

SOUTH ASIAN SECURITY COMPLEX AND PAKISTAN-UNITED STATES RELATIONS POST 9/11

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Abstract

Post 9/11 Pakistan-United States relations are in many ways a new round of the same game. Although this phase is believed to be a fresh beginning that may usher in a new strategic and sustainable camaraderie between the two countries, yet looking at this complex relationship through the prism of the interaction between the regional and global level security complexes points to the continuity of the old patterns. There may have been a different paraphernalia to the macro-securitization of Terrorism and that of the Soviet Communism yet, in both these cases, Pakistan has been motivated to forge close relations with the US, less by the global concerns espoused by the latter, than by its regional security imperatives. The continual intersections between the two security complexes provide an interesting framework for understanding the otherwise complex interplay of factors. The current partnership has far reaching implications for all levels of Pakistan's security i.e. global, regional and domestic. The paper investigates the invariable pros and cons of this quid pro quo partnership for Pakistan.

Pakistan-United States' relationship in the post 9/11 era has been determined by yet another intersection between the global level trends and the South Asian regional currents. The paper attempts to explain this complex relationship with the help of Barry Buzan's theoretical framework for security analysis at global, regional and domestic levels,¹ as modified in Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) and the concept of securitization.² The study underscores that

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¹ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the post Cold War Era* (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), 193.

² Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Power: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). See also Barry Buzan

Pakistan-US relations in the post 9/11 era have had a number of implications for Pakistan's security at all the three levels i.e., domestic, regional, and global. The first part of the paper explores the issues related to Pakistan's global and regional security whereas the second part attempts to analyze the impact of Pakistan-US relations in the post 9/11 era on Pakistan's domestic security.

South Asia: A Regional Security Complex

Security is a relational phenomenon, so "one cannot understand the national security of any given state without understanding the international pattern of security interdependence in which it is embedded"³ The concepts of "amity/enmity" is affected by things such as ideology, territory, ethnic line and historical precedent,⁴ and it leads to what is called a "security complex" which is a "group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national securities cannot realistically be considered apart from one another"⁵. The Security Complex Framework could be conceptualized and applied to a multitude of international environments, including the post cold war manifestation of the same.⁶ RSCT provides the basis for the analysis of the different levels of securitization in current international affairs.⁷ Units being the agents of power manifest a hierarchical tendency i.e. one superpower – the US, four great powers – China, Japan, the EU, and Russia and a multitude of regional powers. The impact of these powers can be defined in terms of "penetration" and "overlay"⁸ However, with the exception of US' overlay in the South Asian Security Complex in particular, and other regional security complexes in general, almost all

and Ole Waever, "Macrosecuritisation and security Constellations: Reconsidering Scale in Securitisation Theory," *Review of International Studies*, (2009): 35 and 253–276. (Copyright, British International Studies Association), doi:10.1017/S0260210509008511.

³ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the post Cold War Era*, 187.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 189. According to Buzan, the enmity or amity between states, in other words relationships between states can represent a spectrum from friendship or alliances to those marked by fear.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁶ Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Power: The Structure of International Security*, 14.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 49.

other leading powers have recoiled from exercising any overlay and penetration beyond their regions in the post cold war era. Regions themselves don't possess any actor quality (perhaps with the exception of EU). Instead it is the projection of power and extent of the reach (both materially and ideationally), which defines polarization in international interactions.⁹ This interpretation takes into consideration a security complex that is at odds as well as one that is unified under shared interests. In case of South Asia, the issues that have rent the region have also unified it because the countries of the region are confronted by similar threats. Thus regional security is part of the issue of a hierarchy of security problems sitting between domestic and global or international security that cannot be left out of the puzzle. However, in case of Pakistan, it is the criss-crossing of the regional and global levels that can best explain the complexity of its posture vis-à-vis the external world.

High level of fear or threat which is felt mutually by two or more major states defines a security complex. "Unless they are world powers, these powers will usually be close neighbours." Regions and securitizations can be bound together positively (where a group of actors share, or partly share, a definition of threat and referent object), or negatively (where actors, or groups of actors, construct each other as threats) in the process forming potentially durable patterns of security interdependence. According to Barry Buzan, during the Cold War period, a higher level "Global Security Complex" contained great powers like the US and the Soviet Union who were rivals and "whose power far beyond extended the immediate environment".¹⁰ The understanding of this interaction between higher and lower level security complexes is useful for understanding the Pakistan-US relations on the one hand and Pakistan-India-Afghanistan triangular relations on the other. We may subscribe to Barry Buzan and Ole Waever's assertion that regional level has always been more autonomous and prominent yet in case of South Asia, the penetration and overlay of the superpowers have always been there irrespective of the global structure prevalent at a given time.

In fact it is primarily the pattern of relations between the US and Pakistan with Afghanistan as a factor that has been the determining factor behind Pakistan's security at the global level. Ideally speaking, it is here that the regional-level security complex featuring *inter alia* Pakistan, India

⁹ Ibid., 352-74.

¹⁰ Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the post Cold War Era*, 195.

and Afghanistan has invariable intersections at different points with the global-level security complex comprising US, People's Republic of China, EU and Russia etc. The US, though a player of the global-level security complex, still enjoys a considerable stature in the sub-continental middle-level security complex. It is however pertinent to mention that the security stakes of Pakistan are much higher than the US. Whereas this particular regional security complex may be crucial to the US, yet it has similar stakes involved in other security complexes around the world as well¹¹.

Security and defence have defined Pakistan's partnership with the US in the different phases of their mutual relationship. US-Pakistan relationship has also shared problems typical of US ties with a smaller country. Pakistan has traditionally responded to regional impulses, while the United States tends to consider global dynamics in its relationship. Nonetheless, Pakistan's very existence and viability as a state is contingent upon this pattern of relations. The dynamics of this relationship had had a new dimension when the Soviet Union physically intervened in the landlocked Afghanistan, just a single step away from reaching the "warm waters". It was however after the September 11 terrorist attacks and the subsequent US policy to hunt down Al-Qaeda and Taliban in Afghanistan that eventually crystallized that situation.

Intersections in Retrospect and Pakistan-United States Relations

Pakistan-US has a curvy type of relationship with periodic highs and lows. Historically speaking, the relations between the two countries have been single issue engagements of limited or uncertain durations between the military or military-dominated government of Pakistan and the American policy largely in the hands of White House, the Pentagon, and the CIA.¹²

¹¹ "Musharraf gets up every morning, and he thinks about how to manage his (Pakistan's) relationship with the United States...The United States does not get up every morning thinking about how to manage its relationship with Musharraf more successfully." Interviewee Steve Coll, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/taliban/interviews/coll.html> (accessed February 20, 2010).

¹² Touqir Hussain, "The US-Pakistan Engagement: The War on Terrorism and Beyond," *United States Institute of Peace*, (Autumn 2005): 2.

Pakistan used to be the most allied ally of the US during the 50s. This Cold War era relationship was primarily meant to contain the Soviet Union.¹³ However, the relationship could not transform into a long-term, sustainable strategic relationship largely because the alliance partners were at cross purposes in so far as the objectives of their association were concerned.¹⁴ The Soviet-US détente and a growing Sino-Soviet schism were primarily responsible for effecting a marginalization of relations between the two “allies”. A further deterioration of relations between the two countries was witnessed when the US imposed an arms embargo on India and Pakistan soon after hostilities broke out between the two in 1965 – a step that badly hit the latter. In order to be able to have an alternative course, Pakistan had already started forging relations with the People’s Republic of China much to the chagrin of the United States.¹⁵

Cooperation between Pakistan and the United States revived in 1970-71 after Pakistan used its good offices in helping the former and the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) recognizing each other. However, this was very short-lived. The relations reached their lowest ebb when Carter administration started courting India at the expense of Pakistan as a sequel to the Carter Doctrine of “regional influential”¹⁶. The Administration introduced sanctions and terminated US military and

¹³ Robert G. Wersing, “Precarious Relationship: Pakistan’s Response to US Security Policies” *Asian Affairs*, (Autumn 2005): 70.

¹⁴ Ahmad Faruqui, “Scenarios, Disruptive Events, and US Policy Options” *Defence Journal*, <http://www.defencejournal.com/2001/august/security.htm>. (accessed February 11, 2010).

¹⁵ Ghulam Ali, “Fifty-Fifth Anniversary of Sino-Pakistan Relations: An Appraisal,” <http://www.cfcc.nthu.edu.tw/~chinastudies/fellowship-symposium/Ali's%20Paper%20cfCC.doc> (accessed January 1, 2010). According to Ali, the US was unhappy about Pakistan’s improving relations with China. Later, the American stance during the war of September 1965 and its overt inclination towards India provided added justification for Pakistan’s closer ties with China, a country that extended moral and material support to Pakistan to help it counter Indian aggression.

¹⁶ Jimmy Carter State of the Union Address 1980 (January 23, 1980). The address was *inter alia* premised on the assertion that Soviet troops in Afghanistan posed a grave threat to the free movement of Middle East oil. <http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.org/documents/speeches/su80jec.phtml> (accessed December, 24, 2009).

economic aid following Pakistan's development of its nuclear programme.¹⁷

However, beneath the web of sanctions, there were some convergences as well. Carter Administration had already started winking at Pakistan's attempt to abet and use the Afghan Islamist dissidents against Afghanistan. Nonetheless, the second Pakistan-US alliance started taking shape in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Both became partners in a proxy guerilla war waged by Pakistan against the communist regime of Afghanistan and the Red Russia – a so-called epic struggle that attracted men and material from all over the world, particularly from the oil rich Gulf States. The US on its part relegated its other commitments/objectives in the region i.e. promoting democratic institutions, helping improve the education system and non-proliferation to the background in order to be fully able to focus on frustrating the Soviet designs in Afghanistan and beyond. It was primarily from this point that Pakistan-Afghanistan relations started impacting Pakistan's global security.

Historically, the US didn't have an eager appreciation of Pakistan's security concerns and underestimated Pakistan's commitment to its nuclear programme whereas the latter failed to see that an episodic US-Pakistan engagement had no resilience. Pakistan particularly has not understood the enormous challenge of running US foreign policy and the need of US policy makers to weigh foreign policy concerns against domestic policy considerations, the dynamics of the media, American sense of exceptionalism and moral purpose, the country's historical experience, and the imperatives of power politics. Against this backdrop, the US could not harmonize its strategic and tactical goals, short and long-term agenda, and global and regional needs. Consequently, Pakistan-US relationship for much of its history has lacked continuity, a formal conceptual framework, and a shared vision beyond the one narrowly based and vaguely defined.

The successive US administrations' shortsightedness in this regard is one of the contributing factors behind the current melodrama on the Af-Pak theatre. In the wake of Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan was believed to have performed its specific role as a paid job so the US was to phase out of the theatre. With the withdrawal of the Soviet Union

¹⁷ Stephen P. Cohen, "America and Pakistan: Is the Worst Case Avoidable?" *Current History*, vol. 104, issue 680, (March 2005): 131.

from Afghanistan in 1988 and the end of Cold War, US dropped its assistance to Pakistan from US\$726 million in 1988 to US\$24 million four years later.¹⁸ The signs of improvement of relations between the US and the Soviet Union expedited this pattern thereby further eroding Pakistan's global security. Not only was its promised aid of \$4.02 billion to Pakistan withdrawn by the US, but a series of sanctions were imposed on Pakistan. Initially these sanctions were clamped on Pakistan in 1990 under the 1985 Pressler Amendment requiring the US president to certify that Pakistan didn't possess any nuclear weapons failing which Pakistan was to lose much of its economic and military assistance from the United States. In 1990, President Bush senior refused to give any certification to that effect. More sanctions were imposed on Pakistan in 1998 following Pakistan's tit-for-tat nuclear tests under Glenn and Symington amendments. Finally the US imposed Democracy sanctions following the overthrow of the democratic government by Gen. Musharraf in a bloodless coup on October 12, 1999.

Without US economic assistance, Pakistani institutions deteriorated; the country accumulated huge debt and the cultivation of radical Islamic groups continued. It was a sort of inside-out trend¹⁹ i.e., lack of democracy and radicalization made Pakistan a troublesome neighbour. The erosion of Pakistan's security at the global level compelled it to try to make amends for the same in a way that had adverse implications both for domestic as well as regional security.²⁰

¹⁸ Peter Buxbaum, "US, Pakistan: Personality Politics", *ISN Security Watch*, January 10, 2008. The writer argues that this on-again, off-again history of US assistance has left Pakistan's leaders and its people with serious concerns about the depth and reliability of the US commitment, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?=53989&Ing=en> (accessed June 29, 2009).

¹⁹ Scott Burchil, "Liberal Internationalism" in *Theories of International Relations*, Scott Burchil's and Andrew Linklater's (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2004), 28-63. Mr. Burchil argues that the progressive translation of liberal-democratic principles to international realm is said to provide the best prospect for a peaceful world order because "a world made up of liberal democracies...should have much less incentive for war, since all nations will reciprocally recognize one another's legitimacy". This approach followed by Liberals in general is known as an 'inside-out approach'. Whereas the Liberals follow the 'inside-out' approach, the Realists, follow the 'out-side in' approach.

²⁰ At the minimum level, Pakistan's acquiescence of the "Mujahideen" groups operating in the Indian Held Kashmir points at this development. US' facilitation would have nudged the two South Asian neighbours to reach at a

The continued US fatigue with the happenings in the region helped protract the continued bloodbath between and among the warring factions locked in internecine war in Afghanistan. Pakistan decided to put premium on the Taliban instead of Gulbudin Hikmatyar, once the blue-eyed boy of Pakistani and the US intelligence agencies. It continued to meddle in the Afghan affairs and developed cordial relations with the Taliban²¹ and was one of only three countries to recognize the same as the legal government at Kabul. The rationale in this regard was premised on the assumption that the Taliban would share Pakistan's regional security perceptions.

Post 9/11 Macro-Securitization of Terrorism and Pakistan-United States Relations

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and Pentagon brought about far-reaching changes in the political landscape of the world. Henceforth terrorism was to emerge as an imminent threat to global peace and security; the issue of war on terrorism was securitized. An issue is securitized when it is constructed into a threat.²² However, this securitization was on a mega scale, so it has aptly been called as macro-securitization. The latter is aimed at, and up to a point, succeeding in framing security issues, agendas, and relationships on a system-wide basis; they are based on the universalist constructions of threats/referent objects. The American administration right from the outset explained its crusade in a macro-securitized style. Bush's ultimatum on for-or-against-terrorism created an atmosphere much like the Cold War where everyone finds oneself, in a way, "choosing a side". This macro securitization has affected security at all its levels²³

semblance of engagement. That would also have prevented the Kargil show-down. Again it has also been pointed out Pakistan being increasingly isolated from the world during this period neglect was seized by dangerous trends in strategic thought that were unrelieved by any outside moderating influence. This period witnessed the rise of the Taliban, the Kashmir Jihad, the Kargil operation, and the A.Q Khan affair.

²¹ Larry P Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics and the Rise of the Taliban* (University of Washington Press, 2001), 111.

²² Ole Waever, *Securitization and Desecuritization*, see also in *On Security*, ed. Rhonnie Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 6.

²³ Barry Buzan, "The 'War on Terrorism' as the New Macro-Securitization", *Oslo Workshop Papers* (Oslo), 2006, 1-20.

On the practical side this so-called Bush Doctrine²⁴ left Pakistan in a catch 22 sort of position. Primarily the US perceived Pakistan's choice to be critical either to impede or facilitate effective US military intervention and pursuit of Al-Qaeda elements hiding in Pakistan. President Musharraf himself was quailed by what he calls a "shockingly barefaced threat" spelling out that the prospect for coercive force was real and decisive.²⁵ In fact, a section of Pakistani establishment already knew its strategic over-extension in the region, especially that its support for the Taliban was untenable. But the country had neither the political will nor the resources to take on these forces. The United States would provide Musharraf with both and, in turn, would receive critical support from Pakistan in the war on terrorism.²⁶ It was to readjust its security dynamics and safeguard its national interest in a radically altered international scenario.²⁷ In fact in October 2001, when the United States attacked Al-Qaeda and its Taliban hosts in Afghanistan, it was a defining moment of much to come.

It is argued that Pakistan's immediate strategic compulsions weighed heavily against its long-term strategic vision of a "strategic depth" when it decided to side with the US and the international community in its war to hunt down Al-Qaeda and the one time protégé of the former i.e. Taliban. Thus yet again an upward spiral was witnessed in the sine curve of Pakistan-United States relations. Pakistan's *volte face* was effected through a number of factors ranging from coercive diplomacy by the US to the realization on the part of Pakistani elite that had it not acted decisively and quickly on that count, the country might have been pushed into a blind alley. Pakistan was also haunted by the traditional Indian nightmare in case of Pakistan's failure to take a somersault; that any foot-dragging on the part of Pakistan in this regard might imply playing India's game which was more than ready to pounce on the opportunity and let the US and international community decimate Pakistan, as they later did in case of Taliban. President Musharraf during his televised speech on September 19, 2001, identified four critical

²⁴ Walter Lafeber, "The Bush Doctrine," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 26, no.4, (Fall 2002).

²⁵ Parvez Musharraf, *In the Line of Fire: A Memoir* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006), 201. He "war-gamed the United States as adversary" and concluded that Pakistan could not "withstand the onslaught".

²⁶ Touqir Hussain, *The US-Pakistan Engagement*, *ibid.*, 5.

²⁷ Dr Moeed Pirzada, "Kashmir: Indian Strategic Initiative since 9/11 and Imperative for US Policy in the Region", *IPRI Journal*, vol. 11, no. 1, (Winter 2003): 126.

concerns: Pakistan's security and stability from an external threat, the revival of the economy, its strategic, nuclear and missile assets and the Kashmir cause. He said, "Pakistan comes first, everything else is secondary"²⁸

The US administration's representatives and eminent US think-tanks now underscore the need to forge long-term, sustained and strategic partnership with Pakistan.²⁹ Of late, the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton admitted in a testimony before the US Congress that leaving Pakistan in the lurch after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, and let it alone coping with the dangerous forces unleashed by the civil war, the US made a big mistake. She also affirmed during congressional testimony that the US had treated Pakistan poorly in the past.³⁰ This statement apparently met a deep need among Pakistanis for the US to acknowledge that it had made mistakes in its past policies toward the region.³¹ In a latter testimony before the US Armed Services Committee, she said,

The case for action against al-Qaida and its allies has always been clear, but the United States course of action over the last eight years has not. The fog of another war obscured our focus. And while our attention was focused elsewhere, the Taliban gained momentum in Afghanistan. And the extremist threat grew in Pakistan - a country with 175 million people, a nuclear arsenal, and more than its share of challenges.³²

By the same token, broad sanctions levied between 1990 and 2001 harmed US interests more than they curbed Pakistani behaviour. This

²⁸ Transcript of the Address by the President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf to the nation on September 19, 2001.

²⁹ Lisa Curtis, "Pakistan: Defence and Security Challenges" Heritage Lectures, *The Heritage Foundation*, no. 1055, December 21, 2007.

³⁰ <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2009/December/Clinton%2012-02-09.pdf> (accessed December 2, 2009).

³¹ "The US and the Soviet Proxy War in Afghanistan 1989-1992: Prisoners of our preconceptions" in *Discourse, Dissent and Strategic Surprise: Formulating American Security in an Age of American Uncertainty*, Working Report no. IV, Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, Edmund A. Walsh School for Foreign Service, Georgetown University, November 15, 2005.

³² <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2009/December/Clinton%2012-02-09.pdf> (accessed February 1, 2010).

relocates the onus of political will and creativity from Islamabad to Washington.³³

Pakistan's Economic Vulnerabilities

One of the reasons why Pakistan showed its readiness to cooperate with the US in the war against terrorism in Afghanistan was the promise of a *quid pro quo* such partnership accrued. Pakistan's strategic over-extension and an array of international sanctions had already taken a toll on the state of Pakistani economy. Pakistan's economy was in near collapse before being rescued by massive aid and debt write-off after its amenability in this regard. Economic incentives, therefore, proved crucial in prompting the Pakistani establishment to go for supporting the international coalition and the US in hunting out al-Qaeda and their Taliban hosts in Afghanistan. Reviving the economy was, therefore, considered an urgent task both by the US as well as the Pakistani government. Driving away the general people from extremist causes was contingent upon the success or failure of this strategy. This is one reason why two struggles – against extremism and economic stagnation – are tied so closely together. Failure of one could lead to the failure of the other. The message from Islamabad, in other words, was clear. The war against terrorism was not just Pakistan's war. It is a war being fought on Pakistan's territory on behalf of the world. The country was prepared to sacrifice but it is incumbent upon its many friends to be generous in providing financial assistance. The country did not need foreign soldiers but foreign aid.

Pakistan did fulfill its commitments for its military and intelligence support much to the detriment of its internal security and chagrin of the rightist allies of President Musharraf.³⁴ Pakistan's quick and essentially

³³ C. Christine Fair, "Time for Sober Realism: Renegotiating US Relations with Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly*, April 2009, 167.

³⁴ C. Christine Fair, "The Counter-terror Coalitions: Cooperation with Pakistan and India," *Rand Corporation* (Washington), 2004. 28-32.

She says,

"...in the first five months of the war, over 2800 sorties overflew Pakistani airspace from carriers in the Indian Ocean. Pakistan provided access to the US to its various military bases and helped establish a number of facilities including Intermediate Staging Bases at Jacobabad and Shamsi, and access to other bases used by over 50 aircraft and 2,000 coalition military personnel that bedded down at these locals. Pakistan provided fuel to aircraft, averaging 100,000 liters per day, initially without any established repayment mechanism. Pakistan provided over 35,000

unconditional decision to support US access to Afghanistan through Pakistan's territory and airspace paid important short-term dividends to Pakistan. The United States had been moving away from the sanctions policy toward both India and Pakistan that it had imposed after each country's nuclear tests in May 1998, and used this opportunity to drop many of the provisions affecting financial and non-sensitive material assistance temporarily. The United States also approved a financial aid package for Pakistan that permitted the rescheduling of its international indebtedness, lifting a cloud from its economy. But the most important gain for Pakistan was the sudden US need for Pakistan's military and intelligence support, a reflection of Pakistan's geopolitical importance in pursuing the initial stages of the war against terrorism in Afghanistan. The United States provided Pakistan a grant of \$600 million in November 2001, after US military operations had begun in Afghanistan. The United States formalized the agreement restructuring Pakistan's \$3 billion debt nearly a year later, at a signing ceremony on August 23, 2002 in Islamabad. The package included loans from US Aid, US Eximbank, and the US departments of agriculture and defence.³⁵

The US had also lifted the military and economic sanctions that had been imposed on Pakistan under the Pressler, Glenn, and Symington Amendments and Section 508 of the Foreign Assistance Act. All were lifted by Bush under the authority of Brownback II. In the first three years, the US provided \$1 billion in grants, wrote off \$1 billion in debt, provided \$1.2 billion in arms sales, reinstated a military training programme and provided \$3 billion for economic aid and security assistance.³⁶ In June 2003, the US announced a \$3 billion assistance package for Pakistan to start in October and to be distributed in over five years, with roughly equal amounts going to economic aid and security assistance. Additionally a framework agreement on trade and investment (TIFA) was signed.

troops to protect these coalition bases and increased border security that resulted in the reportedly capture of 420 high value Taliban and al-Qaeda fugitives. Finally, Pakistan provided intelligence support to coalition forces, most notably human intelligence which coalition forces desperately needed to complement its technical intelligence."

³⁵ Farhan Bokhari, "Pakistan Debt Schedule Agreed," *Financial Times*, August 24-25, 2002, 3.

³⁶ Stephen Philip Cohen, *America and Pakistan: Is the worst case avoidable?*, 132.

The comprehensive “South Asia” policy announced on March 23, 2005 was the first ever such policy promulgated for the region³⁷. Briefly, the policy *inter alia* announced that a yet-to-be specified number of F 16 aircraft would be sold to Pakistan. The United States also reinstated a military training programme through which more than 300 officers have received instruction at US military institutions since 2001. The Kerry-Lugar Bill, passed unanimously by the US Senate, outlined financial commitments aimed at winning the war on terror in Afghanistan and stabilizing Pakistan by countering Talibanisation in the country.³⁸ The bill “The Enhanced partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009” passed by the US House of Representatives and US Senate in two different versions is one such step that can be cited in buttressing the argument. The main US purpose as reflected in the draft bill is to contain the spread of extremism in Pakistan.³⁹ The US Agency for International Development’s (USAID) plans to provide US\$750 million in economic assistance to Pakistan’s Federally Administered Tribal Areas is also a move in this direction.

³⁷ Simultaneously it announced that it had cleared the path for expanded military, high technology, and even civilian nuclear and space cooperation with India.

³⁸ Draft of the Bill, visit: <http://armed-services.senate.gov/statemnt/2009/December/Clinton%2012-02-09.pdf> (accessed February 01, 2010). “The US strategy is based against three serious threats to the United States emanating from those areas: direct attempts by al-Qaeda to attack the US and its citizens abroad; the possibility that al-Qaeda influenced Jihadists could acquire direct or indirect influence over Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal; and the possibility that the Pakistan-based Jihadi groups could provoke a war between Pakistan and India”.

³⁹ Shahid Javed Burki, “America’s New Reach,” *Dawn* (Islamabad), July 7, 2009. The author is one of the proponents of the view arguing that the Pakistan-US relationship is going to alter in three significant ways. First, the draft bill titled “The Enhanced partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009” promise a long-term US commitment to Pakistan; secondly, now there is a clear division between the US military and economic aid to Pakistan; and thirdly, now the US is negotiating with a civilian government rather than with an administration dominated by military. The three previous periods of large US involvement with Pakistan was when military was in charge of Politics. This was the case during the period of Ayub Khan (1958-1969), Ziaul Haq (1977-1988) and Musharraf (1999-2008) when large amount of American assistance flowed into the country. A significant proportion of this was used for military purposes. It will be different this time.

Pakistan's security related needs, and financial requirements to that effect were also attended to by the United States. On this front, the US approved a \$ 1.2 billion arms-sale package that includes roughly \$950 million for the purchase of P3C Orion aircraft. Besides, Pakistan was declared to be the major non-NATO ally of the US in 2004. The 2006 arms purchase deal between Pakistan and the US totalling US\$3.5 billion, made Pakistan the largest recipient of US arms in the world that year.⁴⁰

Any deal on cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear technology, modelled on the one offered to India, has not yet been extended to Pakistan although even the latter has an expanding requirement for energy. This economic boom necessitated ever-increasing needs for energy.⁴¹ It has a plan to generate electricity through nuclear energy to the tune of 8,800 MW by the year 2030.

We are prepared to accept all safeguards on our civilian facilities. So, our expectation is that like our friend China has extended cooperation to Pakistan in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the West and the United States will also appreciate the expanding requirements of Pakistan, and would extend cooperation in this regard. This economic *boom* necessitated ever-increasing needs for energy.⁴²

The new partnership did benefit Pakistan bringing about tangible changes in the economy. Macro-economic performance was on the ascendant curve; growth rate remained in the range of 6 to 8 digits during some of the fiscal years during the outgoing government i.e. 2003-6.⁴³ The Americans were confident on their part that the simmering demand for greater politicization and democratization would be held in abeyance at least in so long as the economy was showing excellent marks. That is why they continued macro-economic aid and debt-relief so that the Pakistani people must see tangible evidence that it's government's tilt in favour of the United States brings significant benefits to all socio-economic strata. Specific projects in the arena of high technology, technical aid to improve

⁴⁰ Peter Buxbaum, "US, Pakistan Personality Politics", *ISN Security Watch*, January 10, 2008.

⁴¹ Pakistani Foreign Office Spokesman's weekly press briefing on September 12, 2005.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Sajjad Chaudhry, "WB Says Trade Deficit is to Reach More than 12 Billion this Year," *Daily Times* (Lahore), December 9, 2006.

indigenous manufacturing and R&D capabilities would demonstrate that a globally competitive Pakistan is in America's interest.

Indo-US Honeymoon and Pakistan-United States Relations

As part of the intersections between the two complexes, India and the US witnessed even closer relationship. The increasing tilt toward India and away from Pakistan was in sharp contrast to the special relationship Pakistan had had with Washington during the Cold War years. But the 9/11 crisis showed, at least momentarily, that India's military and intelligence value to the United States in launching the war on terrorism in Afghanistan was less than that of Pakistan's, once it was clear that Pakistan's cooperation was readily available.

In addition to reviving Pakistan's importance, the US' military presence within Pakistan, albeit limited and restricted largely to southern Pakistan, could have been construed to have an implicit deterrent value against direct Indian aggression on Pakistan, at least while the tempo of operations in Afghanistan remained high and Pakistan's active cooperation in pursuit of al-Qaeda and Taliban elements who fled into Pakistan was needed. This calculated judgment may have eased Pakistan's initial decisions to shift some military capability away from the east, facing India, to seal the borders and provide a form of backstopping of US and allied operations against al-Qaeda and Taliban forces, raising barriers to cross-border infiltration⁴⁴. Nevertheless, the operations in Afghanistan gave Pakistan opportunities to put its relationship with Washington on a more productive footing, and to compete for Washington's attention after years of losing ground. Although it is hoped that, subject to the sustainability of momentum in repairing this relationship, the current closeness between the two countries can pay very significant dividends to Pakistan over time in terms of economic revival and deterrence vis-à-vis India, yet the recent US' misgivings on Faisal Shahzad's count can prove the futility of these hopes.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ It became clear later, however, that this unspoken deterrence was not comprehensive or robust. It did not dissuade India from mounting a sustained conventional military confrontation in December, and the United States moved rather slowly in 2002 before it began to press India to unwind the confrontation in June and July.

⁴⁵ While US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton confirmed that Pakistan being a US ally had been cooperating on the investigation yet she also said that the United States had warned Pakistan of "severe consequences" if a successful

US and Jammu & Kashmir Issue between India and Pakistan

Jammu and Kashmir issue has been yet another area where interests and concerns of the global level security complex have been intersecting with those of the sub-continental level regional complex. Ironically, contingent upon the new policy, Pakistan was to use its juggernaut against those outfits which erstwhile received support from a part of Pakistani establishment. In retrospect, it was Pakistan's failure in extracting anything from India on Kashmir issue diplomatically. Now specifically mentioning Kashmir as one of the *raison d'être* for justifying Pakistani somersault implied *inter alia* that it had to de-dialogize the issue which was more in the interest of the US and the West in the backdrop of the latter's locking their horns with what they termed as Islamic fundamentalism. It is the mixed record of the outgoing Pakistani regime on this count and on failing to produce a matching "micro" securitization at the regional level to the macro securitization of the US-led war on terror at the global level that may explain part of the ongoing imbroglio on the "Af-Pak" theatre.

President Musharraf's softening of Pakistani stand and retreating from Pakistan's stated position with US nudging and acquiescence was more in line with this policy. US policy on Kashmir has not been an easy game. Indian aversion to any third party role in its disputes with its neighbours is well known. Given the size of its market and economy and it being a potential counterfoil to Islamic fundamentalism and a counterbalance to People's Republic of China, it is not an easy target to be arm-twisted on any count. What it can do at the most, and that what it actually endeavours to do, is to nudge the two parties from crisis situation to negotiating table and to let them decide on their own about the modalities of their dialogue processes and the eventual resolution of their outstanding disputes. As discussed earlier, India being a "regional

attack in America was traced back to Pakistan. In an interview with CBS television's 60 Minutes programme, Mrs. Clinton said there was now a "much better relationship" between the US and Pakistani governments, militaries and intelligence services. "I think that there was a double game going on in the previous years, where we got a lot of lip-service but very little produced," she said. See, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8669512.stm> (accessed May 8, 2010).

influential” does not welcome any explicit role from outside.⁴⁶ However, by facilitating the two parties to come to the negotiating table, the US has already played a role in modifying the so-called Indian *Monroe Doctrine*. Pakistan on the other hand has always welcomed such proposals.

We do encourage and appreciate the international community’s engagement with Pakistan, India and the Kashmiris. The US has been in a way engaged in this process. President Bush’s speech at Asia Society clearly spells out US policy direction.⁴⁷

Indian and Pakistani ministers while meeting at Sharm- el- Sheikh, Egypt on the sidelines of the 9th NAM Summit Meeting declared to delink terrorism from the India Pakistan dialogue process. Indian opposition lambasted Manmohan Singh government for having succumbed to international pressure in this regard.⁴⁸

The attempted de-hyphenating of relationship between India and Pakistan by the US was meant to establish close parallel relationship between the two South Asian neighbours, and not to court either of them at the expense of the other.⁴⁹. However that policy is not wholly

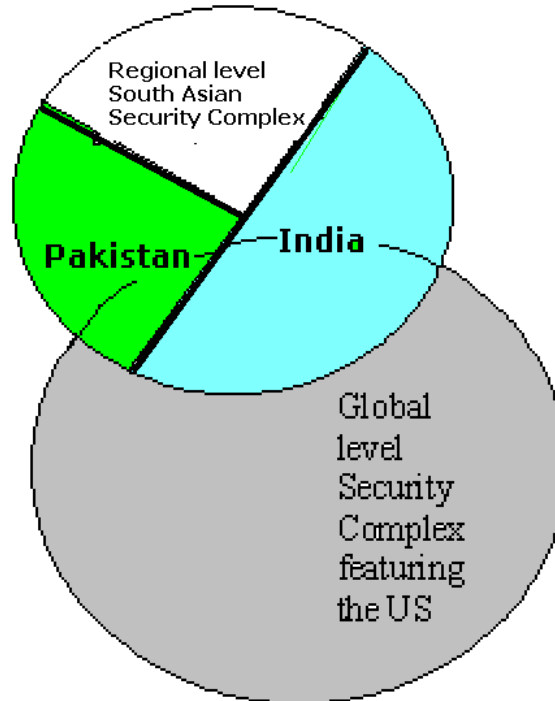
⁴⁶ Faruk Ashrafeen, “Budge on Baglihar too,” *Post* (Islamabad). May 17, 2006. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, while launching Jagat Mehta’s book *Negotiating for India: Resolving Problems through Diplomacy* reportedly expressed the fear that unresolved disputes with the neighbours could invite foreign intervention and asked his diplomats to pay more attention to negotiated settlements.

⁴⁷ Transcript of the press conference addressed by the Pakistani foreign office spokesperson on February 27, 2006.

⁴⁸ “India-Pak Joint Statement: Different Reactions,” *The Muslim Observer*. See, <http://muslimmedianetwork.com/mmn/?tag=bharatiya-janata-party> (accessed January 12, 2010). It was reported ‘Expressing strong opposition against delinking of terrorism from resumption of composite dialogue process, the BJP legislators staged a walkout from Lok Sabha soon after Singh had read out his statement. “You have delinked terrorism and the composite dialogue. Why have you taken seven months to decide on this?,” asked BJP leader L.K. Advani. “If terrorism is set aside, then how does the dialogue become composite? It ceases to be composite as a composite dialogue has to be all-pervasive,” Sushma Swaraj (BJP) said.

⁴⁹ Pakistani Foreign Office Spokesperson Tasnim Aslam’s weekly Press Briefing on January 23, 2006. In response to a question regarding this reported de-hyphenating of relations, she said that Pakistan concentrated on its own bilateral relations whether with the US, Saudi Arabia or any other country, “and how we can mutually benefit from those relations. We do not have a veto on any country’s relations with another country; neither do we expect other countries to have that veto over relations with another country.”

welcome to a section of Pakistani establishment. On the whole the changed geo-strategic realities have brought the two security complexes closer from a different angle. India, no doubt, has much to get from this new relationship, yet Pakistan is not totally out of the competition in at least as far as currying US' favour especially in Afghanistan is concerned. The war-weariness on the part of the Western powers has the potential for putting Pakistan at a better bargaining position vis-à-vis India insofar as untying the Afghan knot is concerned.



Pakistan's Nukes and its Security

A very interesting intersection between the global security complex and the South Asian security complex is on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation. Whereas Pakistan's security predicament vis-à-vis its much larger and conventionally more powerful neighbour dictates at least a finite deterrence, America's non-proliferation interests dictate it to discourage these ambitions of Pakistan. Simplistically, there are two sets of concerns: it is believed that Pakistan has not been a disciplined state in terms of checking the proliferation networks operating from its soil; and that the rightists within Pakistan's nuclear establishment may take

control of the nuclear command and control structure. At times, Pakistan has been subjected to economic sanctions and Pakistan specific legislative measures by the US, yet most of the times US' "other" interests motivated it to wink at the development of Pakistan's nuclear programme⁵⁰.

The US-Pakistan partnership in the Post 9/11 era is conditioned by the latter consideration in so far as the development of Pakistan's nuclear programme and the issue of non-proliferation are concerned. The United States was to carefully craft its approach to the nuclear-armed Pakistan for help on the global "War on Terror". The US did understand the untenable position of Gen. Parvez Musharraf, so it opted not to exert too much pressure on him, offering him with sufficient incentives, political support and other tools to stay in power, because it believed that increased instability in Pakistan could make Pakistan's nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive material vulnerable to theft by militant groups.⁵¹

Dr. A.Q. Khan's recent statements and a letter written to his daughter alleging that he had always acted on behalf of Pakistani state has also adversely affected Pakistan's global security. However, the expediency and the imperative of the continuing Pakistani support in the war on terror have made the US to offer a face-saving to Pakistan. Nevertheless, in this and the UTN⁵² case, Pakistan had to face serious

⁵⁰ US National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski wrote a memo to President Carter about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan which had just begun. He recommended the aid to the Mujahedeen should be multiplied because Soviet success in Afghanistan would tempt it to gain access to the Indian Ocean. The aid to Mujahedeen began before the invasion (1978 and July 3, 1979). "This means more money and more arms shipments to the rebels and more technical advice". He does not give any warning that such aid would strengthen Islamic fundamentalism. "We must both reassure Pakistan and encourage helping the rebels. This will require a review of our policy towards Pakistan, more guarantees to it, more arms aid, and alas, a decision that our security problem toward Pakistan cannot be dictated by our non-proliferation policy". Carter apparently admits Brzezinski's advice, *Joe Trento*, www.historycommons.org/context.jsp?item=a86fourbillion (accessed 28 May, 2009).

⁵¹ President of the Institute for Science and international security Mr. David Albright said, "Fighting the war on terrorism starts with ensuring the stability of a nuclear-armed Pakistan, otherwise the terrorist threat will take on a new, frightening dimension." *ISIS Report*, September 18, 2001.

⁵² Umma Tamir-i-Nau or UTN had been established to carry out social projects in Afghanistan. Sultan Bashirudin Mahmood (former Director for Nuclear

embarrassment internationally. There was tremendous pressure on the Bush administration to be forthright and aggressive on the A.Q. Khan count, and that it should demand an access to the nuclear scientist. However the US relegated the issue to the background, at least as long as Pakistan's services in the critical "war on terror" are the benchmarks of Pakistan's "integrity"⁵³. In a press interview on the day of the confession by Dr. A. Q. Khan, then US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said that Khan's national humiliation was justice to what he did. In the hindsight, US' primary objective was to unravel the network, and shut down its operations as soon as possible, a goal that was more likely to be achieved with Pakistan's cooperation. Bringing him to justice seemed a secondary objective of the US. Dr. A. Q. Khan's activities were those of an individual in charge of a specific organization in a state that was not signatory to Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), and was therefore not in violation of international law.

Nevertheless, American think tanks perceive Pakistan's expanding nuclear programme and what they consider as the spreading of nuclear and missile technology to be a threat to America's vital interests. During the 1980s, the Reagan administration colluded with Congress to pass an amendment that Washington would pull the plug on aid if Pakistan's nuclear programme passed crucial "red lines". This warning was reinforced time and again during the first Bush administration. President George W. Bush and the Congress would again lay down markers conditioning US support to Pakistan's performance on terrorism, proliferation, and democracy. It is in line with this conventional wisdom that the United States is no longer pushing for a roll back of Pakistan's nuclear option. The new red line drawn by the Bush administration relates to transfers of nuclear technology and missiles.

Power in the Pakistan Atomic Energy Agency [Khusab Reactor] and Chaudhry Abdul Majeed were some of its founding members.

See also. George Tenet, *At the Eye of the Storm; My Years at the CIA* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007), 262-272.

⁵³ Nonetheless, Pakistan continuously kept the US apprised of the decisions regarding Dr A.Q. Khan right from the day of dismissal initially from the chairmanship of the KRL and later as Special Adviser to the Prime Minister to Pakistan on January 31, 2004.⁵³ On February 4th, Dr A.Q. Khan made a televised confession to the nation. The next day President of Pakistan gave him an official pardon which according to the Pakistani Foreign Office was "conditional and specific to charges made so far".

In so far as a threat to the nuclear programme is concerned, it is claimed by the Indian and the Western circles that it is from inside. A former CIA official Ralph Moat Lawrence has claimed that Pakistani nuclear installations short of facing any external threat are actually threatened by those elements of Pakistani nuclear establishment which enjoy contacts with external elements, and Pakistani administration's track record in coping with such situations is not very good. In Pakistan there is by far the loosest control exercised over nuclear weapons. He considers the UTR as a case in point.

In order to allay global apprehensions in this regard, Pakistan has subjected itself to a tough non-proliferation policy and has supplied the International Atomic Energy Agency and perhaps other entities with samples of their nuclear enrichment programme for verification if there was any truth in alleged Pakistani links to the Iranian nuclear programme.⁵⁴

The So-called Soft-Peddling on Taliban and Regional Security Dynamics

Some of the policy circles in the US are of the opinion that Pakistan has been cooperating with the US in the post 9/11 era as a matter of compulsion, not as a matter of choice, and that it does not deal with the remnants of Taliban with an iron-hand. However, no Pakistani government is powerful enough to tackle anything that occurs in the autonomous tribal areas of Pakistan. It has become more autonomous after 9/11 because the war against terrorism is being perceived by the tribal people as a kind of war on Islam. Owing to their semi-autonomous status that dates back to the days of British-India, these tribal people have never welcomed any outside forces on their soil. So they have never been easy even with the presence of Pakistani army there. Moreover, owing to the army operations, they have suffered many hardships.⁵⁵ Pakistani

⁵⁴ *Dawn* (Islamabad), March 25, 2005. Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesman Jalil Abbas Jailani was quoted as having said that Pakistan had received a request from IAEA for the centrifuges parts for investigation purposes. As per the reported statement, Pakistan showed amenability to the request.

⁵⁵ Since May 2009, army operations in Pakistan's Swat Valley have by some estimates displaced as many as 2.8 million locals from their homes, in addition to 500,000 internally displaced refugees from earlier fighting in the FATA. See "Pakistan's IDP Crisis: Challenges and Opportunities," *International Crisis Group*, June 3, 2009, 2 and "Over 1450 Pakistan Army Officers, Men Have

government's strategy of using sheer force against Taliban and local militants couldn't work primarily thanks to these limitations.

Moreover, the December 2001 Bonn Conference was in many ways a great disappointment for Pakistan.⁵⁶ Despite US assurances to Pakistan, thanks to its military assistance, the Northern Alliance which has long enjoyed the support of India, Iran, and Russia etc., was able to wrest Kabul from Taliban. The US's reliance in the initial stage of the Operation Enduring Freedom on the Northern Alliance discomfited Pakistan. These early actions conditioned Pakistan's decision to retain its contacts with the Taliban to thwart the emergence of a hostile Afghanistan aligned with India.⁵⁷ In the post 9/11 set-up the balance of power has shifted in favour of non-Pashtoon elements which gave a lot of leverage and influence to India. Pakistan's perception of her security environment compels her to look for a friendly and at the most for a neutral government in Afghanistan because of its tensions with India.

Pakistan's fears are compounded by the Indian advances in Afghanistan. India seeks to establish its influence in Afghanistan in order to isolate Pakistan, politically, diplomatically and militarily. Consequently it has seized many opportunities in the post-Taliban Afghanistan to exert its influence. India has also established Consular offices in Kandahar and Jalalabad provinces of Afghanistan close to Pak-Afghan border. It claims that they have been opened just to oversee popular aid programme, support its overseas business community working in Afghanistan and to carry out consular and other activities.⁵⁸ However, Pakistan has repeatedly drawn the attention of the US and international community, complaining that they are involved in clandestine subversive activities in Pakistan⁵⁹. Now increasingly analysts argue that Pakistan continues to support a section of Taliban mainly because of its fears about India. It is also argued that India's lurking

Embraced Shahadat During Anti-Militancy Operations," *Associated Press of Pakistan*, February 5, 2009.

⁵⁶ Ahmad Rashid, *Descent into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia* (New York: Viking, 2008), 105.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 86-87.

⁵⁸ Mathew Yglesias, "Does Helping Hamid Karzai Conquer Afghanistan Stabilize Pakistan?,"

www.yglesias.thinkprogress.org/archives/2009/09/does-helping-hamid-karzai-conquer-afghanistan-stabilize-pakistan (accessed October 2, 2009).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

interest in seeing a debilitated and fragile Pakistan may backfire, and that such an eventuality will have disastrous consequences for Indian statehood as well. And last but not the least, there has been but half-hearted exercise of pressure on Pakistan in this regard. Some of the US policy circles argue that cutting all ties to the militant groups may make them more dangerous as the Pakistani state loses visibility into their activities and forgoes opportunity to gradually rein them in⁶⁰.

However, there are dissenting voices who advocate the use of a greater amount of force on Pakistan to reduce and eventually terminate its support for the various militant groups, to close their training camps and counter extremist propaganda. They argue that while Pakistan regards these groups as important political and strategic assets, it also regards a military relationship with the United States that produces advance American hardware still more important. As the Pakistani military remains at the centre of political gravity, new sales may be linked to good performance vis-à-vis terrorism.

Peace Deals with the Tribal Militants: Whither Pakistan's Security?

Primarily, the focus of the US has been on confronting the Taliban militarily. It employed a purely military strategy, and that is what they expected from Pakistan to do. However, the recent developments have suggested that a skilful mix of political and military elements is very much on the cards. The latter is more in tune with Pakistan's two-pronged strategy of using military force along with bringing the flexible elements among the militants to the negotiating table. This strategy has the potential of serving both the long-term as well as short-term goals of the war against terrorism. However, till very recently this policy had been out of favour with the Western powers. Pakistan on its part contended that the shoe pinched at the Afghan side of the divide whereas

⁶⁰ C. Christine Fair, "Time for Sober Realism: Renegotiating US relations with Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly*, April 2009. She argues that the international community is reluctant to isolate Pakistan over its ongoing support for militant groups, including Taliban, because it needs continued access to and assistance from Pakistan for the war in Afghanistan, wants to secure Pakistan's continued actions against al-Qaeda, fear proliferation, seeks greater visibility into the emerging command and control structures over Pakistan's arsenal as well as greater understanding of the dynamics within Pakistan armed forces.

Afghanistan and the West – read the US – held Pakistan responsible for the mess which continues to fester and expand over the years.⁶¹ Pakistan, ostensibly due to its security, logistical and socio-economic problems, couldn't crush Taliban altogether though it did work assiduously to segregate Taliban from Al-Qaeda, and the “good” Taliban from the “bad”. It is in consonance with this that it had to employ carrots along with sticks in so far as tackling the Taliban menace was concerned.

Pakistan holds that the genesis of the problem is on the Afghan side of the border. It complains that the Pashtoon area which used to be dominated by the Taliban in the past has been disaffected with the Afghan government. Not much has been done by way of national reconstruction, economic development and nation-building of these areas. That is why the disenchanted people of these areas have started reverting to and looking up to the Taliban for seeking solutions of their economic problems. The view in Pakistan is that it is a willing negligence on the part of the Afghan government and a punitive measure that is disenfranchising the Pushtoons.

It is against this backdrop that Pakistan finds itself in a “to be or not to be” sort of situation while deciding anything about the Taliban. It does not support them; but at the same time it won't prevent them either. In any case, every Pakistani government has had its limitations in coping with the tribal problems. It has to deal with a semi-autonomous area. Pakistani government's strategy of using sheer force against Taliban and local militants couldn't work primarily because of these limitations. That is why it decided to change the tactics to peaceful means. It was primarily against this backdrop that it entered into peace deals with the local Taliban in the tribal belt of Pakistan.

Right from the outset, the Americans did not hold those overtures in favourable light, perceiving these deals a virtual surrender and *carte blanche* to the Taliban to attack every foreign target in Afghanistan.⁶² According to a US Spokesman, attacks from the North Waziristan and

⁶¹ “Afghanistan: Taleban's Second Coming,” *BBC Report*, June 2, 2006.

⁶² <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/taliban/etc/nwdeal.html> Some of the clauses of the deal signed in the North Waziristan are: “All foreigners would go outside of North Waziristan Agency. If any one who is not in a position, will be allowed to stay in the area on surety or guarantee of the local tribesmen. Such type of foreigners would remain with peace and would honour all clauses of the agreement.” “If a person or a group (local or foreigner) will not follow the peace pact and will try to sabotage peace in Waziristan, then action will be taken against him”.

tribal areas have actually increased since the agreement. Besides, there was mutual mistrust between the government and the local Taliban as well. That is why once the US drone attacks destroyed seminaries in Pakistan, these peace deals could remain but on paper only⁶³ American policy on Pakistan over all these issues eroded Pakistan's sovereign power to take whatever decision that it may consider in its best national interest keeping in view the ground realities.

The US has played the role of a conduit or facilitator in enabling both Kabul and Islamabad to resolve these and other issues. In this regard, the tripartite commission featuring ISAF, Pakistan and Afghanistan has a singularly important role in resolving differences. It *inter alia* has to confide with the parties in the fields of intelligence sharing, and coordination and cooperation. This is partly owing to US' seriousness in sharing Pakistan's sensitivity about its security environment, and partly to its own desire that Pakistan and Afghanistan work together in the war against terrorism as partners. By doing so the US also wants to give a signal to the terrorists and the Taliban that it is serious in rooting them out.

US-Pakistan Alliance and Pakistan's Domestic Security

The current US-Pakistan engagement may be focused on the cooperation in the war on terrorism, especially on building the military-intelligence partnership between the two countries, but it is not limited to it. Pakistan's domestic order enhances the potential for extremism and instability which has been of serious concern to the United States.⁶⁴

Two successive US administrations have aimed at forging a sustainable relationship with Pakistan. Yet, the US repeated its mistaken

⁶³ The destruction by the US drone of a madrasah at Damdola, Bajour in January 2006 killed many innocent people which also included children. Pakistan lodged a diplomatic protest to the US against the violation of its territorial integrity. (Transcript of the Press Conference addressed by the Pakistani Foreign Office Spokesperson on January 30, 2006)

⁶⁴ Pakistan on its part hopes to enhance this relationship are to develop stakes in bilateral trade, to promote understanding about Pakistan's requirements in the defence and security areas, and to increase convergences between Pakistan and the US, not just in a tactical sense, but on strategic issues as well. Both Pakistan and the United States are partners, working towards stable, durable, and longer lasting relationship. "Joint Statement on United States-Pakistan Strategic Relationship," Office of the Press Secretary, White House, The United States of America, May 4, 2006.

policy of extending unqualified support to the military-dominated establishment of Pakistan and by giving a *carte blanche* to Gen. Musharraf.⁶⁵ Musharraf's vision of "enlightened moderation" was compatible with US objectives and allowed for the current US-Pakistan engagement, but both he and the United States faced problems in their implementation.

The concentration of resources in the hands of military further disturbed the lopsided institutional balance in its favour. The military and civilian aid not only strengthened the military institution itself but the resources it got were also used to allure the politically vulnerable turncoats.⁶⁶ American supplied aid was thus mobilized to increase the power and influence of those groups and personalities that could be co-opted. The eventual result was a further increase in the yawning gap between the different economic strata of the society. Interestingly Musharraf was successful in courting the flexible elements from both *right* and *left*. The "left off" elements from both quarters were soon to be the main challengers of his regime. He was able to beguile the *right* more deftly than the liberal sections of the civil society. He used the state apparatus freely to ward off any threat. The ultimate result was that more and more people turned to the *right*, and then from *right* to extremism. The US alliance with Musharraf was an alliance of convenience⁶⁷, it is argued.

⁶⁵ "Bush Placed Nearly All his Eggs in Musharraf's Basket and now that Basket is Badly Leaking," said Robert Hathaway, Director of the Asia Program at the *Woodrow Wilson international Centre for Scholars* in Washington, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?=53989&Ing=en> (accessed June 29, 2009).

⁶⁶ "Pakistan army relied on politicians for its legitimacy, while, in turn, the politicians have relied on Army's support to keep themselves in power and shield themselves from accountability. Both have pandered to the Islamists, who have provided the ideological underpinnings to the security-dominated nationalism in Pakistan that has guaranteed the military's dominant political profile. As a result, by creating political space for the Islamists, the military has helped foster religious extremism in the country." See Touqir Hussain, *The US-Pakistan Engagement: The War on Terrorism and Beyond*.

⁶⁷ Mr Hussain Haqqani, currently Pakistani Ambassador in Washington while talking to *ISN Security Watch*, inter alia, also remarked that Pakistan security eroded during Musharraf's tenure. He pointed out that deaths in Pakistan attributable to terrorist incidents have risen from 648 in 2005 to 1, 471 in 2006, and to around 2,300 in 2007, <http://www.isn.ethz.ch/isn/Current-Affairs/Security-Watch/Detail/?=53989&Ing=en> (accessed June 29, 2009).

The regional security imperatives thus compelled Pakistan to have some semblance of leverage in dealing with both India and Afghanistan.

That is why Pakistan was believed to have left the Jihadi outfits unscathed and has also not turned on the Taliban with full force.⁶⁸

The US provided US\$22 billion in aid to Pakistan since 1954. During the 34 years of military rule Pakistan has experienced since then, the US sent US\$17.7 billion, or around US\$650 million per year. In 19 years of civilian rule, the US sent US\$3.4 billion, or around US\$180 million per year.⁶⁹

However, privately the US did impress upon President Musharraf to allow greater participation and functioning of the mainstream political parties. Nonetheless, the US did soft-pedal on the issue of democratization because it saw the spectrum through the prism of the Army which perceived that a return to complete civilian government meant a return to policies inimical not only to the US but also to the military conception of “the national interest”⁷⁰

Again US acquiescence if not outright connivance made Musharraf to renege on his promises and to muffle all dissenting democratic voices. The dangerous vacuum thus created spurred the unprecedented rise of the rightist clergy which ultimately filled the void. This very policy of the US not only eroded Pakistan’s internal security,⁷¹ but also affected Pakistan-US relations.

Existentialist Challenge to Pakistan: Myth or Reality?

However amidst this imbroglio are the rumours spread by both the rightist elements in Pakistan and a section of Indian and western media

⁶⁸ Even if Musharraf had no future use of the Jihadis, he would not have a showdown with them finding this confrontation to be an unnecessary and dangerous provocation as, in light of possible resolution of the Kashmir dispute and normalization of relations with India, these outfits may become rebels without a cause and thus die their own deaths.

⁶⁹ Hussain Haqqani, *ISN Security Watch*.

⁷⁰ Stephen P. Cohen, *America and Pakistan: Is the Worst Case Avoidable?*

⁷¹ By this very token, all the three ingredients of statehood in case of Pakistan were shaken. Internal divisiveness increased and more and more people started contesting the underlying idea of Pakistani statehood; institutional strength was sapped by inter-institutional strife and the weakening of polity and judiciary at the expense of the military, and the physical base of the state became exposed both the traditional and new set of dangers.

that Pakistan is faced with an existential challenge. The rightist elements in Pakistan are offended by the United States' nonchalance towards the increased Indian presence in Afghanistan and the conspiracies hatched by the so-called Black Water against Pakistan for reportedly being the hub of extremism and nuclear proliferation etc. The foreign media point to Pakistan's inability in checking the growth of extremism while some sections of the Indian media have been issuing analyses that Pakistan was about to fall apart. Former Indian Minister for Petroleum, Mani Shankar Ayre, however, does not subscribe to this proposition⁷². Most of the Pakistani columnists, even the rightists, do not agree with this proposition and consider it to be part of an Indian conspiracy to destabilize Pakistan. They consider all the rumours in this regard as simply baseless, because the US was cognizant of the fact that in the worst case scenario, Iran and India would not let it have a foothold in the region, and hence Pakistan was indispensable for the US.⁷³ However, the popular theme in such nationalist discourses has been that if there was anything that could bring about the downfall of Pakistan then it was its continuous, unqualified support to the US in the war on terror and mortgaging Pakistan's sovereignty with the US. Therefore peace and security in Pakistan, as well as in the region, was conditioned with the withdrawal of US/NATO forces from the region, they argue.⁷⁴

Conclusion

The euphoria among some of the quarters about the sustainability and longevity of this pattern of relations may or may not be totally out of place, yet there is no denying the fact that Pakistan would continue to remain on the US radar screen. On top of it, it seems that the US is trying to play a different ball game with Pakistan this time. Critical US policy choices toward Pakistan are in fact integrated with broader regional policies. Both South Asia and the basis of US' relations with it have undergone a change. This presents new threats and opportunities for the US foreign policy makers. For example, India offers the United States

⁷² The author's email communication with Mr. Mani Shankar Ayre with reference to his interview in the *tehlaka.com*.

⁷³ Haroon ur Rasheed (Pakistani Journalist & Analyst) at Programme "Late Edition" with Israr Kasana, *ARY News*, June 26, 2009.

⁷⁴ PTI Chief, Imran Khan speaking in the *Geo News* Programme titled "Capital Talk," December 8, 2009.

great economic and strategic opportunities, but it is Pakistan's internal dynamics and its geo-strategic location that have been at the root of challenges to US foreign policy in South Asia. Overall India will continue to have an edge in so far as currying favour with the United States is concerned. The US may have been able to influence India to come to the negotiating table with Pakistan, yet thanks to its size and international clout, the US has its limits when it comes to exercising pressure on India. There is much trust-deficit between the two countries. While the US, Pakistan and Afghanistan have now a tripartite Committee to monitor the progress against al-Qaeda and Taliban, yet the clouds of distrust still vitiate the atmosphere. Americans think that there are many Pakistanis who still regard Afghanistan as a client state, and given the opportunity they would again interfere in Afghanistan. It should be noted, however, that Pakistan has legitimate interests in Afghanistan which *inter alia* include the desire to prevent the expansion of Indian power into Afghanistan in order to keep India from encircling it.

Needless to say that despite all these changes, the pattern of continuity is visible in all the issues of mutual concern in both these security complexes ranging from dealing with militancy to India-Pakistan relations, Kashmir issue and Pakistan's nuclear programme. First and foremost the alliance partners are at cross purposes in so far as the rationale of this engagement is concerned. Faisal Shahzad's case and the issuance of stern warnings by the US Secretary of State to Pakistan in the aftermath of the failed NY bomb plot is the case in point. It shows how an incident of terrorism attempted by an individual who happens to be a US citizen of Pakistani origin can dash all hopes of the longevity of the current Pakistan-United States engagement.

On checking militancy in the periphery of Pakistan, it can be noted that Pakistani government has clear limitations on that count. Both theoretically as well as pragmatically, no clear-cut military solution of the conundrum is possible. The US should appreciate this and weigh different options available to Pakistan keeping in view the sensitivities of the general people and the peculiar regional security environment.

Gathering of any huge socio-political storm aside, there is no likelihood that Pakistan's nuclear programme is going to fall to extremists. It is under proper command and control system. The US is likely to tolerate the current level of Pakistan's nuclear programme provided Pakistan does not cross the new "red lines" set by the former.

The US has equally to think and address the domestic concerns in Pakistan, including the energy crisis in Pakistan, the nascent political process and the associated simmering tensions, as a cornerstone of its counterterrorism strategy because they enhance the potential for instability and extremism. Hopes are high on this count among the Pakistani policy circles and general people yet whether or not the US opts to continue supporting Pakistan in all these areas beyond the current phase of mutual engagement as part of its long term counterterrorism strategy is an open question. ■