.3% | 26.8% | 32.5% | 32.8% |
| - Female | 2.6% | 1.9% | 3.4% | 1.3% | 4.5% | 1.5% | 2.6% | 2.2% |

²⁵ *Ibid*

²⁶ *Ibid*.

²⁷ Burki, “How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....,18

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Health | | | | | | | | |
| - Nurses | 20000 | | 69000 | 80774 | 22126 | 16322 | 20837 | |
| - Doctors | 8800 | 6410 | 11820 | 4406 | 6085 | 5087 | 4825 | |
| - Beds | 2303 | 2828 | 6348 | 1923 | 1790 | 1180 | 3396 | |
| Roads(Km) | 463 | 388 | 443 | 489 | 557 | 439 | 752 | 3531 |
| Area | 268000 | 230000 | 129000 | 154000 | 338000 | 471000 | 662000 | 2252000 |
| Cultivated | 15000 | 18000 | 74000 | 11000 | 22000 | 13000 | 16000 | 169000 |
| Forest | 2000 | 3000 | 5000 | 2000 | 13000 | 11000 | 2000 | 38000 |
| Land Use | 20.3% | | 97.4% | 91.7% | 95.7% | 86.7% | | |
| Drinking water | | 72.5% | 55.7% | | 68.8% | 80.5% | 41.8% | |

Source: Data provided by the Pakistan Embassy, Washington, D.C.

The second type of governing mechanism is the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA), which is made up of seven of the twenty-four districts of the NWFP and five territories within Baluchistan.²⁸ The PATA districts transitioned from former princely states to form part of NWFP and Baluchistan in 1970, however, weaknesses in governance, judicial and law enforcement departments has often resulted in demand for implementation of “sharia”, or Islamic law within these areas. However most analysts believe that majority of the people are unaware of what "sharia law" means, suggesting that it may be more popular in the theoretical form than in terms of actual implementation, especially if implementation resembles the harsh rule of the Taliban in Afghanistan.²⁹

²⁸ Markey, *Securing Pakistan's Tribal Belt*..... 5

²⁹ *Ibid*, 8



Map 1.2- Tribal Areas of NWFP (FATA and PATA), Pakistan³⁰

The FATA is not subject to rulings by national or provincial courts. Instead, it is governed through Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), a legal system adopted by Pakistan at independence and rooted in British colonial practice and traditional tribal jirgas.³¹ Under the FCR, disputes between tribes and the Pakistani state are managed through the interaction of political agents and tribal representatives, or Maliks.³² The political agent is empowered to coerce tribesmen through threats and bribes. His coercive power includes collective punishment of a tribe for the actions of individual members and his

³⁰ Wikimedia Commons, “NWFP and FATA.jpg.” http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NWFP_and_FATA.jpg; Internet; accessed 15 February 2010.

³¹ Markey, *Securing Pakistan's Tribal Belt*, , 5.

³² *Ibid.* ,6,7

rulings are not subject to judicial review or appeal. The political agent's executive authority is backed by a local constabulary force (levies and khassadars), and, under more extreme circumstances, by the Frontier Corps (FC) and Pakistan Army.³³

³³*Ibid* .,6.7.

THE GENESIS OF TALIBAN AND OTHER ELEMENTS / GROUPS PRESENT IN THE TRIBAL AREAS

The tribal areas and their people have been used to wage wars several times in the history of subcontinent. Most of these wars have been fought in the name of "Islamic Jihad" (In Arabic, the word *jihād* is a noun meaning "struggle." In another context, Jihad means holy war. Jihad appears frequently in the Qur'an and commonly used as the idiomatic expression "striving in the way of Allah (*al-jihad fi sabil Allah*)." A person engaged in jihad is called a *mujahid*, the plural is mujahideen).³⁴ The first in the context of the subcontinent was fought by Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed in the North West Frontier against the Sikhs in 1826.³⁵

The word "Taliban" can be translated as "seekers" or "students" of Islam, so "Lower-case" *taliban* were not new to Afghanistan. The traditional Taliban go back at least two centuries in Afghan history, to Ahmad Shah Durrani, a king who died in 1773 and established an Islamic identity. The classic Taliban had been a "loose Islamic civil service", returning to villages as teachers and religious leaders.³⁶

In 1947, at the time of independence of Pakistan once Kashmir was illegally annexed with India against the wishes of the Muslim majority population, people of the tribal area volunteered to go and fight the Indian occupational forces along with the Kashmiri freedom fighters and Pakistan Army considering it to be a jihad.³⁷

Where Pakistan Went Wrong?

Throughout the history of Pakistan from 1947 to 2001 because of weak writ of the government, absence of a strong administrative system and no judicial or permanent outreach system of the State, many things happened: The regions economy gradually delinked itself from the national economy and became an economy which was not strictly legal. This gave rise to the tendency of accepting "money for services" without regard of

³⁴ *Quran.org*, "Jihad," <http://www.quran.org/jihad.htm>; Internet accessed 15 march 2010.

³⁵ Ahmed, "Terrorism in Tribal Area of Pakistan....", 50.

³⁶ [Steve Coll](#), *Ghost Wars: the Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan and bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 280-283.

³⁷ Aziz, "Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan," , 1.

the legality of the handout.³⁸ The tribal people plied smuggling as normal commerce whereas the weak administrative system and free cross border movement across Durand Line became huge facilitators in promotion of the same. Many people from FATA also got engaged with smuggling of poppy and drugs from Afghanistan to settled areas of Pakistan and other parts of the world. Thus their ties with criminals around the world in general and specifically within this region increased manifolds. Many tribes' men joined the profession of illegal manufacturing of small arms, which over the years became a huge small industry of the region. As per FCR, all tribe's men are allowed to carry weapons for personal protection; it is also a part of Pakhtun tradition.³⁹ This gave rise to increase in manufacturing and use of illegal arms and ammunition in the region. Because of the tribal system and Pakhtun traditions almost all tribes maintained their own small armies or lashkars (volunteer army) to protect themselves from the aggression of other tribes as well as solve disputes over property and honor by use of force. The tribal people also gave refuge to fugitives and criminals from settled areas of Pakistan, which often fought with them against their enemies and later on joined various groups and bands in the region as well.⁴⁰ This last activity paved the way for Al Qaida and many other people from around the world to relocate themselves inside Pakistan.⁴¹ The Soviet invasion resulted in influx of over five million refugees to Pakistan, most of which settled in NWFP and tribal areas. The people of the tribal areas, famous for their hospitality, received their Afghan brethren with open arms and helped them settle in this region. To this date 2.1 million Afghan refugees are still in Pakistan most of them living in NWFP.⁴²

³⁸ Ahmed, "Terrorism in Tribal Area of Pakistan....",39.

³⁹ BBC News "Analysis: Pakistan's tribal frontiers."Internet; accessed 12 February 2010

⁴⁰ Ahmed, "Terrorism in Tribal Area of Pakistan....",39.

⁴¹Ibid., 39

⁴² Refugees International, "Afghanistan," http://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/asia/afghanistan?gclid=CO_X0rqxy6ACFSFy5QodkCruzg; Internet; accessed 15 March 2010

Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and Afghan Jihad

With the invasion of Afghanistan, the focus of the world especially US shifted to Pakistan and the FATA region. The three key players CIA, Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence Organization (ISI) and the Saudi Government started off a campaign which ultimately resulted in Taliban of today.⁴³ The slogan of jihad was raised and Islamic ideology and spirit was used to recruit, train and wage war against the Soviet Union.⁴⁴ The freedom fighters and mujahedeen as they were called then; were made to fight a holy war against a non-Muslim foreign aggressor, who was aiming at capturing their country and endangering their religion and independence. And the war was known as jihad. The madrassas from which they came were mostly established and funded by Saudi Arabia. "Madrassa is a seminary or an Islamic religious school. It's where students of different ages, as young as nine or ten, go to learn religious education and to be schooled first of all in reading and then in religious studies. In the old times, it substituted for regular elementary education and higher education, and ultimately produced clerics."⁴⁵

Many of the Taliban were educated in Saudi-financed madrassas in Pakistan that teach Wahhabism, a particularly rigid form of Islam which is rooted in Saudi Arabia. Around the world, Saudi wealth and charities contributed to an explosive growth of madrassas during the Afghan jihad against the Soviets. During that war (1979-1989), a new kind of madrassa emerged in the Pakistan-Afghanistan region -- not so much concerned about scholarship as making war on infidels. The enemy then was the Soviet Union, today it's America.⁴⁶ These madrassas were established in the name of religion to impart religious education to young boys and men, which were further recruited as mujahedeen later on. CIA and ISI trained these students or Talibans to become freedom

⁴³ Kenneth Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy*, Report Prepared for the Members and Committees of Congress, (Congressional Research Service (CRS) March 2010.), 2, 3.

⁴⁴ Aziz, "Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan," , 13-16

⁴⁵ *Frontline*, "Analysis Madrassas," <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/saudi/analyses/madrassas.html>; Internet; Accessed; 20 February 2010.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*,

fighters.⁴⁷ Proper training camps were established and guerrilla warfare techniques including use of explosives, carrying out minor operations and use of field craft was all mastered under ISI and CIA operators. The forces that emerged from these seminaries were the product of a four way association between three states and one group of people: Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, United States and the Pakhtuns, the people in the middle of the enterprise.⁴⁸ During the war huge numbers of mujahideen military groups on the Pakistani side of the Durand line crossed over to Afghanistan, to destroy the Soviet-backed Afghan government.⁴⁹

US Interests and Role of CIA

“Operation Cyclone” was the code name given to CIA’s program to arm the Afghan mujahideen during the Soviet war in Afghanistan. It was the most expensive covert operation ever undertaken, as per US state department about \$3 billion were expended on provision of economic and covert military aid to the mujahidin during the war from 1980 to 1989. Over the years this aid program grew from \$20 million to over \$300 million per year during FY 1986-1990.⁵⁰ On July 3, 1979, U.S. President Jimmy Carter signed a presidential finding authorizing funding for anticommunist guerrillas in Afghanistan. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December and installation of a more pro-Soviet president, Babrak Karmal, Carter announced, "The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is the greatest threat to peace since the Second World War". Under the Reagan administration, U.S. support for the Afghan mujahideen evolved into a centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy, called the Reagan Doctrine, in which the U.S. provided military and other support to anti-communist resistance movements in Afghanistan, Angola, Nicaragua, and elsewhere.⁵¹ As per an estimate, "by 1987, 65,000

⁴⁷ Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* ,..... 2.

⁴⁸ Burki, “How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....,19.

⁴⁹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, “Durand Line,”
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/174128/Durand-Line>; Internet accessed 15 march 2010

⁵⁰ Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* ,..... 3.

⁵¹ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, “Operation Cyclone,”
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Cyclone; Internet accessed 15 march 2010

tons of U.S.-made weapons and ammunition a year were entering the war."⁵² US financing of the mujahideen Islamic insurgency started, however, before the Soviets invaded and, indeed, the support was provided to "suck" the Soviets into Afghanistan. U.S. policy, unbeknownst even to the Mujahideen, was part of a larger strategy "to induce a Soviet military intervention." National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski stated:⁵³

According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahadeen began during 1980, that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan, 24 Dec 1979. But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise. Indeed; it was July 3, 1979 that President Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul. And that very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention. That secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of drawing the Soviets into the Afghan trap.... The day that the Soviets officially crossed the border, I wrote to President Carter "We now have the opportunity of giving to the Soviet Union its Vietnam War."

The largest recipient of US funding for the mujahideen was the Hizb party led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who received more than a half a billion dollars of American funding funneled through the Pakistani ISI. The CIA allegedly also gave Hekmatyar immunity for his illegal drug trade activities.⁵⁴ Hekmatyar was said to be friendly with Osama bin Laden, founder of Al-Qaeda, who was running an operation for assisting "Afghan Arab" volunteers fighting in Afghanistan, called Maktab al-Khadamat.⁵⁵

⁵² *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "Taliban," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taliban>; Internet accessed 15 march 2010

⁵³ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia* "[How Jimmy Carter and I Started the Mujahideen \(Interview of Zbigniew Brzezinski\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_Jimmy_Carter_and_I_Started_the_Mujahideen_(Interview_of_Zbigniew_Brzezinski))". *Le Nouvel Observateur*. 1998-01-21. Retrieved 2007-02-04, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mujahideen> ; Internet; Accessed 20 March 2010.

⁵⁴ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "Reagan_Doctrine," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reagan_Doctrine; Internet accessed 15 march 2010

⁵⁵ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "Operation Cyclone," Internet accessed 15 march 2010.

Birth of Al Qaida in the Region

The Maktab al-Khidamat, or Maktab Khadamāt al-Mujāhidīn al-'Arab (MAK), also known as the Afghan Services Bureau, is said to have been established in 1984 by Abdullah Azzam and Osama bin Laden to raise funds and recruit foreign mujahidin for the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan. MAK established recruitment and fundraising offices in many Western countries, the United States being one of their main fund-raising destinations.⁵⁶ A large number of people around the world believe that MAK or Al - Qaida was fully supported and funded by CIA during the Soviet – Afghan war. In a 2004 BBC article entitled "Al-Qaeda's origins and links", the BBC claimed: "During the anti-Soviet jihad Bin Laden and his fighters received American and Saudi funding. Some analysts believe Bin Laden himself had security training from the CIA."⁵⁷ According to author David N. Gibbs "a considerable body of circumstantial evidence suggests ... direct Agency support for Bin Laden's activities." Both Bin Laden and the CIA "held accounts in the Bank for Credit and Commerce International (BCCI)."⁵⁸ "Bin Laden worked especially closely with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar" who Gibbs calls "the CIA's favored Mujahidin commander". Gibbs quotes Le Monde as saying bin Laden was "recruited by the CIA" in 1979. He also quotes, Associated Press as saying a former bin Laden aide told them that in 1989 the U.S. shipped high-powered sniper rifles to a Mujahidin faction that included bin Laden, and Jane's Intelligence Review as stating Bin Laden "worked in close association with US agents" in raising money for the Mujahidin from "vast family connections" near the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "Maktab_al-Khadamat," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maktab_al-Khadamat; Internet accessed 15 march 2010

⁵⁷ BBC News, "AlQaeda's Origin and Links," 20 July 2004; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/1670089.stm>; Internet accessed 20 February 2009.

⁵⁸ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "Forgotten Coverage of Afghan 'Freedom Fighters'" [Forgotten Coverage of Afghan 'Freedom Fighters'](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forgotten_Coverage_of_Afghan_'Freedom_Fighters'), [The villains of today's news were heroes in the '80s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forgotten_Coverage_of_Afghan_'Freedom_Fighters') extra January/February 2002, [F.A.I.R.\(Fairness in Accuracy and Reporting ,](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forgotten_Coverage_of_Afghan_'Freedom_Fighters') " http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegations_of_CIA_assistance_to_Osama_bin_Laden#cite_note-2; Internet accessed 15 march 2010.

⁵⁹ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "Allegations of CIA assistance to Osama_bin_Laden ,," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Allegations_of_CIA_assistance_to_Osama_bin_Laden#cite_note-2; Internet; accessed 15 march 2010

FBI translator Sibel Edmonds, who has been fired from the agency for disclosing sensitive information, has claimed United States was on intimate terms with Taliban and Al-Qaeda, using them to further certain goals in Central Asia.⁶⁰ According to author Steve Coll,

Overall, the U.S. government looked favorably on the Arab recruitment drives. ... Some of the most ardent cold warriors at [CIA headquarters at] Langley thought this program should be formally endorsed and extended. ... [T]he CIA "examined ways to increase their participation, perhaps in the form of some sort of international brigade" ... Robert Gates [then-head of the CIA's Directorate of Intelligence] recalled. ... At the [CIA's] Islamabad station [station chief] Milt Bearden felt that bin Laden himself "actually did some very good things" by putting money into Afghanistan.⁶¹

Even Hillary Clinton has mentioned funding Islamic extremists "the people we are fighting today we funded twenty years ago", she explains that this has included recruiting "Mujahideen" and importing the "Wahabi brand of Islam" from Saudi Arabia.⁶² Robin Cook, former leader of the British House of Commons and Foreign Secretary from 1997-2001, believed the CIA had provided arms to the Arab Mujahideen, including Osama bin Laden, writing,

"Bin Laden was, though, a product of a monumental miscalculation by western security agencies. Throughout the 80s he was armed by the CIA and funded by the Saudis to wage jihad against the Russian occupation of Afghanistan."⁶³

⁶⁰ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, "Taliban," Internet accessed 15 march 2010.

⁶¹ Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars* (New York: Penguin Press, 2005), 145 , 146 , 155, 156.

⁶² SouthAsiaNews, "[Hillary Clinton speaks out about US links with Taliban](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2CE0fyz4ys)," 28 April 2009; available e<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X2CE0fyz4ys>; Inernet; accessed 20 February 2010

⁶³ *Wikipedia*, "Allegations of CIA assistance to Osama_bin_Laden ,"..... Internet; accessed 15 march 2010.

TALIBAN OF PRESENT ERA

Unquestionably, the Taliban in Afghanistan came significantly from a madrassa background, but they were initially a rising against lawlessness in their country, then a Salafist movement once in power, and a supporter of external terrorism rather than themselves a terrorist movement like their guest, Al-Qaeda.

Emergence of Taliban

Afghanistan was practically at the verge of collapse just before the Taliban came to power in 1994. The country suffered greatly at the hands of the warlords who fought, looted and plundered of what was left in Afghanistan. Kabul, surrounding area and north east of the country was controlled by the predominantly Tajik government of President Burhanuddin Rabbani, while three provinces in the west centering on Herat were controlled by Ismael Khan. In the east along Pakistan border three Pashtun provinces were under the control of a council or Shura of Mujahidin commanders based in Jalalabad. A small region to the south and east of Kabul was controlled by Gulbuddin Hikmetyar.⁶⁴ And in the north the Uzbek warlord General Rashid Dostum held six provinces. The central Afghanistan was controlled by Hazaras, whereas dozens of petty ex-Mujahidin warlords and bandits ruled Southern Afghanistan and Kandahar.⁶⁵

During this power vacuum created by the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, a faction of students mostly comprising of Afghans, from the border belt of Pakistan arose under the leadership of Mullah Omar and started a campaign against the warlords of various tribes / factions pursuing their own agendas. The agenda they chalked out for themselves, still remains to be Taliban's declared aim ---restore peace, disarm the population, enforce Sharia law and defend the integrity and Islamic character of Afghanistan. As most of them were part-time or full-time students at *madrassas*, the name they chose for themselves was natural, "Taliban." All those who gathered around Omar were the

⁶⁴ Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (USA: Yale University Press, March 2001), 3.

⁶⁵Ibid., 3.

children of the jihad but deeply disillusioned with the factionalism and criminal activities of the once idealized Mujahidin leadership. They saw themselves as the cleansers and purifiers of a guerrilla war gone astray, a social system gone wrong and an Islamic way of life that had been compromised by corruption and excess. Many of them had been born in Pakistani refugee camps, educated in Pakistani *madrassas* and had learnt their fighting skills from Mujahidin parties based in Pakistan.⁶⁶

Rise of Mullah Omer to Power

Some Taliban say Omar was chosen as their leader not for his political or military ability, but for his piety and his unswerving belief in Islam. Others say he was chosen by God. 'We selected Mullah Omar to lead this movement. He was the first amongst equals and we gave him the power to lead us and he has given us the power and authority to deal with people's problems,' said Mullah Hassan.⁶⁷ Omar himself gave a simple explanation to Pakistani journalist Rahimullah Yousufzai.

We took up arms to achieve the aims of the Afghan jihad and save our people from further suffering at the hands of the so-called Mujahidin. We had complete faith in God Almighty. We never forgot that. He can bless us with victory or plunge us into defeat.⁶⁸

There are two reasons normally talked off behind the rise of Mullah Omer and Taliban, The first one is known to be the rape and murder of boys and girls of a family traveling to Kandahar by Mujahidin bandits, which outraged Mullah Omar and sparked his students to vow to rid Afghanistan of these criminals. Another reason given is that, Pakistan-based truck shipping mafia known as the "Afghanistan Transit Trade" armed and financed the Taliban to clear the southern road across Afghanistan to the Central Asian Republics of extortionate bandit gangs who regularly looted and plundered these convoys moving along the route.⁶⁹ It is also said that, in early 1994, Omar led 30 men

⁶⁶ Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia.....*, 4.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*,5.

⁶⁹ Reuters, "The Mysterious Mullah behind the Taliban," *ONE News* 20 September 2001. available from http://tvnz.co.nz/view/news_story_skin/57491; Internet; accessed 20 February.

armed with 16 rifles to free two teenage girls who had been kidnapped and raped by a warlord's group, hanging the local commander from a tank gun barrel.⁷⁰ His movement gained momentum over the year, and he quickly gathered recruits from Islamic schools within the tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. By November 1994, Omar's movement managed to capture the province of Kandahar and then captured Herat in September 1995.⁷¹ Another, possibly apocryphal, story suggests that he rose to power in 1994 after two local warlords waged a full-scale tank battle in Kandahar's central bazaar, after a fall-out over the affections of a young boy; and he led religious students to take control of the city.⁷²

Establishment of Taliban Government in Afghanistan

The capture of Kabul by the Taliban on 26 September 1996 quickly realigned political forces within Afghanistan and the region. The non-Pashtun forces allied again and formulated the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance or United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan, a military-political coalition of various Afghan groups fighting against the Taliban. It comprised of the ousted ethnic Tajik president, Burhanuddin Rabbani, Commander Ahmad Shah Masood, Jamiat-i-Islami forces, General Abdul Rashid Dostum and the ethnic Uzbek Junbish-i-Milli party.⁷³ The Northern Alliance was headed by ex President Rabbani, with Ahmad Shah Masood as his primary military backer. After the defeat of the Tajik Commander Masood, the Alliance came under the leadership of the Uzbek General Abdul Rashid Dostum.⁷⁴ From the Taliban conquest of

⁷⁰ Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror*, 1st Edition (New York: Random House, 2002).10

⁷¹ Larry P Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State failure, Regional politics and the rise of the Taliban.*(University of Washington Press, 2001) , 107.

⁷² Peter Bergen, *Holy War, Inc: Inside the secret World of Usama Bin Ladin*, (Free Press, 2001),10

⁷³ *All Experts Encyclopedia*, “Afghan Northern Alliance”
http://en.allexperts.com/e/a/af/afghan_northern_alliance.htm; Internet; accessed 10 March 2010.

⁷⁴ Barnett R. Rubin *Afghanistan: The Forgotten Crisis*,(WRITENET (UK),1996); available from
http://fas.org/irp/world/para/northern_alliance.htm; Internet; accessed 15 March 2010.

1996 until November 2001 the UIF controlled roughly 30% of Afghanistan's population,⁷⁵ about 10% of Afghanistan.⁷⁶

Public reaction to the Taliban's rule was not wholly negative. While the rigid social standards promoted resentment, the Taliban cracked down on the corruption that had ruined the government machinery for years. They also brought stability to Afghanistan, putting an end to the internal fight between warlords that had devastated the civilian population.⁷⁷ However Taliban regime faced international scrutiny and condemnation for its policies. Only Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan's legitimate government.⁷⁸ Seven years after their ouster, the Taliban continue to provide a semblance of stability in regions where coalition and government officials have been unable to restore order and provide basic services. Kenneth Katzman, a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs for the Congressional Research Service, said in July 2008 that intolerance for a sustained U.S. troop presence is translating into "a little more permissiveness in some areas for the Taliban. That is a worrisome trend."⁷⁹

The Current Insurgency

After 9/11, US and her allies supported the Northern Alliance and over threw the Taliban government from Afghanistan. The Taliban initially resisted the US and allied forces invasion of Afghanistan, but subsequently realizing their tremendous power and military superiority, chose to dissolve into the society and resort to an insurgency.

⁷⁵ *All Experts Encyclopedia*, "Afghan Northern Alliance" http://en.allexperts.com/e/a/af/afghan_northern_alliance.htm; Internet; accessed 10 March 2010

⁷⁶ Infoplease. Com, " The Taliban" <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/taliban.html> ; Internet; accessed 14 March 2010.

⁷⁷ [Greg Bruno](#) and Eben Kaplan, "The Taliban in Afghanistan, " *Council on Foreign Relations ' Publication* (20 March 2009); available from <http://www.cfr.org/publication/10551/>; Internet; accessed 15 march 2010.

⁷⁸ Infoplease. Com, " The Taliban" <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/taliban.html> ; Internet; accessed 14 March 2010.

⁷⁹ Bruno and Kaplan, "The Taliban in Afghanistan," Internet; accessed 15 march 2010.

Besides Taliban, the insurgency in Afghanistan is waged by two other major groups and few foreign based small insurgent groups. The first major group is Hezbi Islami (Party of Islam), a militant group led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, who operates primarily in southeastern Afghanistan. Hekmatyar a favorite of ISI and CIA, during the Soviet-Afghan war fled to Iran after Pakistan preferred the Taliban over him in the mid 1990s.⁸⁰ He is now believed to receive more aid from Iran than from the any other source.⁸¹ He re-emerged in Afghanistan in 2002 to resume fighting against his former Northern Alliance rivals, who had joined with Hamid Karzai to form the post-Taliban Afghan government.⁸² One of Hekmatyar's most effective former commanders, Jalaluddin Haqqani, who later joined Taliban and became minister for tribal affairs, has emerged as a key leader who commands the second powerful insurgent network that straddles the border near the eastern city of Jalalabad.⁸³ Haqqani was perhaps the Taliban's best military commander before their downfall; however he has maintained an independent power base and has waged his own insurgency in cooperation with the Taliban in recent years.⁸⁴ The network is active in Afghanistan's southeastern provinces of Paktia , Paktika , Khost , Logar and Ghazni. The Haqqani network has pioneered the use of suicide attacks in Afghanistan, mostly using foreign bombers.⁸⁵ In addition to these Afghan groups, several hundred Muslim militants from other countries have also joined the insurgency inside Afghanistan. Most of them are from neighboring Pakistan, Uzbekistan,

⁸⁰Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* ,..... 26.

⁸¹ Lisa Curtis and James Phillips, “Revitalizing U.S. Efforts in Afghanistan,” *The Heritage Foundation*; available from http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2007/10/Revitalizing-US-Efforts-in-Afghanistan#_ftn20#_ftn20 ; *Internet*; accessed 10 March 2010.

⁸² BBC News, “Profile: Gulbuddin Hekmatyar” http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2701547.stm; *Internet* ; accessed 10 March 2010.

⁸³ Curtis and Phillips, “Revitalizing U.S. Efforts in Afghanistan,”; *Internet*; accessed 10 March 2010.

⁸⁴ *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, “Hakani Network ,” ; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haqqani_network; *Internet*; accessed 15 march 2010

⁸⁵Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* ,..... 26.

and Tajikistan, but smaller numbers come from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Yemen, Iraq, Somalia, and Chechnya. The foreign militants are reportedly better trained, better equipped, and more professional fighters than the Afghans, who often fight only on a part-time basis.⁸⁶ Most of these groups operate from sanctuaries in Pakistan.

The Pakistani Taliban

The Pakistani Taliban, organizationally distinct from the Afghan group, rose up in 2002 in response to the Pakistani army's incursions into the country's tribal areas to hunt down militants. In 2008, Pakistani security forces clashed with pro-Taliban militants in the tribal area near Peshawar, jeopardizing peace talks between the militants and the government. The clashes continued in early 2009, expanding into the Swat Valley.⁸⁷ Within Pakistan three kinds of Taliban or terrorist or miscreant groups operate. The first are those who have sanctuaries in Pakistan (FATA and Balochistan) and carryout operations / activities against ISAF in Afghanistan. They comprise of groups which do not get involved in anti - Pakistan activities nor associate themselves with other militant groups / factions that do so. They have strong linkages with Al Qaida and have significant number of foreign fighters with them. They are headed by Mullah Omer and supported by commanders like Hikmatyar and Haqqani. Their groups comprise of mostly Afghan nationals born and raised in Pakistan, some foreign fighters and recruits / supporters from FATA.⁸⁸ The second category of Taliban is the one that are involved both across the border in Afghanistan as well as in anti state activities within Pakistan. Their known main leaders are Maulvi Nazir, Hafiz Gul Bahadar and Mangal Bagh etc.⁸⁹ All these leaders have separate groups mostly comprising of people from Waziri and other Pashtun tribes. Their allegiance keeps on changing with time; they are known to have undertaken peace pacts with the government of Pakistan many times in the past but have always broken these pacts and have been involved in terrorist activities against the

⁸⁶ Curtis and Phillips, "Revitalizing U.S. Efforts in Afghanistan,"; *Internet*; accessed 10 March 2010.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Khalid Aziz, "Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan," ----- 18-20.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

Military and other government agencies. They often operate against the US, Allied and Afghan military and Police forces in Afghanistan along the border regions.⁹⁰ They have known to act as mercenaries after being bribed / exploited by other regional players like Russia, India and Iran and do sabotage and anti state activities within Pakistan as well.⁹¹ The third category of Taliban or miscreants comprises of elements that are totally anti-Pakistan and their agenda is focused on creating destabilization and anarchy in the country. The group calls itself “Tehrik – e – Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and mainly comprises of individuals from Mehsud tribe and Uzbek foreign fighters. Many Al Qaida and other foreign elements are also known to be hiding in Mehsud belt of North and South Waziristan Agency, home and area of influence of TTP.⁹² Their leader and founding father Baitullah Mehsud was killed as a result of a US drone strike in August last year and was succeeded by his cousin Hakimullah Mehsud.⁹³ The NWFP governor claimed that Mehsud oversaw an annual money flow of up to three billion Pakistani rupees (about \$45 million) to sustain his regional militancy. Most of this money is said to be raised through trafficking in drugs and through foreign support.⁹⁴ This group is believed to be responsible for the murder of former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto and has also accepted the responsibility of most of the suicide bombings and other terrorist activities (like Marriot Hotel bomb blast etc) within Pakistan.⁹⁵ The perceived strength of various Taliban factions inside Pakistan is as under:-

⁹⁰ Lalwani, Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign... , 15-17

⁹¹ Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* ,.....53-58.

⁹² Lalwani, Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign... , 14

⁹³ BBC News, “Profile: Hakimullah Mehsud”http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/2701547.stm; Internet ; accessed 10 March 2010.

⁹⁴ Global Security.org, “Baitullah Mehsud”
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/ttp.htm>; Internet; accessed 12 march 2010.rgtbn
smnqnmv

⁹⁵ Geo News, “Islamabad Suicide Blast”
http://www.geo.tv/important_events/IslamabadSuicideAttack/pages/english_news.asp; Internet: Accessed
14 March 2010.

Table 1.3 - Taliban Force Levels⁹⁶

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Total Taliban Forces | |
| Pakistani Taliban (TTP) Forces | 20,000-25,000 |
| High End | 100,000 |
| Low End | 10,000 |
| Possible “Additional Assets” | |
| Punjabi Militants | 2,000 |
| Afghan Taliban | 32,000-40,000 |
| Uzbek Militants | 1,000-2,000 |
| Al Qaeda’s “Shadow Army” | 8,000-12,000 |
| Maximum Potential Forces | 156,000 |
| Reasonable Potential Forces | 30,000-40,000 |

The reign of terror on both sides of Pak-Afghan border is primarily because of the linkage and support that these groups have and provide to each other. The support the Afghan insurgency receives from the Pakistani side of the border is for two reasons. Firstly there are still millions of Afghan refugees living in and along Pakistan’s border areas which have strong links with their tribal and clan associates on the other side. Secondly, there is growing resentment within the tribal areas that Islamabad is attempting to impose a model of governance that is different from the one that was used for centuries in the areas in which the tribal code (the Pakhtunwali) and perceived Islamic values got blended into a system that had a wide acceptance.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Lalwani, *Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign...* , 14

¹⁰⁴ “Indian sub-continent is prone to nuclear war”, *Thaindian News*,... Internet; accessed 16 January 2010.

⁹⁷ Markey, *Securing Pakistan’s Tribal Belt*, , 5.

MISPERCEPTIONS / WEAKNESSES IN POLICIES OF US AND THE WEST

The root cause of all the problems in the tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan has been the inconsistent policies of US, Pakistan and other regional and international players of the world. This region has unfortunately been used as a battle ground, in the past as well as at present, by great powers (both international and regional) to settle their scores. The mujahedeen, heroes and friends of yesterday are the terrorists, Taliban and foes of today. The players have changed sides, the faces are new, but the people on ground remain the same. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has accepted this strategic mistake in US policy, while addressing a congress committee she said:-⁹⁸

We have a history of moving in and out of Pakistan. Let's remember here - the people we are fighting today we funded 20 years ago. And we did it, for we were locked in this struggle with the Soviet Union. They invaded Afghanistan and we did not want to see them control central Asia and we went to work. It was President Reagan and partnership with the Congress, led by Democrats, who said you know what? it sounds like a pretty good idea, lets deal with the ISI and Pakistani military and lets go recruit these Mujahedeen, lets get some to come from Saudi Arabia and other places, importing their Wahabi brand of Islam, so that we can go and beat the Soviet Union. And guess what, they retreated, they lost billions of dollars and that led to the collapse of Soviet Union. So there is a very strong argument that it wasn't a bad investment. But lets remember that what we sow we will harvest. We than left Pakistan, we said ok you deal with the stingers that we have left all over your country, you deal with the mines that are all along the border, and by the way we don't have anything to do with you and in fact we are sanctioning you. So we stopped dealing with the Pakistani Military and with ISI and we now are making up for a lot of lost time.

Change in US Policy after the Cold War

The immediate withdrawal of US support to Pakistan and Afghanistan led to the main disaster. Pakistan was left at its own to clean up the mess left over by two super powers of the world. It was faced with multiple problems at that time. These included over 5 million refugees who were not willing to go back to their war torn country, power struggle between hundred and thousands of armed mujahidin groups and a country with

⁹⁸ [Hillary Clinton speaks out about US links with Taliban](#), *SouthAsiaNews*, Inernet; accessed 20 February 2010

no political leadership, direction and a crumbling economy completely dependent on Pakistan. No measures were taken to restore peace in the region, disarm people that had been armed over the years, and rehabilitate them in the society as normal human beings. There were no political and governmental institutions present in the country and no efforts or plans were made to build up law enforcement agencies like police, paramilitary forces or regular armed forces. No aid or resources were provided to the war torn Afghanistan of 11 years, to build infrastructure and develop necessary facilities for health and education. The generals of the Soviet era became warlords of today and another chapter of killing, looting and plundering started in the history of this region. Narcotic trade, drug trafficking, kidnapping, poppy cultivation, smuggling and all other illegal activities increased manifold.

After the death of the two main mentors of Soviet-Afghan war, General Zia Ul Haq (President of Pakistan and Chief of Army Staff) and General Akhter Abdur Rehman (Director General ISI), as a result of a plane crash in 1988, a civilian democratic government under Benazir Bhutto (a relatively new and inexperienced politician at that time), came into power.⁹⁹ With this, the focus of Pakistan also shifted from Afghanistan and her tribal areas, to other issues concerning mainland Pakistan. These problems became more complex after US imposed sanctions on Pakistan under Pressler amendment in 1991.¹⁰⁰ This sudden shift and backtrack policy by the US created a sense of hatred and mistrust amongst the people of this region for US and the West. They lost their faith in their allies and friends of Afghan war, for they expected them to be there for them after the war was over, to help them rebuild what they had lost. The sudden departure of US also created a huge vacuum in the region and caused great instability. Apart from the power struggle between the warlords of Afghanistan many other regional players like Iran, India and Central Asian Republics (CARs) jumped in, to enhance their influence in Afghanistan and in some cases reduce Pakistan's authority and control.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Weaver, *Pakistan: In the shadow of jihad and Afghanistan*....., 38

¹⁰⁰Hugh Fitzgerald, "Robert Gates, Pakistan & The Pressler Amendment" *New English Review* (September 2009) http://www.newenglishreview.org/custpage.cfm/firm/46658/sec_id/46658; Internet ; Accessed 12 April 2010.

¹⁰¹Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* ,..... 4.

This kept Afghanistan burning and helped organizations like Al-Qaida to use it as a breeding ground and promote their agenda.

US Policy and War on Terror

Then came 9/11, and once again US was dragged back in the Afghanistan it had left so many years ago. But this time instead of Soviet Union they were the ones trying to project and enforce their will on the people of the region. Some of the areas where US and her Allies went wrong in Afghanistan are highlighted in the succeeding paragraphs:-

Firstly the war was named as a “Global War against Terror”, by President Bush instead of limiting it to a fight against Al Qaida. This forced US to simultaneously involve itself in both Iraq and Afghanistan, none of which has proven to be a success story.¹⁰² Secondly Islam was associated with terrorism by the West, which had a very negative fallout and adversely affected US popularity and support in the Muslim world, especially this region. Thirdly instead of only focusing on Al Qaida and some terrorists organizations in the Afghanistan, a campaign against Taliban was waged by US, that over the period of years has been turned into a war of independence of Afghanistan by Taliban.¹⁰³ Misuse and incorrect understanding of sensitive terminologies and words like “jihad”, “Taliban” and “Islamic Terrorism” etc has only created a wedge between the Muslims around the world and the West and has promoted the cause of Al Qaida and other organizations. All these words have special meanings in Islam and Arabic language, and have great sentimental value for the Muslims. If terrorism is associated with Islam and is also known as jihad by the West and US, it would only help recruit more Muslims and legitimize the stance and agenda of Al Qaida and other terrorist organizations trying to exploit and misuse Islam. If we give the name Taliban to every terrorist in the world fighting in Afghanistan or Pakistan it would only promote and enhance their image and make them soldiers of Allah (God) in the eyes of illiterate people. We need to clear the fog from not only our own minds but also from those who have become victims of this exploitation. We need to use Islam and its true teachings to uncover and expose these people who do not represent even 1% of the total Muslim community around the world.

¹⁰² Aziz, “Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan,” ; 11.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*,... 7

A thorough study of Islam itself reveals that the religion negates most the actions and philosophy of these terrorists or extremist organizations. As per Islam, “the one who kills one innocent person commits the crime equivalent of killing the whole humanity.” Similarly committing suicide for whatever reason is not allowed in Islam and is declared as “Haram”(not allowed). Allah says explicitly in the Quraan, "And do not kill yourselves. Surely, Allah is Most Merciful to you".¹⁰⁴ In another verse of the Quraan, Allah says: "And do not throw yourselves in destruction."¹⁰⁵ The philosophy of suicide bombing or attack on twin towers is totally against the above mentioned teachings / philosophy of Islam.

The terrorist problem in Pakistan and the terrorist problem in Afghanistan are inextricably intertwined. What happens on the Afghan side of the border has a direct impact on Pakistan just as what happens on the Pakistani side affects Afghanistan. Terrorists and violent extremists continue to exploit Pakistan’s rugged tribal areas as safe havens and cross the border to attack Afghan and Coalition forces in Afghanistan. We therefore must find ways to more effectively coordinate and synchronize operations by both nations, and reduce the operating space where our common enemies function instead of the usual blame game of not doing enough.¹⁰⁶ The current policy of excessive use of force resulting in loss of innocent life on both sides of the border is proving detrimental to the cause. The pro US rating in the region is the lowest in decades. In a national May/June 2008 poll, only 16.9 percent of Pakistanis had a very or somewhat favorable view of the United States, the lowest popularity rating of all the countries surveyed and less than half that of India.¹⁰⁷ The findings of a survey conducted by Centre for Strategic

¹⁰⁴ The Holy Quran, “Surah An-Nisa Verse 29” [http://www.inter-islam.org/Prohibitions/suicide.html#As shown, neither the Judaic nor Christian parts](http://www.inter-islam.org/Prohibitions/suicide.html#As%20shown,%20neither%20the%20Judaic%20nor%20Christian%20parts); Internet; Accessed 15 April 2010.

¹⁰⁵ The Holy Quran, “Surah Al-Baqarah Verse 195 ” [http://www.inter-islam.org/Prohibitions/suicide.html#As shown, neither the Judaic nor Christian parts](http://www.inter-islam.org/Prohibitions/suicide.html#As%20shown,%20neither%20the%20Judaic%20nor%20Christian%20parts); Internet; Accessed 15 April 2010.

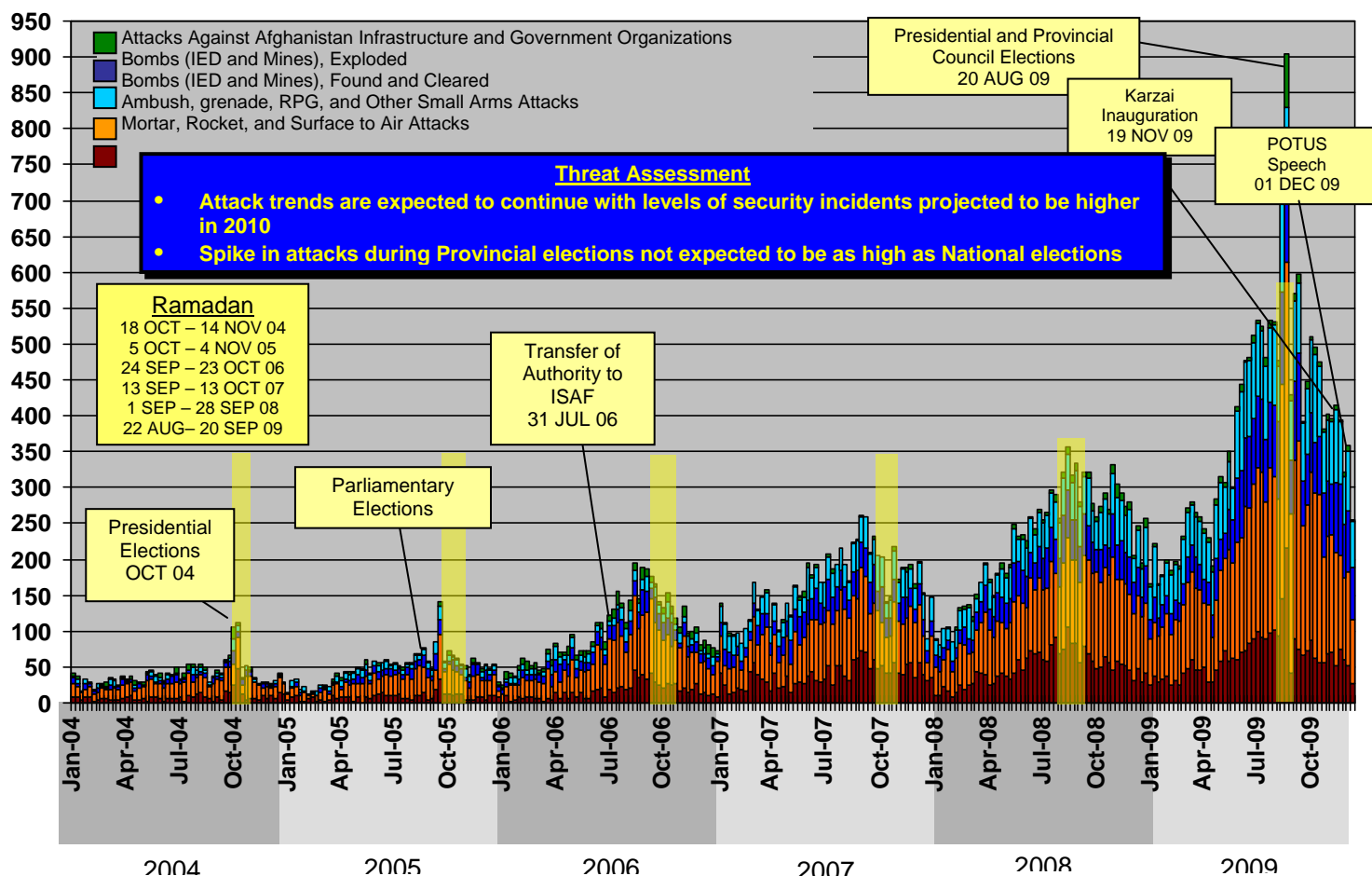
¹⁰⁶ John D. Negroponte, Deputy Secretary of State, “Pakistan's Fata Challenge: Securing One of the World's Most Dangerous Areas” *Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Washington, DC May 20, 2008* ; available from http://www.worldsecuritynetwork.com/showArticle3.cfm?article_id=15941 ; Internet ; accessed 20 march 2010.

and International Studies (CSIS), which was funded in part by US Agency for International Development, after interviewing some 1000 ordinary Afghan citizens, suggests that the model being pursued by the international community in Afghanistan is not producing the desired results. The report of this survey was released on 23 January 2007. As per the majority of the people interviewed, the conditions in Afghanistan had deteriorated markedly since 2005 with rising violence, government corruption and “misguided US efforts”. The report said that the Afghans tend to be more negative in their outlook than official accounts would suggest. “Public fear and frustration are on the rise in Afghanistan. As a result, Afghans are beginning to disengage from national governing process and loose confidence in their leadership,” wrote the authors of the report. It further states that, “NATO and the US’ ‘big army’ military operations and emphasis on foot soldiers ‘fills’ are doing more damage than good.” The report also echoed the comments made by the departing US Commander in Afghanistan Lt. General Karl W. Eikenberry during his testimony in front of a congressional panel, where he said, “a point could be reached at which the government of Afghanistan becomes irrelevant to its people and the goal of establishing a democratic and moderate, self sustaining state could be lost forever.”¹⁰⁸ The following graph shows an increase in casualties in Afghanistan since 2004.

¹⁰⁷ Markey, *Securing Pakistan's Tribal Belt*, 7.

¹⁰⁸ Burki, “How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....30-31

Table No 1.4. Comparative Casualties Data Afghanistan (2004-2009)¹⁰⁹



Sources: Afghanistan JOIS NATO SIGACTS data as of 15 December 2009 reporting.

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Role of Other Players in the Region

Another important factor that has been missing from the policy of US and the West has been the role of other regional powers in the region. This war cannot just be limited to Pakistan and Afghanistan. There are other key players in the region which have direct conflicting and divergent interests linked to the success of US, her allies or

¹⁰⁹ Brigadier-General Denis Thompson, Commander Task Force Kandahar (14 May 2008 – 19 February 2009) “The Land Component in Joint and Combined Operations: A Case Study based on the Canadian COIN Experience in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan.” (Lecture Canadian Forces College : 20 April 2010.

Pakistan in the region. Role of Iran, China, Russia and India in this regard cannot be ignored or over ruled. All these countries have a history of rivalry with US and in some cases Pakistan. It is also a fact that none of these countries form part of the alliance or contribute forces in the war against terror in Afghanistan. Unfortunately no specific policy or concrete measures have been adopted by US so far, to either bring these countries on board or stop them from interfering in the internal matters of Afghanistan or Pakistan. Most of these countries consider US presence and success in Afghanistan as a direct threat to their national interests and influence in the region. From Islamabad's perspective, Afghanistan holds strategic value in regional contests against Iran and India. This perspective compels Pakistan to seek a friendly regime in Kabul. Since 2002, Islamabad has suspiciously eyed Indian activities in Afghanistan, perceived as attempts to encircle Pakistan. Pakistan's most frequent complaints center on India's consulates in Jalalabad and Kandahar, and India's wide-ranging construction, training and assistance programs are all seen as blatant efforts to forge an anti-Pakistan alliance.¹¹⁰

Pak-US Relationship – An Everlasting Friendship or Just another Need of Time?

Although John D. Negroponte, Deputy Secretary of State of US, during a testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in Washington, DC on May 20, 2008 acknowledged the importance of a long lasting relationship with Pakistan by saying:-

The U.S-Pakistan relationship runs much deeper than our mutual counterterrorism priorities. While the battlefield for the war against terrorism will be fought in the border regions, our programs to work with the people and government of Pakistan will be critical to our success in these areas. We are committed to building a broader, long-term relationship with Pakistan.¹¹¹

US's growing military and bilateral relations with India and no efforts to resolve Pak-India disputes like Kashmir etc have always made Pakistan skeptical about such US claims. Pakistan has always been a US ally and a strong supporter of her policies in the

¹¹⁰ Markey, *Securing Pakistan's Tribal Belt*, , 8.

¹¹¹ Negroponte, Deputy Secretary of State, "Pakistan's Fata Challenge: Securing One of the World's Most Dangerous Areas" Internet ; accessed 20 march 2010.

region, whereas India historically remained in the Soviet block during the cold war era. Amazingly, it has always been Pakistan which has been subjected to sanctions and neglect and has been eyed with suspicion by US, whereas India has always remained the apple of the eye - getting all the benefits. This again reflects a weak link and an inconsistent approach in US policy because of which people of Pakistan don't find it easy to trust US and her promises.

FAILURE OF PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT AND ITS MILITARY TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE

Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Pakistan has once again emerged as a key ally of the US, in the global war on terror. Pakistani military forces have been extensively engaged in COIN (counterinsurgency) operations (ops) against Taliban and Al Qaeda extremists. Over 150,000 troops along with various paramilitary forces are involved in a protracted fight against extremists in the tribal areas of Pakistan¹¹². The country has faced an unprecedented wave of terrorism which, over a short period of time (five years) spread from the tribal areas to infect various settled parts of the country. The Prime Minister of Pakistan Yousuf Raza Gilani, has declared this war as, "war of the country's survival",¹¹³ where as the Army Chief Gen Ashfaq Pervez Kiyani responded to this challenge by saying, "The Army is alert and alive to the full spectrum of threats which exists in conventional and unconventional domains."¹¹⁴

¹¹² Sameer Lalwani, *Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign: A Net Assesment*, Publication of the Counterterrorism Strategy Initiative (New America Foundation, September 2009), 45.

¹¹³ Jayshree Bajoria "Realigning Pakistan's Security Forces," *Council on Foriegn Relations Publication*, (18 June 2005); available from http://www.cfr.org/publication/19660/realigning_pakistans_security_forces.html; Internet; accessed 16 January 2010.

¹¹⁴ Gen. Ashfaq Pervaz Kayani, "Pakistan to respond to existing, potential threats," *The Dawn*, 01 January 2010; [Newspaper-online]; available from <http://www.defenceforum.in/forum/land-forces-army/7693-army-reworks-war-doctrine-pakistan-china-3.html#post104537>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2010.

Existing Environment

In recent years Pakistan has changed from being a state of regional strategic significance to one of major global importance. Its geographical position and delicate religious and tribal mix, coupled with a complex political structure, have ensured that its actions - and inactions - have attracted close scrutiny since Nine-Eleven and the declaration of the 'War on Terror.

-Brian
Cloughley¹¹⁵

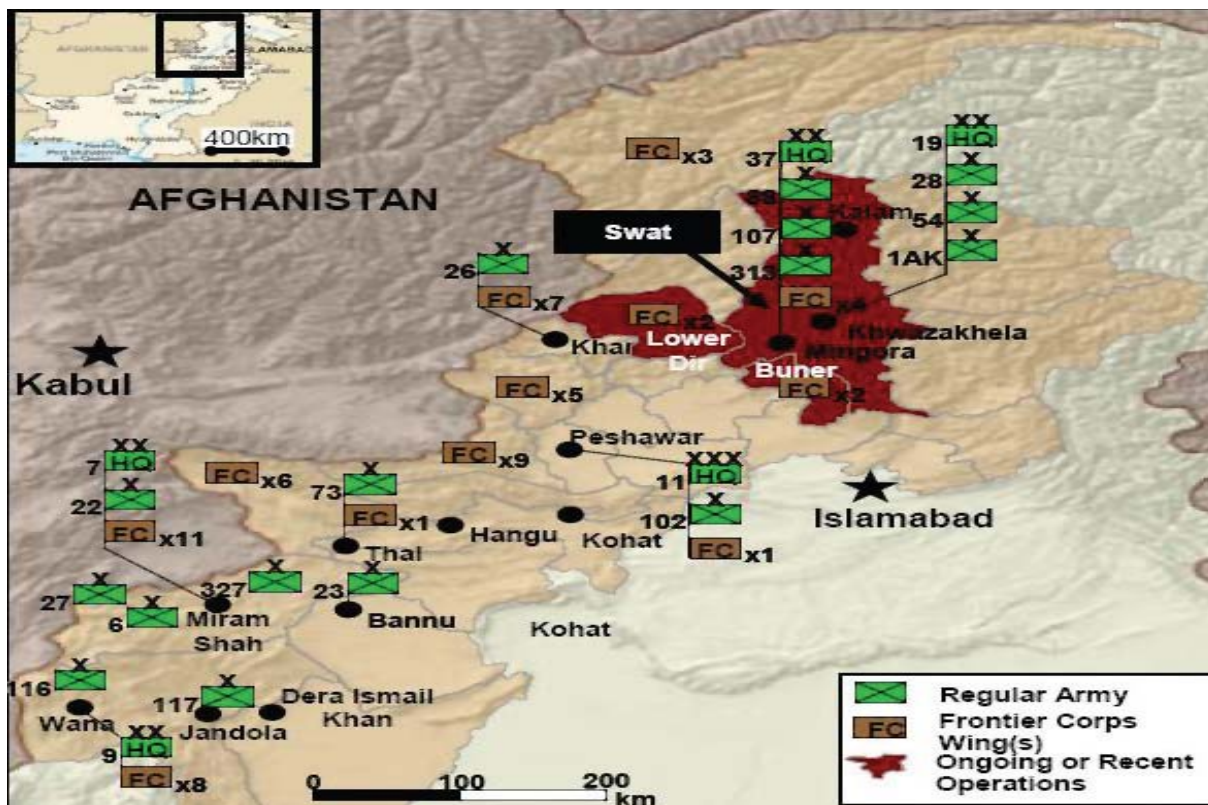
US lead coalition forces are actively engaged in Afghanistan to defeat Al-Qaeda and Afghan Taliban to stabilize the country and the region.¹¹⁶ This conflict has spread over to Pakistan as Pakistani Taliban and other religious extremist groups have strong historical linkages with Afghani Taliban and Al-Qaeda since Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Consequently Tribal area of Pakistan has become a very dangerous area for peace in the region.¹¹⁷ Pakistan Army is actively engaged in combat to gain control of Tribal Area so that the Taliban threat can be annihilated. As a reaction to this the Taliban engaged in a series of suicide attacks in various important cities of Pakistan which resulted in insecure internal environment. To counter this threat Pakistan had to move its forces to the Tribal areas and Swat from its eastern border thereby accepting vulnerability in the event of any threat emerging from India.¹¹⁸ The present dispositions of Pakistani Forces in tribal areas are:-

¹¹⁵ Brian Cloughley, *War, Coups and Terror: Pakistan's Army in Years of Turmoil* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2008), 12.

¹¹⁶ Daniel Byman, *Going to war with the Allies you have: Allies Counterinsurgency, and the war on Terrorism*, Report Prepared for Strategic Studies Institute United States Army War College (November 2005): available from <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=630>; Internet ; accessed 14 Janaury 2010.

¹¹⁷ United States Department of Denfense, "Unconventional Warefare," in *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*: available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconventional_warfare_\(United_States_Department_of_Defense_doctrine\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconventional_warfare_(United_States_Department_of_Defense_doctrine)); Internet ; accessed 14 Janaury 2010.

¹¹⁸ Lalwani, *Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign...* , 5



Map 1.3 - Pakistan Military Positions in NWFP and FATA¹¹⁹

Source: General David H. Petraeus

Pakistan is transiting to democratic form of government. Due to lack of experience the political leaders are inept to handle issues of governance.¹²⁰ The political institutions do not have the culture of honesty and integrity thus resulting in corruption. The cumulative effect is that generally people (the society) are dissatisfied, confused and divided over sensitive issues like ops inside Pakistan against Taliban. The media and judiciary in Pakistan have gained popularity and are over stepping their domains and further accentuating the problems.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ Lalwani, Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign... , 8.

¹²⁰ "Lasting Solutions" *Friday Times Pakistan*, 15 January 2010

¹²¹ "Order or Anarchy" *Friday Times Pakistan*, 15 January 2010.

Pak-India historical rivalry on unresolved issues-Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek, Baglihar, terrorism etc can all become flash points.¹²² India continues to radiate threat. Indian Army chief General Deepak Kapoor latest statement that: "India has long been working on the so-called 'Cold Start' strategy and preparing for a limited war against Pakistan" and that "there are chances for war in South Asia, due to the presence of nuclear weapons",¹²³ clearly reflects Indian intentions and the kind of threat they radiate for Pakistan.

Pakistan Armed Forces remain a stable and focused institution in spite of provocation by other segments of society. This development augurs well as the nuclear assets are under strict guidance and control with this stability. Pakistani Army is generally equipped and trained to undertake conventional operations. It is learning from experience and using its limited resources to equip its forces for counter insurgency operations. Although up till now the strategy used by the Pakistani Army to counter insurgents / terrorists is more conventional than the classical COIN ops strategy described in US Field Manual (FM) - 3-24 authored by Gen. David Petraeus,¹²⁴ Col. Brian Cloughley, author of "*A History of the Pakistan Army*", talking about Pakistan Army's Counterinsurgency capability comments:-

The (Pakistan) army had to retrain almost from scratch to meet the new challenge and it has done remarkably well in completely altering the training priority and emphasis in such a short period.

Brian Cloughley¹²⁵

¹²² Global security.org , "India Pakistan Conflict"
<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/indo-pak.html>; Internet; accessed 17 January 2010

¹²³ "Indian sub-continent is prone to nuclear war" *Thaindian News*, 29 November 2009; available from http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/india-news/indian-sub-continent-is-prone-to-nuclear-war-army-chief_100278935.html; Internet; accessed 16 January 2010.

¹²⁴ Lalwani, *Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign...* , 4

¹²⁵ Brian Cloughley, *History of the Pakistan Army: Wars and Insurrections*, third edition (Pakistan: Oxford Press, 2008), cover page.

Threat Perception

Taliban supported by Al-Qaeda have emerged out to be a major threat and a cause of instability in the country. In case of even a limited success by them a lot of religious extremist groups presently dormant inside Pakistan will suddenly become active causing further destabilization and hence commitment of more forces. Within Pakistan's tribal areas are at least four overlapping security threats: global terrorists; Afghan Taliban; ; Pakistani Taliban; and a plethora of tribal militias, extremist networks, and sectarian groups.¹²⁶

India is trying to gain support of US and other western countries by propagating that the operations against Pakistan are important to gain control of nuclear assets before they fall in the hands of extremists.¹²⁷ Moreover the threat of another Mumbai-type attack is undeniable; numerous Pakistan-based groups (Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed) remain motivated and able to strike Indian targets.¹²⁸ Many of these groups have incentives to act as spoilers, whether to disrupt efforts to improve Indo-Pakistani relations or to distract Islamabad from counter terror crackdowns at home.¹²⁹ An Indian retaliatory strike against terrorist targets on Pakistani soil would set off a spiral of violent escalation between the nuclear-armed rivals.¹³⁰

Political chaos induced by inept leadership and military takeover will spell disaster for the country. This threat may emerge in the realm of the political government failing to stabilize the situation and growing anarchy and dissatisfaction amongst the general public. This will do well for the insurgents and may result in withdrawal of support from US and other allies. Economic meltdown and general uprising under the prevailing poor economic situation is also seen as a threat for the country.

¹²⁶ Markey, *Securing Pakistan's Tribal Belt*, 9.

¹²⁸ Daniel Markey, "Mumbai: A Battle in the War for Pakistan," *Council on Foreign Relations Publication*, (12 December 2008); available from <http://www.cfr.org/publication/17981/mumbai.html>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2010.

¹²⁹ Daniel Markey, *Terrorism and Indo-Pakistani Escalation*, 1.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

Dilemma Effecting Full Use of Force and Resources

Pakistan does not have the capacity to muster enough forces to counter both Indian and Taliban threat simultaneously. If Pakistan has to succeed in the war against terror and finish the menace of terrorism, it will have to be at the cost of mustering more forces from the eastern front.¹³¹ Although US is trying to bridge the gap between the two countries by applying all kinds of diplomatic measures to resolve the impending issues,¹³² such an eventuality appears to be a remote possibility. Taliban on the other hand do not possess conventional superiority, so their reach is limited. In contrast, India's military superiority, nuclear weapons, and 500,000 troops facing the Pakistani border could be used for a massive land invasion. The threat is further augmented by India's provocative "Cold Start" doctrine. Pakistan has not forgotten the loss of 1971, when Bangladeshi secession was aided by Indian military intervention.¹³³

The COIN warfare doctrine calls for "clear, hold and build." Pakistan has the capability to clear terrorists strong holds by use of military forces but because of shortage of troops and absence of other LEAs (Law Enforcement Agencies) like police etc, has failed to hold and build the captured areas. As Richard Holbrook said:-

Our assistance should support Pakistani efforts to "hold and build" in western Pakistan as part of its counterinsurgency efforts so extremists do not return to fill the vacuum once military operations have ended.¹³⁴

To achieve this, as per the doctrine a favourable troop to population ratio is required. Keeping in view the Indian threat, Pakistan is facing a dilemma of achieving this force ratio. Pakistan Military forces comprise of approx 550,000 regular forces.¹³⁵ The

¹³¹ Lalwani, Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign... ,48.

¹³² Daniel Markey, *Terrorism and Indo-Pakistani Escalation*, Contingency Planning ..., 5-8.

¹³³ Lalwani, Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign..., 53.

¹³⁴ Testimony of the US State Department Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke. (Council on Foreign Relations: May 2009); available from http://www.cfr.org/publication/19322/holbrookes_testimony_on_afghanistanpakistan_before_the_house_for_reign_relations_committee_may_2009.html., Internet; accessed 14 January 2010.

present force disposition of Pakistan Military keeping in view the conventional threat from India is as under:-



Map 1.4 - Dispositions of Pakistan Army Corps Along Eastern / Western Borders¹³⁶

As per the force to population ratio of COIN doctrine (20 soldiers per 1000 civilians) for 26-29 million people of FATA / NWFP region, 434,000 troops are needed,

¹³⁵ Lalwani, Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign... ,41.

¹³⁶ *Ibid*

which is very difficult to achieve.¹³⁷ The most optimistic scenario would allow Pakistan to redeploy only two-thirds of its forces from the Indian border to conduct COIN operations in FATA and NWFP.¹³⁸ That means that its regular and paramilitary forces combined still would fall short of average force ratios necessary for a COIN success. In addition, Pakistan would need to recruit more than 100,000 men in local militias to assist in holding areas that it cleared of insurgents.¹³⁹ A comparative analysis of such ops conducted by different countries is as under, including Pakistan's potential campaign in FATA/NWFP.¹⁴⁰

Table 1.5-Analysis of COIN Ops of Different Countries

| | U.S./South Vietnam | Soviets in Afghanistan | US in Iraq | Potential Pakistan Campaign in NWFP/ FATA |
|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Total Forces | 1,368,000-1,434,000 | 200,000 (50,000 on border alone) | 542,000-610,000 | 434,000 |
| Total Population | 16 million | 15 million | 27 million | 26-29 million |
| Total Space (sq. km) | 173,000 sq. km. | 647,500 sq. km | 438,000 sq. km. | 102,000 sq. km. |
| Insurgent Levels | 300,000 | 100,000-200,000 | 40,000 hardcore; 150,000 total | 30,000-40,000 |
| Average Troop- to- | 85-90 | 13.3 | approx. 18-22.5 | 15-16.7 |

¹³⁷Lalwani, *Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign...*, 33.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 34

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 30-32

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---------------------|---|-----------------|
| Population Ratio(per 1000) | | | | |
| Troop to Space Ratio | 7.9-8.3/sq. km. | .31/sq. km. | 1.39/sq. km. | 4.25/sq. km |
| Troop-to-Insurgent Ratio | 5:1 though tactically never higher than 1.5:1 (Joes) | Between 2:1 and 1:1 | 4:1 to 15:1 | 10:1 |
| Average Terrain Type | Jungle | Mountainous | Urban | Mountainous |
| Length of Engagement | 10 years, 1965-1975 | 8 years, 1980-1988 | 6+ years, 2003-present | 2003 to present |
| Outcome | Unsuccessful | Unsuccessful | Mixed | - |
| Source(s) | Nagl, Lewis, Hunt, Joes, Pentagon Papes | Coll, Joes | Nagl, O'Hanlon & Campbell; Robb; Parker | - |

The best balance that Pakistan can achieve is to resort to redistribution of her forces for COIN and conventional warfare, with sufficient capacity to reinforce each kind of ops with additional forces from the other, simultaneously building her paramilitary and LEAs. As explained in Fig 1.1 below:-¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Joseph D.Celeski, "COIN Strategic Aspect of COUNTERINSURGENCY," *Military Review* vol 86, issue 2 (Mar/Apr2006), 38

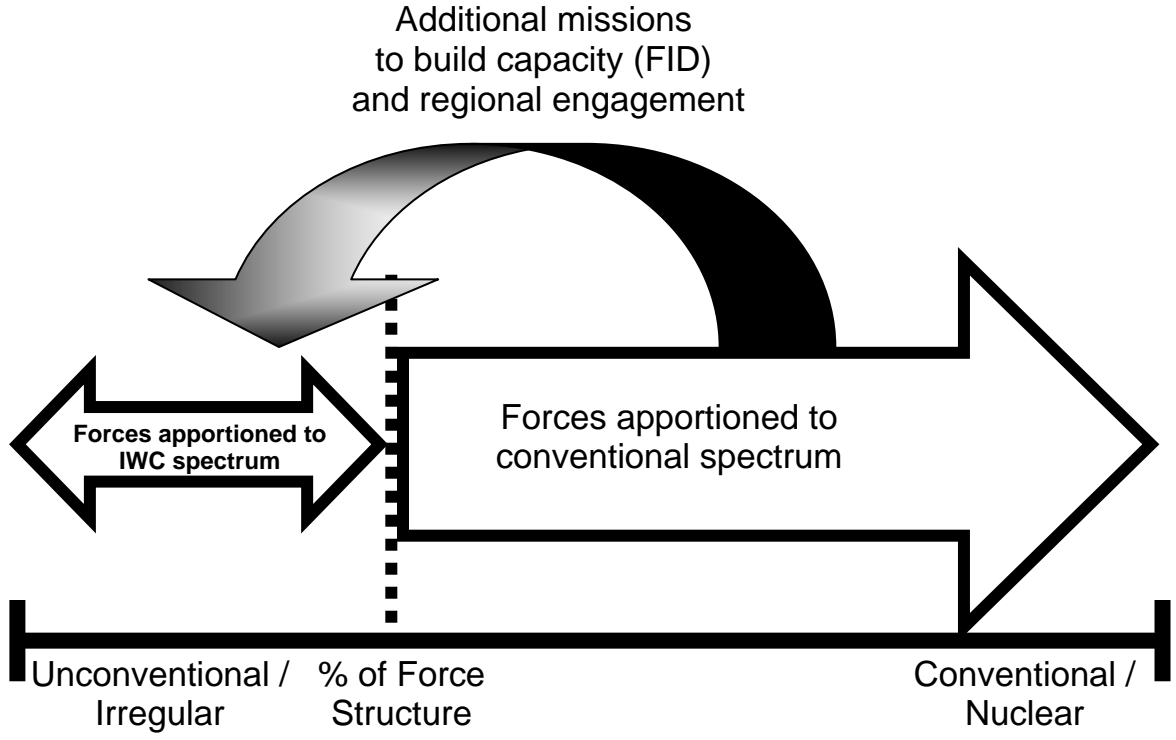


Fig 1.1- Redistribution of force posture along the range of military operations

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

An analysis of the current politico-social and security condition in the tribal belt of both Pakistan and Afghanistan; reveals that a lot needs to be done for harnessing the menace of terrorism in the region. It is however felt, that many of the problems can be resolved by a careful review of the current policies by looking at them through the cultural lens of the region, keeping in view the beliefs and traditions of the Afghan and Pashtun tribal societies of Pakistan.

Understanding the Tribal Dynamics of Afghanistan and Pakistan

It is very important for US and the West to understand the entwined nature and dynamics of tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. No solution can be sought to this problem unless it is treated by taking Pakistan, Afghanistan and the people living on both sides of the border on board.¹⁴² The problems associated have to be taken into consideration down to the micro level. Establishing laws for cross border movement for people (belonging to tribes) living on both sides of the border need to be regulated. Focus will have to be on provision of basic amenities of life and job opportunities (within the tribal region) on either side of the border to restrict, discourage and limit the cross border movement only to social necessities rather than economic and educational needs / requirements. At present most of this movement is because of the fact that majority of the people living in Afghanistan are dependent on Pakistan for their livelihood, education, medical facilities and other basic amenities of life.¹⁴³ However it has to be understood that even after these requirements are met within their own countries, the tribes cannot be separated or stopped from meeting each other. Although there is a likelihood that they can than be made to abide by laws like getting visas or permits for moving across the border and passing through specified entry and exit points. This would then help in maintaining a check / control over illegal movement across the border.

It needs to be taken into account, that the tribes living in these areas live their life as per a tribal code of conduct; an effort has to be made to respect and understand this

¹⁴²Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* ,..... 51-52.

¹⁴³Weaver, *Pakistan: In the shadow of jihad and Afghanistan*....., 42.

code and accordingly resolve their problems. They have their own form of democracy which is somewhat similar to the western form of democracy as it thrives on the “jirga” system which is actually a non dictatorial form of resolving problems after reaching mutual consensus on issues and respecting the decision of the majority.¹⁴⁴ Another important thing that needs to be understood is that the tribes are not bound by geographical boundaries or limited by district, provincial or international borders. Hence any effort whether to maintain peace or to promote wellbeing and development has to be aligned as per the layout and disposition of the tribes and not as per the layout of a district, province or state. This will help promote goodwill and trust, and win the allegiance of the tribes.

One more aspect which needs to be kept in mind is the psyche of the people of these areas. Historically they have refused and revolted against foreign aggression, but at the same time they have been well known for their generosity and extravagant behaviour towards guests or travelers. Looking after the safety and comfort of a guest has been one of the most well-known and famous tradition of the Pakhtun culture, hence it should be understood that these people can never be tamed by use of force, however they can always be melted down with love and patience.

US Policy towards Pakistan

US cannot afford to leave or abandon this region once again as has been the precedence in the past. There is a requirement to formulate a long term policy to bring stability and peace in the region and US will have to shoulder the responsibility to ensure that it is implemented and enforced in years to come. For Pakistan the policy will have to be threefold, focusing on achieving short and long term objectives in the military, economic and developmental fields.

In terms of military assistance US will have to ensure that it provides Pakistan Military with requisite technology and assistance in terms of both military hardware and equipment so that the ongoing fight against the miscreants and terrorists inside Pakistan can continue and become more effective. Pakistan needs assistance to build her Para Military forces like FC, and police to maintain law and order in the area. These forces

¹⁴⁴ Markey, *Securing Pakistan's Tribal Belt*, , 6-8

need better training as well as state of the art weapons and equipment to combat terrorists.¹⁴⁵ This assistance and help would be directly proportional to the efforts put in by the Pakistan government and her military as Pakistan at her own cannot generate enough resources to meet the expenses of the ongoing war against terror.

US will also have to make an endeavor to minimize the negative or anti US sentiment prevailing within masses generally throughout Pakistan and especially in NWFP / FATA. Actions like drone attacks resulting in collateral damage and loss of innocent civilian just add fuel to the fire. As stated by Leader of the opposition in National Assembly of Pakistan, Chaudry Nisar Ali khan, “The statement of [US Army Chief] Michael Mullen that US drones would continue to launch aerial strikes (in Pakistan) is not acceptable to us. We will neither accept an airstrike nor a ground offensive inside our territory”.¹⁴⁶

Another important role that US will have to play in the region is to maintain peace and stability between India and Pakistan. Pakistan has to convince US and western world that the possibility to keep conflict with India limited to conventional war in the backdrop of nuclear overhang will be remote. So India must not try to fish in the troubled water. As this will not only destabilize the region, but would also distract Pakistan from concentrating her efforts and resources towards the insurgents and hamper US ops in Afghanistan, because Pakistan serves as a vital and irreplaceable logistics hub and overland corridor for U.S. and NATO operations.¹⁴⁷

In terms of economic support US has to help Pakistan strengthen her crumbling economy. Pakistan needs to promote developmental projects in her tribal areas to provide job opportunities. The strategy of clear, hold and build needs to be adopted by the government of Pakistan to succeed in this war. US and her allies must help Pakistan, both militarily as well as economically, in implementing this strategy. The tribal areas have historically been neglected by all governments in the past and bringing them at par with other parts of the country would be resource intensive. Moreover this development in

¹⁴⁵ Aziz, “Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan,” , 7

¹⁴⁶ Ahmed, “Terrorism in Tribal Area of Pakistan.”,53.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

terms of construction of schools / educational institutions, electric power generation projects, hospitals, water and sanitation plants, telecommunication hubs / stations and development of roads and other communication structure is highly resisted by terrorists / other miscreant factions in the region for fear of limiting their influence and countering their motives in the area. Hence any developmental project undertaken in isolation is either destroyed by the terrorists or the contractors and labor are intimidated and forced to abandon the project half way. Therefore development can only be brought in, if the area is properly secured and free of terrorist influence.

The most important step towards bringing peace in the region is to promote education and development in the area. US and other powers need to help both Pakistan and Afghanistan in promoting literacy in the tribal belt with emphasis on educating women. Development of small industries / enterprises should be promoted on both sides of the border especially in the sectors like transport, metal works, stone craft, carpet weaving and food processing etc, where local skills exist.¹⁴⁸ Moreover inland trade should be promoted on both sides and opportunities to export the local manufactured goods to urban markets be ensured. Three basic characters of Pakhtuns make them good candidates for such developmental efforts. Firstly they have always found it easy to adapt to new technologies. The ease, with which they operated sophisticated weapons like stingers missiles, drove tanks and Russian left MIGs and mastered use of explosives, is all reflective of their capability to manage and use new systems. This is why small arms manufacturing is a large business in the Pakhtun belts and employs thousands of people from both sides of the border. Secondly they have been involved in the trucking business for decades; their engineering skills come in handy to keep old equipment on road way beyond what would be considered their normal lives. Lastly people of these areas are known for their ability and skills to handle money, they are considered to be very successful in the business of money lending, money transfers and asset management etc.¹⁴⁹ These people if provided with the right kind of opportunities to utilize their skills

¹⁴⁸ Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan24.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 31

can surely be stopped from becoming recruits of Al Qaida and other terrorist's organizations.

US Policy in Afghanistan

US policy in Afghanistan has up till now been focused on use of force to defeat Al Qaida and Taliban and to strengthen / establish a democratic government inside Afghanistan. The world powers in January 2006 in London chalked a well thought out plan titled "Afghanistan Compact" for reviving and building the economy of Afghanistan.¹⁵⁰ This plan provided 27 benchmarks to be achieved within the next five years built around three pillars: security being the first, Governance, Rule of Law and Human Rights, being the second and Economic and Social Development being the third. However missing from the strategy was a regional development component directed explicitly at the Pakhtun tribal belt that borders Pakistan.¹⁵¹ During the conference the donors committed \$10.5 billion as a grant for the government of Afghanistan, to achieve the set objectives. However most of the goals that are being pursued will be either difficult to achieve or do not conform to the aspirations of the people at whom the program is aimed.¹⁵² At a special session of NATO foreign ministers, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced \$10.6 billion of additional funding, of which \$8.6 billion will be spent on military equipment and training and an additional \$2 billion on reconstruction. From 2002 to 2007 US provided \$14.2 billion to Afghanistan, very little of which went to the Pakhtun belt bordering Pakistan.¹⁵³ There is a requirement to create job opportunities and promote small industries / enterprises along the border as explained above, on the Afghan side .to stop them from moving to Pakistan in pursuit of economic opportunities. This is also essential to stop the growth and trade of opium and narcotics in the region.

¹⁵⁰ Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....,16.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 34

The two tribal belts on both sides of the border have a total estimated population of 7.5 to 8 million people. Of this about one - fourth are between the ages of 15 and 30, the age group most in need of jobs and most susceptible to being recruited by Taliban and Al Qaida. Only one half of them, or about a million have jobs; the remaining are either looking for work or are employed in the expanding drug trade. It is estimate that by spending about \$2 billion a year on development with focus on labor intensive sectors, it should be possible to extend legal employment opportunities not only to the one million unemployed young men but also raise the level of productivity of those who are already employed.¹⁵⁴

The key to bringing peace in Afghanistan is to let democracy be implemented by the people and for the people, the way they want it and how it suits them the best. US and other powers should stop choosing leaders for a country with her own history, traditions and a large population capable of making their own decision. Bringing Hamid Karzai as the President in 2002 as a result of “Bonn Accord” might have been a good decision then, but bringing him back to power by holding fake elections in 2010 is a big mistake.¹⁵⁵ Afghanistan is a tribal society, it has certain norms and traditions because of which leaders are made and given respect. Hamid Karzai does not have the credentials of someone who has served his country during the Afghan-Soviet war. He did not lead any men into battle fields or shed blood for the honor and glory of his Afghan brethren or his country. He throughout the war remained in exile in Pakistan and was never a leading general or a politician during that crisis. These credentials are a symbol of respect in Afghan society and any leader without them does not have a chance to have the following of the majority of his countrymen. Although he belongs to the majority Pashtun tribe but even within that tribe he never had a position of authority or a leader’s status.

There may be a requirement to recognize and bring other partners, parties or groups on the political scene. It has to be understood that US’s war is with Al Qaida and not with Taliban, and unless Taliban are recognized as a political party and key figures

¹⁵⁴Ibid., 40

¹⁵⁵ Katzman, *Afghanistan: Post Taliban Governance, Security and U.S. Policy*, 12.

like Mullah Omer, Hikmatyar and Rabbani are accepted as political leaders, true peace and democracy cannot prevail in Afghanistan. Although Hamid Karzai is a Pashtun but it is not a secret that most of the government machinery and military / police force either comprises of, or is under the influence of Tajik led northern Alliance group. This fact alone solves the mystery behind the whole fiasco and failure of Hamid Karzai's government. Northern Alliance was the rival group of Taliban during their tenure of government and hence has a history of strong enmity with all pro Taliban or Pashtun factions; their sole presence on top would always invite aggression and raise tension with other stronger and more powerful groups having the backing of bigger and stronger tribes. The same fact has been highlighted by Selig Harrison in an article for *The Washington Post* in January 2007, he states "Tajik generals and their proxies did control the army as well as key secret policy and intelligences hated by the Pushtuns," he further writes, "The Taliban is effectively exploiting Pashtun dissatisfaction with Kabul recruiting many of its fighters from disaffected tribes in the Ghilzai branch of the Pashtuns who resent the favoritism Karzai has shown to higher status tribes such as his own Durrani. Mullah Omer the key Taliban leader is a Ghilzai."¹⁵⁶

Recent history of the world is witness to such happenings and acceptances where rebels or anti government groups or factions were accepted as political rivals and it helped in putting an end to an unwarranted war. Ireland, Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone stand out as examples in this regard. Afghanistan needs to be given the same chance to avoid more blood shed and stop the suffering of the masses.

Although a lot of effort and resources are being spent on the training and organization of Afghan military and police force, an important aspect is being disregarded / overlooked in terms of their structure, recruitment and make up. Afghanistan is a country which works on tribal dynamics, and it is also well known that tribes have traditional rivalry and historical enmity with each other. The present organizational set up is Northern Alliance / Tajik dominated, understandably because of their support to US against Taliban's in 2001/02. But this is not a long lasting arrangement, and is likely to crumble the day the US and allied forces leave Afghanistan.

¹⁵⁶ Burki, "How to Develop the Afghan-Pakistan.....,26-27

There is a requirement to give representation to all tribes and factions within the country in the armed forces and police as per their ratio or strength in the overall society. Moreover leaders from other groups also need to be given suitable status / rank within the forces to create a balance within the ranks and files. It would not be a bad idea to copy the model of Frontier Constabulary (FC) of the Para Military forces of Pakistan where each tribe has its own distinct platoon within the company and the leadership or higher ranks and appointments are equally distributed and divided between different tribes e.g if the Commanding Officer is a Pashtun, the Second in Command would be a Tajik, the Company Commanders would be Uzbeks, Ghazali's or from other castes or tribes. Hence an equal representation of all tribes is ensured within a battalion.

There is also a requirement to strengthen these forces and employ them to seal the Pak-Afghan border to control the illegal cross border movement. The idea of increasing the strength of these forces from 32000 to 70,000 is a step in the right direction.¹⁵⁷ Both Afghanistan and Pakistan have to join hands to overcome this problem and for this to happen, Afghan forces have to be trained and equipped to the level where they can perform this duty in an efficient manner. If US and Israel with all their resources and technology have not been able to completely control the cross border movement through Mexico and Palestine, than Pakistan and Afghanistan with their meager resources and a far harsh and inhospitable environment and terrain have a really big task to perform. US needs to enhance the surveillance and monitoring capabilities of both Pakistan and Afghanistan by providing ISR capabilities like GSRs (ground surveillance radars), satellite imageries, helicopters and other aerial platforms for reconnaissance, transportation and support of special forces or to engage opportunity targets and support ground offensive.

Separating Islam from Terrorism

One of the biggest mistakes being done by the US and her allies is confusing Islam with terrorism. It has to be understood that Islam as a religion has got nothing to do with terrorism. It does not support, promote or professes terrorism and all deeds associated with it. Although it is true that the terrorist associations like Al Qaida are

¹⁵⁷ Aziz, "Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan," , 11.

misusing Islam to promote their agendas and recruit Muslims from all over the world. But the religion itself negates and strictly forbids all such actions which involve spreading terrorism and killing innocent people for any cause. US and the West need to be very careful in associating Islam and terrorism, as this creates a negative feeling against them in the hearts and minds of all Muslims around the world and gives legitimacy to what Al Qaida and other organizations say. Use of terminologies like calling the terrorists jihadis or Taliban or using the term Islamic terrorism should strictly be forbidden so as not to create an Islam versus West or a Muslim versus Non Muslim holy war kind of a scenario which the terrorists are aiming at.

Use of Islam to Counter the Philosophy and Propaganda of Terrorists

The best way to contradict the propaganda campaign of the terrorists is to use the true teachings of Islam to counter their philosophy. Unfortunately we have failed to launch an effective media campaign against these organizations. We have made them super human beings and supported their plethora of lies by declaring them very strong and extremely dangerous. They call themselves as students of religion (Taliban) fighters of Allah (Mujahidin) and we also call them the same. They use intimidation to create fear in the hearts and minds of common people and increase recruitment by either motivating them by misusing Islam or through coercive methods. We must use Muslim religious scholars around the world, to negate their philosophy and unveil their motives and true aspirations by using / explaining the actual teachings of the Holy Prophet (May Peace Be Upon Him) and the Holy Quran. The media of the Muslim world can be effectively used to counter their propaganda, as Muslims are likely to listen to that more and understand it without being dissuaded (by the terrorists) that it is another attempt by the West to mislead them. We need to formulate a joint concerted policy to neutralize their propaganda campaign as it would considerably reduce recruitment of new members and limit their influence in the Muslim countries, especially Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Resolution of Pak- Afghan Border (Durand Line) Problem

There is a serious requirement to resolve the current Pak-Afghan border problem. The Durand Line as explained earlier is not accepted as an international border by the tribes living on both the sides; however that is not the solution to the problem. Unless a

permanent status is given to the border the cross border movement cannot be stopped or controlled. Both Afghanistan and Pakistan have to resolve this issue at priority and US has to play its role in finding a solution to this very important and long outstanding issue between the two countries. Over the period of years Pakistan has come out with many suggestions like fencing or mining the border etc, but these have always been rejected by Afghanistan on the pretext that Pakistan is trying to legitimize her claim over some of the Afghan land under the garb of this fencing and mining project.¹⁵⁸ Moreover the tribes resent such a development, as besides being split into two, they fully benefit from all kinds of economic opportunities present on each side of the border without being subjected to any government taxes etc. The present status of the border also helps the terrorists and their logistic support to move freely from one country to the other; hence they also detest such a development.

It is imperative for both the countries to accept the status of the Durand Line as an international border and impose all mandatory laws and regulations that are otherwise implemented on international borders between different countries. However keeping in view the sensitivity of the tribes divided across the border some special grants like permits or green cards etc may be issued to individuals belonging to these specific tribes after necessary verification by government authorities on each side, so that only these people have free access on each side of the border.

Withdrawal of US and Allied Forces from Afghanistan

It is also important that US and other Allied Forces pull out of Afghanistan as soon as possible. The presence of these forces is also a cause of instability in the region. Invariably they are being labeled as foreign invaders who have come to rule this area for promoting their own interests. It is therefore felt that the withdrawal of US and allied forces is mandatory for bringing peace and stability in Afghanistan. A peace keeping / maintaining force, comprising of troops from Muslim countries under the mandate of United Nations, should be employed in Afghanistan as anti Islamic or anti west sentiment cannot be exploited by the miscreants / terrorists against them. Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) can play an important role in formulation of such a force.

¹⁵⁸ Aziz, "Causes of the Rebellion in Waziristan,"21

Way Forward for Pakistan to Resolve the Issues.

Threat from Taliban /Al-Qaeda cannot be over emphasized; the earlier Pakistan Forces build up capability to counter this threat very effectively the better it is for Pakistan in particular and the world in general. USA and other allies need to help Pakistan Army in building up their capacity for COIN ops by better training and resources. As identified by Richard Holbrooke: “We must focus our military assistance on the tools, training and support that Pakistan needs to root out the terrorists”.¹⁵⁹

Military take over of the country will be disastrous. Political leaders have to put their act together. Political Parties supported by media must build counter insurgency operations against extremists. Pakistan’s economy cannot support the effort to counter this dual threat. As Richard Holbrooke, said:

A stable, secure, democratic Pakistan is vital to U.S. national security interests. We must support and strengthen the democratic government of Pakistan in order to eliminate once and for all the extremist threat from al-Qaeda and affiliated terrorist groups.¹⁶⁰

The focus of all civil and military plans and operations must be on the center of gravity in the conflict— the people of FATA/NWFP. Winning their hearts and minds must be the objective of the government’s efforts by using whole of the government approach.¹⁶¹

Bringing Reforms in FATA

It is very important for Pakistan to bring FATA into the main stream of the country. This would be resource intensive and something that cannot be achieved over night. FCR would not work in the tribal society any more, nor would the age old system implemented by the British of empowering the “Maliks” pay dividends. The government

¹⁵⁹ Testimony of the US *State Department Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan*, Richard Holbrooke (Council on Foreign Relations: May 2009); available from http://www.cfr.org/publication/19322/holbrookes_testimony_on_afghanistanpakistan_before_the_house_for_reign_relations_committee_may_2009.html ;Internet; accessed 14 January 2010.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ Major E. Deborah Elek, "Unconventional Warfare and the Principles of War" (master's thesis, CSC 1994), available from <http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/elek.pdf>; Internet accessed 14 January 2010.

needs to bring reforms in FATA. The tribal belt should be divided into tehsils and districts like all other parts of Pakistan, the system of Political Agent should be abolished and these areas should function under their own District Administration as part of a province. All matters related to law and order / judiciary should be resolved as per the law of the country in courts through police and other law enforcing agencies. The system of levies and khasadars should be abolished and normal police force should be deployed all over the tribal belt. There may also be a requirement of establishing small military cantonments in a few parts of the tribal belt for helping the law enforcement agencies in case of requirement. Political reforms should also be brought in FATA by allowing people of the area to join various political parties and compete in the elections under the banner of the party they like.

CONCLUSION

The tribal belt along Pak-Afghan border is in the eye of the storm. This region has become the focus of the world attention and the centre piece of all military and non military actions both on the Afghan as well as the Pakistan side of the border. Pakistan is occupying the centre stage in the war against terror. The success of the ongoing COIN ops in Afghanistan and Pakistan, depend upon the commitment of Pakistan and its forces in the tribal belt along Pak-Afghan border. Pakistan Army will have to play a major role in this war. It will not only have to modify its doctrine and learn from the experience of US and NATO forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, but will also have to avoid use of conventional means of warfare by focusing on selective use of force. Pakistan also has to build its capacity to hold the ground after it has been cleared, by either bringing in more forces from the eastern front or building up the paramilitary forces and police to undertake the task.

Relations between Pakistan and India are the main cause of concern for Pakistan. India has to understand the dynamics of the ongoing war on terror; any tension would result in shifting the impetus of the ongoing operations towards east, hence providing relief to the miscreants. If India continues to threaten Pakistan with her offensive military doctrine of “Cold Start” etc, commitment and maintenance of a sizeable conventional force along the eastern border will remain to be a compulsion for Pakistan. This would prove to be counter productive for the interests of Pakistan, US and NATO forces, and would also hamper peace and stability in the region.

US and other powers have an important role to play in this regard. They have to help Pakistan train and equip her Army and develop an effective COIN warfare capability.¹⁶² Strengthen the democratic institutions and the government in Pakistan. Support the dwindling economy of the country and provide resources to the government to combat terrorism and bring stability and development in FATA and NWFP. And most

¹⁶² Husain Haqqani, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States "Fighting Terrorism is Pakistan's Own War," *interviewed by Jayshree Bajoria*, 21 October 2008 (Council on Foreign Relations Publications); available from http://www.cfr.org/publication/17567/capital_interview.html; Internet; accessed 16 January 2010.

importantly stabilize India-Pakistan relationship to lessen the tensions between the two countries and help Pakistan win the war.

US needs to understand that the priorities of Pakistan in dealing with insurgent elements is different from that of US, hence it needs to help Pakistan settle her internal insurgency problems first, so that it can look outward and resolve issues effecting US and allied forces in Afghanistan. Winning the hearts and minds of the people of FATA and NWFP is the key to success. This involves using whole of the government approach and committing more civil and military resources into the ongoing ops. A stable political government backed up by a strong judicial system, a proactive media and all out support of the military would only ensure success. Integration of FATA into the main stream of Pakistan is the only solution which would pave the path for an enduring peace and stability in the region. This would be resource extensive and would need constitutional amendments, reforms and a very strong will and resolve by the government. Pakistan's economy will not be able to bear this burden at it own, it would need considerable assistance from US and other allied countries in undertaking this gigantic developmental task of the socio-economic uplift of her tribal areas.

US and the West have to develop a deep understanding of the tribal culture and the dynamics associated with it. The US and West's perception of looking at things is different than that of the east and Muslims. The US and NATO forces need to see things through the cultural lens of this part of the world to understand the issues effecting the local population here in order to develop a better understanding and find a possible way forward. The West needs to be very careful in associating Islam with terrorism, as this generates a very negative and anti West feeling within the Muslim majority areas of this region. Moreover this association of religion with terrorism is most exploited by the terrorists and is their biggest recruitment source.

There is a very strong perception prevailing within both Pakistan and Afghanistan, that US led operations in Afghanistan are the main source of militancy, instability and insurgency in FATA and the region. US and NATO forces cannot stay in this region for very long, they have to reduce their visible presence in the region and find a political solution to the problem. However US will have to lend a discrete but firm support to the tribal areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan and enforce development in this

region through the governments of both these countries while remaining behind the scenes. It also needs to be understood that use of military force is just one of the tools to counter insurgency and not the total cure of the problem. The actual answer lies in finding a political solution to the problem and removing / resolving the basic issues or reasons which give birth to or cause such insurgent movements. As of now, efforts to find a political solution to the problem seem to be wanting. A deliberate effort needs to be made to strengthen the Afghan Government and bring true democracy in the country by allowing the Afghan people to choose the leader of their choice instead of selecting someone of own choosing like Hamid Karzai. .

We must remember that in the mid 1990's, those who established control over most of Afghanistan did so to bring peace to that troubled country. They partially succeeded. The weapon they used was to impose on the people a government based on their reading of Islam. The regime that then emerged did so by beating a set of tribal warlords, who after helping to expel the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, were fighting to advance their own limited agendas. This meant plundering the meager resources of the country to benefit only themselves, their tribes and clans. None of them had a nation building or fixing a broken state agenda on their list of priorities.

If we don't evolve a strategy which addresses all the inherent issues resulting in the current crises in Afghanistan, Pakistan and their tribal region, we can expect something quite different and considerably more dangerous in the future. If the forces that now go under the name of "resurgent Taliban" are able to establish themselves in a few parts of Afghanistan and Pakistan their aims and governing philosophy will be very different from those that ruled earlier. This group if gains power, will do that after overcoming a foreign force and not by beating down local rivals as was the case in the past. For the first Taliban regime, war against the West was a byproduct, an unwritten prelude to the drama that had an entirely local content. This time the focus will primarily be on what the most radicalized components of radical Islam see as the ultimate cause: an all out jihad against the West. It is therefore in the interest of the international community to help stabilize the situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan, from deteriorating any further and support these countries in their war against terrorism.

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