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Genesis of Insurgency in FATA & Khyber Pukhtunkhwa

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Section 1

Introduction

This study is part of a larger work within the theoretical framework of the New Political Economy which states that positive institutional shift is essential in the process of achieving economic and social progress. Institutions which reward behavior leading to their strengthening are able to bring such a change. Furthermore, societies and organizations can shift to better practices and their previous historic experience is not a bar.

This study examines the security threat to institutions in the Khyber Pukhtunkhwa and the tribal areas of Pakistan. The challenge of the Islamists in part arises out of distorted incentive structure based within the complex world of belief rather than experience.

The rapid destruction of Pakistani institutions and the continuing challenge to state supremacy is the result of many factors but the important ones lie within the foreign and security policies of Pakistan. Some of these factors are;

- a) Ever since Independence strong efforts were made to convert the quasi-secular nature of the Pakistani state as envisioned by the Quaid, which was based on parliamentary democracy and federalism; these guiding principles were ignored and the struggle for Independence was portrayed as a fight for the creation of an Islamic state; this was inventive and opportunist.
- b) On 25th March 1949, Liaquat Ali Khan the Prime Minister moved the Objective Resolution in Pakistan's Constituent Assembly. Munir (36)¹, says that had this happened during the life of the Quaid-i-Azam the founder of Pakistan, "[M]uch of the confusion that appeared subsequently would have been avoided.....But Liaquat Ali Khan knew that the Quaid-i-Azam would not agree to any such resolution.....as it was a complete contradiction of his idea of a modern democratic secular state."
- c) The Anti-Ahmedi agitation of 1953, shook the state whose policies began to be driven more by belief than empiricism. After Gen. Zia, took power in 1977, the nature of the state was drastically transformed by the introduction of Islamic reforms. The armed forces were made to believe that they were an Islamic institution meant to fight a permanent Jihad; a doctrine similar to the Trotskyite idea of a permanent socialist revolution.
- d) Another reason for Pakistan leading to Islamization of the state and to support first the Afghan Mujahideen and latter the Taliban was the need to drown the demands of Pashtun ethnic nationalism under religious rhetoric. Islamists during the Jihad (1979-92), opposed Pashtun sub-nationalism for the sake of Muslim solidarity, (Roy, 76, 1986)². Yet today they challenge Pakistan's integrity. The issue of Pakhtunistan is very much alive and could yet arise again, (Harrison, 29)³.
- e) Pakistan's crucial assistance in the Jihad led to the driving out of the USSR from Afghanistan and radicalized powerful organs of state and the religious right. This combination is powerful and dominates the political space.
- f) Another factor is the growth of autonomous Jihadist organizations for pressurizing India on Kashmir. These extra-legal coercive organizations began to have their own agendas leading them to join Islamist forces including the al-Qaeda and the Taliban, operating in Afghanistan and other parts of the Islamic world. They are now together in Swat and Waziristan.
- g) Simultaneously, the strong militant evangelicalism of Wahabism entered Pakistani social space through private charity and the Madrassa, and added fuel to this highly inflammable mixture. It is this deadly potion, which has sown the seeds of an aggressive Islam aimed at dominating South and Central Asian region.
- h) Pakistan's nuclear capability provided protection to this mixture of revolutionary Islam from external threats.

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- i) The introduction of Local Bodies Reform removed the tier of magistracy and district control mechanism, which was pivotal in maintaining state stability for more than two hundred years. A vacuum was created which has been filled easily by other elements who are fighting the state.
 - j) Another important cause for the crisis of state is the abandonment of merit, efficiency and accountability in the processes of state and government policies. There is also a large resource capture by the elites to the detriment of the majority; amongst the later more than 30% live on or below the poverty line combined with a 35-40 % unemployment rate.
 - k) Lastly, Pakistan's support for the US in Afghanistan after 9/11, invited a strong negative reaction from a sizable percentage of Pakistanis. This has seriously eroded the legitimacy of President Musharraf. His critics believe that they will see the flag of Islam unfurl once more over Kabul, (Imperial Hubris, 44-45)⁴.

The Islamist movement in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa and tribal areas led by the Taliban and al-Qaeda is committed to changing the existing power relationships prevailing in society and anchored in the Khan and Maliks. The challengers are spearheading the millennial tradition of popular religion, where the establishment of an Islamic state brings justice and happiness, and puts an end to the tyranny of the powerful, (Roy, 56, 1981)⁵. Their demand for justice is equal if not higher than the demand for a better economic life.

The neo-Islamists are challenging the hegemony of the state exercised through the dominant class of Khans and Maliks and the institutional and ideological practices and programmes delivered through health and education departments, government publications, local government, national radio, assemblies and official networks, (Hanifi – 2)⁶.

The rebels in Swat, for instance targeted the government polio vaccination programme, girls education and NGOs. These have stopped functioning. It is done to end state hegemony and replace it with Islamist ideology. It is a course of action advocated in Bin Laden's strategy, which is discussed later.

Scope

This paper analyzes the reasons for the rapid decline of the state in parts of the tribal areas and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa. While analyzing the causes of this decline, special attention will be given to outlining the linkage between Taliban and al-Qaeda, as well as their war strategy in Pakistan. The basis for the use of "Martyrdom" operations against the police and military will also be examined.

An examination of al-Qaeda's organizational, financial, military, administrative and logistical capacities will be made. This study will also examine the level of financial and military cooperation between al Qaeda and the Taliban. It will also attempt to identify the weakness in the current anti-insurgency policy of the government.

The report will look at Taliban and al-Qaeda linkage with drugs and trafficking. A review of the social changes in Waziristan and other parts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa will be presented in the context of the revival of the previous basis of state organization based on traditional leaders. The often suggested solution of strengthening the state by the revival of traditional elites will be examined. The impact of Islamists on traditional Afghan society during the Jihad against the Soviet Union from 1979 – 1992, will also be examined since it is predicted that Khyber Pukhtunkhwa society will most probably evolve in that pattern. It is the long term trend.

Finally, the paper will indicate the weakness of the present strategy followed in confronting the Islamists. It concludes by identifying the elements of a general and a development strategy to combat terrorism. It is hoped that further programmes will be designed based on these suggestions.

Causes of decline of the state

The following are the main causes for the loss of government control in tribal areas and other parts of the Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, including Swat:-

- a) Radicalization of tribal areas and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa as a result of Afghan Jihad. At the same time a huge quantity of weapons were introduced in this area.
- b) The invasion of Afghanistan by the US and the removal of the Taliban regime in December 2001, created a huge sympathy for them.
- c) The movement of the Pakistan military into the tribal areas in support of the war on terror severely reduced the influence of political agents in the tribal agencies and administration became weaker.
- d) The scaling down of the Jihad in Kashmir led to the return of Pakistani Jihadists, who have readily found new employment with the Talibans and are challenging the state.
- e) Formation of MMA Government in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, which was closely linked with the religious elements, and was sympathetic to the Islamists. The government provided them support and recruited many from them as teachers. They are in the forefront in fighting the state today. It is an example of what happens when the principle of merit is violated in recruitment.
- f) The state failed to implement the law to check preaching by radical Mullahs.
- g) Illegal FM radio stations were established by the Islamists which led to radicalization of society and the creation of hatred against the elites was initiated through this medium without any checks.
- h) There has been a very large increase in the number of Madrassas, especially those funded by Saudi Arabia, (Aziz, 16, March 2007)⁷.
- i) The office of the political agent has been weakened by the introduction of the military in the tribal areas.
- j) The abolition of the district magistracy created a vacuum and permitted the radicalization by the Islamists without any checks.
- k) There is demographic time bomb in tribal areas where persons in the age group of 15 – 26 years constitute more 60% of the population. It has become a flash point because of the lack of employment opportunities.
- l) The weakening of the state was hastened by ignoring merit in recruitment and the general weakening of professionalism in the security and administrative services dealing with Khyber Pukhtunkhwa and tribal areas.

Thus seeds of this crisis lie in deteriorating governance and failure to run the state machinery based on efficiency or merit. In a nut-shell, Pakistan adopted a path which was destined to lead to a crisis of state.

Analysis of the current situation in Waziristan and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa

The poor security situation in Waziristan, Swat and other parts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa is the result of many deficits but has been worsened by US Predator attacks in tribal areas.

In the aftermath of 9/11, more than 80,000 security personnel were deployed in tribal areas by December 2001. The objective was to arrest al-Qaeda members fleeing Afghanistan. The second objective was to prevent tribesmen of Waziristan from attacking US forces in Afghanistan. The third objective was to prevent establishment of training camps and safe havens by al-Qaeda and Talibans in tribal areas.

Instead of improving the situation, the introduction of armed forces was construed as a hostile act by the population. The tribes considered this measure as an attempt to interfere in their independence and tribal way of life. Secondly, the threat to Islam in Afghanistan and

Pakistan was most ably articulated for the local consciousness by the mosque Mullah and Madressah. The Mullah and Ulemas provided a formidable intellectual leadership to win the public's mind. There is an absence of a counter policy by the state.

Thus a vast majority of rural Pakistanis and Afghans are convinced that the war on terror is a crusade against Islam by a Judeo-Christian alliance, which has been forced upon Pakistan and its military.

Despite occasional reservations by the Afghan Taliban, the insurgents are succeeding in defining the military and the elites as untrue Muslims. This becomes very dangerous when such a definition is anchored within the precepts of Islam interpreted by the 14th century Muslim jurist Ibn-e-Taymiyya. His classification of the enemies of Islam is in four categories;

- a) In the first category are infidels such as Christians with whom it was permissible to make peace, marry their women and whose lives might be spared if they were made prisoners.
- b) Those Muslims who had reverted to infidel habits with whom no peace could be made and who must be fought if they did not return to the fold.
- c) Those who declared themselves as Muslims but did not follow the rituals, they were to be killed.
- d) Those who rejected Islam while claiming to belong to it were to be killed also.

Ibn-e-Taymiyya's interpretation did not find a place in Islam's mainstream until it attracted the attention of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahab born at the start of 18th century. Wahab's interpretation of Islam became Saudi Arabia's preferred practice of religion. It incorporates Ibn-e-Taymiyya's philosophy of apostasy as "takfir", (Allen, 47)⁸. Wahabism has multiplied in Pakistan through the growth of Saudi financed Madressahs as well as Saudi prominence in Afghanistan and their support for the Mujahideen during the Jihad in Afghanistan.

Both al-Qaeda and the Taliban are adherents of this version of Islam and its doctrine of "takfir," which states that those who violate the precepts of Islam as defined by Ibn-e-Taymiyya, were no longer Muslims, but apostates who were to be excommunicated and killed, (Rubin, 87, 2003)⁹.

Thus, when al-Qaeda, Taliban or Pakistani Jihadists execute soldiers in Waziristan or other parts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, it is done under the doctrine of "takfir". Secondly, they are clearly engaged in a holy war against the US and the Pakistani state. Religious wars are always dirty and this one is no different; its seeds lie in Pakistan's foreign and security policies.

Section 2

Genesis and dynamics of al-Qaeda

It can be said with certainty that unless the issue of al-Qaeda is resolved satisfactorily, Pakistan will continue to be threatened by instability. This section examines al-Qaeda from different aspects in order to find possible solutions.

Al-Qaeda was created as a response to the presence of US troops on the Arabian Peninsula after the 1990 Gulf War. Al-Qaeda wanted the removal of foreigners from Saudi Arabia and other Muslim countries. Its aim was not Islamic evangelicalism. It used terrorism as a tactic with the aim of removing foreigners and bending the will of the US. As time went on al-Qaeda took on the larger role of rejuvenating Islam. It transformed the feeling of helplessness and impotence in the Muslim mind into one of perceived equality with the non-Muslim powers. Thus the attack of 9/11 was a message. The main audience was the Islamic world. The US was used as an actor that could be manipulated into behaving as al-Qaeda wanted. Bin Laden used 9/11 as a politico-military maneuver aimed at generating pro-jihadist change in the Islamic world. His plan was to draw in the US which would create a Jihadist resistance. He has succeeded in doing that only. The felling of corrupt Muslim governments and re-establishment of the Caliphate has not occurred, (Friedman, 35)¹⁰.

Al-Qaeda seeks to coerce democratic governments into changing their foreign policies. Since 2001 it has achieved significant success in dividing the West and changing the policies of US allies like France, Germany and Turkey, (Pape, 12th Sept, 2006)¹¹.

Bin Laden's grooming as a Jihadist took place in Peshawar, Afghanistan and later in Sudan. Some important features of Bin Laden's Jihadist profile are the following. They explain many of his actions and policies.

- a) Bin Laden came to Peshawar in January 1980 and established links with Afghan Mujahideen leaders including Burhanuddin Rabbani, Sayyaf and Ahmad Shah Masood. Thus he is linked with the former Mujahideen of Afghanistan and can use their networks.
- b) Bin Laden met his future Jihad teacher Azzam who had schooled him also in the past and they jointly created the Afghan Service Bureau (MAK) in 1984 in Peshawar. This organization began the recruitment and training of Arab and other Muslim youth from various countries for Jihad and its data base became the precursor for creation of al-Qaeda.
- c) In 1986, bin Laden and Azzam built their first training camp al-Ansar in Paktia. Bin Laden's friendship with the Taliban army chief Jalaluddin Haqqani dates from this period. This support net-work continues today through Haqqani's son Siraj, who has replaced him.
- d) Al-Qaeda was created in 1989 in Al-Farooq camp, Afghanistan. It used the data base of MAK for forming an international network of Islamists in about ninety countries. It is estimated that about 200,000 radical Islamists are today linked in one form or another through al-Qaeda.
- e) It is estimated that in the first phase of Jihad against the USSR, bin Laden trained 25,000 – 30,000 Jihadis in his camps. The majority of them were Saudis, Egyptians, Yemenis, Uzbeks, Uighurs, Chechens and Algerians. He also trained from 175,000 to 250,000 Afghans and Pakistanis, (Gunaratna, 21)¹².
- f) After failing to succeed in removing Benazir government from power in 1989, and realizing that the Saudis were also looking for him, bin Laden left Pakistan for Sudan in 1989. But continued to retain his properties and six training camps in Afghanistan.
- g) After returning to Afghanistan from Sudan in 1996, Osama started training Islamists again. It may be noted that the previous lot of trainees who returned to their countries after 1992 had established al-Qaeda nodes in all the Islamic and European countries which had Muslim minorities, (Kepel, 299, 2003)¹³.

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- h) Al-Qaeda's guerilla organization, the famous 055 Brigade composed of Arabs, Chechens and others was integrated into the Taliban Emirate army from 1997 – 2001, and fought the Northern Alliance. It was the most feared unit composed of about 2000 men.
 - i) It was the remnants of the 055 brigade who after the US attack on Afghanistan took refuge in Waziristan and Bajaur and thus were able to radicalize these regions by forming al-Qaeda nodes.
 - j) There was not only a mixing of international Jihadists who had been fighting in various wars in the camps in Afghanistan but also an exchange of knowledge and creation of personal networks for future operations.
 - k) After being on the defensive, al-Qaeda and the Taliban resurfaced in Waziristan and in various parts of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa and began challenging the state.
 - l) In Waziristan they have succeeded in neutralizing and demoralizing the military. As the pressure against the Islamists mounted, they created other points of inflammation for the security forces to deal with, like Lal-Masjid in Islamabad, Swat and Bajaur in the north and Tank and D.I. Khan in the south; basically to divert attention from Waziristan.
 - m) Today four areas of Taliban / al-Qaeda control have been established. Waziristan, the size of New Jersey contains two Taliban Shuras (advisory councils), the Shura of North Waziristan and the Shura of South Waziristan which together administer a population of about 800,000.
 - n) It is apparent that al-Qaeda is creating more emirates in Swat, Bajaur and soon in other Khyber Pukhtunkhwa districts. This will severely test the state and indicate to the population a clear sign of the state's dwindling significance.
 - o) The progression of the Taliban movement in Waziristan and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa clearly points to the implementation of the al-Qaeda strategy to destroy the framework of a "hypocrite" state furthering the aims of the US.
 - p) It is unnecessary for security planners to classify the Islamists into three categories of al-Qaeda, Taliban (Afghani) and Neo-Taliban (Pakistani) as they do. If it is done to indicate their territorial status then it may make sense. From the point of view of security they are alike with varying degree of capacities. Al-Qaeda is the most doctrinaire and the best trained because of the dedication, experience and knowledge of its members. In many ways it is a better version of the socialist International Brigade that fought in the Spanish civil war of the 1930's.
 - q) The signing of peace agreements by the Pakistani government with the Taliban in Waziristan and their subsequent violation may appear confusing. However, the violations of the cease fire signify arguments between al-Qaeda and the Taliban. The Afghan and Pakistani Taliban feel that Pakistan is a Muslim state with a Muslim military and instead of spending energy to destabilizing it, efforts should be made in the Jihad in Afghanistan against foreign troops, (Shahzad, May 2007) ¹⁴. Some other comments in this behalf are as below:
 - i. Pakistan's policy has been to separate the hard core foreign Islamists, mostly Arabs and Central Asians, from the Pushtun Taliban. It is the implementation of this policy that induces Pakistan to sign agreements in North and South Waziristan so as to split the Islamist. However, it weakens the gain made by the government and should be avoided.
 - ii. Pakistan's policy of isolating al-Qaeda achieved some degree of success in 2003 and 2006 in Waziristan. It is in this context that one should view the coming into prominence of Haji Nazir in South Waziristan in 2006. He is the one who ordered the massacre of the "takfiris" composed of Uzbeks, (Shahzad) ¹⁵.

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- iii. Pakistan has also been successfully waging an intelligence war leading to the arrest and killing of prominent al-Qaeda leaders. It is forcing many al-Qaeda leaders to relocate away from Waziristan. Abdul Hadi al-Iraqi, a senior al-Qaeda operative was recently arrested by Pakistan and handed over to the US. Another reason for the al-Qaeda to re-locate is that they do not want to be second fiddle to the Taliban – a natural result of bin Laden's policy of organizing his warriors on tribal lines. Each unit is composed of separate people belonging to the some ethnic group. This organizing principle is both strength and a weakness. It is strong in creating cohesion leading to bravery in battle but poor when it causes problems of coordination and creating a chain of command.
 - r) However, al-Qaeda understands Pakistan's strategy of dividing the Islamist front. In 2003, Al-Zawairi felt threatened by Pakistan's success. He spoke against the Pakistani establishment and urged Pakistanis to stand up against the government.
 - s) After Al-Zawairi found that the Afghan Taliban was equivocal towards Pakistan, he opened up another point of insurgency by radicalizing Swat, Bajaur, Dir, Kohistan and Shangla. Soon this area was engulfed in active fighting. It has given more space to the al-Qaeda to stay coherent. In achieving its objective al-Qaeda used fighters from Waziristan and Pakistani Kashmiri Jihadi organizations like the Lashkar e Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammadi (JeM). Al Qaeda has now taken over leadership over the Jihadis.
 - t) Secondly, al-Zawairi's selection of Swat/Bajaur and contiguous districts of Malakand for fighting is based on the TSNM support structure which is present in this region.
 - i. TSNM began as a movement in 1989 for the introduction of Shariat in Malakand region. In 1994 they staged a long march in support of their demand and threatened to march to Peshawar. They were stopped and about twenty of their supporters perished in this confrontation. The Khyber Pukhtunkhwa government finally caved in to their demands and issued the Nizam-e-Adl Regulation in 1999, which introduced a form of Shariat into Malakand. However the TSNM was more interested in being co-opted into the justice system. Therefore the issue of Shariat has remained active.
 - ii. In November – December 2001 about 10,000 TSNM volunteers from Malakand, including Swat joined the Afghan Taliban fighting against the US forces. It was a disaster and many died or were made prisoners by the Northern Alliance and their leader Sufi Muhammad was arrested and is under arrest. He has been recently shifted by the military from D.I Khan Prison to Peshawar. It is likely that he will be released and as a price he will sign an agreement with the government promising the introduction of another version of Sharia. TSNM has been declared a terrorist organization.
 - iii. It may be noted that from 2001-2004 Khyber Pukhtunkhwa remained peaceful. After the strike by predators in Waziristan in 2004 and later in Bajaur, we notice the revival of radicalism in its virulent form. Maulana Fazlullah, the successor to Sufi Mohammad and also his son-in-law, began his political career in 2005, in Swat by delivering religious sermons through a proscribed FM radio transmitter. Similar leaders by then had emerged in Waziristan; more in the nature of warlords using the religious rhetoric than religious leaders.

Origin of Jihadism

Jihadism is a global phenomenon that seeks to eradicate by force the Western influence from the Muslim world. The movement has been linked in the public mind to bin Laden. It is important to recognize that Jihad is not restricted to a particular group, but it is an ideological movement to which many disparate groups subscribe.

According to this ideology, secular political institutions and regimes should be removed in favour of state institutions based on Islam. This has to be implemented both through peaceful advocacy and if needed, through the use of violence.

Jihadism developed during the later half of the 20th century. Ideologically, the movement can be traced back to the first Arab –Israel War of 1948. It gained momentum in 1970 with the emergence of Gamaah-al-Islamiyah and Tandheem-ul-Jihad in Egypt, which was followed subsequently by numerous other groups in the Muslim world. President Nasser's crack-down against the moderate Muslim Brotherhood, after Egypt's defeat in the 1967 Arab-Israel's war, was the catalyst that pushed the radical Muslims towards violent change through Jihad. With the success of Islamic revolution in Iran and the Mujahideen victory against USSR in Afghanistan, the foundation for the modern Jihadists movement was established.

Palestinian activist Abdallah Azzam, who played a leading role in recruiting Muslim volunteers to fight Soviet troops in Afghanistan; is the god-father of the modern Jihadist ideology. His famous work "Join the Caravan," published in the late 1980s, has been an inspiration for the Jihadists. Several other influential jihadists also came from Egyptian groups; Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rehman, a blind activist-scholar, was the founder of Gamaah, and al-Qaeda lieutenant Ayman al-Zawahiri emerged from the Tandheem al Jihad (Jihad Organisation), which was involved in the 1981 assassination of Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat, which was planned in the Peshawar office of MAK by bin Laden, Azzam and Islam Istambuli.

Among al-Zawahiri's works is a scathing attack on the moderate philosophy of the Muslim Brotherhood, titled "Al Hasad al-Murr: al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn fi Sittin Aman" (The Bitter Harvest: The Muslim Brotherhood in Sixty years). The movement also has been influenced by the thinking of Egyptian author Abdel-Salam al Faraj, his most famous jihadist text is "Faridah al Ghaibah," (The Neglected Duty), (Stratfor 26th Nov, 2004)¹⁶.

Nexus of Jihad with Wahabism

It is important to note that splinter groups from the Muslim Brotherhood formed close intellectual links with Wahabis, which is a narrower interpretation of Islam. In this bin Laden played a crucial role especially since the Wahabis, who are Saudi Arabians were under the leadership of bin Laden. They form the core of al-Qaeda. Prior to this the Jihadists followed different religious schools. After Bin-Laden's centralizing role, most of the Jihadist groups are now heavily influenced by Wahabi extremist thought.

According to the strict Islamic interpretation, Jihad can only be declared by a Muslim ruler, who is an Emir. It cannot be declared by groups or individuals. Ibn-e-Taymiyya opened the path to individual interpretation both of "takfir" and Jihad.

It is to get over this difficulty that the Islamists are eager to establish emirates to legitimize war and "martyrdom" operations. It is thus clear that the establishment of emirates will open the flood gates for new attacks.

After having established its credibility by undertaking the 9/11 operation, al-Qaeda has begun to develop into a quasi-state which uses advocacy for disseminating its message to the public. This transformation took place after the end of 90 days truce declared by bin Laden after the Madrid bombing in March 2004. At the same time independent Jihadist groups have begun to act at local levels with the support and encouragement from al-Qaeda "Prime". This includes groups such as Gamaah al-Islamiyah in South East Asia, the semi-independent al-Qaeda cells in Saudi Arabia and other groups in Iraq. There is evidence of communication between these groups and al-Qaeda.

Evidently the work of bin Laden in this context has been that of a genius. He has not only raised asymmetrical war to a new level but has created a system of challenging the US everywhere in the world. It is a strategy which pulls in a tremendous amount of resources and raises the US deficit due to cost of security operation conducted by her and others.

It is evident that the contributions to radical Islam by bin Laden has created new challenges for Muslim states. Any mis-governance or weakening of institutions in the targeted states will be exploited by al-Qaeda.

Al-Qaeda strategy

In war when one side is pressed into a corner, the normal reaction is to collect all the resources and direct it at the weakest link of the encircling enemy. Since such an offensive has a high probability of failure, therefore it is normally not attempted unless the situation is near defeat.

The pattern of al-Qaeda activities shows that none of their operation since 9/11 has been of major significance in forcing the US to change its strategy. Secondly, the avowed intention of al-Qaeda activities was the removal of pro western Muslim governments and replacing them by radical Islamic regimes. This has not occurred and most of Muslim states are actively cooperating with US. This has defeated the primary objective of the radical and militant Islamists, which was the creation of a Caliphate instituted in one of the significant Muslim state.

In other words it is evident that because of the danger of losing influence, al-Qaeda wanted to establish its credibility by mounting another attack on the scale of 9/11, otherwise there is a danger of losing influence. Since that is not happening, it will be logical to assume that the national intelligent agencies have been successful in reducing al-Qaeda's influence, (Stratfor 26th July, 2005)¹⁷.

Furthermore, since al-Qaeda is unable to conduct a strategic operation in the west, it has shifted its emphasis to Afghanistan, tribal areas and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa in Pakistan. The objective of this exercise is apparently to create safe havens for conducting operations in Afghanistan and speed up the rate of radicalization in Pakistan. It would, therefore follow that the efforts of al-Qaeda and Afghan Taliban and their supporters in Pakistan is to create space for their jihadist activities.

If this projection is borne out, then Pakistan would be facing extreme pressure in the three nodes that al-Qaeda wants established here. These are in Waziristan, Swat and Bajaur. These nodal points will create linkages with the efforts of Taliban in Afghanistan, who are now well of their way to creating controlled areas in Kunar and southern Afghanistan.

Martyrdom as a weapon

Co-existing with the normal strategy of al-Qaeda is the special role of terrorism as the weapon of choice for achieving the vision. This weapon has certain advantages. A few suicide bombers aimed at a rich range of targets creates an ideal combination, very difficult to detect or counter.

Osama has analysed that the center of gravity of the US did not lie in its people, media or the army. It lay in its economy. This is what he hit on 9/11. In classical war the opposing commanders can predict each other's move. What gives strength to terrorism is its unpredictability. It is the smart bomb of the Islamists and a great equalizer of imbalance caused by advance weaponry.

9/11 was intended to be so brutal and humiliating as to force the US to launch massive retaliation against Muslim countries, which would galvanize the masses to rise and overthrow their regimes which were to be replaced by Islamists and ultimately leading to the establishment of a Caliphate. This still remains the over-riding objective of bin Laden.

Role and structure of al Qaeda

Osama gained a lot of knowledge by working with some of the world's best intelligence agencies during the Afghan Jihad. This has played a major role in the designing of al-Qaeda. The following are its main design features;

- a. It is transnational in its approach. Hence it does not control or administer regional Islamist associates in a direct manner.
- b. Its basic principle is to organize Jihadist on tribal or familial lines so as to generate valor, loyalty and bravery in operations. Osama implemented this doctrine in the while creating the 055 Arab Brigade during the Taliban struggle for power in Afghanistan. The Northern Alliance was terrorized to fight against it.
- c. Leaders of other groups are co opted anywhere in the world once al-Qaeda central embarks on a Jihadist operation.
- d. Al Qaeda provides strategic direction and tactical support to its affiliates. It also lends its experts for capacity building. In 2000 a delegation of Iraqi Kurds visited Kabul and sought assistance from bin Laden in how to administer territory under its control and to be guided about the strategy to be followed against challengers. Capacity building al Qaeda expert was dispatched to Iraq to assist the Kurds. Similar knowledge transfer takes place in Waziristan and in other parts.
- e. Al Qaeda's main role is to act as a knowledge center training its cadres and looking after the financial and administrative needs of its affiliates. Thus it is very important for al Qaeda to develop segregated training spaces. When it lost its training sanctuary in Pakistan in 1998, it immediately re-established eight camps in Afghanistan.
- f. Osama has clearly learnt and evaluated the lessons following the dispersal of the Afghan Jihadist after 1992, when Najibullah's Communist regime fell in Kabul. As a result of the absence of demobilization program, which ought to have been drawn up, about 30,000 Jihadists saw the future closing on them; they thought something better could be done by becoming the permanent soldiers of Jihad.
- g. When volunteers came to fight the USSR, in Afghanistan their passports and identities were taken away by the CIA and other intelligence agencies. After the war their papers were never returned. They could not go back and secondly, their home countries did not want these radicals back either.
- h. Bin Laden did not disown them and used the data base of MAK in Peshawar, which he had previously created with Azzam his mentor and teacher to look after these shadowy warriors and he began to contact them and to organize them as a Jihadist force.
- i. As a result of this Diaspora after 1992, Jihad intensified in Bosnia, Algeria, Egypt, Tajikistan, Chechyna, Kashmir, Africa, the Pacific region and in Europe, (Kepel, 299, Jihad)¹⁸.
- j. These Jihadist nodes were serviced and trained by the best. Chechens were trained by al-Ansar, one of the fiercest groups which specialized in suicide bombings. To train the Bosnians, who were considered 'soft,' a training manual was written by al-Qaeda.
- k. Bin Laden relied on a pool of brilliant experts and strategists, like al-Zawahiri, Fadl el-Masry, al-Banshiri, Atef, Ahmed al-Fadl (Sudani), Faraj Yemeni and many others. Some have since died. But since Osama believed in training, others equally capable have replaced them, (Gunaratna, 54-94)¹⁹.

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- l. Thus bin Laden indoctrinates trains and controls a core inner group which in turn supports peripheral cadres of radicals world wide.
 - m. In 1998, al-Qaeda was reorganized into four linked entities divided by function and some by region – depending where the Jihadist hot spot was.
 - n. The top entity is the al Qaeda inner core dealing with tactics, strategy and direction of war. Its head is the Emir-General, who is below bin Laden. The first Emir-General was the Iraqi, Abu Ayoub. He held al Qaeda's formative meeting at the Farook camp in Khost in Afghanistan in late 1989.
 - o. Below the Emir-General, is the Shura Majlis which consists of experienced and dedicated warriors, who are personally loyal to bin Laden; structured on al-Qaeda lines it is a personalized system where appointments are based on commitment and dedication of bin Laden. There is no formal procedure of recruitment, appointment or promotion. They are determined by ties of family, friendship and nationality. Immediately under the Shura Majlis are four committees dealing with:
 - p. Military
 - q. Finance and business
 - r. Fatwa and Islamic study
 - s. Media, publicity and propaganda
 - t. As-Sahab, the propaganda and psych-war unit distributes training and motivational material to al-Qaeda cadres world wide. Each committee is headed by a deputy emir. The military committee is responsible for operations, recruitment, training, procurement, transportation and logistics. Members from within the military committee are hand picked for special operations and tactic development as well as manufacture of special weapons. The current operations in Afghanistan, tribal areas and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa are being conducted by the military committee; al Zawahiri, is the most likely commander of these operations. He is a master strategist and very good.
 - u. It may be noted that al-Qaeda has outstanding abilities in computer knowledge and financial management. It is a tribute to its expertise that despite a world wide alert this organization continues to field about 3,000 active members around the world at all times. It is estimated that the annual expenditure of maintaining such a posture costs al-Qaeda from \$ 40-50 million annually. Osama's personal fortune which he inherited is between \$ 25-30 million. It is obvious that sympathizers make financial contributions to al-Qaeda, yet it must be generating funds through other means.
 - v. Al-Qaeda uses banks, dummy business and legitimate bodies for moving its funds when required. For example the funds used for the attempted assassination of Husni Mubarak passed through the National Bank of Saudi Arabia. Respectable Pakistani NGOs headed by responsible persons have been also used as fronts (62)²⁰. Al-Qaeda also depends heavily on the hawala system for moving funds. It may be noted that al Qaeda's financial managers are highly educated and well trained. Saudi born Mustafa Ahmed, who is in Pakistani custody coordinated the finances for the 9/11 operations, (64)²¹. Investigations have found that al Qaeda has large business enterprizes in Middle-East, Africa, Asia and Europe, (67)²².

Recent tactics of al-Qaeda

Over the past couple of years al-Qaeda has been refining its tactics. They have a bearing on events in this part of the world and an analysis will pay dividends while formulating a counter strategy.

In March 2004 the situation for al-Qaeda was indeed glum and the US could take pride in crushing the movement. For example at this period:

- a) Al-Qaeda had disappeared as a threat
- b) The Sunni guerillas were crushed in Iraq while the Shias were divided.
- c) Most Islamic states began to tackle other concerns than security.
- d) The US began to plan the finale in Pakistan

Al-Qaeda also felt the heat and their loss of influence in Iraq came as a shock to them. They had to do something to remain credible. This they achieved by the Madrid train bombing's of 11th March 2004. The Madrid strike diverted the focus of security forces to European capitals. It was something which was planned. The last four years of evasion and hide and seek had damaged al-Qaeda seriously. Many of their key personnel were either killed or arrested – by far the largest numbers were arrested or killed by Pakistani intelligence.

The Madrid bombing was a strategic strike and achieved the following;

- a) Defeat of the Aznar government in the Spanish elections and the withdrawal of Spanish troops from Iraq
- b) Challenged European government's commitment to US and threatened their support to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Al-Qaeda suspended further attacks for ninety days to allow Europeans to re-think.
- c) Al-Qaeda then increased its operations in Saudi Arabia.
- d) Iraq erupted, when al-Qaeda drew the US into Fullujah. Simultaneously, the Shiite Al-Sadr, joined the Sunnis in demanding withdrawal of US from Iraq; some thing the US never expected would happen.
- e) Finally the May 2004, Abu Gharaib episode placed the US on a complete defensive.
- f) Al-Qaeda having realized that the destruction of twin towers failed to generate a Muslim world wide rebellion against their governments rethought its strategy and began to consolidate. By creating war like conditions in parts of Pakistan, al-Qaeda has pre-empted any US security operation to mop up its cadres in Pakistan.

Al-Qaeda is aware that one of the largest bases of its supporters is in Pakistan. They had increased over a number of years by receiving training in camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as fighting jointly for the Talibans in Afghanistan from 1992 to 2001.

Members of Pakistani supported Kashmiri Jihadist organizations like Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Muhammad were close to both al-Qaeda and the Afghan and now the Pakistani Talibans; it was therefore common sense to preserve them.

Al Qaeda aims in Pakistan and Afghanistan

Bin Laden has issued a stinging edict on 20th Sept, 2007 against Gen Musharraf, and the military, inviting the people to fight them. However, this does not appear to be his main target. His aim is to cause fire fights in so many areas that the security services are unable to handle the eruptions. It is likely that in the days to come more insurrections involving armed attacks against security and police targets will occur. The object will be to string out the army and then to slowly nibble away its cohesiveness.

Bin Laden realized that the center of gravity of Pakistan is its army. If it is weakened then the Islamists can establish their independent emirates from where attacks would be launched against US troops in Afghanistan. Any US retaliation against Pakistan would lead to mass protests and state failure. The ensuing chaos will lead to degradation of US fighting capability and in the end it will face the same fate as the USSR in Afghanistan; that is the larger vision of bin Laden.

Bin Laden realizes that by keeping up the pressure through Talibans in Pakistan and Afghanistan, he will achieve his objective of hitting the US economically by increasing its defence expenditure and thereby increasing its deficit. If the present trend continues, it is likely for the holders of large dollar reserves to shift to Euros; it will be a set back for the US and a part of bin-Laden's strategy.

It is thus likely that radical activity coupled with suicide bombings will increase. This activity will also shift to the Punjab, since the activation of Kashmir Jihadists is so visible.

Section 3

Organization of Taliban

Today there are at least three identifiable groups within the Pashtun Jihadist movement. The first group is in Afghanistan and composed of Afghans under the command of regional chiefs, who represent Siraj son of Jalaluddin Haqqani and Mullah Dadullah's brother. This group controls part of southern and eastern Afghanistan and is responsible for fighting there.

The second group consists of Afghan who have some links with Taliban connected to Pakistan. They have relations with fellow Pashtun Jihadists in Pakistan's tribal areas and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa including Swat. A branch of this group also extends into Baluchistan. This group has ties with Pakistan civil society and state including its security and intelligence agencies.

The third group of Afghan Taliban consists of the core leadership around Mullah Umar. This group remains away from Pakistan since it cannot be trusted because of its support to the US in the Jihadist war, but this group takes advantage and benefits from its Pakistani connections. The third group cannot totally remain away from Pakistan, because it needs material assistance. This group is also close to al-Qaeda. Thus the remaining two groups would be amenable to negotiation with Pakistan if pursued, (Stratfor, 2nd March, 2007)²³.

Although the Pashtun militants are clubbed together under the single label of Taliban, these dividing lines can be used to under cut the Afghan insurgency. It also shows that Pakistan alone will not be able to tackle the Taliban but in tandem with Afghanistan.

Pakistan's Taliban policy

This policy is guided by a desire to have a stable Islamist and Pashtun dominated government in Kabul. One that is anti Indian and to keep such a government focused northwards and into Central Asia for its evangelic aims and not eastwards towards Pakistan, (Imperial Hubris, 53)²⁴. The Taliban is the single largest Pashtun movement ever recorded in the Pashtu speaking areas of Afghanistan or Pakistan. This is strategic fact with far reaching implications for the countries of this area.

Secondly, the Pashtuns are the only ethnic group that Pakistan can use for gaining influence in Afghanistan. It is also a fact that the Talibans are the only route to achieve this objective.

However, Pakistan's difficulty is two fold; presently the Taliban is in disfavor in Kabul and Washington so how can Pakistan have friendly contact with them? Secondly, what is even more implicative is that the Talibans are fighting a war. Some of their support bases lie in Pakistan; it is natural that such support areas are radicalized.

The dilemma is clear. Pakistan cannot have good relations with the Taliban because of the war. On the other hand it upsets them when Pakistan clamps on them in their support base in Waziristan or Swat. Obviously, it is no longer possible for Pakistan to consider that its Afghan policy objectives will be met through the Taliban. This would call for a reframing of strategy which is based on peace with India and good neighborly relations with all.

Another danger is that while on the face of it Pakistani Taliban were fulfilling Pakistan's need for gaining influence in Afghanistan, they at the same time were radicalizing their own region. Pakistan would like to distinguish between the Afghan and Pashtun Taliban. However this is not easy since the Taliban cannot be bifurcated along nationalist lines because of ethnic and ideological reasons. Both are Pashtun and both believe in the same Jihadist cause, they operate in different countries yet they cooperate. The question is whether Pakistan should continue to pursue obtaining influence in Afghanistan through Afghan Taliban? It must change or pay a large price for its faulty policy by losing, large chunk of territory in tribal areas and the Khyber Pukhtunkhwa to the Pashtun Taliban, (Stratfor, 23rd March)²⁵.

It will be thus much more productive to build Pakistan's future Afghan policy by using the strength of Pashtun political rather than religious forces. This would need the revival of traditional elites. Failure to do so will cause incalculable harm to Pakistan.

Al-Qaeda and the Taliban

The war against the USSR in Afghanistan led to the creation of al-Qaeda and later on the Taliban. This is the price paid by the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for ignoring to protect against a blow-back. This huge omission has changed the world and shaken Pakistan to its core.

The Afghan jihad against the USSR from 1979 to 1992 provided US, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia an opportunity to conduct a war of liberation based on Islam and used the Mujahideen for that purpose.

Saudi Arabia supported this move so as to spread its Wahabi version of Islam. Iran showed interest by creating a niche in Afghanistan for its Shiite minority. The US supported Pakistan and Afghan Islamists.

After the departure of the USSR from Afghanistan in 1992, the US too departed, giving no thought to cleaning up the social and security mess created during this vicious war.

As a result of the war, the Pashtun belt of Pakistan was heavily armed and "Klashnikoved". According to one estimate, during the period 1978-1992, this war affected region received \$66 billion worth of weaponry, (Coll: 238)²⁶. After 1992, a severe struggle began between the former Mujahideen and the internal resistance leaders, which completely gutted the Afghan nation. This war was most terrible and destroyed Afghan social institutions and infrastructure which had survived the Soviet scorched earth policy.

Pakistan saw an opportunity, when the Taliban movement composed of young religious students under Mullah Omer came into existence in Kandahar. Gradually, the Taliban began to gain control over Afghanistan with the assistance of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Being a religious movement it had strong evangelical leanings. The Saudi investment in inculcating Wahabism paid off because the Taliban encouraged its practice. The Saudi investment in Madrassas finally paid off.

The Taliban were very soon joined by groups from Pakistan and other Muslim nations which allowed them to form a government in Kabul in 1996. Before their defeat and dispersal after the US attacked them in October 2001, the Taliban in Afghanistan, their followers in Pakistan and the al-Qaeda had by then coalesced into singularity. They are one block though there are differences of shade only.

Occasionally difference in tactics between al-Qaeda and Taliban do arise but more often than not they are resolved quickly. The Taliban are fully supported both by al-Qaeda and Pakistani Taliban when the need arises.

Nexus between al-Qaeda, Taliban and Kashmir Jihadis

- a. The nexus between the Arabs, the Afghans & Pashtun was initiated in 1982 when a decision was made to recruit radical Muslims from around the world. The Saudis saw this as a good opportunity to promote Wahabism and wash their hands off Saudi dissidents at the same time.
- b. Eventually, more than 100,000 Muslim radicals came into contact with Pakistan and Afghanistan for the Jihad against the USSR. Fraternal relationships developed between the radicals and officials which was later used for spreading the lessons of the Afghan Jihad (Rashid, 130-131)²⁷.
- c. Bin Laden left for Sudan in 1992 and in May 1996 returned to Afghanistan, when the Taliban were on their way to winning Kabul. By 1997 bin Laden became Mullah Omar's friend and moved to Kandahar. In the meantime al-

Qaeda undertaking Jihadist operations against US targets in east Africa and the Middle East.

- d. It is important to note that there was no contact between the Talibans and Arabs or any rhetoric about Pan Islamism when the Taliban captured Kabul in 1996. It was only after 1997, that we note a change in the Taliban mind set. The friendship between Mulla Omer and bin Laden converted the Taliban as an active component in the Pan Islamic movement directed against the US and corrupt Muslim regimes worldwide.

Before the Taliban government was destroyed in Dec, 2001, al-Qaeda, Taliban and Pakistan Kashmir Jihadi organizations were being trained in camps in Afghanistan. Pakistani Jihadi organizations included the Harkat ul Ansar. This organization announced that it would impose strict Wahabism in Kashmir. Furthermore the Afghan Taliban received material and manpower support from al-Qaeda and the Pakistani Kashmiri Jihadist groups during the period under review.

It is interesting to note that the same combination of al-Qaeda, Taliban and ex Kashmiri Jihadists are active today in Pakistani tribal areas and districts including Swat; Afghan Talibans have also been identified there together with contingents of Wazirs and Mahsuds from Waziristan. Pakistan's policy in Afghanistan and Kashmir has produced a virulent mixture threatening the state.

Islamist war strategy in Pakistan

Al-Qaeda is the intellectual driver of insurgency in Pakistan. It is now opposed to the policies of the Saudi royal family and a threat even to that country.

When 9/11 occurred the Saudis were fence sitters and had not committed themselves to the US. The real purpose of the attack on Iraq was to scare the Saudis into seeking US protection for the Kingdom, which would get them committed in attacking the Jihadist infrastructure, whose roots lay in S. Arabia and was well known to Saudi intelligence. Without Saudi cooperation it was not possible to win the battle against the Islamist, (Friedman, 234)²⁸.

- a. In the 1980's, the Saudis with US and Pakistani had helped to create the Jihadist movement but did not know how to shut it. Al Qaeda on the other hand focused on US as an enemy for stationing its troops in the holy land.
- b. The Saudis where afraid that undertaking a vigorous anti-Jihadist campaign inside the kingdom would tear it apart. Thus in 2002 it asked the US troops to leave.
- c. This specific Saudi situation integrated into the interpretation of history believed by the Islamists. The Muslims, until the defeat of the USSR by the Afghan and Muslim Mujahideen had been demoralized by its failures during colonization. Independence had only increased corruption and subjugation to others. The Muslims were resentful and felt helpless. The defeat of a super-power in Afghanistan spread hope and revived them.

Bin Laden wanted to create hope and a feeling of being substantive in the Muslim mind. The US represented its nemesis – one which was supporting repressive Muslim regimes throughout the world and also encouraged the oppression of the Palestinians by the Jews of Israel.

Osama reasoned that the only way the spirit of the Muslims could be revived was by striking a strategic blow at the US, so that the credibility of corrupt Muslim states and Israel could be tarnished. It was thought that this coupled with the pent up resentment would cause an Islamic revolution leading to the re-establishment of the Caliphate, (33)²⁹. It could be achieved by striking at the US. This was the rationale for 9/11. It failed to remove even a single Muslim government. Bin Laden thus failed to achieve a worldwide Muslim rebellion against Muslim rulers leading to the re-establishment of the caliphate.

Weakness of the present strategy in dealing with insurgency

The following appear to be the main weaknesses of the current strategy in dealing with the insurgency;

- a. Pakistani should realize that the Taliban of different classification adhere to bin Laden's analysis about the weaknesses of political Islam. It is felt that corrupt governments of a non-Islamist mould act as proxies for US interests. Bin Laden wants to end this and desires that the leadership over the Muslims should be exercised by themselves and not by some foreign power like the US. For this reason he wants to establish an Islamic Caliphate in one country at least. His other aim is to propagate the Salafist/Wahabi vision of Islam globally amongst the Muslims.
- b. The Taliban in Afghanistan have friendship with al-Qaeda because of the financial and military support provided by bin Laden in their war against the Northern Alliance. The Taliban's only reservation was concerning Pakistan with whom they had close ties. They had links to its state institutions, political parties, Islamic groups, Madressahs, drug mafias and business and transport interests, (Rashid, 185)³⁰. These relations acted as a barrier for a complete Taliban buy-in into al-Qaeda core philosophy. However, this link has weakened after 9/11.
- c) It appears that the Pakistani security policy of encouraging a close linkage between the Taliban and its Kashmiri Jihadist, (186)³¹ has now embarrassed her. It is noted that LeT and JeM cadres are operating in Waziristan, Swat and Mohmand Agency, they belong mostly to the Punjab. It has also been suggested that the Kashmir Jihadist feel let down by the Pakistani military and being "takfiri" in their outlook have executed soldiers by slaughtering them since they are representative of a state supporting a non Islamic country like the US.
- d) When interviewed, these Punjab Jihadists spoke of fighting in Afghanistan and in tribal areas as well as Swat. They also disclosed that they are in the process of establishing small independent emirates to be administered by them and their Islamist colleagues in Waziristan, Swat, Bajaur and in Afghanistan.
- e) It is quite clear, that Pakistan's Kashmiri Jihadis are in a vengeful mood and have come back to haunt the country. This has many serious implications. One of the most serious one being that it is only a matter of time before the Kashmir Jihadis begin operating in Punjab. It is also predicted that the Kashmir Jihadis are more likely to follow the violent "takfiri" interpretation of Osama rather than the more accommodative version of the Taliban.
- f) Although Pakistan helped the Afghan Taliban in the early 1990's in the hope that they would curb Pashtun nationalism in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, and provide an outlet to Pakistani radicals created for the Afghan and Kashmir Jihad.
- g) However, these hopes were dashed. As soon as the Taliban formed a government in Kabul and refused to recognise the Durand Line, which is the international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. They also armed Sunni extremist groups to kill Shias in Pakistan. The Taliban wanted to overthrow the ruling elite in Pakistan and establish a Sunni Islamic state through a revolution, (Rashid, 187)³². In fact the blow-back from Afghanistan and Kashmir is now threatening Pakistan and calls into question its flawed Afghan policy. The presumption that Pakistan's strategic depth lay in Afghanistan was mistaken.
- h) As indicated elsewhere, the semantics of the struggle against Pakistan between the interpretations of Osama, who would like to treat the Pakistan government and its forces as enemy and the Taliban caveat that it is a Muslim government and military and thus the "takfiri" finality should not be enforced, is the last stop before a full scale Islamist onslaught. Swat, Waziristan and Bajaur are being carved out as emirates which would give the Islamists the administrative and training space to create a

launching pad for offensives. It is unlikely for Pakistan alone to be able to resist the degradation of the state and its institutions.

- i) Support for the assumptions made is available in bin Laden's latest Fatwa of 20th September 2007, which is directed personally against President Musharraf and the army. In it he has asked Pakistanis to launch a jihad against President Musharraf and the army for killing many innocent in the Lal-Masjid attack. Secondly, bin Laden is supporting a previous fatwa of Mufti Shamezai which enjoins upon all to destroy supporters of US which includes Musharraf.
- j) Bin Laden's fatwa should be seen as the concluding salvo in the argument of the Taliban that Islamist must distinguish between Muslims and non-Muslims. This being the case, it means that bin Laden has turned tables and this will mostly likely result in the addition of Pakistani Jihadis belonging to LeT and JeM into Osama's camp. It leads one to conclude that the 'takfiri' elements will take over the Islamist uprisings in Waziristan, Swat, Bajaur and other areas.

In dealing with the insurgency the following proposals are made:

- a) The army has been identified by the Jihadist to be the present day centre of gravity in the war. Therefore, they will like to engage it often to demoralize it (kidnapping and execution of soldiers) and to weaken its capabilities. So far the Jihadist strategy is successful.

These operations should be reduced gradually and civil armed forces trained and upgraded to take on the role of fighting the insurgency. Moreover, it must be noted that both the al-Qaeda and Taliban are superb fighters and the civil armed forces are no match against them today. Only professional training and capacity building can make them better.

- b) Strategy would call for the thinning out of the military from tribal areas. Their presence is destroying the political administration's capacities to handle the tribes and bin Laden wants it to be destroyed bit by bit.
- c) The vacuum created in the districts by the removal of magisterial system must be reviewed to confront the insurgency. The Local Government district chairmen being locals are under threat from Talibans and cannot take coercive measures.
- d) Research has proven that using Islam to blunt sub-nationalism of the Pushtun has failed. Pakistan must not rely on religion in foreign or anti-insurgency policies. It must negotiate with the political forces on merit and build sound foundations for policy formulation.
- e) The state must challenge the spread of insurgency by dialoguing with provinces under the relevant constitutional provisions relating to consensus building by the revival of the Council of Common Interest, after the next election.
- f) Many join the Taliban for employment and influence. Creating opportunities for employment will reduce the lure of working for the Taliban. The only problem is that with a worsening security situation investment will not be forthcoming to create employment.

Nexus of the Taliban and al-Qaeda with drugs

According to a US report, (Perl, 2001)³³ Afghanistan is the world's major producer of opium poppy. The Taliban controlled 96% of territory where poppy was grown during their rule. The funds were used for managing the state, to purchase weapons and to conduct war.

Although in July 2000 the Taliban had issued a decree banning opium cultivation, no significant action was taken to destroy stores, prosecute traffickers or deny precursor chemicals. On the contrary, the Taliban allowed free trade in opium after collecting a 10% tax. In 2000, Afghanistan had stock piled 3000 tons of opium and a significant portion of it

was by bin Laden, (2)³⁴. It was estimated that the drug trade brought in k\$40 million to the Taliban in 1999, (4)³⁵. It was also reported that al-Qaeda protected Taliban shipment of opium bound for the West, (5)³⁶. Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, made a statement that he had proof of bin-Laden's personal involvement in drugs. However, given the history of imaginative statements about Iraq's possession of weapons of mass-destruction, one ought to be careful about such statements.

Further proof of Taliban's link with the drug trade is given by Rashid, (185, 193)³⁷. He found that the Taliban nexus with the drug and transport Mafias had destroyed Pakistani institutions.

However, it must be noted that the opponents of the Taliban, the Northern Alliance also conducted drug trade. What is even of more concern is the flourishing of the same opium trade as before today but this time under the protection of US forces. As was the case during the Taliban, the drug producing areas are also the same Helmand, Kandahar, Uruzgan, Nangarhar and Badakhshan. As a Stratfor report found that the poppy trade is allowed to reward the warlords, who assisted the Allies and Northern Alliance, (Stratfor, 30 Nov, 2001)³⁸.

Another report of Time, (August 2, 2004)³⁹ found that Juma Khan was shipping drugs through Karachi and a part of the proceeds went to Taliban and al-Qaeda. The same report quoted a World Bank figure estimating that opium generated \$2.23 billion worth of incomes for growers and traffickers in Afghanistan.

The authors own research confirms the widespread cultivation and trafficking of drugs in Afghanistan today. Obviously a large portion is trafficked through Pakistan, (Aziz, 15 – 16)⁴⁰.

Previous experience shows that drug dealers and farmers growing opium relish a break down of the state as it increases production and trafficking of drugs. It can thus be concluded that even today drugs are used to fund the insurgency.

It can thus be concluded that drugs were not only a source of funding for the Taliban and al-Qaeda but remain a source of income for supporters of Karzai government even today, (Chayes, 360)⁴¹. Nothing really has changed.

Section 4

Social changes in Waziristan and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa

The insurgency in Waziristan and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa is also unfolding as a class struggle below the surface. The shape of this struggle is moderated by the Islamic idiom and the instruments of religion at the societal level – the Ulema and the Mullah. At the opposite end are the Khans and Maliks, who represent state elites and the haves.

In Waziristan, Bajaur, Swat and other parts where the Taliban have gained control, have either killed the Maliks and Khans or attacked their properties and homes. In this context some leading personalities of Swat like Shujat Ali had to flee while their homes were looted and put to fire. His brother Fateh Muhammad has been under siege for more than forty days. The Taliban have also attacked the home and person of Afzal Khan of Drosh Khel another leading Khan and elite.

In Waziristan more than 270 leading men of the tribes recognized by government as Maliks have been killed by the Taliban. Many policemen and soldiers have been executed after they were captured. These are the acts of people who are expressing their anger at the elites and the state. As a result the state thus has ceased to function in those parts, where the Taliban have taken over control.

In place of the former state apparatus the Talibans have instituted “Shuras” or consultative assemblies composed of the commanders, ulemas or religious scholars and prominent Mullahs. It is a theocratic design of administration close to the majority’s Islamic and cultural ethos rather than the former ‘colonial’ model of administration. These regional units administer Islamic Sharia law. Money is collected through contributions, a religious tithe known as ‘ushur’ of 1/10 of the value of produce is collected. Tax is levied on houses. Other non-Islamic revenues are also collected like tax on vehicles, petrol pumps etc.

State schools and hospitals are permitted to function but with changes to rules pertaining to females and curriculum. In the later aspect more emphasis is given to religion. In other areas the social and development sectors have stopped working after the staff fled the area. It is obvious that state functions will stop ultimately after the Taliban gain more control.

Restoration of traditional society

If Pakistan is unable to gain full control over the contested areas, the situation will mimic what happened to Afghanistan during the Jihad against the USSR, Roy (149 – 156)⁴², has provided a good glimpse of such a social change. The highlights of such a change over time will be the emergence of young Islamists, extension of more control over civil society by the Ulema and the diminishing power of influential traditional families.

Rural society is likely to retain social cohesion, since the links with family and respect for tradition and Pushtunwali will continue. The Islamists are much more in tune with society than the colonial state structure.

The Ulema will be cooperating with the Islamist and provide them legitimacy in exchange for the management of civil society by implementing the Sharia as Qazis and acceptance of the pre-eminence of Islam.

It is obvious that the linkage of the notables with the state has become a liability for them at a time when Pakistani policy of support for the US faces criticism amongst many Pakistanis. As long as the war against terror continues, the elites will face trouble.

The Afghan intelligence service the Khad and the communist party tried to reinstitute the pre-war social order by attempting to revive the position of the notables. It failed. In the case of Pakistan the result is likely to be the same; once the idiom of rebellion is built on religion.

Secondly, the implementation of Sharia has many advantages for the poor and the peasant. Justice is easily available and is speedy in its implementation. Thirdly, proceedings

are conducted orally and not in writing and the process quickens further in the absence of lawyers. Sharia is more suited for tribal and Khyber Pukhtunkhwa rural society, (156)⁴³, than secular law.

Elements of a strategy to combat terrorism

The international failure to phase out the Afghan Jihadists after 1992 and the refusal of the US after 9/11 to permit Pakistan to negotiate with the Emirate of Afghanistan to hand over Osama has led to the formation of a formidable Taliban - al-Qaeda nexus.

The Jihadist policy of privatizing war in Kashmir has played into the hands of the Islamists. Pakistan's social structure is under attack. Coupled with the Saudi Wahabi intervention entering Pakistani educational space through Saudi Madressahs is creating a never ending production of Islamist revolutionaries. They will continuously challenge the state until they are in power.

State failure to generate a better life for a vast majority of its people coupled with the expanding rentier behavior of the Pakistani elite has generated negative feelings for the state by the poor masses.

The poor have nowhere to go but Islamist NGO's, charities and Madressahs. Although we see the "terrorist", yet ignore the causes of terrorism. Secondly, political disempowerment further reduces the chances of many to climb out of poverty.

The security situation today will require a multi-dimensional approach. To quench the fire of insurgency, military force will continued to be used but under a political umbrella. Disempowerment fuels the feeling of disenchantment. Galloping unemployment fills the ranks of the Jihadist groups.

The principal levers to be used to bring change and return the state back to health is to restore the state institutions to their original form. In fighting terrorism we must talk about legitimacy and allow reflection of peoples hopes based on merit, efficiency and accountability.

Human beings have evolutionary drives. They must be encouraged and assisted to raise families, have homes and seek stability in life for themselves and their children. These can only be provided through employment, which comes from economic growth and education.

Finally, the citizens irrespective of their status or beliefs must be treated fairly and in accordance with law. Peace and tranquility will not occur if there is a vast difference in incomes and opportunities. The same principle also applies internationally. If there are states which discriminate their own citizens then terrorism as a reaction will continue to disturb peace in rich countries.

Thinkers must give serious thought to the basis of Pakistani nationalism. An aggressive agenda based on concepts of superiority or prior rights can only create violence. Pakistan must not be India centric.

What is called for is a major alignment of Pakistani state and international relations. Only this can pave the way forward over the next two or three decades. Bin Laden and the Taliban lead the less fortunate, the former because of choice and the later out of compulsion of their existence in the Pushtun society.

A development strategy for the region

As discussed in this report, some parts of the tribal areas and the province are facing an insurgency from those Islamists who have challenged the legitimacy of the state. Under such circumstances it is impossible to be talking of development. So far as the peaceful areas are concerned the current development strategy needs to be adjusted and fine tuned.

Pakistan and the Khyber Pukhtunkhwa are committed to implement the Millennium Development Goals. However, there is an abundant need to re-focus on a sound

implementation strategy. The focus should be on skill development and vocational training so that the pool of the employables can be increased. However, this can only happen if there is investment and more opportunities in the province. Such is not the case. The province needs to create more jobs to take up the past unemployment lag as well as to create jobs for new entrants into the labor force.

There is need to reduce the heavy expenditure made by households on or near the poverty line on health and education services. With the reduction of public sector investment in the social sectors, the poor are forced to seek education for their children in the Madrassas, the majority of them are benign, yet there are also many militant ones which continue to stoke fires of violence. This has obvious consequences as has been argued in this paper. Pakistan needs heavy investment in its education and health infrastructure; it needs more technical training institutes and skill development centers.

Pakistan's poor democratic framework has increased the plight of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa since it is not able to negotiate its problem in the absence of functioning constitutional forums; for instance under a constitutional provision arbitration has awarded Rs. 26 billion as payment of arrears on account of net hydel profit. This money has not been transferred to the province, (Award, 9th Oct 2006)⁴⁴. The result is that the province cannot invest more in its poor. It has been reported that the per capita development expenditure per head was higher in 1992 than in 2007, (Report, 2005)⁴⁵! About 40% of the population of Khyber Pukhtunkhwa and a larger number in the tribal areas live on or below the poverty line of about Rs. 3,000 per month or \$ 50; with an average household size of 7 it is very difficult for the poor even to get one square meal a day. It is obvious that a large population in is unhappy. This appears to be the main reason for the insurgency.

There is also a need to re-adjust the development strategy for the tribal areas. In discussions with a cross section of tribesmen it was found that their main demand is for empowerment coupled with development; they want more say in where and how the money is spent. At present the decisions are made in an arbitrary manner since the tribal areas do not have effective local government; they also do not have any representation at the provincial level. In many ways they still live in the 18th century. If an empowerment programme is initiated for the tribal areas, positive change can be expected. Since this may not happen soon, it is proposed that the area must be provided skills and industrial training so that they are able to find employment once an industrial uplift programme like the proposed Reconstruction Opportunity Zones program is launched with the assistance of the US. There is also great opportunity to increase incomes by developing agriculture and providing funds for micro credit and enterprise development.

Many of these ideas if implemented will improve the wretched development indicators of the tribal areas; they are a major cause of generating hopelessness amongst the tribesmen who have nothing much to lose than join the Islamists!

Important drivers of social transformation in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa

Khyber Pukhtunkhwa is home to 22 million people of whom 35% are living on or below the poverty line today. The bad security situation in the province is mainly the result of years war in Afghanistan since 1979 as well as the presence of thousands of refugees who have destroyed forests, rangeland and water resources in the province. Aggravating the situation has been the scaling down of economic development that has increased unemployment.

According to a conservative assessment, the current level of unemployment is the highest in Pakistan. In 2001-02 the unemployment and underemployment rate amounted to nearly 15% of the province's labor force, which was the highest in any province of Pakistan (World Bank, 4)⁴⁶.

The indicators in the social sectors are equally poor. About 1.9 million children of whom 1.1 million are girls between the ages of 5-9 years are not enrolled in schools (XIII)⁴⁷. The rate of immunization of 12-23 months old is only 60.5% (XV)⁴⁸.

A large population in the province are denied benefits from social sectors due to poor access; the rural population's access to roads and is lower than the national average and one in five residents has no access. The same poor coverage is evident in the drinking water sector where only 58% of households have access to safe water as compared to the 86% average for Pakistan (V)⁴⁹.

On the macro level the pathetic figures of underdevelopment are confirmed by difference in the estimated per capita provincial GDP when compared with the national average; it is only 60% of the Pakistan's. Research has indicated that this figure is even lower if one noted that the income from Tarbella is booked against Khyber Pukhtunkhwa.

The provincial tax base is inelastic with only about 10% of the total resources generated internally. Another factor has been the impact of inflation on federal transfers which have remained fixed and have not been adjusted. For example in 1991, a sum of Rs. 6 billion was adjudged as a justified transfer to the province from the net profits of hydel generation; this figure has remained static for more than a decade. According to the World Bank this amount has depreciated by more than 60% in value due to inflation (XVIII)⁵⁰. No wonder Khyber Pukhtunkhwa's public sector budget and investment in the social and infrastructure sector was more robust in 1992 than today. It is one of the main reason for the slow implementation of the MDGs in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa also.

It is thus not incorrect to state that the main cause of the rise of radicalism and the raging insurgency in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa as well as the tribal areas, (where a worse situation prevails), is due to adverse economic conditions which has badly affected livelihoods, employment, social sector and infrastructure outcomes.

The development challenges in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa can be met by implementing a strategy based on the following development priorities.

Employment Generation: The growth strategy must be based on pro poor growth and should generate employment and productivity gains. To cover the annual labor force growth rate of 3.2% based on a 4.8 million aggregate jobs in 2007; the provincial growth rate should be increased to 7-7.5% per annum to create an additional 1.3 million jobs by 1212. It would bring down unemployment from 13% in 2007 to 9.5% of the labor force in 1212. This is an ideal situation but the amount of employment generation that it demands both in the public/private sector new jobs mainly in building roads, irrigation, hydel, urban projects and private sector will be difficult to provide. The analysis has been given to indicate the size of problem that we are confronting. However, employment generation in the pro poor sectors remains the single most powerful intervention for lowering poverty and improving livelihoods.

Agriculture: Since more than 20% of the provincial GDP is contributed by agriculture and 44% of total employment is provided by this sector, investment in it and irrigation will provide considerable benefits. It is one of the most important driver of change for poverty reduction and improvement of livelihood. Shifting the pattern of production to higher value added in horticulture and vegetable is a good option; the lessons learnt from the Kalam integrated project should be replicated in communities near large cities. There is also a need to revive the Fruit & Vegetable Development Board under a more corporate structure. Seed industry should be encouraged to locate in the mountainous regions of this province to use the advantage of altitude.

Social Sectors: Pakistan is a signatory to implementation of the MDGs. However, out of the eighteen designated targets and forty-eight indicators, Khyber Pukhtunkhwa was on course to achieve only fifteen indicators. Fourteen indicator targets will not be achieved, (Report, 2005)⁵¹. This is a poor situation for the deprived that are in substantial numbers. In order of priorities in the social sectors the following will be important.

Education: For reducing poverty and raising productivity heavy investment is needed in primary education. The province suffers from many deficits in this sector but one of the main one is the gender gap. Programs should be launched to address this and the following other areas;

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- a. Increasing overall school attendance, particularly for the female child at the primary level.
 - b. Improving access to schools particularly in the far flung and deprived areas.
 - c. Improving the quality of education and its governance. The quality will be improved through teacher training and pay incentives while governance will be improved by community participation through PTAs. A separation must be introduced between teaching and management of schools.
 - d. Education and training in skills and vocations should be imparted on a much larger platform and be a part of the main teaching syllabus rather than a separate vertical program.

Health: The following are some of the important measures that need prioritization;

- a. The immunization rate should be increased from the present 61% to 90% by 2010 to cover 600,000 children left out of the net each year.
- b. The contraceptive prevalence rate must be raised from 30% to 50% by 2015.
- c. The management of primary health services should be contracted out to NGO's/Rural Community Organizations. The provincial government should speedily create the regulatory framework to achieve it within six months.

Clean drinking water and sanitation: This is another important sector in which a lot of work and reform is needed. Improvement here is a cheap method of reducing the expenditure by poor households on medical care.

- a. Access to clean drinking water, toilets and sewerage must be increased to reduce child mortality and disease which locks in a large population into poverty.
- b. Larger water supply schemes must be contracted out to NGO's or Rural Community Organizations.
- c. An independent regulatory authority should be established to monitor quality of drinking water and sewerage and sanitation standards.
- d. In urban areas water supply schemes should be transferred to incorporated entities if NGO's/Rural Community Organizations are not forthcoming.

Microfinance and entrepreneurial development: One successful method of reducing poverty is by providing funds for these twin agents of livelihood improvement. Besides providing dedicated funds through banks and Rural Community Organizations, the Bank of Khyber can be tasked to look after a part of this portfolio. Federal initiatives should also be fruitfully utilized.

Community organizations & empowerment: Rural Support Organizations and NGOs should be sought as partners for implementing the change agenda in all the sectors. They should also be programmed to empower communities by creating networks for assistance and help. Providing communal mobile phones for reaching out for help and departmental assistance should be tried as in many other parts of the world.

Fiscal issues: For finding funds to achieve the changes proposed, the following is recommended;

- a. The provinces own revenue generation must increase from 0.7% of provincial GDP to at least 0.9% by 2012.
- b. The Federal Government should maintain the parity of 1992 value of Net Hydrel Profit transfer to Khyber Pukhtunkhwa. It is advisable to accept the arbitration award in this matter ordered by Justice Ajmal Mian in Oct 2006⁵².
- c. The NFC (National Finance Commission) share from divisible pool for the provinces should increase.

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- d. Khyber Pukhtunkhwa be given more and larger projects/program share from the PSDP for ten years.
 - e. Donors and bi-lateral partner's contribution should be sought to narrow the financial gap.

These core proposals along with software of new reforms and regulations will help in poverty reduction, employment generation and better progress in achieving the MDGs. It will have a positive impact in reducing the insurgency and make positive changes to the region.

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