THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Conrad on Terrorism
Robert D. Kaplan

Special Issue

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paint a much different picture, however. A survey of Pakistanis captured by the United Front shows that nearly 70 percent of such fighters are non-Pashtun, and therefore must be motivated by a cause other than ethnic solidarity. When I interviewed them, these POWs (who also include Arabs and Chinese) claimed that they came to help the Taliban in order to acquire skills that would be helpful in a *jihad* outside of Afghanistan, both against their home countries and against the United States.

Post-Taliban Afghanistan

THE KEY TO defeating an enemy is understanding him. In this, bin Laden and his Taliban allies have already proven helpful. The CIA admits that it was bin Laden who was behind the assassination of United Front leader Ahmed Shah Masood just two days before the September 11 attacks on the United States. Bin Laden likely calculated that murdering Masood would decapitate the Afghan resistance just when the United States would need it the most. But Washington has been slow to heed bin Laden's message: that the greatest threat to the Al-Qaeda terrorist network—at least inside Afghanistan—lies with those who can physically oust it. The people of the United Front have been suffering from the atrocities of bin Laden and the Taliban for years. They may be the only people in the world who hate bin Laden more than Americans do. While only a genuinely broad-based coalition government representing all ethnic groups, including southern Pashtuns, will be able to govern in a post-Taliban Afghanistan, one thing is certain: as long as the United Front is allowed to play a strong role, no foreign Islamist militants will be allowed on Afghan soil.

That the U.S. government has so much difficulty grasping this fact shows that Washington has been listening a little too closely to the Taliban's and bin Laden's allies in Islamabad. This is not surprising given that Americans officials stationed overseas who are tasked to monitor Afghanistan are based primarily out of Pakistan. Not coincidentally, the most negative media stories about the United Front tend to come from the same place. Yet if we continue along this path of willful ignorance in the wake of more than 5,000 dead Americans, it will likely prove fatal to many more of us. Instead, we must strain to peer through the mists clouding our vision of Afghanistan, lest we view that country no more clearly than I first did through the veil of a *burka* on that bus ride many years ago. □

"Long, Too Long America"

Long, too long America,
Traveling roads all even and peaceful you learn'd from joys and prosperity only,
But now, ah now, to learn from crises of anguish, advancing, grappling with direst fate and recoiling not,
And now to conceive and show to the world what your children en-masse really are,
(For who except myself has yet conceiv'd what your children en-masse really are?)

—Walt Whitman

The Pakistani Pivot

Dennis Kux

ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2001, Pakistan was a country of secondary interest to the United States. Although it had been America's "most allied ally in Asia" in the 1950s and an indispensable partner in the struggle against the Soviets in Afghanistan in the 1980s, the relationship unraveled after the Soviets pulled out of Afghanistan. In October 1990, the United States suspended economic and military aid under the Pressler amendment because Pakistan had developed nuclear weapons. Its May 1998 nuclear tests and the army's overthrow of the civilian government of Nawaz Sharif in October 1999 led to further sanctions against the one-time U.S. ally.

Thus, when President Bill Clinton touched down for five hours in Islamabad on March 25, 2000—the first journey to Pakistan by a U.S. chief executive in more than thirty years—the mood was tense, and contrasted sharply with his highly successful five-day visit to India. In their talks, Clinton and General Pervez Musharraf, Pakistan's military dictator, differed over major issues: how best to deal with the fundamentalist Taliban in Afghanistan and other Islamic extremists; how best to deal with the Kashmir dispute; a timetable for the return of democracy; and nuclear weapons issues. Clinton outlined his concerns to Musharraf in a frank but conciliatory manner and then repeated them in a television address to the people of Pakistan. Out of the public spotlight, the President worried about Pakistan's chronic political instability, the growing threat of fundamentalism, its mounting economic woes and the continuing fixation on India. With the country drifting toward national failure, the worst-case fear was that, like its neighbor Afghanistan, Pakistan might be engulfed by Islamic fundamentalism. A Pakistan ruled by religious extremists and armed with nuclear weapons posed a nightmare scenario with ramifications far transcending South Asia. Amid such concerns, Clinton's inability to produce a better U.S. relationship with Pakistan inevitably left the impression that the United States was "tilting" toward India.

The incoming Bush Administration picked up where Clinton left off, this despite the Cold War tradition of Republican warmth toward governments in Islamabad. The new leadership in Washington soon made clear that its top priority in South Asia was to continue the process of improving relations with India.

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Pakistan's image remained largely negative both in official Washington and in the prestige press.

The events of September 11 have changed all that. Geography and history have once more made Pakistan important to U.S. interests. Islamabad's support is required in order to deal with Osama bin Laden, his Arab terrorist colleagues in Al-Qaeda and their Taliban hosts. Pakistan's long common frontier with Afghanistan, the intimate ethnic links between Pashtuns on both sides of the border, and the in-depth knowledge that Pakistan's intelligence service has of its neighbor make Islamabad a key partner in "bringing the terrorists to justice or justice to the terrorists", as President Bush put it on September 20. Pakistan has become pivotal.

Here We Go Again?

TO AN EXTENT, the post-September 11 situation is a replay of what happened after the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Then, as now, Pakistan was ruled by a military dictator. Then, as now, U.S.-Pakistan relations had been in disarray. In 1979, relations were at their nadir following a mob attack on the U.S. embassy in Islamabad that November. The United States had also cut off economic aid because of Pakistan's secret nuclear program, and had been strongly critical of Pakistan's lack of democracy and poor human rights record.

After the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, President Jimmy Carter quickly shifted policy gears. Pakistan became a "frontline" state. Carter revived the 1959 U.S.-Pakistan security agreement and offered economic and military help. Washington feared that Pakistan might be the Soviets' next victim but, just as important, U.S. officials realized that without Pakistan's help, it was virtually impossible to cause trouble for the Soviets inside Afghanistan. In the midst of the Tehran hostage crisis, no cooperative action was feasible with Iran, the only other country that then bordered on Afghanistan.

Although Muhammad Zia ul-Haq, the then-Pakistani dictator, quickly decided to oppose the Soviets and to provide covert support to a nascent anti-communist guerilla movement, he rejected Carter's offer of $200 million worth of aid as "peanuts." A year later, however, Zia and the Reagan Administration agreed on a cooperation package involving $600 million in U.S. aid a year (including the potent F-16 fighter-bomber); an understanding that the nuclear issue would not be "the centerpiece" of U.S.-Pakistan relations; an end to U.S. criticism about Pakistan's internal scene; and channeling all covert CIA aid to the Afghan resistance through Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI). Zia knew that he had a strong bargaining position *vis-à-vis* the Americans, hung tough, and in the end got what he wanted. So did the United States. Seven years later, in 1988, Mikhail Gorbachev decided to pull the Soviet army out of Afghanistan after the rag-tag but well-armed Afghan *mujaheddin* held 100,000-plus Soviet soldiers at bay.

But there were serious negative consequences as well. The arms supplied through the covert U.S. aid program flooded Afghanistan and became an important cause of the violence and lawlessness that has racked that country ever since. The more fundamentalist Afghan resistance groups, who, in keeping with Zia's instructions, received the bulk of the weapons, gained strength and political legitimacy during the war, as did their Pakistani counterparts. (These counterparts became even more important in the 1990s through their cooperation with the ISI in supporting the insurgency against India in Kashmir.) Ultimately, the collapse of the state structure in Afghanistan, the virtual destruction of the economy, the mass refugee exodus during the anti-Soviet insurgency, and the ensuing civil conflict created the political vacuum that spawned the Taliban and enabled Al-Qaeda to make Afghanistan its base of operations.

To its discredit, the United States simply walked away from Afghanistan after the Soviets departed, leaving it to the Pakistanis to arrange a political settlement among the fractious Afghan *mujaheddin*. The main U.S. aim, as former Undersecretary of State Michael Armacost has said, "was getting the Russians out. Afghanistan, as such, was remote from major U.S. concerns. The United States was not much interested in the internal Afghan setup and did not have much capacity to understand this." Although a more active American role might still have failed to resolve the Afghan problem, Washington was remiss in not trying harder.

But there are important differences from 1979. The United States today is not totally dependent on Islamabad in dealing with Afghanistan. Russia and the new Central Asian republics to the north, especially Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, are bitter foes of the Taliban regime, whom they have blamed for stirring regional instability and Islamic militancy. Iran detests the Taliban, who had executed a number of Iranian diplomats after they captured the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e Sharif in 1998, and was already supporting the anti-Taliban resistance, the Northern Alliance. Although their past record was unpromising and their most capable leader, the redoubtable Ahmed Shah Masood, was assassinated just days before the terrorist attacks on the United States, the Alliance offered a means of applying military pressure on the Taliban. And, of course, they were Afghans.

Probably the most significant difference lay in the fact that Pakistan in 2001 was not just part of the solution to an Afghan problem, but also part of the problem. In the wake of the Soviet departure from Afghanistan and the fall of the communist Najibullah regime in 1992, Pakistan tried unsuccessfully to cobble together a stable arrangement for a *mujaheddin* coalition. However, the *mujaheddin* commanders fell to fighting among themselves, with the conflict taking on an ethnic character. Pashtuns, the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan as well as in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province and northern Baluchistan, clashed with Tajiks, the second largest Afghan ethnic group, and the less numerous Uzbeks and Shi'a Hazaras. The capital city of Kabul suffered more damage from this intra-Afghan strife than it had during the eight-year struggle against the Soviets.

Fed up with the chaos and disorder in Afghanistan, Maj. Gen. Nasrullah Babar, Benazir Bhutto's interior minister, became the godfather of a new Pashtun grouping called the Taliban, or "students", that sprang up in 1994 in southern Afghanistan near the city of Kandahar. The Taliban were mainly Afghan refugees who had studied in *madrassas*, or religious schools, in Baluchistan that were affiliated with the fundamentalist Deobandi school of Sunni Islam. Their ability to pacify areas around Kandahar by suppressing and disarming unruly *mujaheddin* commanders impressed Babar. The interior minister then took the Taliban under his wing, arranging for the ISI to provide communications equipment, transportation, fuel and advice.

After firming up their base in the south and west during 1995, the Taliban advanced rapidly northward in the summer of 1996 to capture Kabul in late-September. What quickly set the Taliban apart was the puritanical nature of their version of Sunni Islam. They were, as Barnett Rubin aptly put it, "fire and brimstone, backwoods preachers with an AK-

47."[1] Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar, a one-eyed Afghan war veteran, proclaimed that Afghanistan would become "a completely Islamic state." He then proceeded to show what he meant by enforcing a rigid code of Islamic law: women were to remain at home and not work; girls were to receive no schooling; men were to wear beards; television and Western music were forbidden; and strict Quranic punishment for crimes was to be enforced.

Over the next two years, as the Taliban imposed their control over almost all of Afghanistan, driving their Northern Alliance opponents into the extreme northeast corner, Pakistan's ISI continued to provide supplies and advice. Students from Pakistani *madrassas* also fought for the Taliban, as did an Arab brigade composed of several thousand Arab fundamentalists who made Afghanistan their base. Osama bin Laden was the most prominent of these. The wealthy Saudi exile and former *jihadi* against the Soviets developed his Al-Qaeda terrorist organization to wage holy war against the United States, which he had come to regard as the mortal enemy of Islam.

Pakistan was the only country to accord diplomatic recognition to the Taliban, apart from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Several factors explain Pakistan's stance. Even if the Taliban were making themselves an international pariah by their treatment of women, they were Pashtun, whom the Pakistanis believed should rule Afghanistan as the largest ethnic group. The desire to see a friendly regime in Afghanistan that would assure "strategic depth" against India, a longtime hope of Pakistan's strategic planners, was a second factor. Finally, the Taliban were willing to reciprocate for the help the ISI provided by permitting use of Afghan territory by militant Pakistani groups in support of the insurgency in Kashmir against India.

Although the military dimension of the Kashmir dispute had been mostly dormant for nearly two decades, it flared up in 1989—just as the Soviets were completing their departure from Afghanistan—as a result of heavy-handed interference by New Delhi into the state's internal politics after the 1982 death of the legendary Kashmiri leader, Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah. The final straw came with the rigging of the 1987 elections to prevent pro-Islamic elements from winning seats in the state assembly. Frustrated Kashmiri Muslim youth, who until then had been willing to vent their displeasure with Indian rule peacefully, turned to violent protest. The Kashmiri *intifada* began. For Pakistan, the temptation to fan the flames was too great to resist. Drawing on the extensive experience in orchestrating the Afghan resistance against the Soviets, the ISI began to provide active backing and training for the Kashmiri *intifada*. Before long, Pakistanis and Arabs became heavily engaged in the anti-India struggle. A nexus took shape linking the Taliban, Al-Qaeda and other Arab terrorists, Pakistani Islamic militants and the ISI.

Students, Spies and Soldiers

AGAINST THIS background, it is not hard to understand why, with the bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa in 1998, Osama bin Laden became a cult hero among Pakistani fundamentalists—a sort of Arab David standing up to the U.S. Goliath. Support for the Taliban and their narrow and obscurantist brand of Islam, however, lay mainly in the Pashtun-populated areas of Pakistan. The Pashtuns, or Pathans as they were formerly called, represent about 15 percent of Pakistan's 150 million people. Their strong tribal traditions, martial character and conservative religious views set them apart from Punjabis and Sindhis, Pakistan's two largest ethnic groups. The unruly Pathans had posed a major security problem for the British Raj, which never fully succeeded in pacifying them. After independence, Pakistan's leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, withdrew the army from the tribal areas, gambling correctly that a Muslim government would succeed in winning allegiance from the Pathans where the British had failed.

Meanwhile, Pakistani society itself has changed. What has happened in Pakistan is not so much its "Talibanization", as some have claimed, as its Islamization. This development began in the late-1970s when President Zia sought to gain greater political legitimacy for his unpopular rule by making Islam a central feature of Pakistani life. Although Pakistan was created to provide a homeland for the Muslims of India, its founding fathers, Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, were secularists. They supported the idea of a separate state not for religious reasons but from fear that the Hindu majority would not respect Muslim minority rights in a united India. Until Zia took over, Pakistani leaders paid lip service to Islam but not too much more. In his Islamization policy, however, Zia substituted traditional Quranic punishments for Western legal norms, established a special *sharia* court to ensure that Pakistan's laws were consistent with the Quran, cooperated with religious parties, especially the Jamaat-i-Islami (which, ironically, had opposed the formation of Pakistan), and promoted the establishment of *madrassas*.

In the two decades since, the *madrassas* have spread widely and now number in the thousands. The government's failure to provide educational facilities, especially in rural areas, created a void that the religious schools have filled. They have produced a large subculture of youth who are lettered in the Quran but little else, and are inculcated with religious fanaticism for *jihad* against India, the United States and other alleged enemies of Islam. The Taliban are the most prominent product of the *madrassas*, but other graduates have provided the foot soldiers for several militant fundamentalist groups that have become a destabilizing feature of Pakistan's internal scene. In recent years, for example, sectarian violence between militant Sunni and Shi'a groups (the Shi'a minority constitutes 15 to 20 percent of the population) has become a serious problem, intensifying the overall sense of insecurity that has gripped the country.

Since the mid-1970s, Pakistan's military intelligence service, the ISI, has also become a much more important player both domestically and in national security policy. Established in the late 1940s, the ISI at first operated much as the CIA and other external intelligence services do, collecting intelligence and running covert operations outside the home country. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, unhappy with the work of the internal service, the Intelligence Bureau, gave the ISI a mandate in the mid-1970s to undertake domestic operations as well as those abroad. The ISI has ever since been an active and destabilizing force in Pakistan's political life, promoting the army's agenda and opposing perceived opponents. Thus, the ISI vigorously supported Nawaz Sharif against Benazir Bhutto in the 1988 and 1990 elections.

As a result of the Afghan war, the ISI grew in both size and power. At Zia's orders, it served both as the conduit for all foreign assistance flowing to the Afghan resistance and as the planner and coordinator of *mujaheddin* activities. Covert aid

[1] Quoted in Kenneth J. Cooper, "Kabul Tests Islamic Limits", *Washington Post*, October 6, 1996.

from the CIA, which was matched dollar for dollar by Saudi Arabia, began rather modestly—just $30 million in 1981. By 1986, however, the total Afghan program had ballooned to more than $1 billion a year, all flowing directly through the ISI's hands.

After the Soviets left Afghanistan, the ISI continued to mastermind Pakistan's involvement in Afghanistan. Since 1994, this has meant working with and supporting the Taliban. The ISI has also had the responsibility for orchestrating *jihadi* groups active in the anti-India insurgency in Kashmir. After years of cooperation between the ISI and the militants, it is not surprising that support for fundamentalist views has gained ground within the intelligence agency. It is wrong, however, to see the ISI as an independent actor or a "rogue elephant." It takes its orders from the government, even though at times, when the lines of authority are blurred (for example, after Zia's death in 1988), it can gain more independent leeway.

Career civilian intelligence officers and army officers on temporary assignment staff the ISI. The head of government appoints the director-general, who has traditionally been a serving army general. Even though the ISI technically stands outside the military chain of command, reporting directly to the head of government, the fact that its chief and an important part of the staff are serving officers has given the army leadership a decisive influence over the intelligence agency.

The army, in its own right, has been a dominant force in Pakistan's political life since the mid-1950s and has ruled the country for half of its 54 years. Unlike India, where Jawaharlal Nehru firmly established the primacy of the civilian political leadership over the military and the civil service elite, the opposite occurred in Pakistan. After the death of Jinnah in 1948 and the assassination of Liaquat, his successor and chief lieutenant, in 1951, Pakistan lacked capable political leadership. Senior military officers and civil servants, who did not believe that the country was ready for democracy, filled the void. In 1958, following a period of internal instability, the Pakistani army took over, declaring martial law and sidelining the political parties. Pakistan has swung back and forth between military and civil rule ever since. Even when civilians have been in charge, however, as in the 1990s, the army has had the decisive say in national security issues. In times of dire economic straits, too, military spending has continued to account for about a third of the budget and six percent of GNP. The army has also bridled at interference in its internal affairs by the politicians. It was Nawaz Sharif's attempt to put his people in charge of the army by firing Pervez Musharraf that triggered the October 12, 1999 military takeover. The army had accepted the forced resignation of Musharraf's predecessor a year earlier, but had vowed not to permit such a thing to happen again. And it didn't.

Musharraf's Choice

ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001, Pervez Musharraf had been in power for 23 months. His record was mixed. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) gave good marks to Musharraf's Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz, a former Citibank official, for his efforts to clean up the country's finances. Debt relief was forthcoming, although not as much as Pakistan wanted. Development lending was extended for the first time in a number of years. Corruption had tapered off, and few alleged that Musharraf and his colleagues were lining their pockets. Still, the economy remained in the doldrums, suffering from lack of domestic investment.

Observers also accepted Musharraf's good intentions in trying to decentralize government even if they questioned the practicality of his proposed reforms. Musharraf also seemed to be serious about handing back power to elected national and provincial assemblies in the fall of 2002 as directed by Pakistan's supreme court. At the same time, he made clear that he intended to stay around. In June of this year he pushed aside the figurehead civilian president and appointed himself president in his place (he was previously styled "the chief executive"). More recently, he re-appointed himself as Army Chief of Staff, the real seat of power in a military regime. At the same time, Musharraf left the press relatively free and did not impose martial law.

Before the events of September 11, Musharraf had made little change in Pakistan's foreign and security policies. He maintained a hardline approach toward India, continuing Pakistan's support for the insurgency in Kashmir. He also continued friendly ties with the Taliban, disregarding the global opprobrium that the Taliban earned by their outrageous conduct.

Although Musharraf has a secular outlook and is not an Islamic extremist, his government before the September 11 terrorist attacks failed to rein in the major religious parties, the Jamaat-i-Islami, the Jamiat-e-Ulema Pakistan, and the Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam (which, in particular, supported the Taliban). For example, the Musharraf government backed off from moderating Pakistan's harsh anti-blasphemy laws in the face of objections by the religious parties. It appeared, therefore, that Musharraf was content with the status quo—but that status quo begs a short description.

Despite official patronage from Zia and the ISI, the religious parties have never been able to attract mass support and have rarely gained more than five percent of the vote. The clout of the fundamentalists has come from their militancy, their ability to bring mobs into the streets and their willingness to exert pressure on the administration of the day, whether that of Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif or Pervez Musharraf. It was as if Pakistani regimes had made a Faustian bargain with the fundamentalist parties, affording them political space and legitimacy in return for their service as a vehicle to promote Pakistan's national interests, via the ISI, first in Afghanistan and more recently in Kashmir.

On September 11, the day the terrorists struck, Lt. Gen. Mahmood Ahmed, the since-replaced Director General of ISI, was in Washington on a routine liaison visit. The next day, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage called him in to deliver what amounted to an ultimatum. In moving against bin Laden and other terrorists in Afghanistan, the United States wanted to know where Pakistan stood. Would it be willing to provide intelligence cooperation, allow U.S. overflights and offer logistical support? Armitage did not say what the United States would do for Pakistan in return. Secretary of State Colin Powell followed up with a phone call to Musharraf saying, in effect, that Pakistan had to choose between joining the fight against terrorism and international isolation. Unlike the Carter and Reagan Administrations of 1980 and 1981, the Bush Administration played hardball with Islamabad.

The decision was not easy for Musharraf and his senior colleagues. They realized that public opinion in the country was opposed to cooperating with the United States. Even if active backing for the Taliban and bin Laden was limited to the religious parties and their supporters, the average Pakistani did not like the idea of becoming involved in a conflict with neighboring Afghanistan and deeply distrusted Washington. Pakistanis believed

their supposed U.S. ally had betrayed them not only by refusing to help in the 1965 war against India, but, even worse, by cutting off the military and economic aid on which Pakistan depended. More recently, in 1990 Pakistanis felt that after Washington no longer needed Pakistan to afflict the Soviets in Afghanistan, the United States discarded them "like a piece of used Kleenex", imposing nuclear sanctions and suspending aid, to boot.

But paradoxically, despite this disenchantment and the absence of military or significant economic help since 1990, the United States still casts a long shadow over Islamabad. Only partly in jest, Pakistanis say that their country is ruled by the three A's: Allah, the Army and America. Among the English-speaking elite—senior military officers, civil servants, rural landlords (the so-called feudals) and the business community—the American connection runs strong. They may bemoan U.S. policy, but they send their children to the United States for education and seek political, security and business links with America. Many in the elite have relatives in the 400,000 strong Pakistani-American community. Pervez Musharraf's own brother is an American citizen, a doctor in Chicago.

The average non-English speaking Pakistani tends to hold stronger anti-American views, reflecting the harder line of the Urdu-language press. The man in the street in Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, and especially in Peshawar and Quetta, sees the United States as not just anti-Pakistani (and of late pro-Indian) but as genuinely anti-Islamic. This opinion echoes widespread, long-standing anger over U.S. policy toward Israel and the Palestinians and, more recently, over policies such as the continued bombing and sanctioning of Iraq. The virulent criticism of America by the Taliban and bin Laden has resonated well in Pakistan.

More important than the lack of immediate public support for cooperating with the United States was concern about the reaction of the religious parties. Musharraf knew that they would quickly and vociferously take to the streets to vent their opposition to a positive response to the Americans. Although the President was reasonably sure that the security forces could contain trouble in the short-run, he had to be concerned about what might happen were the U.S. military intervention in Afghanistan to become particularly bloody and protracted. If the fundamentalists succeeded eventually in staging massive anti-American and anti-government demonstrations in major cities throughout the country, especially in the Punjab, Musharraf's position would be in danger.

In the past, the Pakistani army has stepped in to prevent a collapse of state authority in the face of the mob. After disturbances rocked the country in 1969 and again in 1977, the army deposed President Ayub Khan, himself a former army commander, and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, to impose martial law. The soldiers and officer corps come primarily from the Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province (as a refugee from India, Musharraf is an exception). Never comfortable with the idea of firing on fellow Punjabis, the army leadership would probably replace Musharraf with a general possessing stronger Islamic credentials if the fundamentalists appeared to be winning the battle of the streets. The danger in Pakistan is thus not of an Iranian-style revolution in which the army disintegrates, but of the army bending to street power. Musharraf's recent shake-up of the military high command to replace officers who were unhappy with the policy of supporting the United States surely went forward with this threat in mind.

Another important factor in Pakistani decisions has been the attitude of its long-

time adversary, India. In January 1980, India stood on the opposite side of the Cold War fence from the United States and Pakistan. Its statement whitewashed Soviet aggression during the UN General Assembly's special session on Afghanistan. But in 2001, against the background of improving bilateral ties with Washington and bitter opposition to the Taliban, India promptly offered full support to the United States. Musharraf knew immediately that Pakistan would find itself isolated if it refused to cooperate with the Americans; indeed, it would perhaps even find itself lumped together with the Taliban as part of an American target set.

Although the Bush Administration did not bargain for Pakistan's support—as the Carter and Reagan Administrations did in 1980–81—the Musharraf government was doubtless aware that Washington would reward Pakistani cooperation. Lifting several layers of sanctions on Pakistan and India was already under consideration before September 11, so this was likely to be the first reward—as indeed it was. Pakistan can now acquire spare parts for its aging military equipment and has already begun to receive badly needed economic help. In the 1980s, the United States and its friends poured in assistance to bolster Pakistan. While circumstances differed on September 11, Musharraf had good reason to expect a generous response to Pakistan's pleas for debt relief and financial help if it joined the anti-terrorist cause.

Musharraf justified his positive response to the United States in a national television address on September 19. He first spelled out what help the United States had requested, but indicated that he did not know what U.S. plans were. Stressing that the decision was difficult, he argued that cooperating with the Americans was in Pakistan's interest, while refusing to do so presented grave dangers to the country. Refusal to cooperate, he declared, could even threaten Pakistan's sovereignty, its economy, its security assets (nuclear weapons) and its Kashmir policy. Making clear that he had India in mind, he undiplomatically told New Delhi to lay off.

Predictably, the religious parties took to the streets to oppose the decision after mid-day prayers two days later on September 21. The demonstrations were boisterous but largely limited to Peshawar and Quetta, where Afghani and Pakistani Pashtuns form the majority of the population, and to Pashtun areas of Karachi. The police contained the disorders and the rest of the country remained relatively quiet. Although public opinion opposed Musharraf's decision, he received the backing of the Muslim League and the Pakistan Peoples' Party, the major mainstream political parties. They provided that backing partly because of the sheer horror of the terror attacks, and because about 250 Pakistanis or Pakistani-Americans died in the World Trade towers. The blindly negative stance of the Taliban in stonewalling last-minute Pakistani efforts to convince them to hand over bin Laden may also have been a factor.

Since Musharraf's initial decisions, Pakistani authorities have exerted more vigorous pressure on the religious groups than they have in the past. Maulana Fazlur Rehman, the firebrand leader of the Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam, the party closest to the Taliban, is under house arrest. The fact that Washington wisely decided to limit the use of Pakistan as a base of operations has also reduced the potential for political upheaval. In so doing, the Bush Administration showed sensitivity to Pakistani public opinion as well as to Pakistan's ambiguous position *vis-à-vis* the Taliban.

The rigidly inflexible attitude of the Taliban, which virtually invited the U.S.

military response, has also enabled Musharraf to shift Pakistani policy from trying to preserve the Taliban to writing them off. In reversing gears, Musharraf, in effect, has accepted that Pakistan's efforts to manipulate Afghanistan for its own purposes has reached a dead end. His focus has shifted to ensuring that a post-Taliban government is willing to accommodate more modest Pakistani interests—giving the Pashtuns a major voice and not adopting an anti-Pakistani policy. After years of the ISI's opposing any role for the exiled former King Zahir, Pakistan now speaks of him as an important transitional figure in shaping a post-Taliban Afghanistan. As events unroll in Afghanistan, Washington should not grant Pakistan a veto over U.S. policy toward Afghanistan, but it must recognize that no government in Kabul is likely to succeed for very long in the face of Pakistani opposition.

America's Interests

ONCE THE dust settles in Afghanistan and a broad-based regime replaces the Taliban, it is essential that the United States not walk away as it did after the end of the Soviet war. A sustained international effort, preferably led by the United Nations, is needed to reconstruct Afghanistan after twenty years of devastation and disorder. As long as its legitimate interests in Afghanistan are taken into account, Pakistan has much to gain from such an outcome. A stable Afghanistan would permit the return of legitimate commerce, the opening up of new trade routes to Central Asia, the repatriation of Afghan refugees, and far greater regional stability over all.

Domestically, too, U.S. interests will prosper if Musharraf successfully faces down the fundamentalists. By supporting Washington, Musharraf has crossed a Rubicon in opposing Pakistan's own extremists. If Pakistan can contain and reverse the pulse of Islamic radicalism, it will achieve greater internal stability than it has seen in many years. Increased aid inflows should have a positive impact on the Pakistani economy and permit the government to address some of Pakistan's basic economic shortcomings more seriously. Moreover, Musharraf appears committed to holding elections and re-establishing popularly-elected government in the fall of 2002. Were he to veer from that commitment, the United States should make clear its displeasure. The system that emerges may not be Westminster democracy but it could offer what Pakistan badly needs—a period of political stability in a relatively free atmosphere.

The crystal ball is less clear with regard to India. The logic of the war against terrorism is clearly inconsistent with a continuation of active Pakistani support for *jihad* in Kashmir. It is hard to see how the United States can fight terrorism in Afghanistan while ignoring it in Kashmir. Nonetheless, the Kashmir struggle has become such an article of faith for the Pakistani military and much of the public that it will be politically difficult to shift gears. Washington should oppose *jihadi* operations in Kashmir more forcefully than it has in the past, but it should also press India to reduce its military presence and accept a more open political system inside the state.

Over the years, U.S.-Pakistan relations have been extraordinarily volatile. After a decade of difficulties, however, President Musharraf's response to the terrorist attacks of September 11 has re-opened the possibility of a friendlier and more cooperative U.S.-Pakistani relationship. In moving forward, Washington needs to be clear-headed about where U.S. and Pakistani interests coincide, and where they do not. Too often in the past, both countries have overlooked underlying differences in the interest of attaining short-term goals. Washington should focus its assistance primarily on helping Pakistan to reform its economy to better provide for basic human needs. The United States should be wary, however, of again rewarding the generals with expensive and sophisticated military hardware. Quite apart from the damaging impact on U.S.-India relations such aid might cause, providing the 2002 equivalent of F-16s would serve neither U.S. nor Pakistani interests.

In the 1960s and the 1980s Pakistan stood on the edge of middle-income status, but failed to cross the threshold because of poor policy choices and unfortunate leadership. The outlook could improve were Pakistan to enjoy a period of political stability and sounder economic policies, and were it to focus its attention on addressing domestic ills rather than pursuing foreign adventures in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Pakistan could reverse its long downward slide, reduce the danger of religious extremism and make progress toward realizing its considerable potential as a middle power. There is a silver lining for Pakistan in the wake of the tragic events of September 11; it will take much work, however, to actually acquire the silver. □

Let the Record Speak

I think it's important to emphasize that five times in the last ten years, the United States military has engaged with our NATO allies in defense of Muslims who were victims of aggression, or who were victims of war-induced famine. Starting with the defense of Kuwait in 1990–1991, the operation in Somalia, the operation in Northern Iraq called 'Provide Comfort', and then, of course, the two operations conducted under NATO mandate in Bosnia and Kosovo, I think our record is very clear.

—Paul Wolfowitz,
Deputy Secretary of Defense,
September 26, 2001