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America's War on Terrorism: Religious Radicalism and Nuclear Confrontation in South Asia

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he new approach [to Iraq] is revolutionary. Regime change as a goal for military intervention challenges the international system established by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia ... And the notion of justified preemption runs counter to modern international law ... The most interesting and potentially fateful reaction might well be that of India, which would be tempted to apply the new principle of preemption to Pakistan.¹

SECURITY CRISES have defined and reshaped U.S. relations with South Asia nearly as often as they have with the adjoining Middle East. Nuclear and war-threatening crises have reemerged in quick succession lately in South Asia. This makes that region arguably as dangerous to international security as the Middle East is—not least when the shadow of a new preemptive war against Iraq looms on the horizon. The impact of radicalized religious groups is now a prominent part of these world-shaking regional crises.

1. Henry A. Kissinger, "Our Intervention in Iraq," syndicated column in the *Washington Post*, 12 August 2002.

To enumerate the most recent crises in South Asia: In May 1998, it was the overt military nuclearization of India and Pakistan—an ominous watershed. In May 1999, the Kargil Conflict followed, a low-intensity war in Kashmir under the “nuclear shadow.” In October 2001, the United States counter-attacked al-Qaeda and its Taliban hosts in Afghanistan after the terrible 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States—a defining moment for much to come. In 2002, it was India’s mobilized military confrontation with Pakistan, a defining moment for relations between India and Pakistan.

The India-Pakistan military confrontation persists today—even though it seemed to lose some of its sizzle mid-way through the year.² In June 2002, senior American and British leaders finally interceded with some conviction in Delhi and Islamabad. What was this India-Pakistan confrontation all about? What does it tell us about the phenomenon of religious radicalism and violence in that part of the world? How close did India and Pakistan get to the beginning of a hot war before July 2002? What were the odds that the outbreak of a hot war could have degenerated into a spiral toward nuclear war? Would this military confrontation have even arisen from the December 13, 2001 attack on India’s parliament, had the U.S. “global war on terrorism” not been underway in Afghanistan, nearby? Did the broader “war on terrorism” shape India’s specific objectives vis-à-vis Pakistan in this confrontation? Is this current confrontation a harbinger of more to come? Does it tell us anything about a deeper issue, namely, whether the ongoing tension between India and Pakistan would be easily resolved if the element of religious radicalism were taken out of the picture? Or is the conflict deeper than that?

This paper is an overview of the meaning of the India-Pakistan military confrontation. The analysis necessarily reflects the impact of religious radicalism and militancy, not only on the confrontation itself, but also on the relationship between India and Pakistan, and the U.S. role in that region, since September 11, 2001. It argues that the U.S. war on terrorism radically increased the potential capacity of militant

2. The confrontation began to subside, though it did not end completely, after elections in Indian-held Kashmir and the national elections in Pakistan, by October 2002. This chapter was completed in August 2002. The epilogue was added in November 2002.

organizations to trigger war between India and Pakistan, a war that neither side would ultimately benefit from and that almost certainly would have catastrophic consequences if it went nuclear. It acknowledges that the December 13 terrorist attack on India's parliament was a serious provocation, but concludes that it was not sponsored or engineered by the state of Pakistan and was really as much an attack on the government of Pervez Musharraf as on the ostensible target in India.

This analysis further argues that India dangerously overreacted by choosing to exploit military brinkmanship for coercive diplomacy. India's overt aim was to force Pakistan to outlaw militant organizations operating across the line in Indian-held Kashmir and to get the support of the international community to make this permanent. In essence India hoped to seal off Kashmir irrevocably from Pakistani influence, to squelch the Kashmiri struggle for independence at its roots, and to turn Indian-held Jammu and Kashmir into a normal state inside the Indian union. India's underlying aims seem to have reached even deeper. Taking advantage of the war on terrorism, India sought to stigmatize Pakistan permanently in the eyes of the world as a terrorist state, thereby marginalizing its external influence altogether. India also sought to convince the United States that India has been the victim all along, partly to defuse the reaction to its nuclear ambitions. In fact, India largely succeeded in realizing these objectives, at least for the near term, although how far it succeeded in stigmatizing and marginalizing Pakistan remains to be seen.

With this Indian strategy in mind, the paper argues further that while religious extremism has become an ingredient of the India-Pakistan rivalry, the underlying conflict is political and will not be resolved merely by restraining religious zealotry. Moreover, India's incentives to find a negotiated solution to the Kashmir problem with Pakistan actually shrink to the degree that Indian and Western perceptions of the problem are expressed in terms of religious militancy and equated simply with "terrorism." The most important implication of this judgment is that the risks of nuclear war between India and Pakistan will remain at a high level because military crises over Kashmir are likely to recur, in the absence of serious trilateral negotiating efforts to achieve a political solution.

As for the changing U.S. role in this region, this paper argues that the military crisis acted as a post-Cold War catalyst that induced U.S. leaders to choose sides between India and Pakistan—on ideological as well as geopolitical grounds. The ideological grounds favored India, given its reputation as a democratic and constitutionally secular state. But the geopolitical grounds were crucial. U.S. interests seemed to mesh with India's vocal opposition to the same international terrorist sources (Arab and Islamic) that are now feared most in the West today.

Pakistan, by contrast, has been stigmatized in the West increasingly, as a consequence of its drift from an essentially secular government before 1977 to one with increments of Islamic content. Its failure to evolve stable democratic institutions, its increasing sectarian violence, its October 1999 lurch back to military rule, and its original sponsorship and continued sympathy for the Taliban in Afghanistan have reinforced an image that does not sit well in the West. In the wake of al-Qaeda's attack on the U.S. homeland and President Bush's mobilization of the global war on terrorism, it was ironic but not surprising that the new U.S. administration would view Pakistan with underlying suspicion and India with greater warmth.³

The net effect on the core issue of India-Pakistan relations has been U.S. gravitation toward an Indian perspective on the violence in Kashmir, and away from a clinical understanding of the legal and political origins of the dispute. This further adds to the risks that the subcontinent will be swept up into a holocaust before the Kashmir problem is resolved on a constructive basis.

3. Several ironies surface upon closer inspection of these issues. The rise of Osama bin Laden and the Islamic zeal of the guerrilla warfare against the Soviet Union in the Afghan liberation war of the 1980s were encouraged and partially financed by the United States, along with Saudi Arabia, China, and Pakistan. The sponsorship of the Taliban itself, a successor movement that arose well after the Soviet withdrawal, was not U.S.-inspired, but leading Americans, including some highly placed in the current Bush administration, were advocates of official recognition and normalization of diplomatic relations with an aspiring Taliban regime in Kabul during the mid- and late 1990s.

U.S. Policy and Military Operations in Afghanistan: Impact on India and Pakistan

TO UNDERSTAND THE DEEPER MEANING of the current India-Pakistan military confrontation, it is important to explore the broader geopolitical context. The impact of the U.S. policy reaction to 9/11 on Pakistan and India, and the success of U.S. military operations against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, did much to define this context. President George W. Bush declared the global war on terrorism to be the primary focus of an American effort abroad for as long as it might take, and challenged every nation to choose sides—to join the United States against international terrorism, or side with terrorism as a U.S. enemy.⁴ Then in the cross-hairs, the Taliban leaders in Afghanistan faced the same draconian choice, either to expel Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network, or face the full military force of the United States and its allies, backed by the United Nations.

When Taliban chief Mullah Mohammed Omar rebuffed Pakistani intercession and defied the U.S. demand to expel the Taliban's "honored guests," President Bush's "for-or-against terrorism" demand required Pakistan and India—as well as China and Russia, the Persian Gulf states, and the newly independent Central Asian countries—to choose sides. For most of the other Afghan ethnic factions, especially the Tajiks and Hazaras of the Northern Alliance who had barely beaten back Taliban control over the entire country, the choice was obvious. American pressure on each entity was intense after September 2001, because their choices could either impede or facilitate effective U.S. military intervention and pursuit of al-Qaeda elements hiding in Afghanistan.⁵

4. Since dubbed the "Bush Doctrine," the stark good-versus-evil formula announced by President Bush in his September 20, 2001 speech to Congress said: "Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."

5. While this paper focuses on the post-9/11 dynamics of South Asia, it is crucial to remember that the U.S. response to the terrorist attack on its homeland was comprehensive—politically and financially—using all the tools of diplomacy, intelligence, law enforcement, and finance to pursue, isolate, constrain, and starve the components of the globally far-reaching al-Qaeda terrorist network. The military operations focused in Afghanistan have been the most visible part of the war on terrorism, but are only one part of a long-term, multi-faceted campaign to root out and crush global terrorist organizations, including others that may cooperate with al-Qaeda leaders.

Few governments in the region, however, grasped how quickly and skillfully the United States could employ conventional and unconventional warfare in so isolated and primitive a country as Afghanistan. In the Gulf War, the buildup to drive Iraq out of Kuwait had taken months, with the support of Saudi Arabia allowing the allies to stage forces on its territory. Iraqi forces were heavily equipped, but cumbersome and vulnerable to effective allied air power. Landlocked Afghanistan, however, was a different situation. Taliban leaders apparently believed U.S. long-distance air strikes would be ineffectual against Taliban forces hidden amongst their countrymen in towns, or bunkered down in mountain fortresses and caves. The Taliban fully expected to deliver to American soldiers who ventured on land the same fate Soviet soldiers had suffered at the hands of Afghan mujahideen in the 1980s. Indeed, Pakistanis, Indians, and Iranians probably wondered whether the United States was about to stumble into quicksand and be painfully bloodied by low-tech guerrilla tactics.

For Pakistan, making the “right choice” as Bush posed it was not really in doubt. The magnitude of President Bush’s commitment to the war against terrorism was conveyed. General Pervez Musharraf came out unequivocally on the U.S. side from the start, abruptly—albeit painfully—abandoning the Taliban. An elected government of Pakistan might well have dithered longer, because the “right choice” was acutely difficult for Pakistani leaders, for a number of reasons. The most important was that such a choice meant abandoning the Taliban not only as a natural ally but also as a creature of Pakistan’s decade-long efforts to pursue stability and lasting influence in Afghanistan following the Soviet expulsion. Fortunately Pakistan did not have a stake in al-Qaeda, and no intimate official ties with Osama bin Laden and his Arab associates.

PAKISTAN’S STAKES IN THE TALIBAN

As Ahmad Rashid has described so well,⁶ the Taliban (Islamic student) movement sprang from Pushtun refugees in Pakistan, concentrated in temporary camps in western Pakistan. Pushtun young men

6. Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

who had grown up in these camps were drawn back to the Afghan homeland after the Soviet exit, but under civil war conditions in their country. These youths had been trained in the use of small arms (carrying weapons was a natural legacy of their culture) and taught to believe they could impose a peaceful, Islamic moral order on their country. Most had no deep memory of traditional social life in Afghanistan itself, many had lost their parents and, being displaced, few were accustomed to the valued roles women played in Afghan society. The Taliban religious outlook was a product of the free, but largely Quranic, obscurantist education available to boys in the austere camp environments. Their teachers themselves typically were religious leaders (*maulvis* or *mullahs*) from Deobandi or Wahabi brands of fundamentalist Islam who ran traditional religious schools (*madrassas*) with hostels, frequently using them as recruiting grounds for political ends.

When the Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, the United States essentially washed its hands of responsibility for the future of that debilitated country. Having defeated Soviet power and installed a weak Islamic republic under Tajik cleric Burhanuddin Rabbani in Kabul, Afghan mujahideen groups increasingly quarreled among themselves on ethnic and tribal lines and most of Afghanistan succumbed to internal warfare. Pakistan's elected, bureaucratic and military leaders could not so easily ignore this turbulence and groped for a strategy that would restore civil order beyond Pakistan's borders in Afghanistan.

Under liberal Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and Interior Minister Naseerullah Babur in 1993, the government of Pakistan worked out a two-fold strategy toward Afghanistan: (a) to support the revival of traditional Pushtun rule in the hope of extinguishing inter-tribal war, suppressing banditry, reopening roads, reviving trade with Iran and Central Asia, and securing Afghanistan for Western-financed pipeline projects that could provide Afghanistan revenue while transporting natural gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and on to India; and (b) to preempt Pushtun revival of the demand for a separate Pushtun state (Pakhtunistan) that had threatened Pakistan's integrity in the northwest tribal belt for many years after Independence, by ensuring the primacy of Pushtun stakes in Afghanistan's future.

The Taliban movement emerging from the refugee settlements provided a natural political vehicle for this Pakistani strategy. It depended

on the cooperation of the Islamist political parties that sponsored the Taliban in the camps. The task merely involved lightly arming and training Taliban cadres, and negotiating their entry through Quetta to join those Pushtun militia leaders inside Afghanistan who deplored the country's internal disintegration and aspired, however crudely, to pacify, reunify and rebuild Afghanistan. The Pakistani military intelligence arm, the Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI)—which had served as the main American and Saudi conduit for training, financial support, and transferring arms to the Afghan mujahideen—became the overseers and managers of Pakistan's assistance to the Taliban. This ISI role was secretive, but it was no rogue operation—as some in Pakistan and the United States may now wish to believe. Rather, it was the policy of Pakistan's elected governments from 1993, including that of the Harvard- and Oxford-educated Benazir Bhutto, Pakistan's first female prime minister.

The Taliban gained a regional foothold around Kandahar in 1994 and then rapidly spread within southern and eastern Afghanistan, seizing Kabul and asserting a claim to govern Afghanistan in 1996, with all but a northeastern tenth of the country falling under their sway by 1998. Some financial support for the Taliban came from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. The Taliban regime was formally recognized by Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and United Arab Emirates as the government of Afghanistan. Other governments and the United Nations either continued to recognize the first mujahideen (Rabbani) government even after it fled Kabul, or declined to recognize the Taliban regime, hoping that diplomacy and United Nations relief could patch together a workable, coalition government more representative of the country as a whole.

Almost invisible to Westerners at the start, the Taliban project at first was not considered objectionable in Washington. The Taliban became anathema only later, after word of its brutality spread. Having seized power in Kabul, the Taliban's inhumane governing practices undercut its once positive reputation for disarming warlord factions and bringing peace in one locality after another. From Kabul, the new regime imposed uniquely harsh judicial procedures and tried to force the surviving remnants of Afghanistan's battered urban society to give up music and entertainment. On pain of beating or even execution, men were forced to grow beards and wear traditional clothes, and women to leave jobs and whenever outdoors to wear the head-to-toe

covering known as *burqas*. Western revulsion was aroused by media reports of the Taliban's draconian interpretation of Islamic law, confinement of women, suppression of female education, arbitrary arrests, mutilation or execution as punishments, and intolerance of non-Muslim religious minorities.

However much the Taliban was eventually despised in the West, it was not the offspring of, nor originally associated with, al-Qaeda. Osama bin Laden apparently left Sudan in 1996 and moved back to Afghanistan some time in 1997. Thereafter, al-Qaeda gradually extended influence over the Taliban by spending its own resources to win the favor of senior Taliban leaders. Al-Qaeda also provided armed support and guidance to Taliban fighters who were fighting the Northern Alliance forces and other autonomous factions elsewhere in the country. The United States focused only on the significance of the Taliban's grant of sanctuary to al-Qaeda after its bombing of U.S. Embassies in East Africa in 1998.

Toward the end of its tenure, the Clinton administration put considerable pressure on Pakistan to arrange communication with Taliban officials, hoping to persuade them to expel Osama bin Laden and his associates. But the Taliban's counter demand was that it be recognized as Afghanistan's de jure government. This price the United States was unwilling to pay. How deeply the Taliban depended on al-Qaeda for military operations against the Northern Alliance was not apparent to ordinary observers until after 9/11. What was clear, however, was that Pakistan had a major stake in the Taliban's claim to govern Afghanistan, was opposed to the Northern Alliance, and could not disengage from those positions in Afghanistan, short of a world-shaking crisis. September 11 brought just that crisis.

This analysis indicates that Pakistan's stakes in the Taliban were not based on a common religion or on matters of Islamic principle, per se. Pakistan was interested in geopolitical objectives, not in the religious aims of the Taliban or its parochial justification of a strict Islamic discipline. Pakistan hoped to foster order through a client regime in a war-torn country on its borders. In doing so, it aimed to promote the revival of trade, to link Central Asian energy resources with the subcontinent, and to extinguish any Pushtun impulse to tear part of Pakistan away as a separate Pushtun state.

Exploiting reservoirs of Afghan Islamic fervor was useful to Pakistan (as well as to the United States) against the Soviet forces in Afghanistan,

and useful again to Pakistan in helping the Taliban come to power, but the Taliban movement's Islamic fundamentalist orientation was never for Pakistan's government an end in itself. Only a smattering of individual Pakistanis and fundamentalist groups—mainly Pushtun tribes and Islamic political parties with roots in the Pushtun tribal regions—identified with the Taliban cause emotionally or ideologically. For the Pakistani authorities, the Taliban's religious appeal was only a tool.

Far more basic for Pakistan's government, and painful to abandon, was the aim of Pushtun dominance within Afghanistan as a means of resolving the civil war and opening the way to the trans-Afghanistan energy project. In achieving this aim, to cut off the Taliban even after George W. Bush threw down the gauntlet was tantamount to sacrificing Pushtun interests in Afghan politics and undermining Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan's stability and its own security. Pakistan's view of the power of the Northern Alliance, perhaps mistakenly, was that it jeopardized stability in Afghanistan. Thus, when Pakistani chief Pervez Musharraf turned against the Taliban under U.S. pressure, the decision was acutely difficult. Because Pakistan's strategy toward Afghanistan—and its own security on its western borders—was based on a successful Taliban campaign for power, it required accepting a fundamentally different calculation of Pakistan's national interests.

The new calculation was that Pakistan could not afford to be stigmatized by the West as a terrorist state. Once the Taliban refused to disassociate itself from al-Qaeda, Islamabad recognized that the United States would regard the Taliban as a de facto "terrorist" regime, and a legitimate object of military attack. For Pakistan to be associated with the Taliban political cause after that would not only put Pakistan on a slippery slope toward international ostracism but could be used, potentially, to justify military attack on Pakistan itself. Indeed, it was exactly this sensitivity that India latched onto when it initiated a military confrontation with Pakistan after the attack on parliament in December 2001. But before we examine that crisis, the dramatic progress of the U.S. war in Afghanistan and the potential effects on the Kashmir side of Pakistan's Afghanistan-related entanglement need separate discussion.

MILITARY CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE TALIBAN AND AL-QAEDA

Pakistan had to decide very quickly whether it would support the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan. Senior Pakistani officials announced on September 15, *within four days* of the 9/11 terrorist

attacks on the United States, that they had agreed to give "full support" to U.S. efforts to combat international terrorism.⁷ President Musharraf's address in Urdu to the nation three days later informed his people that the United States had demanded military overflight rights, logistical support, and intelligence cooperation against three targets—Osama bin Laden, the Taliban, and international terrorism.⁸ Musharraf noted that the United States had won United Nations support and confided to the nation that neighboring India had offered its military facilities to the United States in the hopes of isolating Pakistan and getting it declared a terrorist state. Musharraf made it clear to his countrymen that Pakistan had to assist the United States; otherwise four vital interests of Pakistan would be in jeopardy—its sovereignty, its economy, its strategic (nuclear and missile) assets, and its cause in Kashmir. Musharraf and his advisors

7. See Molly Moore and Kamran Khan, "Pakistan Moving Armed Forces: Focus Shifts from India as 'Full Support' for U.S. Is Vowed," *Washington Post*, A-9, 16 September 2001. Pakistani officials indicated that Pakistan would "provide detailed intelligence information to the United States on bin Laden and the Taliban," seek "to control illicit fuel and other materials from crossing the border into Afghanistan" [and] "permit U.S. military logistical and technical personnel to operate at Pakistani air bases, ports and some other locations in support of attacks against Afghanistan." They suggested the United States had not sought permission to bring ground combat forces into Pakistan but that, if asked, Pakistan "would consider a request for a multinational force that included representatives of Muslim nations." The article reported that the Pakistani "military also was preparing plans to protect the country's ... nuclear facilities ... from the possibility of a stray missile or other aerial accident." This last point hinted at a deep Pakistani concern that Indian, Israeli, or even U.S. aircraft transiting from India through Pakistani airspace might use the crisis to damage Pakistan's military capabilities.

8. "Highlights of President Pervez Musharraf's Address to the Nation," *Dawn*, 19 September 2001, online edition. An investigative *Washington Post* article, the "Afghan Campaign's Blueprint Emerges," 29 January 2002, provides a colorful and pumped-up account of the senior Bush administration officials' rush on Musharraf after 9/11. Thinking through what the United States would ask of Musharraf and Pakistan, Secretary of State Colin Powell and his Deputy Richard Armitage put on their list: (1) stop all al-Qaeda operatives at the border, intercept all arms shipments to Afghanistan moving through Pakistan, and end all logistical support for bin Laden; (2) obtain blanket overflight and landing rights; (3) get access to Pakistan's naval bases, air bases, and borders; (4) obtain immediate intelligence and immigration information; (5) get Pakistan to condemn the 9/11 attacks and "curb all domestic expressions of support for terrorism against the [United States], its friends or allies" (knowing such a demand could not be fulfilled even in the United States); (6) cut off all shipments of fuel to the Taliban and prevent Pakistani volunteers from joining the Taliban; and (7) get Pakistan's commitment, in the event the evidence strongly implicates Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan, and if the Taliban continues to give him and the network sanctuary, to break diplomatic relations with the Taliban regime, end all support for the Taliban, and assist the United States in the aforementioned ways to destroy Osama bin Laden and his network.

apparently drew the line, however, at inserting Pakistani military forces into Afghanistan.

Despite concerns about a violent domestic backlash from political parties and groups that had links with the Taliban as well as the threat of al-Qaeda or Taliban attacks across the border, Pakistan thus committed itself almost overnight to give the United States valuable flight corridors over its territory and access to stage U.S. search and rescue forces at facilities near Karachi in the south and closer to Afghanistan at the Pakistani military airfield near Jacobabad.⁹ Pakistani forces also provided backstopping for U.S. operations against al-Qaeda and the Taliban later, by attempting to seal the mountainous borders so as to prevent hostile units fleeing across the border into Pakistan. Pakistani intelligence and security forces also cooperated with covert U.S. forces in efforts to hunt down those al-Qaeda and Taliban elements that succeeded in entering Pakistan to take refuge, or to slip out of the country.¹⁰

Operation Enduring Freedom against al-Qaeda and Taliban forces in Afghanistan began with air strikes on October 7, 2001. Saudi Arabia

9. U.S. access to the Jacobabad airfield reportedly was negotiated as a “semi-permanent” presence. Pakistan agreed to remove from the facility all but liaison personnel from its own air force, and to allow the United States to build air-conditioned barracks for U.S. military units. See Kamran Khan and John Pomfret, “U.S. Extended Presence Agreed to by Pakistan: Air Base to Serve as ‘Key Facility’ in Region,” *Washington Post*, A-57, 14 December 2001. But Pakistan had to reclaim partial use of Jacobabad airfield later in late December and January after India launched its military confrontation. By that time, U.S. access elsewhere, including cities within Afghanistan, reduced its need to depend so heavily on Pakistani facilities. Kamran Khan and Thomas E. Ricks, “U.S. Military Begins Shift from Bases in Pakistan,” *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-9, 11 January 2002. U.S. forces also operated from the Pasni, Dalbandin and Shamsi airfields. Pasni airfield, located at the foot of Baluchistan province on the Arabian Sea coast, ten miles from the Pakistani naval base at Omara, is one of the oldest airfields in the region, having been used during World War II by allied forces. Though small with one major runway, it can handle Boeing 737 jet aircraft. Dalbandin, a small civil airport, is also in Baluchistan, about 230 miles due north of Pasni, and less than fifty miles south of the Afghanistan border. Dalbandin is in use by U.S. forces as a refueling facility for special operations helicopters. Shamsi, in use as a Marine forward operating base, is smaller and in an even more remote part of Baluchistan, near Washki, about fifty miles south of Dalbandin. See the following Global Security.org pages: <http://198.65.138.161/military/facility/pasni.htm>; <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/dalbandin.htm>; and <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/shamsi.htm>.

10. At the height of operations in Afghanistan in December 2001, the number of U.S. military and special operations personnel in Pakistan had reached a reported level of about 1,500. Thomas E. Ricks and Alan Sipress, “Pakistan May Hold Key to Afghan Result: Musharraf Must Decide How to Deal with Al Qaeda Fighters Fleeing across Border,” *Washington Post*, A-20, 20 December 2001.

had vetoed U.S. use of facilities on its soil for the attack and Iran denied access through its airspace. This put a much greater burden on U.S. aircraft carriers and other naval forces that assembled in the Arabian Sea, on bombers that had been flown to Diego Garcia and some that flew all the way from the United States, and on the prodigious use of aircraft refueling capabilities.¹¹ But to the surprise of most observers, Russian President Putin gave his blessing to the U.S. counterterrorist effort and the leaders of three post-Soviet Central Asian states neighboring Afghanistan—Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan—provided the United States air access and staging facilities near Afghanistan in the north and west. Use of these facilities greatly eased U.S. cooperation with the Afghan Northern Alliance and the Uzbek elements that had reestablished a presence under General Rashid Dostum and that would retake Mazar-i-Sharif.

As a result, not only was the United States able to use its own infiltrated ground spotters and air strikes to destroy exposed Taliban military assets and installations—there were relatively few big targets—but it was also able to use airborne firepower to break down the front lines of the Taliban forces opposite the Northern Alliance, enabling the alliance and the other anti-Taliban forces that reemerged to advance, taking Mazar-i-Sharif, Kabul, Herat and Konduz in succession. Mazar-i-Sharif fell on November 9. Kabul was retaken on November 12, and Herat fell the same day. Konduz, where a combined force of about twenty thousand al-Qaeda and Taliban forces put up a fierce resistance, fell on November 24.

A thousand U.S. marines were airlifted on November 26 into a remote landing strip (dubbed Camp Rhino) fifteen miles southeast of Kandahar to provide protection for a buildup of helicopters, armored personnel carriers, and the entry of additional special operations units. This also provided the United States with a staging area inside Afghanistan to pursue operations in the Pushtun areas to the north and east, including near the border with Pakistan. Coupled with well-targeted air raids, the ground presence of U.S. combat forces helped break the main, residual Taliban resistance in the south, stimulated

11. While U.S. forces dominated, the British provided an aircraft carrier and helicopter ship and committed 4,200 soldiers to the effort. France and Italy also each provided a carrier and naval task group, and Germany, Canada, Australia and New Zealand each made special contributions to the campaign.

defections, and forced the hard core to disperse into hiding. Kandahar fell on December 7.

Aided by the Rome political process of negotiating a new Afghan government, Hamid Karzai's leadership had begun by this time to make significant headway among Pushtun elements in the south and east that could absorb defectors and accommodate the Northern Alliance in forming a new government in Kabul. The U.S.-assisted Afghan meetings in Rome helped negotiate agreed steps to constitute a new, representative government in stages—and made the level of international commitment to rehabilitating Afghanistan clearer.

Special combat operations shifted once Kandahar had fallen to the White Mountains, near Khost, adjoining Pakistan, where al-Qaeda and Taliban forces had taken refuge in fortified and well-provisioned mountain caves and bunkers. The Tora Bora operations heavily bombed the cave complexes and ground units then cleared most of them on the ground by early January 2002. Several hundred al-Qaeda and Taliban prisoners were taken, with many shipped to Guantanamo Bay in Cuba for interrogation. A significant number of the al-Qaeda Arabs at Tora Bora evidently slipped through into Pakistan, however. In March, U.S. and allied forces gathered in Operation Anaconda to attack a well-dug-in al-Qaeda/Taliban force of about 1,500 fighters in the Shah-e-Kot Mountains south of Gardez in northeastern Afghanistan. Anaconda produced the largest number of U.S. casualties in a single Afghan operation, but apparently took a heavy toll on the enemy, killing an estimated four hundred to eight hundred opponents. Again, some of the fighters melted away into Pakistan, although in this case Pakistani forces intercepted and fought small units, capturing and turning over a number of al-Qaeda members to the United States for interrogation.

In roughly six months U.S. and allied military intervention, coupled with the residual anti-Taliban forces in Afghanistan, had radically transformed the situation. Momentum increasingly favored the formation of a new Afghan government—although it was clear that such a government would be hard put to establish order throughout the country and develop the capacity, even with international assistance, to conduct a far-reaching economic and social rehabilitation program. Pockets of Taliban and al-Qaeda resistance remained, with a capacity to harass the emerging Karzai government and foment perceptions of disorder, but by summer 2002, these isolated elements no longer held

the capacity to counter-attack the U.S. and allied presence in any major way.

During that military campaign, the radical Islamic backlash that the Musharraf government had feared would erupt within Pakistan launched a handful of demonstrations but then largely subsided during the remainder of 2001. Considerable anti-American feeling and anger with Musharraf's decisions percolated below the surface but potentially massive, violent agitation was contained. Meanwhile, the level of violence in Kashmir rose to a degree. Then on December 13, 2001, halfway through the military campaign, terrorists struck the Indian parliament and precipitated a full Indian military mobilization against Pakistan.

PAKISTAN'S GAINS FROM RENEWED U.S. ATTENTION

Musharraf's quick and essentially unconditional decision to support U.S. 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.¹² But the most important gain for Pakistan was the sudden U.S. 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—giving Pakistan an unexpected opportunity to get back into the good graces of Washington.

During most of the 1990s, the Clinton administration had courted India assiduously, even before the ascent of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the shock of the nuclear tests in early 1998, and continued

12. The United States provided Pakistan a grant of \$600 million in November 2001, after U.S. 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 U.S. Aid, U.S. Eximbank, and the U.S. departments of agriculture and defense. Also under discussion has been cancellation of Pakistan's \$1 billion U.S. debt. See Farhan Bokhari, "Pakistan Debt Schedule Agreed," *Financial Times*, August 24–25, 2002, 3.

to seek an improved relationship despite the nuclear shocks. Pakistan's covert military operations across the line of control (LOC) in Kashmir near Kargil in May 2001 precipitated a mini-war with India that could have escalated. President Clinton's use of his good offices to persuade Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to end this conflict and withdraw Pakistani paramilitary forces behind the LOC measurably improved Delhi's disposition toward the United States. Much the same trend toward a closer U.S.-India relationship continued in the Bush administration. 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 U.S. 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 U.S. and allied operations against al-Qaeda and Taliban forces, raising barriers to cross-border infiltration.

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—staying far quieter about the risk of nuclear war in the subcontinent than its previous policies would have implied—before it began to press India to unwind the confrontation in June and July. 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. If momentum is sustained in repairing this relationship, it could pay very significant dividends to Pakistan over time. It is too early to tell at this juncture whether this will be the case.

Judging by the reaction of its media and attentive public, Indians were greatly outraged by the attention Pakistan got from the United States after Musharraf signaled his support to Bush and U.S. military operations in Afghanistan began. This belied the fact that U.S. efforts to build a broader relationship with India not only stayed in high gear but intensified, drawing satisfaction from India's strong rhetorical support of, and offer of its facilities for use in, the war against terrorism. India's disarmingly positive reception of Bush's decision to withdraw the United States from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, coincidentally announced on December 13, 2001, was received by the Bush administration as an unexpected boon.¹³ Thus, while the war against terrorism brought Pakistan back to the foreground, it did nothing to diminish India's growing influence in Washington, although this would not have been apparent to an outsider watching the intense indignation and recrimination portrayed in the Indian press and television.

AFGHANISTAN, ISLAMIC MILITANCY, AND THE NEXUS WITH KASHMIR

Musharraf's ability, or that of any government of Pakistan, to join the U.S. war on terrorism and cut off the Taliban next door posed two other serious risks to Pakistan's interests. One was that Islamic extremists could destabilize Pakistan domestically, making it hard to govern. The other was that Pakistan's influence with India over the Kashmir question (Pakistan's leaders believed this had been revived by the insurgency that began in Kashmir in 1988–89) would now be neutralized. Pakistan's fifty-year-old claims to that disputed territory might be lost irretrievably. It remains a fundamental tenet of Pakistani politics that no government that makes deep concessions on the future of Kashmir, let alone surrenders it to India altogether, can survive.

13. U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell visited India as well as Pakistan in October 2001 to address U.S. needs and the tension between India and Pakistan, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld visited Delhi in November 2001 to mollify India's irritation over the renewed U.S.-Pakistan military relationship, as well as to discuss the possibility of deepening military-to-military contacts with India and U.S. readiness to expedite specific military sales that had been embargoed earlier due to India's nuclear proliferation. Adding Britain's weight to U.S. efforts to combine Pakistan's and India's contributions in a common front against terrorism, Prime Minister Tony Blair twice visited the subcontinent in the same period.

These two threats were intimately intertwined in the aftermath of 9/11. Musharraf had to face the dilemma that Islamic militancy would be aroused at home by the assault on the Taliban, and extremism could overturn the moderate core and national goals of Pakistan itself. Yet Islamic militancy operating within Kashmir itself, led in part by Kashmiri Muslims, was also viewed as a crucial source of pressure on India to negotiate Kashmir's future. Moreover, Islamic militancy was increasingly being seen abroad as the core of "international terrorism," and this could stigmatize all efforts to free Kashmiris, including native Kashmiri insurgents, as forms of terrorism.

Fundamentalist Islamic political parties and groups emerged in British India long before India and Pakistan became independent and have always been a troublesome undercurrent in Pakistan's modern politics, much as Hindu extremist groups have been in India. Islamic extremist tendencies during Pakistan's early years were restrained or diffused by the conduct of elections and the moderate outlook on Islam that was prevalent in the subcontinent, as well as by the usual bread-and-butter issues of all politics. Islamic fundamentalist parties collectively have won relatively few seats in Pakistan's past national and provincial elections.¹⁴

Nonetheless, the potency of Islamic fundamentalist parties and the violent propensities of their armed militia formations have increased over time in Pakistan. Contributing factors or stimuli came from the military seizure of power from Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto by General Zia ul-Haq in 1977, the shock effects on the wider region of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, and the mobilization of mujahideen groups to carry the Afghan war against the Soviets in the 1980s. In the period since the Soviet withdrawal, the smoldering civil war in Afghanistan, a secular slowdown in the Pakistani economy, stagnation of the public school system, and the initially spontaneous emergence of a liberation struggle in Indian-held Kashmir have given the Pakistani

14. Competition among the various Pakistani Islamic political parties in past elections has split their vote, ensuring that few would win seats against mainstream parties in "first past the post" election districts. In October 2002, the Islamist parties formed an alliance and picked single candidates to compete for most seats, consolidating rather than dividing the vote of religious sympathizers. As a result, in 2002 for the first time, the Islamist parties won a larger number of seats in proportion to their roughly 20 percent share of the actual vote. In this respect the electoral strength of the Islamist parties taken together increased only slightly in 2002 over results of the past.

Islamicist organizations—and not just Islamic extremist groups—additional footholds.

A common theme that has emerged among analysts in the wake of these developments is that a nexus has emerged between extremist Islamic groups and their allegedly terrorist operations in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Kashmir—creating a so-called Kalashnikov culture. While there may be a kernel of truth here, it is also a gross oversimplification to ascribe the aims of these groups and the political linkages that may exist among some of them to the singular design, common inspiration, and coherent direction of Pakistani military and security organizations, notably the ISI. Where official ties with these groups may exist to use them externally, the internal objectives are to play them off against each other and prevent their uniting against the state.

Islamic religious fundamentalism, Islamic political radicalism, and Islamic armed militancy are distinct conceptually, and their organized forms seldom if ever exist under a single roof. There is no homogeneous Islamic fundamentalism, but rather a variety of schools of thought, many cultural variants of each, and even more varieties of styles of Islamic life and behavior—readily visible when moving from one Muslim society or community to the next. “Terrorism” as a generic phenomenon—targeted killing of innocents—is as antithetical to Islamic tenets as it is to the mainstream of any world religion, or to the norms of modern civilization. Political violence frequently has a political context without which it is not properly understood. By understanding political violence in any particular instance, one need not condone it or justify it, or hesitate to pursue means to stop or eradicate it. But neither is it productive automatically to equate “terrorism” with freedom struggles against invaders and occupiers, revolutionary actions against perceived tyranny or oppression, or the use of force in response to force over a historical dispute—whether differences of religion are involved or not.

That said, several Pakistani fundamentalist political groups have not only willingly joined the Afghan wars and the Kashmir insurgency—against “foreign occupiers” as they see it—but have, like the *ayatollah* and *pasdaran* movements against the secular regime of the Shah of Iran—developed revolutionary aspirations vis-à-vis the liberal constitution and representative governing institutions of Pakistan. Their goals are to replace the existing political order with their own concepts of Islamic society.

Naturally, the actual content of their visions of Islamic society varies from group to group, by school of thought and by organizational proclivity. (For an overview of the Islamic political parties and those that have militant offshoots in Pakistan, see “Map of Pakistani Islamic Militant Groups” in the Appendix.) In most cases the vision of an Islamic order is traditional and based on the *shari'a*, but their styles of interpretation of Islamic law and tradition vary. One of Pakistan's three most prominent Islamicist parties, the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), actually has a modernist idea of Islamic revival that accommodates genuine learning and even natural science, and thus has strong appeal in certain intellectual, professional, and middle class circles. But the JI counterparts in Afghanistan and Kashmir do not necessarily subscribe to the same program or ideas, or draw from the same social base, as does the JI in Pakistan. While the government of Pakistan actively supported the role of these groups in Afghanistan, their efforts in Kashmir are best understood as an extension of their efforts to build platforms for the takeover of political power within Pakistan itself.

Moreover, one should understand the revolutionary aspirations of these Islamic parties not in terms of how many votes or seats they can win in national elections but rather in terms of how they build bastions of local influence, incrementally. This is achieved by the largest and arguably most aggressive of these Pakistani Islamist organizations, the Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI)—which split many years ago into two branches led by Maulana Fazlur Rahman and Maulana Sami-ul-Haq, respectively. The two JUI organizations use intimidation and infiltration of authority, the building of mosques, development of welfare institutions, publication of local language newspapers and magazines, recruitment of supporters, targeting and acquisition of disputed land and property, and accumulation of other resources, at the local levels to aggrandize power and influence in society. JUI leaders pursue these goals in a decentralized way—in districts, towns, and major cities. The armed militias not only provide protection to the leaders and their political activities but also serve as agents in putting the squeeze on vulnerable local property owners and influentials.

Some of these organizations also ruthlessly exploit the sectarian divisions of Islamic society, especially Sunni versus Shia, confusing their ultimate objectives with near-term and situational objectives. The leaders of these organizations are often quite entrepreneurial,

and some of the most successful also receive funds from Islamic groups in Saudi Arabia or other Gulf states. In their defensive and essentially introspective response within Pakistan, Shia leaders and organizations have also received financial help from Iran. The Pakistan-based extremist groups that have been most active in the fighting in Afghanistan, as well as those that have joined the insurgency in Kashmir, are generally Sunni by sectarian affiliation.

Views differ on whether the activities in Kashmir of the Pakistani militants were also actively sponsored by the Pakistan government, or provided official assistance by some cabal of bureaucratic and military officials behind the scenes. But there seems little doubt that successive political and military governments turned a blind eye to the infiltration of these groups into Kashmir to join the insurgency in the early 1990s. It is also possible that even if the militant formations were privately recruited and trained, they found tacit encouragement in Islamabad's official political and military circles. Mujahideen training of Pakistani recruits, and perhaps some combat experiences with groups in Afghanistan, were readily transferable to Kashmir. The influx of light arms and ammunition to support the guerrilla war against the Soviets left stockpiles that could be put to other uses.

The insurgency in Kashmir began spontaneously in late 1989, led by native Kashmiri militant groups that recruited fighters from a younger generation of Muslim Kashmiris who were frustrated with Indian political interference in state elections and government. It was some time, therefore, before groups in Pakistan began to react in an organized way, with the infiltration and support of militants from Pakistani sources broadly welcomed by most politically active Kashmiris in the Vale of Kashmir, especially in the initial years.

In the development of resistance objectives and tactics, several of the Pakistani militant groups developed reputations for taking greater risk and using more aggressive tactics against Indian security forces than did their Kashmiri counterparts, but a majority of these groups shunned wanton terrorism—avoiding direct attacks on civilians and ordinary Kashmiri property. The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), based essentially in Kashmiris in both Pakistan- and Indian-held parts of Kashmir, for instance, began with a militant approach to Indian security installations (avoiding violence on civilians, and never deliberately terrorist) but changed course later to adopt exclusively political methods.

A handful of Pakistan-origin extremist groups, however, did cross the line during the 1990s to terrorist actions, pure and simple, including capture and execution of foreign tourists, as well as other attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. Pakistani-origin groups reportedly associated with such activities in the early 1990s included al-Badr (sponsored by the Pakistani JI) and Harkat-ul-Ansar, later renamed Harkat-ul-Mujahideen. (For the denominational and party affiliations of these groups, see "Map of Pakistani Islamic Militant Groups" in the Appendix.) The Harkat-ul-Ansar was the earliest of these militant Pakistani or Kashmiri organizations to be put on the list of terrorist organizations by the U.S. Department of State. The sponsor of the Harkats was the Sami-ul-Haq branch of the JUI in Pakistan; this branch of the JUI is believed to have had closer Afghanistan ties than any of the other Pakistani Islamic parties and is suspected of having early contacts with Osama bin Laden, dating back to the late 1980s during the Afghan war against the Soviets.

In the late 1990s, the Lashkar-e-Toiba (sometimes written Lashkar-i-Tayyaba), sponsored by the politically invisible but Wahabi-dedicated Ahl-e-Hadith, and the Jaish-e-Muhammed, a more recent extremist offshoot of the Sami-ul-Haq branch of the JUI, became active in Kashmir. India pointed to the Jaish-e-Muhammed and the Lashkar-e-Toiba as the source of the attack on parliament in New Delhi on December 13, 2001, claimed that the attackers were Pakistanis, and accused Pakistan of sponsoring their attack. The State Department also added these organizations to its official list of terrorist organizations in December 2001. India began a full-scale military mobilization of seven hundred thousand troops opposite Pakistan—along the entire border and in the Arabian Sea—and made a series of demands, including total cessation of Pakistani-origin infiltration and "terrorism" in Kashmir.

Military Brinkmanship: The Indo-Pakistani Confrontation of 2002

OUR INTEREST IN THE MILITARY CONFRONTATION between India and Pakistan is not merely in the precipitating events but rather its meaning in the larger context of the war on terrorism, Indo-Pakistani relations, and the knotty dispute over Kashmir. India had adopted a higher profile since September 2001 in seeking to brand the insurgency in predominantly Muslim Kashmir as a concerted campaign of foreign

"terrorism" against India—sponsored by Pakistan and possibly linked with al-Qaeda as well. India had thus set the stage for an intense reaction to Pakistan in the event any major terrorist incident inside could be linked to Pakistan and used as a trigger.

Does India's accusation that Pakistan was behind the December 13 terrorist attack on parliament stand up under scrutiny? How did Musharraf respond to India's charges? Why did the confrontation last so long? How close to the outbreak of war did the sides come? If India had launched a conventional attack, would this have started a chain of events that might have culminated in nuclear war? Why did it take so long to defuse this confrontation? Once one steps back from it, how much was this confrontation driven by religious extremism? What lessons does it contain for the future regarding religious radicalism and conflict in that region?

TERRORIST ATTACK ON PARLIAMENT TRIGGERS INDIA'S BRINKMANSHIP

Indian security guards effectively disrupted the suicide attack by five armed terrorists on India's parliament building before the gunmen could enter the building. The ensuing shootout resulted in the death of all five attackers (one committed suicide by detonating explosives on his person) and of nine security guards and paramilitary troops. No members of parliament were injured, and none, apparently, were even in the line of fire. Indian intelligence agencies claimed through tracing cellular phone calls made by the attackers that they belonged to Jaish-e-Muhammed and Lashkar-e-Toiba, among the most violent of the organizations active in Kashmir and well known to be Pakistani in origin.¹⁵

Since the attackers were all dead and the cellular phone links to collaborators pointed to Kashmiris on the Indian side, there was no compelling forensic evidence released at that time that the attackers or collaborators themselves were actually Pakistani citizens.¹⁶ But

15. See Rama Lakshmi, "Indians Blame Attacks on Pakistan-based Group," *Washington Post*, A-23, 15 December 2001.

16. India endeavored to convince the media that the attackers were Pakistanis. It even allowed the three Indian television stations to interview an alleged suspect named Afzal who reportedly told his interviewers in Hindi that the leader of the operation did a reconnaissance of several possible targets "before their boss in Kashmir chose the Parliament as the final target." This prisoner reportedly told the interviewers that the attackers were from Pakistan and had made calls to their families the night before the attack and informed them they were embarking on a "big job." See Lakshmi, "India, Pakistan Leaders Rule Out Meeting at Summit," *Washington Post*, A-26, 21 December 2001.

whether they were Kashmiris from India's side or Pakistanis, the terrorist attack on India's parliament obviously was not in Pakistan's interest. It is hard to imagine a situation that could have been more damaging to Pakistan's interests at that time.

One can safely assume that the two organizations fingered probably were indeed the perpetrators. But what were the actual motives of those who sponsored or carried out the attack? The effect of the attack on India's parliament clearly was a serious blow to Musharraf's leadership and to Pakistan's prestige, whether that was a motive or not. Embarrassing and weakening Musharraf and attempting to get him to back away from his support of U.S. operations could have been one of the secondary objectives of the groups that sponsored the operation, but such a motive would have been more plausible after Musharraf's January 2002 crackdown on extremists. It obviously was a central motive in the kidnapping and assassination of Daniel Pearl in January 2002, and in other attacks on foreigners and Christian institutions within Pakistan that increased in frequency from the spring through the summer and fall of 2002.¹⁷

Likely, the attackers of India's parliament gave no thought, even if they were Pakistanis, to the stability or welfare of Pakistan's existing government. A more ambitious objective might have been inciting an Indian military attack on Pakistan and provoking war between the two countries. This theoretically could serve the domestic political purposes of the sponsors of Jaish and Lashkar within Pakistan, by enraging and radicalizing the Pakistani population and making them more susceptible to aggressive Islamic leadership. But it is not a convincing explanation for this operation at that time.

Perhaps the most plausible motivation for the attack on parliament was the aim of weakening India's determination to hold on to Kashmir—two militant groups pursuing their own version of the Kashmir freedom struggle—by striking at India's heart. Interestingly even the Indian exhibition of evidence, for what it is worth, suggests

17. This was a more obvious explanation, however, of the January 23 kidnapping and subsequent assassination of *Wall Street Journal* journalist Daniel Pearl in Karachi, six weeks later. It is by no means obvious in the terrorist attack on parliament on December 13. As to increasing incidences of terrorist violence against Christian churches and hospitals and Western embassy or consular facilities in Pakistan, see the list in Kamran Khan, "Attacks in Pakistan Linked: Officials Tie Strikes on Western Targets to Al Qaeda, Taliban," *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-16, 10 August 2002.

that the operation may have been intended to take members of parliament hostage for a few days—an act that could have elevated the media visibility of the Kashmir struggle astronomically.¹⁸

India's outrage over this assault on parliament was understandable and the fact of terrorism in this incident cannot be trivialized, but the length to which India went in reaction seemed utterly disproportionate to the incident. The proximate terrorist aims of the attackers—to assassinate elected Indian national leaders—were totally foiled by the units assigned to protect the parliament building.

India used this occasion, nevertheless, to accuse Pakistan of sponsoring the attack.¹⁹ Three days after the attack on parliament, the New Delhi police commissioner issued a report that tenuously connected the Pakistani ISI with a collaborator in the conspiracy.²⁰ India quickly

18. The police suspect named Afzal (see note 16) who claimed to be familiar with the operation, reportedly told his interviewers that: “[The participants in the operation in phone calls home] said the 10-year-long fight in Kashmir had not brought any good results. ... unless Delhi was attacked, the Indian government would not yield. ... Afzal also said the attackers were carrying food in their bags in the hope of holding lawmakers captive inside the Parliament building for a number of days.” If this account is true, it suggests the aim of the operation was not necessarily to kill but rather to seize hostages and, in that case, was completely botched. See Lakshmi, “India, Pakistan Leaders Rule Out Meeting,” A-26.

19. L. K. Advani, Home Minister (responsible for internal security) and apparently now being groomed as Atal Bihari Vajpayee’s successor as prime minister, went on record on the day after the attack to claim that “a neighboring country [Pakistan] that has been spreading terror in India” was the source. Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh also announced on December 14 that: “India has technical [and credible] evidence that yesterday’s terrorist attack on the seat of Indian democracy was the handiwork of a terrorist organization based in Pakistan, the Lashkar-e-Toiba.” Although he refused to give further details, Jaswant Singh demanded that Pakistan take immediate action against both the Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Muhammed, by arresting their leaders and freezing their assets. Lakshmi, “Indians Blame Attacks.” Prime Minister Vajpayee joined the accusation chorus the next day, saying “a neighboring country was inspiring the terrorists in carrying out subversive acts in India. The sponsors are destined to doom.” Naresh Mishra, “Pakistan on Alert as India Steps Up Criticism,” *Washington Post*, 16 December 2001.

20. The connection made by the New Delhi police commissioner’s report in this case offered no evidence that the ISI directed or materially participated in the attack on parliament but merely alleged that a suspect in police custody [apparently Indian-held Kashmir] had admitted he had been trained at an ISI camp in Muzaffarabad in the Pakistani-controlled part of Kashmir. Whether this testimony was voluntary, whether it would stand up in court, and whether it was directly connected with the attack in question or about an experience long in the past, was not subject to public examination. Nevertheless, the police commissioner grandly assured reporters: “The ISI connection is very clear.... The things which have come to notice clearly show that ISI was connected with this, and if ISI is connected with it then Pakistan must know of it.” See “The World in Brief: Asia: Pakistani Agency Accused in Fatal Attack,” citing the Press Trust of India and Reuters, *Washington Post*, A-20, 17 December 2001.

mounted a campaign of “coercive diplomacy” cloaked in the same themes that President Bush used in launching the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, implicitly threatening preemptive war on Pakistan to root out terrorists.²¹ India dramatically cut all air, rail, and road links with Pakistan, recalled its ambassador from Islamabad, placed constraints on Pakistan’s ambassador in Delhi, and initiated a mobilization of the bulk of its armored and mechanized military forces along the border with Pakistan and began moving the leading edge of its naval combatants toward the Arabian Sea to hover opposite Karachi.²² India maintained this war footing for more than six months, and had only partially relaxed this posture as of this writing in late August 2002.²³

Caught up in the heat of the preemptive war against terrorism in Afghanistan, the U.S. administration ironically was in no position to walk back India’s overreaction, and with the shift in mood in Washington in favor of India, perhaps was not exactly inclined to do so. No doubt, India analysts will claim soothingly, in retrospect, that India was never close to launching war, and perhaps this was the message behind the scenes between Delhi and Washington.²⁴ But one can

21. Lakshmi, “India Wages a War of Words: Pakistan Again Assailed for Attack, U.S. for Its Response,” *Washington Post*, A-32, 19 December 2001.

22. India also threatened a variety of other measures. India’s deputy foreign minister, Omar Abdullah, said in a December 21 interview that India was considering revoking the bilateral water-sharing treaty with Pakistan—an important milestone of cooperation negotiated in the first decade after Independence, might suspend trade agreements, and could request that the UN Security Council take action against Pakistan under an anti-terrorist resolution. Two days earlier, the Bush administration placed Lashkar-e-Toiba on the list of banned terrorist organizations and froze its assets. See Pamela Constable and Lakshmi, “India Recalls Pakistani Envoy: New Delhi Signals Its Anger over Attack on Parliament,” *Washington Post*, A-12, 22 December 2001.

23. Reporting on the scale of the increasing Indian military buildup, and the Pakistani response, began to appear just before Christmas. By this time, the air in Delhi was thick with reports of India considering military strikes against Pakistan. L.K. Advani talked openly about using “hot pursuit” against terrorist camps in Pakistan as “legitimate under international law.” Rajiv Chandrasekaran, “Pakistan, India Mass Troops: Tensions Escalate as New Delhi Considers Strike,” *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-11, 24 December 2001.

24. That India staged the brinkmanship mainly to force the United States to put additional pressure on Pakistan was reported at the time as a calculated Indian strategy: “Mindful of the consequences of an all-out war, some Indian officials privately concede that the troop movements were not part of an offensive strategy, but rather an effort to get the United States to more forcefully push the Pakistani government to crack down on militant groups that strike India from bases over the border. ‘We are keeping up the warmongering to get the U.S. to put pressure’ on Pakistan, one

hardly look back at the crisis, whether manufactured or not, without recognizing that it is a foreboding precedent for how future terrorist-driven crises in the subcontinent could erupt and then explode into war.²⁵ At the height of the tension, a second terrorist attack that actually succeeded in killing top Indian leadership or any urban concentration of women and children would certainly have triggered India's opening war at some level against Pakistan.

India set forth a series of escalating demands on Pakistan. In addition to insisting by implication that Islamabad prove it was not responsible for sponsoring the attack, India demanded that Pakistan immediately halt what Delhi had long called "cross-border infiltration" (now redefined in slogan-like fashion as "cross-border terrorism") in Kashmir. India called on Pakistan to ban the organizations and effectively shut down the operations of the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Muhammed, and extradite to India some twenty persons (almost all listed as criminals by Interpol, mostly Muslims, but hardly any Pakistanis) whom India claimed were guilty of acts of terrorism in India. India also shifted the diplomatic burden of muting its own response to action by the big powers, suggesting that only their pressures on Pakistan to comply with Indian demands could bring hope of Indian restraint.

Underneath this Indian brinkmanship, India's prime objectives were threefold. First, and probably most important, was to capture Western energy then being poured into the war on terrorism to vaccinate India's position on Kashmir irrevocably against international intervention, and to remold international views of the nature of the problem. This Indian position is that the major part of Kashmir that India holds is an integral part of India, and codified in India's constitution; Kashmir is no longer subject to dispute, and Pakistan's claims can be

senior official said." Chandrasekaran, "Pakistan, India Mass Troops." Early in the crisis, Brookings South Asia expert, Stephen P. Cohen, also held this view, calling the Indian moves a "sound and light show" to force the United States to play a stronger role with Musharraf. Peter Slevin, "Pakistan Groups Called Terrorist Organizations: Powell Names 2 in Formal Declaration," *Washington Post*, A-20, 27 December 2001.

25. India's military leadership joined the coercive diplomacy showmanship just before Musharraf made his major conciliatory speech of January 12, 2002. India's new Army chief, General Sundarajan Padmanabhan, made unusually bellicose remarks on January 11; he reported said Indian forces are "fully ready" for war and the massive buildup on the border "is for real." Chandrasekaran, "Head of Army Declares India Is Ready for War," *Washington Post*, A-14, 12 January 2002.

relegated to the dustbin of “ancient history.” India sought to project the long-standing unrest in Kashmir as solely a product of terrorism waged against the population of the state as well as against the security forces.

The second and related objective was to seize the opportunity to draw the United States and as much of the West as possible into India’s corner, as a strategic gambit, by being “more Catholic than the Pope” in India’s own approach to the war against terrorism. Indian officials and publicists subtly reinforced international perceptions that the core problem in South Asia, as well as between Israel and its neighbors, is an Islamic one—a malady of a particular desert religion that invariably goes radical (read “radioactive”) when it is ignited by politics. Even Osama bin Laden’s vocation of terrorism against the West is, in this polemical caricature, a natural expression of the belligerent proclivities of Islamic belief, rather than merely a crass manipulation of religion for political ends. Playing judo, India was craftily using the West’s new passion for its own ends.

The third Indian objective is as old as Pakistan and independent India itself: to isolate and marginalize Pakistan in international affairs. India’s resentment of Pakistan is profound. If Pakistan cannot be diminished to the status of a banana republic, India would still like to shrink its relative importance as a thorn in India’s side to Cuba’s level against the United States, a testy and noisy but easily manageable problem.

India’s capacity to isolate Pakistan during the Cold War failed because the East-West struggle gave Pakistan front-line utility in the Western strategy to contain the Soviet Union, even as late as 1989 when the Afghan war terminated. It failed partly because India’s diplomacy never looked for equitable, quid-pro-quo bargains, but rather assumed it should be treated as a unique power with a great destiny. India traded in prestige rather than geopolitical security and stability—brushing aside the deeper interests of others. Only the Soviet Union, as an underdog, got better treatment by India, and even that was hardly a sterling relationship in Delhi.

Once the Cold War was over, India awakened to a different set of imperatives. The most important of these new imperatives were recognition of the greatly decreased importance of Russia as a bargaining instrument against the West, and the acceleration of China’s race to the stature of a great power—especially, but not only, in international

trade. In this context, India finally adopted a pro-Western outlook. In this same context, the war on terrorism is a grand opportunity for India to resume its efforts to marginalize and isolate Pakistan.

Was religion the key driver here? In one sense it was—it is the real divide between India and Pakistan, the basis for Pakistan's (and Bangladesh's) separateness. But the longer one watches the rivalry between these states, the more one sees that age-old struggle for power as the main dynamic, defined now in a national context. It is a culturally imprinted struggle, in which memories of past civilizations, Hindu and Islamic, count for a great deal. But this struggle would exist whether religion were radicalized or not, whether extremist groups had formed or not. What the radicalization of religion does is intensify the propensity toward violence, on both sides.

PAKISTAN'S RESPONSE: CRACKING DOWN ON MILITANT GROUPS

Musharraf's immediate response to India's brinkmanship was twofold: He put the Pakistan Army on "high alert," and threatened to retaliate with force if India took "any kind of precipitous action."²⁶ He denied any direct role of Pakistan in the terrorist attack and called on India to provide evidence to support its claims.²⁷ Musharraf declared emphatically, "We will take action against anybody involved in Pakistan in these acts, *if at all proved*. We would not like Pakistani territory to be used against any country, including India."²⁸ But Musharraf sought to protect Pakistan's equities in Kashmir by maintaining the position that Pakistan's moral, diplomatic and political support for the political struggle of Kashmiris was legitimate and totally defensible. He refused to be pushed into a corner that would define all militant activity on behalf of Kashmiri rights as terrorism.

Despite the fact that India provided no specific or forensic evidence to Pakistan at all, either informally or through diplomatic channels, Musharraf took bold action by any past Pakistani standards, in a sustained effort to defuse the crisis and reduce the military pressure on Pakistan. On December 24 Musharraf's government

26. Mishra, "Pakistan on Alert."

27. Pakistan's defense spokesman, Major-General Rashid Qureshi, called for a joint investigation of the incident. See "The World in Brief."

28. Mishra, "Pakistan on Alert."

froze the assets of Lashkar-e-Toiba, and the following day announced the detention of Masood Azhar, the Pakistani founder of Jaish-e-Muhammed.²⁹ Colin Powell's announcement on December 26 that both Jaish-e-Muhammed and Lashkar-e-Toiba had been designated terrorist groups by the United States³⁰ added impetus to Musharraf's crackdown on extremist organizations. On December 31, Islamabad announced the detention of two dozen Islamic militants, including Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, head of the Lashkar-e-Toiba, and Musharraf announced, "I want to eradicate militancy, extremism, intolerance from Pakistani society. And ... I would like to eradicate any form of terrorism from the soil of Pakistan."³¹

By the first week of January, Pakistan had arrested about two hundred militants in ten days. It also began to arrest Punjabi leaders of the Sipah-i-Sahaba and Tehrik e Jafaria,³² Sunni and Shia organizations that fought each other with violence on sectarian grounds, neither being deeply involved in Kashmir. Musharraf used the occasion to restrain not only externally oriented extremist organizations but also those that inflicted violence on Pakistanis at home. But the Indian pressures continued to mount. A meeting on the margins of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in Nepal had not been productive.³³

Musharraf finally made a carefully prepared speech on January 12. In the context both of the war on terrorism and India's demands, the most significant feature was an explicit, wide-ranging condemnation of terrorism and extremism, both inside and outside Pakistan. He specifically condemned the December attack on India's parliament and the suicide attack some weeks earlier on the Kashmir legislature,

29. Chandrasekaran and Khan, "Pakistan Arrests Islamic Militant: Massood Azhar Led Group India Blames for Attack," *Washington Post*, A-24 and A-26, 26 December 2001.

30. Slevin, "Pakistan Groups Called Terrorist Organizations."

31. Craig Whitlock and Chandrasekaran, "Pakistan Detains Islamic Militants," *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-15, 1 January 2002.

32. Whitlock, "Pakistan Arrests Scores of Islamic Radicals," *Washington Post*, A-18, 5 January 2002.

33. For the early Pakistani interest in holding a summit meeting to reduce the tension, see Lakshmi, "India, Pakistan Leaders Rule Out Meeting," A-26. For Vajpayee's rebuff, see Chandrasekaran, "Pakistani, Indian Leaders Meet, but Tension Remains: Despite Shaking Hands, Vajpayee Cool to Musharraf," *Washington Post*, A-18, 6 January 2002.

and said “no organization will be allowed to indulge in terrorism in the name of Kashmir.”³⁴

The Pakistani president’s declarations and promised action agenda went a considerable distance to meet the substance of India’s concerns about acting to prevent terrorist attacks inside India.³⁵ Musharraf announced a formal ban on Jaish-e-Muhammed and Lashkar-e-Toiba, the two extremist organizations implicated by Delhi in the attack on parliament. Musharraf went further, however, to ban three domestic extremist organizations that had little or nothing to do directly with Kashmir and India. Two were protagonists of sectarian warfare within Pakistan itself, the radical Sunni Sipah-i-Sahaba and the Shi’ite rival, the Tehrik e Jafaria Party. The third domestically oriented group then banned was the Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Shariat Muhammadi, an organization that had channeled misguided Pakistani youth to join the Taliban in Afghanistan in fighting the incoming U.S. and allied forces.

Musharraf also announced that the government would introduce other measures to reign in Islamic radicalism domestically, including new regulations over the madrassas that would require all foreign students to register, establish registration requirements for opening any new madrassa, impose state-designed curricular requirements, and restrict the use of mosques and loudspeakers for political purposes or inciting public protests.

34. See “Mr. Musharraf Speaks,” editorial in *Washington Post*, A-18, 15 January 2002. This editorial further applauded Musharraf’s speech as containing “... a breakthrough of potentially deeper consequence ... Pakistan’s president passionately denounced the radical Islamic ideology that fuels terrorism in his country and around the Muslim world. He pledged to root out not just terrorists targeted by India or the West but preachers, schools and other institutions that foment religious intolerance [within Pakistan].... The importance of that agenda, if Mr. Musharraf forcefully pursues it, can hardly be overstated: It would not only reverse Pakistan’s drift in recent years toward tolerance of Islamic militancy but would also provide an alternative vision to that of government who arrest militants but ignore or even support their ideology.”

35. See report by Whitlock and Chandrasekaran, “Pakistan Bans Groups in Reply to Indian Appeal,” *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-27, 13 January 2002. These crackdown measures against extremist organizations were, incidentally, judicially controversial if not objectionable under the provisions of the constitution. They could be sustained only by a military regime, and then only temporarily—absent evidence that could be presented in court of specific crimes, of murder, assault, treason, or the like. If the shoe had been on the other foot, India would have been hard put to carry out comparable measures itself—absent evidence that could be presented in court, for instance, against the Tamil Tigers, or Hindu extremist organizations such as the Shiv Sena or Vishwa Hindu Parishad—given the individual legal protections under India’s constitution. Musharraf clearly caved unilaterally under Indian (and perhaps U.S.) pressure to stave off war, but also to keep Pakistan on the moral high ground with respect to the international war against terrorism.

At the same time, Musharraf emphasized in his speech the crying need for India to sit down and negotiate on the Kashmir problem, as the root cause not only of the conflict between India and Pakistan, but also of the rise of extremist tendencies related to Kashmir, in the Kashmir insurgency itself, and within Pakistan's own Kashmir-oriented Punjabi and Pashtun activist communities.

India's reaction was mixed. While it welcomed the thrust of Musharraf's measures against extremist groups, it ignored the proposals for negotiating on Kashmir. Moreover, the overall Indian response was couched to put Musharraf on notice that his sincerity would be judged by results, a theme also in U.S. official statements but framed there in more positive and encouraging tones.³⁶ The proof of his intentions would be in how the promises were implemented. India also immediately converted the expectations in Musharraf's speech into a test in Kashmir. Indian officials insisted that the infiltration of Pakistan-based extremist groups into Indian-controlled Kashmir must stop, extremists still operating in Indian-held Kashmir should be called back, and the net results would also be measured by whether the violence there dropped steadily to much lower levels.³⁷

In effect, India kept the military confrontation in place for the best part of a year, to squeeze maximum concessions from Pakistan during a time of emergency.³⁸ India also used missile testing to attract

36. See, for instance, Alan Sipress and Whitlock, "In Pakistan, Powell Encourages Action: Musharraf Praised for Anti-Terror Vow," *Washington Post*, A-20, 17 January 2002.

37. Whitlock and Chandrasekaran, "Pakistan Bans Groups"; Chandrasekaran, "India Builds for Long Haul on Border with Pakistan," *Washington Post*, A-18, 17 January 2002; Sipress and Chandrasekaran, "Powell 'Encouraged' by India Visit: New Delhi Officials Signal Approval of Pakistan Crackdown on Islamic Militants," *Washington Post*, A-19, 19 January 2002.

38. India also exploited its "fugitive list" to keep the spotlight of the investigatory media on Musharraf and on the issue of "terrorism." Otherwise, for India this list probably was a tactical concern. The twenty fugitives were a motley combination of Muslim extremists, Sikh separatists, and organized Indian crime bosses who were accused by Indian law enforcement, in one case or another, of bombings, kidnappings, assassinations, gun-running, and drug smuggling. India claimed all had taken refuge in Pakistan. In this context, India did supply to Pakistan some material evidence regarding the violations of these individuals. Pakistan found that only six of the twenty were Pakistani citizens and insisted that in their cases, if evidence of criminal violations supported it, they would be tried in Pakistani courts. With respect to the rest, Pakistan denied that they were residing in Pakistan. Five of the six Pakistanis on the list allegedly were hijackers of an Indian aircraft used in December, 1999, to force the release of Masood Azhar, who had been imprisoned (without trial) for years by India, for making inflammatory speeches in Kashmir in the early 1990s. Upon his release triggered by the hijacking, Azhar founded the Jaish-e-Muhammed militant organization. See

media attention and to stimulate Western anxiety about the nuclear issue, as a means of escalating the pressure on Pakistan.³⁹ Between Musharraf's bold January actions against extremist groups and the present, the manipulated and felt risks of nuclear weapons rose and fell, sometimes in agonizing fashion. However, much of the attention after January shifted to the backlash in Pakistan against Musharraf's efforts to corral and suppress the extremist organizations. The key here was the kidnapping and assassination of Daniel Pearl in January–February 2002, followed at intervals by Islamic extremist attacks on foreigners, foreign institutions or Christians—themselves ostensibly as symbols of foreign influence.⁴⁰

For Pakistan, the effect of India's perpetuating the military emergency was to keep it in a vice, trying gamely to support the United States against terrorism on one side (also trying to minimize the injury to the Pushtun peoples from the sustained assault on the Taliban, and to limit Northern Alliance influence in the emerging government). On the other hand, Pakistan was obliged to look over its shoulder at India, and to worry about possible Indian plans to use air strikes against Pakistani installations or assets, or, worst of all, to launch an outright invasion on the pretext of pursuing terrorism in Pakistan.

THE NUCLEAR DIMENSION

This author has addressed analysis of the nuclear instability inherent in the India-Pakistan relationship more extensively elsewhere.⁴¹ The underlying risks of nuclear conflict almost certainly were exacerbated by the Indian military confrontation with Pakistan. How close to nuclear war during the confrontation did the two countries get?

Chandrasekaran and Lakshmi, "Fugitive List Becomes Central Issue for India: Pakistan Pressed to Hand Over 20 Suspects," *Washington Post*, A-10, 22 January 2002.

39. Lakshmi, "Missile Test by India Raises Nuclear Ante: Pakistan Assails Firing 'at a Time of Tensions,'" *Washington Post*, A-17, 26 January 2002.

40. On the January 23 kidnapping in Karachi of Daniel Pearl of the *Wall Street Journal*, see Molly Moore and Khan, "Pakistani Group Says It Has U.S. Journalist: E-Mail Demands Release of Countrymen," *Washington Post*, A-16, 28 January 2002.

41. See Rodney W. Jones, *Minimum Nuclear Deterrence Postures in South Asia—An Overview*, prepared for DTRA/ASCO, October 2001, <http://www.policyarchitects.org> and http://www.dtra.mil/about/organization/south_asia.pdf; also by the same author: "Conventional Military Asymmetry and Regional Stability among Emerging Nuclear States: India and Pakistan," *Fourth Nuclear Stability Roundtable: Conference on Strategic Stability and Global Change*, 12–13 March 2002, <http://www.policyarchitects.org>; "Force Modernization Trends—India and Pakistan," *Conventional Arms Modernization in Asia and the Pacific*, Honolulu: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (forthcoming);

How likely is it that one or another crisis between these two countries will lead to war, and potentially to nuclear escalation? Will religious radicalism increase the risks of hot wars and nuclear use between them?

The key structural factors that inherently pose nuclear instability between India and Pakistan relate to the asymmetries of their overall territorial size, strategic depth, and conventional military forces. Additional factors that are matters of concern in crises—specific sources of potential crisis instability—are inexperience and the technical and personnel shortcomings in their respective nuclear command and control systems, shortcomings in their early warning capabilities, and serious issues of survivability of nuclear assets, especially in Pakistan's case, where its narrow geography leaves fewer secure concealment options than India enjoys.

As a result, the nuclear postures of both sides are also asymmetrical. Pakistan's nuclear deterrence calculations require that nuclear weapons be an immediate backup of its conventional defenses, which are considerably weaker than India's and theoretically could be easily overrun, risking Pakistan's survival as an independent country. Thus Pakistan's nuclear capability is seen not just as a deterrent against the hypothetical possibility of an Indian *nuclear first* strike but also as a deterrent against India's use against Pakistan of its superior *conventional offensive* capabilities. Pakistan's situation is analogous to the NATO nuclear deterrent during the Cold War against the mightier conventional armies of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact.

But the dilemma this presents to the Pakistani leadership, the same dilemma that NATO lived with, is that it requires Pakistan's decision makers to leave open the option of striking India first with nuclear weapons. Presumably this would be contemplated only if Pakistan were under concerted Indian conventional attack and presumably only when Pakistan's situation had seriously deteriorated—considering nuclear retaliation as the use of weapons of last resort. Without such a posture, Pakistan's nuclear deterrent would lack credibility.

"South Asia under the Nuclear Shadow: Is Stable Nuclear Deterrence Feasible?" *The Friday Times* (Lahore), 22–28 February 2002, <http://www.policyarchitects.org>; "Debating New Delhi's Nuclear Decision," *International Security* 24, no. 4 (Spring 2000): 181–87; "Pakistan's Nuclear Posture: Quest for Assured Nuclear Deterrence—A Conjecture," *Spotlight on Regional Affairs* 19, no. 1 (Islamabad: Institute of Regional Studies, January 2000), 40 pages; reprinted in *Regional Studies* 18 (Islamabad) (Spring 2000): 3–39; "Pakistan's Nuclear Posture: Arms Race Instabilities in South Asia," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 25, no. 2 (Summer 1998): 67–87.

With enormous conventional military superiority over Pakistan, India has the luxury of claiming that it will never use nuclear weapons in a first strike, but only in retaliation against an opponent's first use of nuclear weapons.

As long as India does not impose conventional war on Pakistan, the likelihood of authorized nuclear use is very low. But clearly the converse is also true: that India threatening Pakistan with conventional war brings Pakistani preparedness to use nuclear weapons to the surface.

In this regard, the Indian mobilization of the bulk of its military forces to confront Pakistan with coercive diplomacy undoubtedly raised the risks of a nuclear conflict to a fairly high threshold. India may have calculated that it would merely threaten Pakistan for political objectives, such as forcing Pakistan to leash Islamic militant and extremist organizations operating in Kashmir or deeper in India.⁴² But this was a situation prone to politically inflamed miscalculation, which could have caused both sides to become trapped in a spiraling loss of control. A really effective extremist attack on Indian political leaders—which could have happened at any time—certainly would have triggered an Indian invasion, quickly bringing the risk of nuclear use to the fore.

Moreover, the flood of hints from within India during the confrontation that it was considering preemptive attacks on extremist training camps in Pakistan nearby Kashmir—and also nearby sensitive Pakistani nuclear installations—had to put Pakistan on a much higher state of nuclear readiness.⁴³ Prudence in the Indian military establishment would have meant it too must have moved to a higher state of nuclear readiness. This drift, not unlike cocking loaded guns, certainly brought both sides closer to nuclear war. It is worth mentioning, however, that neither side overtly threatened the other with nuclear attack; nuclear options were, for the most part, veiled.

42. For reporting on hard-nosed Indian calculations contrary to the conventional Cold War wisdom, buying instead into the notion that "a conventional conflict would not necessarily spiral into a nuclear exchange," see Chandrasekaran, "For India, Deterrence May Not Prevent [Conventional] War," *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-18, 17 January 2002. This report also notes some official Indian views that India could easily ride out a nuclear attack by Pakistan, quoting Indian Defense Minister Fernandes: "We could take a strike, survive and then hit back. Pakistan would be finished." *Ibid.*

43. Indian military brinkmanship and jawboning reached a particularly intense crescendo on the eve of Musharraf's key speech and new policy initiatives of 12 January 2002. See Chandrasekaran, "Head of Army Declares India Is Ready for War," *Washington Post*, A-14, 12 January 2002.

What is most surprising given this underlying danger—which U.S. officials did acknowledge publicly—is how relaxed instead of strenuous U.S. efforts were to defuse the confrontation during its early months. The Bush administration evidently encouraged an information campaign against India's brinkmanship only in May 2002 when it became clear that Pakistan's concerns about the threat on its eastern border had reduced its capacity to aid U.S. forces in sealing off al-Qaeda exit from Afghanistan.⁴⁴ Perhaps U.S. preoccupation with the deterioration of the Israel-Palestinian relationship partly accounts for this extraordinarily “laid back” approach. It was tantamount, however, to turning a blind eye to all dangers in the subcontinent save those of terrorism, in order to achieve the objectives of destroying terrorist operatives and sanctuaries in Afghanistan. The consequences of a major conventional war, or, more horribly, of an India-Pakistan nuclear exchange, would have made everything al-Qaeda and the Taliban have done pale by comparison.

U.S. DIPLOMATIC INTERVENTION: DEFUSING CONFRONTATION

The United States moved rather late in the game to defuse India's confrontation with Pakistan. A schedule of visits of senior U.S. officials to the region recently had been planned. The precipitating events for a more decisive intervention may have been a resurgence of violence in Kashmir in May 2002, suggesting renewed infiltration of militants from Pakistan after the usual winter lull. Coinciding with the India visit of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia

44. Only in the late spring of 2002, as waves of fresh reports appeared on Indian military massing its forces on the borders with Pakistan, did an administration-inspired information campaign regarding the dangers of nuclear weapons get underway, as initial steps to restrain India—because, some alleged, Pakistan could not assist the United States adequately against al-Qaeda in the west when it had to protect against the Indian threat in the east. One form this information diplomacy took was technical briefings on the human and ecological damage that would result from nuclear weapon exchanges on plausible targets. One assessment had found that a small Pakistani nuclear weapon on Bombay could kill up to 850,000 people. Undersecretary of Defense Douglas J. Feith told a conference on American-Indian defense trade on May 13 that the Bush administration was “focused intensely” on the danger posed by the five-month-old mobilization by Pakistan and India and the prospect of nuclear war. His remarks became more significant when a paper by Bruce Riedell, an aide to President Clinton, revealed that during the Kargil conflict U.S. officials believed Pakistan had readied nuclear weapons for use and surprised Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif with this disclosure. See Sipress and Thomas E. Ricks, “Report: India, Pakistan Were Near Nuclear War in '99,” *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-23, 15 May 2002.

Christina Rocca, on May 14, militants attacked a bus and then stormed an Indian Army camp in Kashmir where soldiers had their wives and children present, killing at least thirty and injuring forty-seven, including ten women and eleven children among the dead.⁴⁵ Two days later, Pakistan put its military forces in the north on the highest alert, fearing that India was preparing to launch a strike on Pakistan in retaliation for the violence in Kashmir.⁴⁶

Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage's planned visit to India and Pakistan had suddenly gained a new importance, although it was still two weeks off. Indian officials complained that the United States had not adequately brought Pakistan into line, accused Musharraf of betraying his January pledge to stop the infiltration of extremists from Pakistan into Kashmir, and threatened heavy retaliation.⁴⁷ India then launched rounds of mortar fire into Pakistan-held Kashmir across the line of control, ostensibly to suppress infiltrators.⁴⁸ Pakistan soon responded in kind, following a long-practiced routine. A day later, India announced the expulsion of Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, Pakistan's ambassador to Delhi, giving him one week to leave; India had ceased communicating with him anyway since the December 13 attack,⁴⁹ but this action hinted that India might break relations with Pakistan altogether—an action that often precedes war.

India announced additional steps signaling the seriousness of its preparation for war. It streamlined the command structure of the armed forces, putting the border security forces under Army control, and the Coast Guard under Navy command. The Navy announced the movement of five warships from the eastern coast to reinforce the western fleet in the Arabian Sea. Vajpayee toured Army camps near the line of control in Kashmir to calm the atmosphere after the assassination of moderate separatist Abdul Ghani Lone, and to boost

45. Lakshmi, "At Least 30 Killed in Raid in Kashmir," *Washington Post*, A-23, 15 May 2002. Pakistan condemned the attack immediately. Two groups, Al Mansooren and Jamiat ul Mujahideen, claimed responsibility. Indian Home Minister Advani said that Al Mansooren replaced the Lashkar-e-Toiba when the latter was banned.

46. Karl Vick and Khan, "Pakistan Puts Some Forces on High Alert as India Plans Reprisal," *Washington Post*, A-20, 17 May 2002.

47. Lakshmi, "India Links Pakistan to Attack in Kashmir: Officials Vow to Take Action for Militant Raid," *Washington Post*, A-18, 16 May 2002.

48. Lakshmi, "India and Pakistan Trade Mortar Fire: Exchange on Kashmir Line is Heaviest in Months," *Washington Post*, A-16, 18 May 2002.

49. Lakshmi, "India Orders Expulsion of Pakistan's Envoy," *Washington Post*, A-17, 19 May 2002.

military morale, telling the troops “be ready for sacrifice … the time has come for decisive battle.”⁵⁰

Once again seeking to defuse India’s brinkmanship and to persuade the United States to lend a hand, Musharraf opened himself to a wide-ranging press interview on May 26 with a senior U.S. journalist.⁵¹ Musharraf made several points. First, he insisted that Pakistan had stuck by his pledges to stop terrorists operating from Pakistan into India or anywhere else: “We will ensure that terrorism does not go from Pakistan anywhere outside into the world. That is our stand, and we adhere to it.” He added that Pakistan’s fight against terrorism included cooperation with the United States against al-Qaeda and had a third component of suppressing Islamic sectarian extremism inside Pakistan itself. He asserted that militant infiltration across the line of control in Kashmir was not occurring, using the same language four times: “I repeat: There is nothing happening across the line of control.”

Second, Musharraf demanded India negotiate on Kashmir, with a dialogue and with a process, and reduce its own atrocities in

50. Lakshmi and Chandrasekaran, “India’s Leader Steps Up War Rhetoric,” *Washington Post*, 23 May 2002. The day before, masked gunmen in police uniforms shot and killed Abdul Ghani Lone in Srinagar. Lone was the senior leader of the All Parties Hurriyet Conference, a group of Kashmiri political and religious parties that advocate the separation of Kashmir from the rest of India. Lone himself, in contrast to many of the other Kashmiri independence leaders, favored dialogue with India and had become an opponent of the participation of hard-line militants from Pakistan in the Kashmiri separatist campaign. Lakshmi and Chandrasekaran, “Moderate Separatist Leader Is Assassinated in Kashmir: Muslim Drew Militants’ Ire for Seeking Talks with India,” *Washington Post*, A-26, 22 May 2002. See also Chandrasekaran and Lakshmi, “Indian Leaders Talk of War over Kashmir: No Deadline Set for Pakistan to Move against Militants,” *Washington Post*, A-24 and A-26, 24 May 2002.

51. Steve Coll, “Pakistan Says Raids in Kashmir Have Ended: Musharraf Demands Response from India,” *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-21, 26 May 2002. Steve Coll is managing editor of the *Washington Post* and was seasoned earlier as his newspaper’s correspondent in South Asia from 1989 to 1992. See his trenchant analysis in the same issue, “Between India and Pakistan, A Changing Role for the U.S.,” *Washington Post*, Outlook section, B-1 and B-5, 26 May 2002. In his concise policy recommendations, Coll raises a point that has been brushed aside by virtually every contemporary South Asia expert, that war in South Asia impacts U.S. vital interests negatively and the point must be made in no uncertain terms to India and Pakistan both: “The first challenge facing U.S. negotiators is to convince India to back off from its war threats, while insisting that Musharraf use the breathing space to dismantle the jihadist networks in Kashmir. Such an initiative may require high-level talks, backed by private U.S. guarantees, to help push India and Pakistan away from repetitious border scares and toward sustained political negotiation. It may also require an invocation, whether in public or private, that vital U.S. interests would be jeopardized if either party launches another war.”

Kashmir by withdrawing forces from the towns and cities. Third, he called for a reciprocal de-escalation of the military confrontation on the borders and at the line of control. Fourth, he warned India that it would pay a price for starting war: "Pakistan is no Iraq. India is not United States. We have forces. They follow a strategy of deterrence. [If deterrence fails] we are very capable of an offensive defense ... These words are very important. We'll take the offensive into Indian territory." He made it clear that he was not talking here about using nuclear weapons. Musharraf affirmed Pakistan's interest in peace with honor and dignity. But he also pulled no punches in describing India's approach since December as belligerent "chest thumping." He identified the basic problem as India's unwillingness to accept a strong Pakistan as its neighbor: "They want a subservient Pakistan which remains subservient to them. They are arrogant and want to impose their will on every country in the region."

Coordinated U.S. and British diplomacy finally went into high gear in South Asia in late May and June 2002, to avert the pressure for war by bringing about a more decisive outcome on India's main bone of contention. This required extracting a still more unequivocal pledge from Musharraf, to actively put a stop to armed extremists moving from Pakistan to the Indian-held part of Kashmir. Musharraf apparently believed he would receive in exchange "international assurances that India would also take significant steps to end the decades-old stalemate over Kashmir."⁵² President Bush, on tour in Europe, finally took the stand himself to urge Musharraf personally to "show results" in stopping incursions into Indian-controlled Kashmir.⁵³ But escalation of tension mounted, with additional violence in Kashmir, missile testing, and a Musharraf speech on May 27 that was both conciliatory and defiant but that riled the Indian establishment. Thus, in advance of Armitage's visit, to be followed by that of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, the U.S. State Department, the United Nations, and a number of advanced nations urged their citizens and foreign nationals to leave India and

52. Sipress and Khan, "U.S. Presses Pakistan on Incursions: Tensions with India Dangerously High," *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-28, 25 May 2002.

53. Dana Milbank, "Bush Presses Pakistan on Kashmir Raids," *Washington Post*, A-14, 27 May 2002.

Pakistan—hinting obviously at the rising concern that war could begin and lead to nuclear war.⁵⁴

Musharraf and Vajpayee both attended the sixteen-nation Asian security summit convened by Kazakhstan in Almaty on June 4, where Russian President Vladimir Putin and China's President Jiang Zemin each attempted to take the two South Asian leaders aside while trying to mediate, but Vajpayee stonewalled Musharraf on any direct dialogue.⁵⁵

The Armitage visit to Pakistan on June 6 and New Delhi the following day, bolstered by Rumsfeld's visit beginning on June 11 in Delhi, appeared to finally soften the India-Pakistan deadlock and allowed a basis for unraveling the military crisis by stages. Armitage evidently found the formula in Washington's employing the key word "permanent" to clarify the nature of Musharraf's pledge to "end" cross-border transit of militants from Pakistan to Kashmir. In New Delhi, Musharraf's pledge would be understood to mean, by virtue of U.S. assurance, bringing infiltration of militants to a "permanent end," but it would not have been publicly stated that way in Islamabad itself—a "blue smoke and mirrors" act of diplomacy. In exchange, Musharraf could count on India's de-escalation and on the United States to urge India to enter dialogue on Kashmir. In addition, the doors that had been closed by sanctions to trade and even military procurement would be opened somewhat wider.⁵⁶

While Pakistan could find some satisfaction in this outcome as a way of making the best of a difficult situation, the real benefits to Pakistan are not anything like Indian undertakings to move toward a solution of the Kashmir problem on terms meaningful to Pakistan. But they probably do add up to the opportunity to begin moving toward some form of normalcy in relations with India, and go a long

54. Chandrasekaran, "U.N. to Evacuate Families of Staff: Pakistan Plays Down Talk of Nuclear War," *Washington Post*, A-17, 2 June 2002. Since most non-essential foreign nationals had already been evacuated from Pakistan months before, this action hit India relatively severely for the first time, by causing a drop in confidence that affected a wide range of international economic activity.

55. Peter Baker and Sipress, "Kashmir Foes Apart at Meeting: India Declines Pakistan's Offer to Meet as Pressure Mounts," *Washington Post*, A-1 and A-12, 4 June 2002; see also "Russia Fails to Persuade Pakistan, India to Budget: At Summit Rivals Trade Accusations, Not Handshakes," *Washington Post*, A-17, 5 June 2002.

56. Glenn Kessler, "A Defining Moment in Islamabad: U.S.-Brokered 'Yes' Pulled India, Pakistan from Brink of War," *Washington Post*, A-1, 22 June 2002.

way to allow Pakistan to count on more positive international relations more generally, especially with the West and with the United States. The nature of this arrangement sidestepped Pakistani humiliation but there was no doubt that it requires a rather fundamental shift in Pakistan's outlook about the likely future of Kashmir—where the use of violence must not only be avoided but Pakistani volunteers who would resort to it must be prevented from doing so. From the standpoint of any Western observer, such a shift, coupled with the long-term dividends that the other mentioned opportunities could yield for Pakistan, would seem to be a highly valuable outcome in the long term.

Epilogue, November 2002

INDIA FINALLY BEGAN TO WIND DOWN its confrontation with Pakistan in October and November of 2002, standing down a portion of the seven hundred thousand armored and mechanized troops it had mobilized in Punjab and Rajasthan to exert military pressure on Pakistan. It did so after further visits by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and Secretary of State Colin Powell to both countries in August and September—to tamp down another spike in tension between both countries that arose in August, while furthering the agenda of the war against international terrorism in Southeast Asia and the Middle East. It became clear in retrospect that India had maintained its pressure on Pakistan partly to enhance its chances of minimizing violence in Jammu and Kashmir while it conducted state elections there in September and October, 2002. The Kashmir elections were not without violence but nevertheless were relatively free and unrigged, and displaced the long-ruling National Conference.⁵⁷ The elections brought to power in Srinagar a coalition of the new Kashmiri People's Democratic Party (PDP), which favors a lifting of the oppression and greater

57. The chief minister of the new government in Kashmir, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, was selected from the PDP and sworn in on November 2. See reporting on the Kashmir elections in Lakshmi, "Kashmir's Ruling Party Defeated at Polls," *Washington Post*, A-28, 11 October 2002; Ashok Sharma, "Indian Parties Try to Form Coalition in Kashmir," *Washington Post*, A-26, 27 October 2002; Lakshmi, "Kashmiri Politics at 'Crucial Stage': New Government Raises Region's Hopes," *Washington Post*, A-25, 17 November 2002.

autonomy within the Indian union, and the Congress Party, formerly the ruling party of India and the main opposition to the BJP in New Delhi. This outcome potentially sets the stage for negotiations between Kashmiris and New Delhi over a new disposition for Jammu and Kashmir, although steps in that direction seemed slow to emerge as of this writing in November.

Meanwhile, in Pakistan, national elections were held on October 10, 2002, resulting in a division of seats among the Pakistan Muslim League, Quaid-e-Azam faction (PML-Q), the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), and an alliance of six Islamist parties known as the Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA). No party won a clear parliamentary majority.⁵⁸ The religious alliance, however, won power at the provincial level in the two provinces adjacent to Afghanistan, the Northwest Frontier Province and Baluchistan.

After weeks of negotiations, a coalition government with a narrow parliamentary majority was formed between the PML-Q, smaller parties, independents, and PPP defectors. Zafarullah Khan Jamali, from Baluchistan, was selected as prime minister. This Jamali coalition, in contrast to the MMA—which is severely critical of Musharraf's relations with the United States in the war against the Taliban and the restrictions on militant movement into Kashmir—is likely to support the broad outlines of Musharraf's foreign policy.

Although time will tell, the Jamali government may also be more amenable to a Musharraf-led, step-by-step reduction of tensions in the relationship with India than one in which the Islamicist opposition figures more prominently. However, the increased strength of the Islamicists at the national level is likely to circumscribe Musharraf's domestic options, especially in social and reform policy. Imposing controls over the militant Islamic organizations and the reservoirs of militant education in madrassas affiliated with the JUI will prove difficult. Thus, the objectives of setting Pakistan on a moderate and secular governmental course will remain challenged.

58. For Jamali's emergence as prime minister and the Pakistani national election results, see John Lancaster, "Musharraf Ally is Named Prime Minister of Pakistan: Election by Legislators Signals Emergence of Ruling Coalition," *Washington Post*, A-30, 22 November 2002; John Lancaster, "Musharraf Struggling for Ruling Coalition: Pakistan's Religious Parties Emerge from October Elections as Power Brokers," *Washington Post*, A-22, 11 November 2002; John Lancaster, "Islamic Parities' Gains May Be West's Loss in Pakistan Vote," *Washington Post*, A-22, 12 October 2002.

Conclusions

THE U.S. CAMPAIGN against al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan was a defining moment for Pakistan and India both. It created new strategic opportunities for both, but these played more easily to India's advantage. It also imposed new strategic burdens. In the first instance, these fell primarily on Pakistan. In the aftermath, they could also fall on India as well, on its approach to Kashmir, and in its future handling of nuclear affairs. How this will play out remains to be seen, but is of great importance for the future stability and peace of the region.

In the immediate aftermath of September 11, Pakistan's advantages came to the fore. Its geographic position made Pakistan indispensable, especially in the early stages, for U.S. military access to Afghanistan. Pakistan's intimate ties with the Taliban (who also sheltered al-Qaeda) meant that Islamabad's approach to the war on terrorism also could be pivotal to how the United States applied its military and political options. Musharraf's quick and relatively unconditional agreement to provide the United States logistical access through Pakistan, and to cut off ties with the Taliban, reopened a relationship with Washington of great near-term benefit, and potentially long-term benefits as well.

Pakistan's ready availability to the United States also sidelined India as far as the immediate military effort in Afghanistan was concerned, much to India's chagrin. India, nevertheless, expressed its full support for the U.S. operations in Afghanistan, a position it never would have contemplated during the Cold War and actually had withheld during the Afghan war against the Soviet intervention in the 1980s. The warming of U.S. relations with India that had been given impetus by the Kargil episode in 1999 and by U.S. moves to relax the nuclear-related sanctions, however, gained momentum after September 11. India too had made clear its readiness to offer the United States the use of its own military facilities should they be needed. This had weighed on Pakistan and may have speeded its own decisions. Musharraf alluded to this in explaining the necessity of Pakistan's decision to cut off the Taliban.

While the agitational backlash in Pakistan from religious parties and extremist groups against his regime did not immediately rise to an unmanageable level, as had been feared, the animosity against Musharraf was clear. Musharraf attempted to strike a balance in his

support for the United States between his actions on Afghanistan and Pakistan's policies toward India. While dropping the Taliban, he steered away from imposing any new constraints on the religious parties and their affiliated militants that would affect their access to the insurgency in Kashmir.

Islamic extremist groups continued their own operations in Kashmir. In retrospect, it seems clear that the most aggressive of these organizations also attempted to provoke India by carrying terrorist operations beyond Kashmir into the heart of India. The motivations of the Jaish-e-Muhammed organization in preparing the December attack on India's parliament are still far from clear (and the same may be said for the Lashkar-e-Toiba, if it was actually part of the same conspiracy). India's own forensic investigations provided hints that the attack on parliament was not thoroughly pre-planned (other targets in Delhi apparently had been surveyed and considered), and that the rationale of the participants had been to carry the Kashmir insurgency to Delhi because their efforts within Kashmir had not borne fruit in forcing India to negotiate. The founder of Jaish-e-Muhammed had also been imprisoned by India and may have had motivations of personal revenge. Also, although no direct evidence of this has surfaced, one cannot rule out the possibility that those who engineered or directed the attack from a distance may have hoped that it would arouse India to undertake efforts to destabilize Musharraf's regime.

Whatever the exact motivation, it is clear that the *effect* of the attack on parliament was to provoke India to consider going to war against Pakistan, or at least to retaliate with a major show of force. The Bush Doctrine and the war on terrorism in Afghanistan provided a precedent that Indian leaders instinctively embraced—that acts of terrorism could be pursued to their origin and rooted out by military force. Since India alleged that the perpetrators killed in the incident were Pakistanis, the effect of the terrorism in Delhi was to provoke a response that would threaten Pakistan directly, and, given the context, indirectly threaten the Musharraf regime.

India was handed a strategic opportunity on a platter. Rather than squander this opportunity on a quick, punitive action against terrorist training camps or Pakistani military installations along the line of control (such action would have been militarily ineffectual and probably politically counterproductive as well), India mounted a major military

confrontation against Pakistan for coercive diplomacy. This effort was well designed to put simultaneous pressure on the United States to use its influence with Musharraf, and direct pressure on Musharraf himself to get him to condemn terrorism and block the emigration of extremist groups into Kashmir. By Indian calculations, this could seal off Indian-held Kashmir from Pakistan's influence and terminate the anti-Indian unrest there. The confrontation could have led to Indian military actions, too, if circumstances convinced India's leadership of their utility or necessity.

Caught in a vise between the United States pursuing the war against the Taliban to the west in Afghanistan, and India threatening war from the east, and under pressure from Islamic political parties at home, Musharraf faced more than the ordinary dilemma. Condemning the attack on India's parliament was easy enough but did nothing to relieve the pressure. Musharraf's problem was to show Pakistan's commitment to suppress terrorism on one hand without undercutting Pakistan's Kashmir policy. His initial attempts to do this by the measures announced in his January 12 speech. These banned the two extremist groups that India had fingered, confined members of those groups in temporary detention, and declared that Pakistan would not allow the migration of terrorism from Pakistan's soil anywhere outside. This was greeted with skepticism by India. India did not budge from the confrontation. In effect India pocketed Musharraf's promises, but insisted they would have to be monitored before India could adjust its position.

While the confrontation remained in place, the winter weather cut down movement from Pakistan to Kashmir, a regular occurrence, and a modest drop-off in the level of violence in Kashmir followed. But India revived the crisis of war threats to a high pitch in mid-May when a bloody attack on an army camp coincided with Christina Rocca's visit. India insisted that Musharraf had betrayed his January pledges. Anger in India was accentuated by the communal riots in Gujarat, which took an exceptionally heavy toll on Muslims and BJP's anxiety as it ran up to certain state level elections. U.S. concerns were augmented by Musharraf's trimming of military support against al-Qaeda groups slipping into Pakistan. Nuclear threats were hinted at indirectly by testing missiles (India earlier, and Pakistan later), during this timeframe. The magnitude of the tension set the stage for a more active U.S. intervention with Armitage and

Rumsfeld, Armitage carrying the ball diplomatically, and Rumsfeld giving personal impetus to promises of continued military cooperation.

Attacks on Americans and other foreigners within Pakistan had increased after Musharraf's January actions. The Daniel Pearl murder and the killing of French technicians in Karachi received exceptionally intense attention from the international media. This helped mobilize U.S. pressure, too. Thus, under concerted U.S. pressure, and with the additional challenge of staying in power while preparing the ground for national elections scheduled for October, Musharraf became a measure more pliable.

Armitage's principal contribution in visiting Pakistan and India in succession was to nail down more definitively Musharraf's pledge to stop emigration of extremists into Kashmir, adding the word "permanent" in front of the word "stop." Armitage evidently had some assurances from India that he could convey to Musharraf in return, together with additional promises of U.S. support for Pakistan, if Musharraf adhered to his word. This intervention did begin to thaw the tension between India and Pakistan, although India made it clear that it would draw down its military confrontation in steps as it monitored Pakistan's performance.

India won the lion's share of the benefits that U.S. intervention and media attention awarded in the coercive diplomacy exercise. India successfully focused the crisis on extremist infiltration into Kashmir and related terrorist acts in other parts of India. It not only got U.S. assistance in defining any terrorist problem linked to Pakistan in India's own way, but a more substantial U.S. sympathy toward India's own position on Kashmir. India made considerable headway in shifting international perceptions of these problems in the direction of stigmatizing Pakistan.

On the role of religion and religious extremism, or radicalism, in this South Asian set of security problems, one must conclude that the real issues are deeper social and political grievances, which makes it possible to use religion as a tool. The more radical the operators, the more terrorism comes into play. Religious hatred and extremism are not new to the region; they have been endemic. The Islamic world has more than its share of this problem, but the fires of Hindu extremism are being fanned by politics in India, too.

With two countries possessing nuclear weapons in this region, neither can afford to stoke up deeper conflict. Both must turn to resolving real problems, economic, political, and those of fundamental security. But Kashmir as a core problem stares any objective observer in the face. Apart from the campaign against terrorism, efforts to rehabilitate Afghanistan and with Musharraf's crackdown on extremism, the most hopeful development during the India-Pakistan confrontation was the dawning realization in the international community that the process of resolving the Kashmir problem must begin soon.