



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**PAKISTAN'S AFGHANISTAN POLICY**

by

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June 2005

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| <b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                 |                                                                | Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188                            |  |
| Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                 |                                                                |                                                            |  |
| <b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                 | <b>2. REPORT DATE</b><br>June 2005                             | <b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b><br>Master's Thesis |  |
| <b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE:</b> Pakistan's Afghanistan Policy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                 |                                                                | <b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>                                  |  |
| <b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Khawar Hussain                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                 |                                                                |                                                            |  |
| <b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b><br>Naval Postgraduate School<br>Monterey, CA 93943-5000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                 |                                                                | <b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>            |  |
| <b>9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b><br>N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                 |                                                                | <b>10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b>      |  |
| <b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                 |                                                                |                                                            |  |
| <b>12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b><br>Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                 |                                                                | <b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b>                              |  |
| <b>13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)</b><br><br><p>Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have remained estranged mainly due to Afghanistan's revanchist claim made about Pakistan's western province and its non-recognition of the Durand Line as the international border. With a hostile India to the East, Pakistan can ill-afford another irredentist neighbor. Since 1947 both countries have interfered in each other's domestic affairs. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan forced Pakistan to wage a proxy war in Afghanistan, garnering the support of Western and Arab allies. Since the end of Cold war, Pakistan continued its forward policy in Afghanistan through support of Taliban. Its prime security interest in Afghanistan remains having a friendly government in Kabul.</p> <p>After the September 11, 2001 attacks, Pakistan abandoned support of Taliban and joined the U.S.-led coalition to destroy the Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Once again, Pakistan encountered a deep-seated hostility, this time from the Northern Alliance, which dominates the new power structure in Kabul. Skepticism and fear remain as both countries move cautiously to revitalize bilateral ties. This thesis analyzes Pakistan's Afghanistan policy from 1947 to 2001. It recommends Pakistan's effective engagement with Afghanistan. While Pakistan protects its legitimate security interests, it must refrain from actively interfering in Afghanistan's political future. The thesis will also recommends that the United States should substantively remain engaged in Afghanistan to stabilize the region, assist with the reconstruction of Afghanistan, ensure non interference of regional actors, and finally and most importantly help settle the Durand Line issue once and for all.</p> |                                                                 |                                                                |                                                            |  |
| <b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b><br>Pakistan, Afghanistan, United States, Foreign Policy, National Security Affairs, South Asia, Taliban,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                 |                                                                | <b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b><br>101                          |  |
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| <b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b><br>Unclassified                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b><br>Unclassified | <b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b><br>Unclassified | <b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b><br>UL                    |  |

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**PAKISTAN'S AFGHANISTAN POLICY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have remained estranged mainly due to Afghanistan's revanchist claim made about Pakistan's western province and its non-recognition of the Durand Line as the international border. With a hostile India to the East, Pakistan can ill-afford another irredentist neighbor. Since 1947 both countries have interfered in each other's domestic affairs. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan forced Pakistan to wage a proxy war in Afghanistan, garnering the support of Western and Arab allies. Since the end of Cold war, Pakistan continued its forward policy in Afghanistan through support of Taliban. Its prime security interest in Afghanistan remains having a friendly government in Kabul.

After the September 11, 2001 attacks, Pakistan abandoned support of Taliban and joined the U.S.-led coalition to destroy the Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Once again, Pakistan encountered a deep-seated hostility, this time from the Northern Alliance, which dominates the new power structure in Kabul. Skepticism and fear remain as both countries move cautiously to revitalize bilateral ties.

This thesis analyzes Pakistan's Afghanistan policy from 1947 to 2001. It recommends Pakistan's effective engagement with Afghanistan. While Pakistan protects its legitimate security interests, it must refrain from actively interfering in Afghanistan's political future. The thesis will also recommends that the United States should substantively remain engaged in Afghanistan to stabilize the region, assist with the reconstruction of Afghanistan, ensure non interference of regional actors, and finally and most importantly help settle the Durand Line issue once and for all.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I have to thank many. First of all I would like to thank Professor Peter Lavoy for his continues help and guidance in completing this thesis. With him it has been lot easier and a lot more fun. Professor Jeff Knoff's explanation of influence theories in state to state relations contributed much in formulating future policy options for Pakistan with regards to Afghanistan. I am also thankful to my editor Martin for making my sentences more meaningful. Special thanks to school librarians who provided all the material and resources for the completion of the thesis. Above all, I have to thank Brigadier (retd) Feroz Khan who taught me a huge amount and has provided unfailing support. His knowledge of contemporary Afghan history, news judgment, and understanding of South Asian politics are without equal.

I also would like to express my gratitude to my wife Farah who has shown patience and understanding during our time at the Naval Postgraduate School.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Following the events of September 11, 2001, the political landscape of South Asia transformed dramatically. Consequently, Pakistan's strategy changed radically when its decade old "forward policy" in Afghanistan became counter-productive to its own national security. Pakistan's reversal of Afghan policy was not without repercussions. Pakistan continues to face serious political, economic and security challenges. Its complex security problems with India, as well as serious domestic issues, remain Pakistan's primary concern. Its relations with Afghanistan continue to be bedeviled with skepticism and fear, even as both countries are cautiously revitalizing bilateral relations. Historically, Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan has remained a highly controversial topic. It is, therefore, important to evaluate the causes, and, thereby, determine why Pakistan's policy objectives in Afghanistan have been so difficult to achieve.

This thesis will analyze the dynamics of Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan from 1947 to 2001. The analysis here will describe the extent to which Pakistan's previous Afghan policy has served Pakistan's national interests. Given such a historical perspective, policy-makers may be able to better analyze the ramifications of both current and future policies.

The nature of Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan has been predominantly shaped by Pakistan's desire to have friendly relations with Afghanistan. The creation of such an environment allows Pakistan not to be sandwiched between two hostile neighbors --India to the east and Afghanistan to the west. Afghanistan's refusal to accept the historically set border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, also known as the *Durand Line*,<sup>1</sup> as the legitimately recognized international border between them, has been the root problem since 1947. Additionally, Afghanistan also laid territorial claims on the north-

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<sup>1</sup> The Durand Line, marking the Eastern most boundary of Afghanistan, was established as a result of the treaty signed by the government of British India and Afghanistan's Amir at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1947, when Pakistan was first created, Afghanistan refused to accept the Durand Line as an international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan. For details see Chapter II.

west frontier provinces of Pakistan on a nationalistic basis-- the so-called Pushtunistan.<sup>2</sup> The ruling elites in Afghanistan, while pressing their revanchist claim, followed an open, pro-Indian posture, despite being aware of the nature of India's threat to Pakistan. This only served to reinforce Islamabad's belief that Afghanistan is a secondary threat to Pakistan, and is prepared to serve interests of powers hostile to Pakistan's security—Soviet Union and India.

Pakistan's fundamental aim has been to stabilize its western borders. It became acute because of India's hostile posture, compelling Pakistan, to seek defensive measures. India's threat remains central and primary to Pakistani security calculation with Afghanistan, as well. Pakistani policy-makers were so focused on a joint Indo-Afghan threat perception that they were unable to fully appreciate the changing geo-political dynamics in the aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was with this backdrop that Pakistan followed an active forward policy in the 1990s in Afghanistan, eventually situation got out of its hand.

#### **A. BACKGROUND**

Afghanistan is one of Pakistan's most strategically important neighbors. From a geo-political standpoint, Afghanistan's location at the crossroads of south and central Asia has always been critical. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the famous Indian poet, Muhammad Iqbal, described Afghanistan as "the heart of Asia," while India's viceroy, Lord Curzon, called it the "cockpit of Asia".<sup>3</sup> Throughout its history under Britain, it was a buffer against Czarist Russia's expansion that stopped in Central Asia at River Oxus. The post independence significance of Afghanistan continued, as the Cold War set in, which brought super power rivalry and complicated Pakistan- Afghanistan relations.

With its inception in 1947, Pakistan inherited a unique and difficult security situation. The new-born state was thrown into the international current before it could stand on its own two feet. Its antagonistic relationship with India, several times its size, when combined with an unfriendly Afghanistan, increased Pakistani insecurity. Though

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<sup>2</sup> The Pushtunistan issue is closely linked with the Durand Line in creating a troublesome tribal boundary, dividing the Pushtuns between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Afghanistan, following the argument that the Durand Line was accepted under pressure, contends that Pushtuns living on the Pakistan side should be given autonomy because they were forcefully divided. For details. see Chapter II.

<sup>3</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban* (London: Yale University Press, 2001), 7.

militarily, India was a greater threat to Pakistan than Afghanistan, Pakistan could not afford to ignore Afghanistan's role in creating malfeasance on its western border.

Given this security environment, Pakistan looked towards Afghanistan as a potential friend in the region. Realizing that landlocked Afghanistan was economically dependent on Pakistan, and given that both countries are Muslim, Pakistan assumed that Afghanistan will be a natural friend, give up its unrealistic territorial claims and maintain friendly, cordial and mutually beneficial relations. However, during the last five decades, the relations between both the countries never ran a smooth course.

For the purpose of analysis, the period from 1947 to 2001 has been divided into three major periods in Pakistan's Afghanistan relations, each marked by a change in the geo-political situation in Afghanistan. Accordingly, 1947 to 1979 is considered as the first period; 1979 to 1989 delimits the second period; and 1989 to 2001 the third period. Although, there have been many constants in Pakistan's Afghanistan policy, priorities have frequently been altered in accordance with the changing geo-political situation of Afghanistan, in order to best promote Pakistani national objectives. The reader does well to note that there was a visible transition in Pakistan policy from Pakistan's desire to have friendly relations with the Afghanistan government during the first period, to ambitious aspirations to establish a friendly government in Afghanistan.

#### **1. First Period (1947 to 1979) -From Pakistan's Independence to Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan**

From 1947 to 1979, the issues presented by the *Durand Line* and *Pushtunistan* remained the major concerns for Pakistan's foreign policy and spoiled the relations between the two countries during the following decades. Afghanistan was the only country not to vote in favor of the admission of Pakistan in the UN. Consequently, due to antagonistic relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, the Soviet Union was quick to expand its influence in Afghanistan. The other important factor in Pakistan-Afghan relations was the latter's good relations with India. Further, the Indo-Soviet strategic alliance added to Pakistan's perception that a threat existed. The actual problem was that Pakistan became a direct and an indirect target of the nexus created by Indo-Soviet-Afghan relations. Pakistan, being a newly born country, had virtually no army with which to defend its frontiers and, thus, could certainly not afford to fight a war on two fronts.

Consequently, Pakistan adopted a defensive policy, vis-à-vis Afghanistan, in order to ensure that a friendly regime arose in Afghanistan; one which would help it to stabilize its western borders.

During this period, Pakistan did not have a comprehensive Afghan policy. Rather, Pakistan had a policy in which it simply reacted to Afghanistan's actions. By regularly closing its borders and granting asylum to Islamist leaders after the Daoud coup in 1973 (against King Zahir Shah), Pakistan did try indirectly to influence the Afghanistan government. Overall, Pakistan was able to maintain the status quo on both the Durand Line and Pushtunistan issues and to a certain extent; Pakistan was also successful in convincing the Afghan leaders about the illegitimacy of their claims on the two issues.

## **2. Second Period (1979-1989)- Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan**

In 1979, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the complexion of the region completely changed. All of a sudden, the buffer between Pakistan and the Soviet Union diminished, and the Red Army posed a direct security threat, not only to Pakistan, but also to the entire Persian Gulf region. The interests of the United States and Pakistan converged here, as Pakistan became the front-line state in the containment of the Soviet threat. The Soviets were forced to withdraw by the anti-communist Mujahideen forces supported by the United States, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. Pakistan's support for the Afghan Mujahideen proved to be invaluable in helping them to contain Soviet communism. Moreover, Pakistan successfully used this opportunity in its favor to, not only strengthen its ability to extinguish threats to its western borders, but also to strengthen its Armed Forces and advance its nuclear weapons program. However, Pakistan was unable to achieve its long-term objectives, when it could not help to establish friendly government in Afghanistan. The major flaw was in the Geneva Accord, which had a limited agenda of ensuring the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. It did not provide a framework for the establishment of an interim government after the Soviet withdrawal.

## **3. Third Period (1989 to 2001) – From the Soviet Withdrawal to the Fall of the Taliban**

Pakistan's Afghan policy after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, up until September 11, 2001, had been criticized for its failure to play a positive role in bringing a lasting

solution to Afghan problem. Many factors came into play that made the situation very complicated. Mainly, these factors arose from the political vacuum in the region, created by the disintegration of the Soviet Union in the region and the U.S. policy of distancing itself from the situation. It has been argued that, despite the Soviet withdrawal, the shortsightedness of U.S. policy allowed communist Afghans to retain power in Afghanistan. The regime installed by Moscow, under Najibullah, fought for nearly three more years, finally collapsing in April 1992, after which ensued a bloody power struggle among Mujahideen parties vying to rule Afghanistan. The factional fighting among the Mujahideen groups created an opportunity for external elements to exploit Afghanistan's internal situation, thereby, creating a conflict of interests among regional and global forces. All these conflicting interests resulted in the development of a civil war, ultimately culminating in the emergence of the Taliban in 1994.

By now, Pakistan was more concerned about stability in Afghanistan due to another new factor – the emergence of independent states in Central Asia with their immense energy potential. Pakistan was now seeking a corridor for trade with Central Asian countries. This posed Pakistan with a stark choice whether or not to support and recognize this new Taliban power. Three key factors affected Pakistan decision. First, the friendly regime will help provide access to Central Asian States. Second, the regime will bring stability and not raise the Pashtunistan issue and decide the issue of the border. Third, it will not allow sanctuaries to India or any other hostile powers. Cumulatively this would serve Pakistan's objectives of having a neutral western border allowing Pakistan to focus on internal security and on India, especially Kashmir which had been in the throes of a freedom struggle since 1989. However, Taliban were not puppets of Pakistan, and further their radical policies, ultimately created an embarrassing situation for Pakistan, as Pakistan got isolated from the international community. Moreover, Pakistan also did not form a coherent foreign policy to handle the Afghan crisis that could have rectified the situation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Inter Service Intelligence Service (ISI) Directorate, and Ministry of Interior, all made decisions independent of one another which, they thought, would be in the best interest of the country. The paradigm shift in Pakistan's decision not to support the Taliban after the events of 9/11 was because by then Pakistan's vital national interests were threatened. Pakistan's internal vulnerabilities

had compounded, Musharraf's economic revival agenda would have suffered a blow, Pakistan strategic assets and nuclear development plans would have also come under threat and India was eager to exploit the situation in its favor. These were major factors that prompted Pakistan to change its policy, and it decided to cooperate with the United States' response to the September 11 attacks.<sup>4</sup>

The last twenty years of war has completely crippled Afghanistan. It might take another fifteen to twenty years for Afghanistan to play any role in regional politics. However, its instability in the interim period could lead to continuous turbulence in the internal security of Pakistan. Moreover, until peace and stability is achieved in Afghanistan, and the Afghan economy is able to stand on its own two feet, Afghan refugees will remain a burden on the fragile economy of Pakistan (along with all the other social complications of the refugee situation). A strong and prosperous Afghanistan is a benefit to Pakistan. Pakistan should, therefore, work with the central government of Afghanistan, and need not impose its will in bringing about a friendly government. Pakistan should be content with having an independent, integrated and friendly western neighbor, irrespective of which political faction or ethnic community is in power. It could further be argued that, despite the present cold relationship between the two countries, other compulsions, especially those caused by economic and security issues, should draw them into a long-term, friendly relationship.

Policy recommendations would be based upon influencing strategies in state to state relations. In this context, two policy options would be discussed: "Coercive Diplomacy<sup>5</sup>," and "Policy of Reassurance".<sup>6</sup> Out of the two policy options, the Policy of Reassurance is the recommended course of action. Under this option, Pakistan needs to remain effectively engaged at all levels in Afghan affairs in order to protect its own legitimate interests, while not playing favorites.

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<sup>4</sup> For details see President Musharraf's speech in *The Dawn*, available on line, [www.dawn.com/2001/09/20/](http://www.dawn.com/2001/09/20/) - 24k – assessed on May 25, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> For details on Coercive Diplomacy see Robert J Art. *Coercive Diplomacy : What do we Know* (U.S. Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC, 2003). See also Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boston : Little, Brown, 1971)

<sup>6</sup> For details see Stein, Gross Janice. *Deterrence and Reassurance. Behavior, Society and Nuclear War.* Vol 2. Oxford University Press 1991. NY. Also see Hass, Richard N and O'Sullivan Meghan L. *Honey and Vinegar: Incentives, Sanctions, and Foreign Policy*, (Brooking Institution Press, Washington 2000), Chapters 1 and 9.

One of the limiting factors faced in writing this thesis has been the scarcity of literature on the subject. Few scholars in Pakistan have written seriously on the subject, while in the Afghanistan camp, there is virtually none. Therefore, to help create a more balanced perspective, this thesis has obtained help from the study of foreign authors. Even Western literature has covered little about the Pakistani-Afghan relations dynamics in the period from the Soviet withdrawal to the fall of the Taliban. The focus has been more on describing the nature of Taliban regime, than on international relations between regional countries. Most of the literature on the Taliban presents a journalistic view of the situation, not giving real insight into the Afghanistan crisis. Effort has been made in the thesis to provide a holistic picture of Pakistan's Afghanistan relations and, thus, to carry out critical analyses of Pakistan's Afghanistan policy, while also giving policy prescription for the future.

## **B. CHAPTER OUTLINE**

Chapter II discusses Pakistan's Afghanistan policy, from Pakistan's independence to up till the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan (1947 to 1979). In doing so, it seeks to answer the question, "What were the issues that strained Pakistan and Afghanistan's relations?" This chapter addresses the two major issues, namely the Durand Line and Pushtunistan, both of which have been the cause of conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan since 1947. Largely as a result of this Afghan-Pakistani antagonism from 1947 to 1989, all Afghan governments have sided with New Dehli. The military cooperation between both capitals and Moscow was also a concern for Pakistan. Afghanistan's occasional security threat to Pakistan, and its encouragement to a nationalist insurgency in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan (by inciting the groups in Pakistan) will be deliberated. Pakistan's ability to manage the tension, while maintaining its legitimate right on the Durand line will be discussed.

Chapter III will discuss Pakistan's Afghanistan policy after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 to 1989. This chapter addresses the question of how Pakistan was able to exert diplomatic and military pressure, along with the United States, with the result that the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan created a new security situation, not only for Pakistan, but also for the entire region. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan provided an opportunity for Pakistan to wage

a more offensive policy. Pakistan's Afghan policy was manifold. The first, and immediate, priority was given to thwarting the Soviet threat, and the second priority was to establish a friendly government in Afghanistan. This was done by organizing the Islamist movement and various Mujahideen groups in the name of Islamic cause. Pakistan was able to achieve its first objective. However, it could not install a friendly government after the withdrawal of Soviet Union. The causes of the failure to establish a friendly government will be analyzed in detail.

Chapter IV will examine the period from the Soviet withdrawal to the fall of the Taliban (1989-2001). This chapter will discuss the complex nature of the situation in Afghanistan, which developed as a result of collapse of Soviet Union and emergence of new central Asian states. It will also discuss how the United State's diminished interest in the region has helped to create a power vacuum which, in turn, has led other regional actors to play a role in the region. The chapter will also discuss how these conflicting interests affected the region's stability, and led to civil war in Afghanistan and, ultimately, to the emergence of the Taliban. International reaction to the Taliban, including the U.S. policy toward the Taliban, will be discussed in detail. Analysis of why Pakistan's supported Taliban and the context in which Pakistan recognized Taliban regime will be given. In the end, analysis of Pakistan's Afghanistan policy will be done to establish the causes of failure of Pakistan's policy during the period.

Chapter V presents a conclusion by discussing the current geo-political situation in Afghanistan. It highlights the forces which could become the source of a convergence of interests for both governments, and, thus, can lead to friendly relations between the two countries. Summaries and recommendations will be offered in the end, hypothesizing guidelines for Pakistan's Afghan policy.

## **II. PAKISTAN'S AFGHANISTAN POLICY - 1947 TO 1979**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Just after the independence of Pakistan, in December of 1947, Afghanistan denounced former treaties with regard to the Indo-Afghan border (known as “the Durand Line”) with the British government of India. It also laid a claim to the formation of a Pathan State within the borders of Pakistan (i.e., Pushtunistan). Pakistan rejected both of these proposals made by the government of Afghanistan, considering them to be interference in the internal matters of the Pakistan. And later, when Pakistan joined the South Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Asian Treaty Organization (CENTO), to elevate its security threat vis-à-vis India, Afghanistan came under the influence of Soviet Union and India, falling into a socialist block. Consequently, a Soviet-Indo-Afghanistan nexus became one of the main irritants in establishing cordial relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan; one that would be free of disputes. As a result of Afghan-Pakistani antagonisms from 1947 to 1989, all governments in Kabul sided with New Delhi. Moreover, close military relations between the two capitals and Moscow were also a concern for Islamabad. However, to secure its western border, Pakistan remained engaged with Afghanistan in a defensive capacity in order to resolve disputes. In this regard, the strategic goals of Pakistan have been to maintain friendly relations with Afghan governments, in order to prevent the reconstruction of a Kabul-Delhi nexus. Meanwhile, Pakistan also tried to convince Afghan leaders about their illegitimate claims on border issues.

This chapter will illustrate the degree to which Pakistan was able to achieve its national security goals with regard to resolving the Durand Line and Pushtunistan issues. Thus, it will be organized in three distinct sections. The first section explains the security constraints under which Pakistan had to form its foreign policy (with regard to Afghanistan, in particular). This would explain the motivations of the three countries, i.e., Pakistan, Afghanistan and India, in advancing their own policies with respect to each other. The second section discusses the main issues of the Durand Line and Pushtunistan. With this background, in third section, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations from 1947 to 1979

will be discussed. This will help in determining the success or failure of Pakistan's Afghanistan policy during the period.

## **B. PAKISTAN'S SECURITY CONSTRAINTS**

Pakistan was born amid the upheavals of partition in 1947. Therefore, it faced a series of monumental tasks. Internally, it was confronted with a refugee settlement problem and the problems associated with building cohesion between the east and west wings of the country. Externally, having almost no army with which to defend its frontiers, there was the Kashmir problem with India, and border disputes with Afghanistan--all in all, it must have seemed like a nightmare for the policy-makers of Pakistan. Ian Stephens presented a gloomy picture for Pakistan's future when he said,

It was evident that if, on Pakistan's birth, coordinated movements opposed to her could be produced in Kashmir and Afghanistan, both of them predominantly Muslim territories and near to one another, the new state might be still-born, crushed by a sort of pincer-movement.<sup>7</sup>

Even Mountbatten had similar views on the future of Pakistan, who, while commenting on tensions between Pakistan and India over the question of Junagardh, said that in the case of war between India and Pakistan "(it) might be an end of Pakistan altogether."<sup>8</sup> Also, in the international arena, Pakistan could not find a single country that it could count on as being an unfailing friend and ally; someone willing to lend her aid and support in her times of need.<sup>9</sup> In such a severe environment, Pakistan's primary objective was to preserve the territorial integrity and security of Pakistan.<sup>10</sup>

This was a unique situation for any country, who, right on its birth, had to face two unfriendly neighbors; neighbors with which it shared more than two third of its border. This peculiar security environment had a major impact in shaping Pakistan's Afghanistan policy in the future.

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<sup>7</sup> Ian Stephen, *Horned Moon*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1953. p.108, cited by Aslam Siddiqi, *Pakistan Seeks Security*. p. 25

<sup>8</sup> Ziring, Braibatni, and Wriggins. *Pakistan : The Long View*. Durham, N.C. Duke University Press. 1977. S.M. Burki : *The Management of Pakistan's Foreign Policy*: p. 349

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 345.

<sup>10</sup> Ziring, *Pakistan : The Long View*. Norman D . Palmer : *Pakistan : The Long Search for Foreign Policy*, p. 422.

## 1. Pakistan's Apprehensions Towards India

Afghanistan though, could pose problems among tribal peoples of Pakistan. However, by comparison with India, Afghanistan was less of a worry. Pakistan was obsessed with the threat from its most powerful, and generally hostile, larger neighbor India. Pakistan's perception of the threat from India was derived from the sheer size of India, as well as from the size of its army. There was a great deal of strategic and economic asymmetry between the two countries. Pakistan's geographical compulsions (e.g., East and West Pakistan were separated by over 1000 miles of Indian territory) added to Pakistan's fears of being overly vulnerable. This fear, too, was compounded by repeated statements made by Indian leaders regarding the tragedy of partition; a fear which intensified Pakistan's conviction that India had not yet reconciled itself to the existence of Pakistan. President Ayub Khan comments,

We have an enemy, an implacable enemy in India.....India's ambition to absorb Pakistan or turn her into a satellite. The Indian leaders made no secret of their designs. Mr. Acharya Kripalani, who was the President of the Indian National Congress in 1947, declared, 'neither the Congress nor the nation has given its claim of a united India. Sardar V.B Patel, the first Indian Home Minister and the 'strong man' of the Congress Party, announced at about the same time, 'sooner or later, we shall again be united in common alliance to our country.'<sup>11</sup>

Thus, from the day of her Independence, Pakistan was involved in a bitter and prolonged struggle for her very existence and survival. According to an Indian writer, Niran C. Chaudhuri, "India held pistol at the head of Pakistan until, in 1954, the American alliance recovered the country from the nightmare".<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the quest for national integrity and security, particularly vis-à-vis India, has been the primary, and most constant theme in Pakistan's foreign policy. This "fixation" on India has, in fact, largely shaped Pakistan's relations with and attitude towards other countries and has remained central to every calculation of its foreign policy makers.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Mohammad Ayub Khan, *Friends not Masters* (London : Oxford University Press, 1967), 55, 115, 116.

<sup>12</sup> S.M. Burke, "The management of Pakistan's Foreign Policy" in *Pakistan: The Long View* (Durham : Duke University Press, 1977), 358.

<sup>13</sup> W. Howard Wiggins, "The Balancing Process in Pakistan's Foreign Policy" in *Pakistan : The Long View* (Durham : Duke University Press, 1977), 303.

Consequently, since Pakistan was confronted with such a hostile geo-political environment, it could not afford a second front towards her west (i.e., Afghanistan) that was also unfriendly. With this pre-condition, Pakistan shaped its Afghan policy. However, Afghanistan did not view the situation in quite the same way--rather, Afghanistan had its own agendas. This thesis will now discuss the apprehensions Afghanistan had towards Pakistan.

## **2. Afghanistan's Reservations towards Pakistan**

It is important to understand, what were the driving forces behind the Afghan leader's motivations in formulating their foreign policy towards Pakistan. President Mohammed Ayub Khan describes Afghanistan's reservations in the following words,

When Pakistan came into existence, there were two misconceptions in the minds of Afghan leaders. First misconception was the result of Indian constant propaganda that Pakistan would not be able to survive as a separate state. Afghan leaders believed this to be true and decided to stake claims on to Pakistan territory before it was disintegrated. Consequently, they laid claim on Pushtunistan.....The second misconception lay in the attitude of the Afghan rulers themselves. If their assumption proved wrong and Pakistan did survive, they realized that Pakistan would be a democratic country. This would naturally undermine the position of the rulers in Afghanistan. So they made these claims to our lands.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, it appears that it was basically fueled by fears that the establishment of a democratic country in their neighborhood would have adverse implications on the legitimacy of the monarchy in Afghanistan. Moreover, Peshawar, as compared to Kabul, was economically in a better condition. Thus, it might have been a source of dissatisfaction for the Pushtun people of Afghanistan, who shared ethnic ties with Pakistan's Pushtuns, thereby causing instability in Afghanistan. The theoretical explanation of the phenomenon is given by Robert Jervis, "when there are believed to be tight linkages between domestic and foreign policy or between the domestic policies of two states the quest for security may drive states to interfere preemptively in the domestic politics of others in order to provide an ideological buffer zone".<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 174-175.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma" in *World Politics*, Vol XXX No2 (January 1978), 168.

### **3. Perspective on the Indo-Afghan Nexus**

India-Afghanistan relations have been a classical case of Kautilyan's theory, that is an 'enemy's enemy is (a) friend'. India found Afghanistan in a strategically important position to serve her designs. In India's designs, in case of a war with Pakistan over the issue of Kashmir, Afghanistan would be able to open the second front against Pakistan on the North-West Frontier. Thereby, Pakistan could be faced with a two front war. Additionally, such an alliance would also ensure that Pakistan would not be able to use Afghan tribesmen against India. Thus, India may have thought that they would be able to corner Pakistan and embarrass her by pincer-type movement.<sup>16</sup>

### **C. THE ISSUES: THE DURAND LINE AND PUSHTUNISTAN**

#### **1. The Durand Line Issue**

The Durand line resulted from a "Great Game," i.e., a game played by Russia and British India in manifesting their desires to expand their empires. Russia's expansion was motivated by their desire to weaken British power, both in India and its extension into Europe. On the other hand, the British followed a "forward policy" in order to contain the Russians within central Asia. Although neither power held Afghanistan during this time, Afghanistan's role as a buffer between them grew throughout the 1800s, leading to repeated clashes on its fringes.<sup>17</sup>

In eighty years, the British fought three wars in Afghanistan. The first Anglo war (1838-1842) was fought because of British concern over Russians long-term interests in Afghanistan. The first Anglo-Russian war heated up the confrontation between the two powers. Both started to push the outer limits of their power. The British shifted to a forward policy, vis-à-vis Afghanistan, and began to press the Amir of Afghanistan to establish the British mission in Kabul. In response the Russians sent an unsolicited diplomatic mission to Kabul. When the British were refused in their diplomatic mission in Kabul, they invaded Afghanistan. Thus, the second Anglo-Afghan war (1878-1880) began, as the first had, over British concerns and Russian intrigues in Afghanistan. Two developments of importance came out of this, first the treaty of Gandamak in May 26,

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<sup>16</sup> Ayub Khan, *Friends not Masters*, 175.

<sup>17</sup> Larry P Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War : State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Washington DC : University of Washington Press, 2001), 31.

1879 that ceded strategic border areas to the British (notably the Khyber pass, Kurram Valley, Pishin and Sibi,) and second, it provided British to control Afghanistan's foreign affairs and rise of Amir Abdul Rahman Khan in Kabul.<sup>18</sup>

Amir Abdul Rahman Khan ruled Afghanistan for the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was prevented from expanding externally by Russia in the north and northeast, the British in the north and northwest and Persia in the east. Internally, he was also surrounded by many difficulties. Not only he faced general rebellion all over the country, but he also had to fight four civil wars. Therefore, his first priority was to consolidate his position internally. After he had satisfactorily consolidated his position to an extent, he turned towards reforms that he felt were necessary for making Afghanistan a great nation in the future. Amir felt that reforms would not be possible until a boundary line was marked along the perimeter of Afghanistan so that people could know what provinces really belonged to Afghanistan.<sup>19</sup>

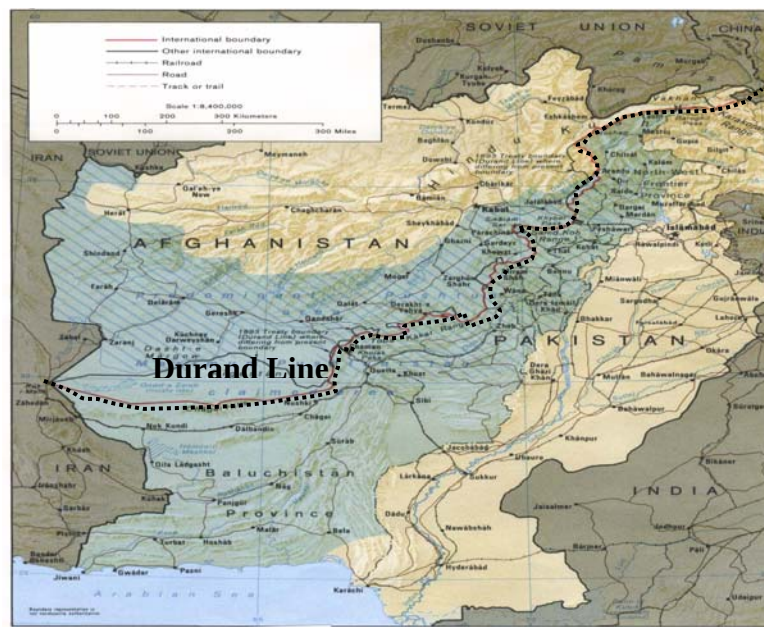


Figure 1. **Durand Line** (Border between Pakistan & Afghanistan)

Meanwhile, Britain and Russia almost went to war on the Panjdeh crisis of 1885, leading the two powers to form a number of boundary commissions (1887, 1891, 1896)

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan : A military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA : Da Capo Press, 2002), 208.

<sup>19</sup> S M Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis* (London : Oxford University Press, 1973), 81.

to demarcate Afghanistan's eastern border. Abdul Rehman made a request to the British Viceroy, Sir Mortimer Durand, the Foreign Secretary of British India, to head the Mission for negotiations.<sup>20</sup> The boundary, as decided upon by the parties, was made the subject of an agreement by the Amir on November 12, 1893. The border line split 17 million Afghan, non-Afghan, Baloch and Brahui tribes on both sides. Although, geographically speaking, a much better frontier than the Durand Line would have been the line of the Hindu Kush mountains, in the interests of British policy it was desirable to keep a strip of Afghan territory as a buffer zone between British India and Russia.<sup>21</sup> The Line gave control of all strategic entry points (Khyber, Tochi, Kurram and Bolan) and other strategic heights along the border to the British, who developed an extensive strategic railroad communication to ensure quicker shifting of forces, should the buffer state of Afghanistan fail to check the onslaught of Russia.

Later on, the Afghan rulers reaffirmed the treaty three times. Habibullah, son of Abdul Rahman, reaffirmed to British government in 1905 that he would abide by the 'agreements and compacts' entered into by his father.<sup>22</sup> However, in 1919, Ammanullah (son of Habibullah) launched an attack on the frontier in the hope of recovering "Peshawar and up to the river Indus." The invasion was contained, and the Afghans were obliged to sue for peace. Two treaties followed the interim Treaty of Rawalpindi (1919) and permanent Anglo-Afghan treaty (1921). These, in effect, reaffirmed the Durand agreement.<sup>23</sup> When Nadir Shah ascended to the throne of Afghanistan in 1930, the validity of the 1921 treaty was reaffirmed by an exchange of letters between the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Afghan minister in London.<sup>24</sup>

Although the Durand line was confirmed by successive Afghan governments, it was not accepted by the government of King Zahir Shah after the withdrawal of British

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>22</sup> Olaf Caroe, *The Pathans, 550 B.C.-A.D. 1957* (London : Macmillan & Co Ltd, 1965), 464.

<sup>23</sup> Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy*, 84.

<sup>24</sup> Olaf, *The Pathan*, 465.

from India.<sup>25</sup> What follows is a brief examination of the arguments which Afghan spokesmen allege when campaigning for the invalidity of the Durand Line.

**a. *Afghanistan's Point of View***

At this point in history, the Afghan government had two objections to the treaty. First, they contend that the Durand Line was established under duress. Second, as the British Government in India has ceased to exist, they also contend that the Anglo-Afghan Treaty of 1921 is null and void. Thus, they have laid claim to all areas between the Durand Line and the River Indus.<sup>26</sup>

**b. *Pakistan's Point of View***

Conversely, Pakistan contends that, because the Durand Agreement was negotiated at the request of Amir Abdul Rahman, himself, with a British official of Amir's own choice, and Amir and his advisor publicly accepted the Agreement, thereby declaring that they were satisfied with it, it likely was not signed under duress<sup>27</sup>. Moreover, for half a century after the signing, every Afghan ruler had reaffirmed the validity of the Durand Line as the agreed upon frontier between Afghanistan and India. This contention is further strengthened by the fact that the government of India Act of 1935 formally defined India to include the tribal territory.

With regard to the second argument, it is a well-settled proposition of international law that according to the principle of '*res transit cum suo onere*', treaties of extinct states concerning boundary lines ... remain valid, and all rights and duties arising from such treaties of the extinct state devolve on the absorbing State.<sup>28</sup> The United Kingdom government had also expressed its public agreement regarding the validity of Durand Line, in favor of Pakistan.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Shahid Javid Burki, *Pakistan a Nation in the Making*, (Karachi : Oxford University Press, 1986), 185.

<sup>26</sup> Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 87.

<sup>27</sup> Olaf, *The Pathans*, 381.

<sup>28</sup> Oppenheim's International Law, ed. Lauterpacht, I (ch. I s. 8 2b)

<sup>29</sup> Olaf, *The Pathans*, 436.

## 2. The Pushtunistan Issue

The issue of Pushtunistan is closely linked with the Durand Line as a troublesome tribal boundary. Afghanistan, following the argument that the Durand Line was accepted under pressure, contends that Pushtuns living on either side should have the right of self-determination, as they were forcibly separated from their motherland. Secondly, the Afghan government argues that the inhabitants of Pushtunistan are one nation and that the Durand Line arbitrarily splits the nation into two.<sup>30</sup>

### a. *Pakistan's Point of View*

Because Pakistan contends that Pushtuns voted for Pakistan in the 1947 referendum in Peshawar, it, therefore, refutes validity of the Afghanistan position. Secondly, Afghanistan's concern for the unity of Pushtuns is not genuine because Afghanistan does not include the Pushtuns on its side of the line in the proposed state of "Pushtunistan".<sup>31</sup> Rather, the Pushtunistan of Afghanistan's conception would consist solely of areas now within Pakistan. The Pushtuns would, therefore, continue to be split between two sovereign states. This raises the question of ambiguity, thereby weakening the arguments for an independent Pushtunistan.<sup>32</sup> The notion that the Durand Line is an arbitrary line is a misconception. Johan C. Griffiths explains,

It (Durand Line) generally follows tribal boundaries, separating those tribe which go to market in Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Tank and Quetta from those with economic links with Khorasan, having Kabul, Ghazni and Kandhar as their market towns. Only in two cases, the Mohmands and the Wazirs is a tribe divided.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> See Figure 1, the darker portion in the map indicates the Pushtun speaking areas, split between Pakistan and Afghanistan by the Durand Line.

<sup>31</sup> Olaf, *The Pathans*, 436.

<sup>32</sup> Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 88.

<sup>33</sup> Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 87. Cf Johan C. Griffiths, *Afghanistan*, Appendix I, Historical Note by Sir Olaf Caroe.

As a matter of fact, Afghans, themselves, were not very clear in their demands regarding Pushtunistan. Apparently, to them Pushtunistan had different meanings at different times.<sup>34</sup> President Ayub Khan has best described this in the following way:-

They (Afghan) had defined Pushtunistan in variety of ways, as a separate independent state, as an autonomous area, as a unit within Pakistan to be called Pushtunistan, and sometimes only as a demand for a reference to be made to the Pathans to indicate whether they were happy with Pakistan.....<sup>35</sup>

The Afghan government first made this claim in 1946, when an interim government was set up in India. At that time, it did not attract much attention, and claim was officially rejected by Mr. Nehru, then head of the interim government in Delhi. But it constituted launching of the since stubborn Pushtunistan demand.<sup>36</sup> And when under the June 3, 1947 plan referendum was organized in North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) the Indian National Congress made a demand that the province should be allowed to opt for independence as well. Lord Mountbatten rejected the demand.

Afterwards, the partition issue of Pushtunistan remained a perpetual source of conflict between the two states, resulting in the severance of diplomatic relations and in military operations on the border. India and the Soviet Union both contributed fuel to the issue. The demands for an independent Pushtunistan lost their momentum after the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union in 1979. Presently, the issue fails to capture the hearts of Pakistani Pushtuns any more due to their absorption in the Pakistani state, and the sad plight of both Afghans and Afghanistan. However, the issue has the potential

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<sup>34</sup> Dilip Mukerjee, "Afghanistan under Daud : Relations with Neighbouring States" in *Asian Survey*, Vol. 15, No 4. (Apr, 1975), .302. Dilip writes "*The Pushtunistan demand is difficult to define because Afghanistan has never spelled it out. Pushtunistan literally means the land of Pushtuns, meaning the Pashto-speaking people. They live both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Baluchi, speaking an entirely different tongue, are described as "southern Pahstoons" in Kabul. The claim was made in a book on the subject published in the early 1950s by Abdul Rahman Puzhwak, now Afghan Ambassador in New Delhi, that Pushtunistan includes the whole area from Chitral and Swat down to Las Bela on the Arabian Sea, roughly comprising Pakistan's two provinces North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. When Daud was Asked in the summer of 1974 by an Indian journalist to define Pushtunistan's territorial extent, his terse reply was: " this is well known".*

<sup>35</sup> Ayub Khan, *Friends not Masters*, 176.

<sup>36</sup> Ian Stephen, *Pakistan. old country / new Nation* (England : Penguins Books Ltd, 1964) 265.

to again strain Pak-Afghan relations in the future. Thus, conflict between Pakistan and Afghanistan appears unlikely to be over with regard to the issue of Pushtunistan.<sup>37</sup>

#### **D. PAKISTAN'S STRATEGY**

Since independence, due to its security dilemmas, Pakistan has aspired to friendly, cordial and mutually beneficial relations with Afghanistan. To achieve these objectives, Pakistan has tried to follow a policy of restraint and patience towards Afghanistan during the period. For example, Pakistan gave Afghanistan all possible facilities for the passage of goods on railways. It also did not establish any controls on trade with Afghanistan.<sup>38</sup> In effect, as Pakistan was tied up on both the fronts, Pakistan was most anxious to avoid any clash with Afghanistan. Thus, it did not want to let any disorder develop on its western border due to close proximity of the Soviet Union.<sup>39</sup> Under such circumstances, Pakistan was left with one option, namely to maintain the status quo, strengthening its own security. Meanwhile, Pakistan tried to convince Afghan leaders about the illegitimacy of their claims, thereby hoping that situation would improve. Such a strategy had the affect of making Pakistan's Afghan policy reactionary with regard to Afghanistan's unfriendly policy towards Pakistan.

The aforementioned background information should help in understanding Pakistan-Afghanistan relations from the period of Pakistan's gaining independence to the invasion of the Soviet Union into Afghanistan.

#### **E. PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS**

From the beginning, Afghanistan has followed a policy of hostility towards Pakistan, and remained committed to its demands regarding Pushtunistan. For example, Afghanistan was the only country to oppose Pakistan's admission to the United Nations, conditioning its recognition upon the provision that the right of self-determination be given to the people of Pakistan's NWFP.<sup>40</sup> Actually, the demand for Pushtunistan was made in December 1947, when the Indian Army was poised for a quick advance into Kashmir, on Pakistan's border.<sup>41</sup> Since then, raids from Afghanistan into Pakistani

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<sup>37</sup> Burki. *Pakistan a Nation in the Making*, 185.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 174-175.

<sup>39</sup> Mujtaba Razvi, *The Frontiers of Pakistan* ( Karachi : National Publishing House Ltd, 1971), 156.

<sup>40</sup> Burke. *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 73.

<sup>41</sup> Saddiqi, *Pakistan Seeks Security*, 25.

territories have taken place from time to time. The first major raid occurred in July 1948, when Faqir of Ipi attacked the Dattakhel and Boya posts in North Waziristan, setting them on fire. His lashker (i.e., army) even surrounded Razmak, Dosalli and Tal. But scouts and loyal tribesmen fought him back. Prince Abdul Karim of Kalat led another lashkar into Baluchistan. He was beaten and was, himself, arrested at Harboii (Kalat).<sup>42</sup>

In 1949, Afghanistan became more active, moving two armored divisions and Air Force to a place on the Afghan-Pakistan border. This was done, presumably, with the hope that it may give moral support to certain tribal interests on the Pakistan side of the Durand Line. The Afghan campaign reached to its climax when, in 1950, Afghan King Zahir Shah made an anti-Pakistan speech at a celebration in Kabul. The Afghanistan flag was hoisted and anti-Pakistan leaflets were dropped by the Afghan Air Force.<sup>43</sup> On 9 January 1950, Liaquat Ali Khan in a Parliament speech, while following a strategy of restraint, condemned Afghanistan for her hostilities.<sup>44</sup>

While Afghanistan continued with its hostile actions, India helped Afghanistan to keep up their propaganda against Pakistan to serve her own interests. The issue of Pushtunistan was kindled by the Indians, and kept alive while the pro-India regime lasted in Afghanistan.<sup>45</sup> The Indian government not only allowed 'Pushtunistan Jirga' to be held in Delhi<sup>46</sup>, but also made "All India" radio available to Sardar Najubullah Khan for making anti Pakistani speeches on May 27, 1951. Dupree describes Indian involvement as follows,

I was among those who were in Pakistan and Afghanistan almost immediately after partition in 1947, I looked into what was happening in

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>43</sup> Razvi, *The Frontiers of Pakistan*, 156-157.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 26. Liaquat Ali Khan said, "That for some incomprehensible reasons, this neighborly Muslim state had been following a policy of open hostility to Pakistani, ever since it opposed Pakistan's admission in UN.....Pakistan could not be expected for ever to continue pleading for friendship and that not an inch of our land will be surrendered to anybody, come what may".

<sup>45</sup> Kamal Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon : Afghanistan 1994-1997* (Karachi : Oxford University Press, 1999), 3.

<sup>46</sup> Stephen, *Pakistan : old country / new Nation*, 265.

Kabul. There was a group of Indians there controlling Kabul Radio, and they are the ones who even invented the term Pushtunistan.<sup>47</sup>

Pak-Afghan relations took another down turn when the Afghan Prime minister, Sardar Daud Khan, a main supporter of the Pushtunistan demands, threatened Pakistan with undesirable consequences if it went ahead with the proposed merger of West Pakistan's provinces into 'One Unit'. In her campaign, the Afghanistan government requested factory managers to give their workers two hours off every afternoon for two weeks to take part in Pushtunistan-related protests. This propaganda led to an incident when, on March 30, 1955, about 150 demonstrators attacked Pakistan's embassy in Kabul. Similar attacks were made on Pakistan consulates in Kandhar and Jalalabad. These incidents ultimately led to the breakup of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Subsequently, after the mediation of some other Muslim countries, a settlement was reached between Pakistan and Afghanistan on September 9, 1955.<sup>48</sup>

To help improve its defensive capabilities against India, Pakistan joined the U.S. sponsored anti-Communist pacts, SEATO and CENTO, in 1954 and 1955. The Afghan prime minister Sardar Daud, described U.S. military aid to Pakistan as presenting a grave danger to the security and peace of Afghanistan. In reaction to this, in December 1955, a new development took place in the region when the Soviet Union declared its support for the Afghan policy in regard to Pushtunistan. This facilitated the Soviet economic penetration into Afghanistan.<sup>49</sup> Such Soviet support for Afghanistan enabled it to adopt even a more uncompromising attitude towards Pakistan.<sup>50</sup>

However, despite these developments, Pak-Afghan relations improved some in the following years. For example, in August 1956, President Iskandar Mirza took initiative and paid a good-will visit to Kabul. This was followed by Prime Minister H.S. Suhrawardy's visit in June 1957. In return, the Afghan Prime Minister Daud and King Zahir Shah also paid visits to Pakistan. A number of other steps were taken to improve

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<sup>47</sup> Magus H. Ralph, *Afghan Alternatives: Issues, Options, and Policies* ( New Jersey : Transation, Inc. 1985), 131.

<sup>48</sup> Saddiqi. *Pakistan Seeks Security*, 27.

<sup>49</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 49.

<sup>50</sup> Aswini K. Ray, *Domestic Compulsions and Foreign Policy : Pakistan in Indo-Soviet Relations*. (New Delhi : Delhi publishers, 1975), 129.

the relations, including the commencement of air service, the establishment of a direct radio link between Karachi and Kabul, and the entry of both countries into the Transit Trade agreement of May 1958, under which no custom duty had to be paid on imported goods destined for Afghanistan.<sup>51</sup>

Meanwhile, India continued its support for Afghanistan on the issue of Pushtunistan. The issue was again brought up when an 'All-India Pushtun Jirga' was held in Delhi in October 1958. In this Jirga, several resolutions were passed containing demands made on behalf of Pushtunistan. Prime Minister Daud's reiteration to a Japanese correspondent of Afghanistan's claim regarding the NWFP, and the Afghan Foreign Minister's visit to Moscow, both tended to show the 'identity of views on world affairs,' thereby, once again, straining relations between the two countries. This led to another series of raids on Pakistan territory by Afghan lashkars (i.e., armies) in May 1961. These, once again, led to the termination of diplomatic relations. Sardar Daud, who was a main proponent of Pushtunistan, resigned in March 1963, and was replaced by Dr Mohammed Yousaf. The change improved the atmosphere between the two states, and diplomatic relations were restored in May 1963. Zahir Shah paid a good-will visit to Pakistan in 1968. Islamabad's decision to disband the One Unit strategy, thus restoring the former provinces of West Pakistan, further helped reducing tensions between the two countries. Overall, during the period of Zahir Shah, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations remained strained, but Pakistan never felt required to deploy force along the Durand line.

However, relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan again took a down turn when Sardar Daud overthrew King Zahir Shah and became the president of Afghanistan in July 1973. At this time, the Soviet Union fully supported Daud's government. The Daud regime again raised the issue of Pushtunistan. For the first time, it also moved the forces closer to borders, resulting in a reciprocal deployment of troops from Pakistan.<sup>52</sup> At the same time, resentment and resistance against communist influence was also increasing, particularly from politico-religious entities. As a result of Daud's crack down, Gulbadin Hikmatyar and Burhanuddin Rabbani, both opposition leaders, escaped to

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>52</sup> Khan, Feroz, "Rough Neighbours : Afghanistan and Pakistan" in Strategic Insight of Center for Contemporary Conflict [Journal Online] (NPS 2003) available from <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/archiveTopic.asp#southAsia> , assessed on 20 December 2004.

Peshawar (Pakistan) from Kabul, continuing their resistance efforts from there.<sup>53</sup> Pakistan and Afghanistan were again at loggerheads, as Daud encouraged a nationalist insurgency in Baluchistan, while Zulfikar Ali Bhutto used Rabbani and Hikmatyar to destabilize Daud's government. Subsequently, several leaders from Baluchistan fled to Afghanistan, setting up their camps there to fight back.<sup>54</sup> Thus, during the mid-70s, both countries continued to support each other's dissident leaders on a quid pro quo basis.<sup>55</sup>

A significant foreign policy achievement took place in 1976 regarding Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan when Daud became convinced that his policies towards Pakistan were causing more harm to his government than good. Moreover, by this time the Soviets had completely infiltrated the Afghan Army, the Afghan media, the Afghan educational institutions, etc.<sup>56</sup> Soviet influence in internal affairs was also cause of concern for Daud. Consequently, Daud tried to normalize relations with Pakistan. As a result, an exchange of visits between the two leaders of these countries took place in mid-1976. These visits not only helped in diffusing the tensions between the countries, but also brought them closer to finding an amicable solution of the Pushtunistan issue. Whereas, Pakistan Prime Minister Bhutto agreed to release the National Awami Party leaders, Daud agreed to recognize the Durand Line as the boundary between Pakistan and Afghanistan. However, before this agreement was signed, Bhutto was removed by Zia ul Haq in a 1977 military coup. Although a similar agreement was also reached between Zia and Daud, this time it was Daud's overthrow by Soviet backed communist forces in April 1978 that derailed the process of settlement.<sup>57</sup> These events precipitated the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. Thus, a new chapter in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations opened. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

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<sup>53</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban*, (London : Yale University Press, 2001), 13.

<sup>54</sup> Oliver Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan* (London : Cambridge University Press, 1986), 75. Also see, Bennett Jones, *Pakistan : Eye of the Storm* (London : Yale University Press, 2002) 134.

<sup>55</sup> Feroz, *Rough Neighbors : Afghanistan and Pakistan*, 2.

<sup>56</sup> For details on Soviet involvement see Chapter III of the thesis.

<sup>57</sup> Magus, *Afghan Alternatives: Issues, Options, and Policies* (New Jersey, Transaction Inc. 1985) and Dupree Louis, "Commentaries on Professor Weinbaum's Paper" 132.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

The central determinants of Pakistan's foreign policy since independence have been to safeguard its territorial integrity and political independence, both of which might be weakened by the centrifugal forces generated by India and, second, to get Afghanistan to drop its irredentist claim by recognizing the validity of the Pakistan-Afghan border demarcated in 1893, reaffirmed no less than four times since that time. Every other constituent part of Pakistan's foreign policy has flowed from these two basic felt needs.

There were two reasons for Afghanistan's inhibition towards Pakistan. First, Afghanistan rulers have perceived the emergence of Pakistan, its neighbor, as a democratic country as a threat to their kingship (i.e., monarchical system). Second, the dissemination of propaganda by India, proclaiming that Pakistan would not be able to survive as an independent state, has reinforced Afghanistan's claims regarding Pushtunistan. As such, Pakistan was confronted with a two-front war. To alleviate the perceived threat to its security, Pakistan joined SEATO and CENTO. This did not fit into the Soviet Union's scheme of maneuvers and, thus, it reacted strongly by supporting Afghanistan's Pushtunistan claims against Pakistan. Thus Pakistan was confronted with an Afghan-Soviet-Indian axis pitted against them.

In such a geo-political environment, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have had to develop. During the period of 1947 to 1979, there were many ups and downs in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations. Since independence, Pakistan has aspired to build a friendly, cordial and mutually beneficial relationship with Afghanistan. However it also had to remain prepared for new situations on the Afghan side and adapt accordingly. Thus, it was basically an action and reaction policy. Pakistan, as such, did not interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, except during the periods of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's time leading Pakistan and Daud's reign in Afghanistan, when Bhutto supported Islamic movement leaders of Afghanistan in response to Daud's support of Baluch leaders from Baluchistan.

A change in the thinking of the policy-makers in Afghanistan was triggered by too much involvement by Soviet communists in Afghanistan, and Afghanistan's growing economic dependence on Pakistan and Iran. Daud realized that his policies of

confrontation with Pakistan may have been counter-productive for his country. Subsequently, an exchange of visits by Daud and Bhutto paved the way for a solution to the decades old confrontation regarding the legitimacy of the Durand line. However, the removal of Bhutto in 1977, and Daud in 1978, derailed the process of resolving the issue.

Therefore, the question arises, “Was Pakistan’s Afghanistan policy successful?” Two factors need to be considered in measuring success or failure of Pakistan’s Afghanistan policy during the period studied. First, Pakistan achieved significant success with regard to the major issues of the Durand Line and Pushtunistan--Pakistan was able to convince Afghan leaders about the illegitimacy of their claims on both the issues, thus, bringing Afghan leaders to the negotiating table for a resolution of the dispute. Second, despite Afghanistan’s cold relations with Pakistan, and warm relations with India, during the 1965 and 1971 wars (between India and Pakistan), Afghanistan remained neutral, not supporting India, as expected.<sup>58</sup> This not only can be seen as a success for Pakistan’s Afghanistan policy, but is might also be an indication that, despite territorial issues between both countries, ethnic and religious bonds played a key role, and would continue to act as a centrifugal force, drawing both countries towards each other. This so-called *soft power*<sup>59</sup> should be considered by Pakistani policy-makers while forming future policies towards Afghanistan.

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<sup>58</sup> Dr Riffat Munir, “Pakistan’s Relations with Afghanistan : Continuity and Change”, published by Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, [On Line] (Winter 2002) , available from [http://www.issi.org.pk/volume\\_strategicstudies.asp?issue\\_id=12&archieve\\_id=3](http://www.issi.org.pk/volume_strategicstudies.asp?issue_id=12&archieve_id=3), assessed on December 2004.

<sup>59</sup> For details on Soft Power as an Influencing Strategy see, Joseph S. NYE, *The Soft Power : The Means to Success in World Politics*, (New York : Public Affairs, 2004)

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### **III. PAKISTAN'S AFGHANISTAN POLICY AFTER THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN-1979 TO 1989**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

A major change took place in Pakistan's Afghanistan policy when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979. The Soviet invasion completely changed the complexion of the region. The Red Army now posed a direct threat, not only to Pakistan, but also to the entire Persian Gulf region. Conceivably, the Soviets might have used Afghanistan as a stepping stone to reach to Indian Ocean, a possible fulfillment of their stated ambition of acquiring a warm water port. Pakistan's fears were manifold. According to their worst fears, Pakistan planners visualized a war with India on two different fronts becoming a reality. At the very least, a Communist victory had the potential of creating a permanent border threat, since the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan was perceived to be indefinite. Furthermore, because of the mass exodus from Afghanistan, what soon became the settlement of more than 3.2 million refugees posed a threat of another kind, this one to the country's economic prosperity and national security. The new situation was not acceptable to Pakistan, in any way; therefore, it had to fight a war for its security and integrity.

Although the situation created challenges for Pakistan, as it was forced to confront an ideologically hostile super power but simultaneously it also created opportunities that Pakistan could redress some of its security concerns by neutralizing previous bitter experiences with regard to Afghanistan. Another positive aspect of the Soviet invasion was renewed U.S. interests in Pakistan. As Pakistan expert Marvin Weinbaum put it, "Pakistan's strategic objectives became convergent with those of United States".<sup>60</sup> General Zia, in March 1980, showed his agreement with this when he said, "you take Pakistan out of this region and you will find that you have not an inch of soil where America can have influence."<sup>61</sup> Apart from supporting the resistance movement in Afghanistan, General Zia used this opportunity, not only to strengthen

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<sup>60</sup> Marvin G. Weinbaum, "Pakistan and Afghanistan: The Strategic Relationship" in *Asian Survey*, Vol.31, No.6 (June 1991), 497.

<sup>61</sup> Kamal Matinuddin, *Power Struggle in Hindu Kush : Afghanistan 1978-1991* (Lahore; Wajidalis Pvt Limited, 1991), 120.

Pakistan's armed forces, but also to forward Pakistan's nuclear program and prolong his own rule. Although Pakistan's short-term policy objectives were to ensure the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, Pakistani policy makers could also see that their long-term objective of establishing a friendly government in Afghanistan might be hastened by their efforts, as well.

Confronting a super power was an offensive and a risky policy. Any direct confrontation with the Soviet Union may have led to a war breaking out between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. Cognizant of this situation, Pakistan skillfully organized and manipulated the Afghan resistance movement against communist forces, simultaneously putting diplomatic pressure on the Soviet Union to withdraw from Afghanistan.

Pakistan achieved its short-term objective when the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989, in accordance with the *Geneva Accord* agreement. However, it failed to achieve its long-term objectives, once Mujahideen could not establish their government in Kabul and the country was plunged into a civil war. Failure to establish an interim Afghan government after the Soviet withdrawal had major consequences with regard to events in Afghanistan in the following decade. The question arises, "Why were the Afghan Mujahideen, despite defeating Soviet forces, unable to establish a government in Kabul?" It is argued that the Geneva Accord was the major cause, i.e., it had very limited objective of ensuring withdrawal of Soviet forces. It did not address the issue of replacing the Communist regime with an interim government in Afghanistan. Moreover, after the Soviet withdrawal, U.S. apathy and shortsighted policies in the region added to the fragile situation of war-torn Afghanistan.

This chapter begins by giving the historical background of the Soviet Union's involvement in Afghanistan. This will be followed by threat perception and the response of the international community, especially by the United States. Subsequently, Pakistan's policy options to counter the Soviet threat will be discussed in detail. The *Islamist movement* in Afghanistan had a major role in mounting resistance against Soviet forces. Therefore, the emergence of the Afghan resistance movement, as well as Pakistan's strategy to counter the Soviet threat, will be deliberated. Finally, the chapter will provide detailed analysis of the Geneva Accord.

## **B. SOVIET MOTIVATIONS: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Soviet interests in Afghanistan date back to the Soviet-Afghan Friendship Treaty of 1921. The Soviet Union had been the first state to recognize Afghanistan in 1919, and, as if to repay the favor, Afghanistan was the first neighboring country to formally recognize Lenin's regime.<sup>62</sup> Since then, the focal point of Soviet strategy has always been to increase her influence in, and dominance over, Afghanistan. The USSR has used several methods interactively to achieve this goal. For example, whereas, prior to WW II, the focus had been on diplomatic initiatives and economic aid, after the war the Soviets expanded their focus to include military assistance and political manipulation. Thus, the Soviets were quick to capitalize on Afghanistan's poor socio-economic conditions, exploiting them under the guise of economic aid, all the while actually cultivating communist regimes in the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). These openings, along with the trade and transit disruptions by Pakistan during its troubles with the Pushtunistan situation, made it possible for the USSR to re-establish its economic relationship with Afghanistan.<sup>63</sup>

Such an analysis suggests that Soviet efforts in Afghanistan have always been intentional; i.e., elements of an overall plan, rather than being ad hoc.<sup>64</sup> For example, the Soviet construction plan in Afghanistan had been centered on northern Afghanistan, containing the roads that go from Termez to Kabul, and from Kusha through the heart of Kandahar, all being outfitted to military standards.<sup>65</sup> Also, the Soviets built the Salang Tunnel through the Hindu Kush, linking northern Afghanistan with the rest of the country. Moreover, major airfields were built or improved at Begram, Shindand, and Kabul. This infrastructure development plan was directly in-line with the Soviet Union's

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<sup>62</sup> Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan : A military History from Alexander the Great to the Fall of the Taliban* (USA : Da Capo Press, 2002), 221.

<sup>63</sup> See Chapter 2, Pakistan Afghanistan Relations 1947 to 1979.

<sup>64</sup> Larry P Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War : State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Washington DC : University of Washington Press, 2001), 49-51.

<sup>65</sup> Personal Observations: The author had couple of visits to Afghanistan in 1974-75 and it was observed that despite relatively economically weak than Pakistan, Afghanistan's road infrastructure was much better than Pakistan.

long-term objectives in Afghanistan, all suggesting that the Soviets had already deemed it necessary to occupy the country.<sup>66</sup>

In the field of military assistance, the Soviets modernized the Afghan armed forces along Red Army lines, providing sizable military aid to Afghanistan. This aid included tanks, jet aircraft and other vital military equipment. In July 1956, a \$32.4 million arms deal with the Soviet was reached, bringing the Soviet military assistance in Afghanistan to a total of \$1.25 billion, the equivalent of almost the sum amount of Soviet economic aid to Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Afghan military made Russian the technical language of their armed forces, and during the period, some 3700 Afghan officers and cadets received training in Soviet Union.<sup>67</sup> This led to the gradual “Sovietization” of the Afghan armed forces. Training programs in the USSR provided the Soviet intelligence services with an opportunity to subvert and indoctrinate Afghan officers; officers who would later make possible the success of the 1978 Communists coup. Thus, by 1978 the Afghan armed forces were transformed, their capability also being well known by the Soviets.

By the time Daoud overthrew King Zahir Shah in 1973, thus declaring himself president, the Soviets had penetrated well into the internal politics of Afghanistan, providing support and assistance to the revolutionary PDPA. By 1976, Daoud appeared to have realized that the Soviets had their own agenda in Afghanistan. Thus, to counter-balance Soviet influence, he embarked on efforts to improve relations with Pakistan, Iran and other Muslim countries.<sup>68</sup> This policy did not please Moscow or the PDPA.<sup>69</sup> This culminated in the “Saur Revolution,” and on April 27, 1978 Daoud and members of his family were murdered. Nur Mohammad Tukai was installed as president after the

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<sup>66</sup> Stephen Tanner, *Afghanistan*, 227.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Dr. Abdul Sattar, “Relations with the West, China, and the Middle East” in *Pakistan: Founder’s Aspirations and Today’s Realities* (Karachi : Oxford University Press, 2001), 383.

assassination.<sup>70</sup> Moscow was then the first to recognize the Communist regime in Afghanistan.<sup>71</sup>

The Afghan PDPA soon faced a national rebellion when the ‘mullahs’ and ‘khans’ declared *jihad*, or holy war, against the Communists, being predominantly led by Islamists leaders such as Gulbuddin Hikmetyar, Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmed Shah Masud, all of whom were later to lead Mujahideen. By late 1979, it was clear that the PDPA regime would fall without Soviet support. Thus, on Christmas Day in 1979, the first of some eighty-thousand Soviet troops entered Afghanistan. This direct military intervention by the USSR transformed the Afghan war into a regional, and even global, geo-political struggle, having ramifications that far exceeded the devastation it brought to Afghanistan, alone.

### **C. THREAT PERCEPTION: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL**

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought forth an entirely new situation, not only for Pakistan, but also for regional, and even extra-regional, countries. The global ambitions and the expansionist nature of the Soviet brand of communism had caused deep apprehensions in the capitalist West, as well as in Islamic countries, for a long time. The invasion of Afghanistan was not an isolated development, but part of a chain, wherein Soviet-inspired communism was seizing control in one country after another. Thus, it might have seemed that Afghanistan could be annexed, just as had so many other member states of the Soviet Republic.<sup>72</sup>

The Soviet invasion revived fears of the long-dreaded Soviet expansion towards the warm waters. There was a manifold increase in the global importance of the region with the discovery of oil reserves in the Gulf region. The reality was that the uninterrupted flow of oil from the Gulf to the rest of the world was of vital strategic interest to the West, as Afghanistan was only 500 km away from the Persian Gulf. Thus,

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 383

<sup>71</sup> S.M Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis* (London : Oxford University Press, 1973), 87.

<sup>72</sup> Burke, S.M. *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 83. Burke writes, “The Soviet Union’s ambitions in the region were recorded in November 1940 in the secret agreement with Nazi Germany where the Soviet Foreign Minister had proposed that ‘the area south of Batum and Baku in the general direction of Persian Gulf should be recognized as the center of the aspirations of the Soviet Union’.”

it was felt that the supply of oil could easily be impeded from here, and the invasion of Afghanistan was perceived in Washington as a geo-strategic threat. The downfall of the pro-Western government in Iran, being replaced by an anti-American fundamentalist Islamic regime, further heightened the American sense of regional insecurity in the area.<sup>73</sup> What is commonly known as the “President Carter Doctrine” declared that “an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of United States and such an assault would be repelled by any means necessary, including military force”.<sup>74</sup> Arguably, many Arabs were as apprehensive of this, as they were of Soviet movement in their region.

### **1. Impact on Pakistan**

In the immediate context, Pakistan, a strategically located country, became vulnerable to communist expansion. Keeping in view their historically rough relationship with both Afghanistan and the Soviet Union, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had direct, wide-ranging and far-reaching impacts upon Pakistan’s internal and external security.<sup>75</sup> Earlier, Afghan armed forces were too weak to pose any serious threat to Pakistan, and Bhutto, and later Zia, could pursue their Afghan Policy by themselves, without the support of any outside power. But now, with Soviet forces within striking range of Pakistan, the situation warranted serious attention. According to Mr. Abdul Sattar, ex-Foreign Minister of Pakistan,

The Soviet military intervention provoked a deep sense of alarm in Pakistan. Suddenly the buffer disappeared and if the Soviet ruler consolidated their control in Afghanistan they could use it as springboard to reach the warm waters of the Arabian Sea. Pakistan could not afford to acquiesce in the Soviet intervention. But neither could it afford a confrontation with a super power.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Tanner, Stephen. *Afghanistan*, 234. Stephen writes, “The U.S. military was focused on the region and after loss of Iran was looking to restore its lost position elsewhere”.

<sup>74</sup> Burke, S.M. *Pakistan’s Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 83.

<sup>75</sup> Rasyul Bakhsh Rais, “Afghanistan and the Regional Powers” in *Asian Survey*, Vol. 33, No. 9, (September 1993), 906. Rais writes, “earlier, Moscow had supported Afghanistan’s position on Pushtunistan issue, recognized India’s position on Kashmir, and gave strong indications of encouraging secessionist movement inside Pakistan”.

<sup>76</sup> Sattar, *Relations with the West, China, and the Middle East*, 283. Sattar writes, “Pakistan-U.S. relations were all time low since the sacking of U.S. embassy in Islamabad in November 1979. When mob of youth infuriated by a false report broadcast by unidentified radio alleging U.S. occupation of holy Kaba. In the incident four staff members of U.S. embassy were killed”.

Another negative impact of the Soviet invasion was that Pakistan was continuously suffering from economic and demographic pressure due to the influx of Afghan refugees, which by 1982 had reached 3.2 million.

## **2. The Response of the International Community**

As Western countries concerns, particularly those of the United States, converged with Pakistani interests in getting the Soviet forces out of Afghanistan, their common strategy became premised on the notion that raising the costs of occupation might compel Moscow to consider withdrawing.<sup>77</sup> Consequently, the United States and Saudi Arabia, supported by Japan and many other countries, decided to extend all their support to Pakistan of which they were physically able in order to assist the growing popular resistance to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. In this way, the United States' objectives were also being achieved, without them having to commit all of its own forces in the region. Therefore, Pakistan, because of its geographical proximity to Afghanistan, emerged as the linchpin of the increased American military presence in the region. For Pakistan, on the one hand, the situation created challenges in having to face and engage an ideologically hostile super power that was standing right on its doorstep. On the other hand, however, it also created an opportunity for it to redress old security concerns by neutralizing previous bitter experiences with Afghanistan as well as not letting any other party directly intervene and exploit the situation for its own advantage.

## **D. POLICY OPTIONS FOR PAKISTAN**

In December 1979, Pakistan had three immediate options to deal with the Afghan issue.<sup>78</sup> First, it could acquiesce, accepting the Soviet invasion as a *fait accompli*. Second, it could provide all-out military support to the freedom fighters, thus helping them to achieve their objectives of eliminating an adversary by force. Third, with the assistance of United States, Europe and Islamic countries, it could bring political pressure to bear on the Soviet Union, along with covertly assisting the Mujahideen.

As for the first option, Pakistan would never have been comfortable with Russian soldiers deployed along the Pak-Afghan border, even if it was assured that they would

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<sup>77</sup> Rais, *Afghanistan and the Regional Powers*, 907.

<sup>78</sup> Matinuddin, *Power Struggle in Hindu Kush : Afghanistan 1978-1991*, 121.

not attack Pakistan. Indirectly, it may have thought it could still become a target of the KGB, who could instigate an insurgency within Pakistan, easily, by using dissident elements and exiled politicians to raise ethnic issues and territorial sensitivities. With the Indo-Soviet treaty of 1971 in hand, India could use a Soviet-controlled Afghanistan to stir up trouble on Pakistan's western borders, thereby forcing it to weaken its eastern frontier defenses.

Regarding the military option, Pakistan had certain limitations. For example, Soviet troops were already well within Afghanistan, and any military confrontation, without any guarantee of protection from major powers, like United States or China, could have threatened the security of Pakistan. Moreover, keeping Pakistan's dependence on foreign assistance clearly in view, even a low intensity conflict, if over a long period of time, could likely not have been sustained by Pakistan.

The only viable option, therefore, was to use all possible diplomatic pressure to build up world opinion against the Soviet Union for having violated the principles of the UN charter, thereby forcing it to leave Afghanistan.<sup>79</sup> At the same time, Pakistan would provide humanitarian assistance to the Afghan refugees and the freedom fighters. The other determinants of this policy were the Islamic brotherhood,<sup>80</sup> and Pakistan's desires to crush Pukhtoon nationalism, to modernize its own army with modern assistance, to divert public opinion from domestic problems and to prolong Zia's regime.<sup>81</sup>

This course of action had definite risks for Pakistan, primarily by its confronting the Soviet Union. It seemed to be an absolute gamble at that time. The Soviet Union repeatedly warned Pakistan of the dire consequences of maintaining their policy. However, president Zia saw the Red Army's entry into Afghanistan as a mortal threat to Pakistan and thus, decided "to fight the battle for Pakistan" in Afghanistan.<sup>82</sup> In this regard, the Afghan *Islamists* movement leaders were instrumental in organizing the Afghan resistance to the Soviet aggression. Subsequently, these same actors were involved in a bloody power struggle after the Soviet's withdrew. Hence, it might be

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<sup>79</sup> Sattar, *Relations with the West, China, and the Middle East*, 283.

<sup>80</sup> Kux, *The United States and Pakistan: Disenchanted Allies*, 245.

<sup>81</sup> Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 88.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

helpful to briefly discuss how the Afghan Islamists movement developed in Afghanistan, as well as why Pakistan chose to lend them its support.

#### **E. THE ISLAMISTS MOVEMENT IN AFGHANISTAN**

Many Islamists in Afghanistan were intellectuals who had arisen from within the government education system, being either from one of the scientific schools, or from the state Madrasa. They believed that the only way to come to terms with the modern world, as well as the best means of confronting foreign imperialism, was by developing a modern, political ideology that was based on Islam.<sup>83</sup> The founders of the movement known as the “professors,” received their education within the government system, completing their studies at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Later, these professors were on the faculty at Kabul and taught theology. Professor Rabbani, and other intellectuals, like Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Ahmed Shah Massoud, and Sayyaf, were among the founders of the movement. The party was formed in late 1958 bearing the name, “Jam’iyyat-i-Islami,” also known as “Takrik-i-Islami.” The group introduced translations of the works of foreign Islamists, such as Sayyad Qutb from Egypt and Maududi from Pakistan, in general, presenting Islam as a modern ideology.<sup>84</sup>

Islamists were strongly opposed to: the traditionalist way of looking at things, to the king, but especially to Daoud. They were also against Pashtun nationalism, as well as being opposed to the establishment of an independent Pushtunistan. They protested against foreign influence in Afghanistan, be it from the Soviet Union or the West. They were also very much opposed to Communism.<sup>85</sup> It is important to note that their support was limited to towns-- in tribal zones they had virtually no influence.

Not surprisingly, the Daoud regime (1973 to 1978) regarded the Islamic group to be a threat to its own existence. Therefore, when there was an attempted coup of Daoud in 1973, it was followed by the arrest, and eventual killing, of many Islamists. For this

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<sup>83</sup> Olivier Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*, (London. Cambridge University Press, 1986), 69.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid, 70. [The Islamists movement developed over the period of several years prior to actual Soviet invasion of the country. Initially, the movement functioned at secret level centered upon the “professors. Meetings were held in private houses until 1972 and the emphasis was on spiritual growth and not on pursuit of power]

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, 71. [Number of fights broke out on Kabul university campus between them and Maoists during 1960s]

reason, many of the Islamists leaders fled to Pakistan<sup>86</sup>. Based in Peshawar, Rabbani and Hekmatyar continued their resistance, the group receiving financial support from private donors in Saudi Arabia.<sup>87</sup> Also, in 1975, with the training and other aid of Pakistan, the Afghan Islamists organized a rebellion, though exiled<sup>88</sup>. However, Daoud was able to crush the rebellion. During this period, the movement polarized around Rabbani and Hekmatyar. Whereas, the former attracted moderate elements, especially among Persian speaking peoples, the latter attracted radicals, especially the Pashtuns. Finally, in 1976-77, the movement was divided into two factions, namely the Jam'iyyat-i-Islami, led by Professor Rabbani and Ahmed Shah Masood, and the Hizb-i-Islami, led by Hekmatyar. This would become the most significant division among the Afghan Mujahideen, culminating in their struggle for control of Kabul in the mid-1990s. These two parties became the largest of the resistance organizations until the emergence of Taliban in 1994.<sup>89</sup>

After the failure of the uprising, the surviving movement continued to get support from Pakistan, as well as being allowed to open offices in Peshawar. Pakistan's support to the Islamists was not ideological in nature, rather strategic, because the Islamists were opposed to Pushtunistan and also rejected the Kabul-Delhi coalition in the name of Muslim solidarity. Therefore, the Islamists were perceived, in fact, as defending the integrity of Pakistan.<sup>90</sup>

In April 1978, when the Communist group took control of Afghanistan, they also, like Daoud, focused on the elimination of prominent religious leaders. In response, many Islamic Sufi leaders fled the country, forming another nuclei for the resistance, along with the Islamists. By the time the Soviet invasion took place, several resistance and refugee organizations were already based in Peshawar. The offshoot of these groups was

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<sup>86</sup> Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda : Casting a Shadow of Terror*, (London, I.B Tauris & Co Ltd, 2003). 64. Burke writes, "Prime Minister Bhutto, who was irritated by Daud's attempts to cause trouble in Pushtuns in Pakistan, gave the Islamists leaders gave refuge, where they were cared for by Qazi Hussain Ahmed. Bhutto's advisor on Afghan affairs General Naseer Ullah Babar, gave ISI role to watch over the new arrivals"

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.,64.

<sup>88</sup> Magus H. Ralph, *Afghan Alternatives: Issues, Options, and Policies* (New Jersey: Transnation, Inc. 1985), 66.

<sup>89</sup> Larry P Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War : State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban* (Washington DC: University of Washington Press, 2001), 61.

<sup>90</sup> Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*, 76.

ultimately developed into seven Sunni, political parties in exile, generally headed by Islamists leaders.<sup>91</sup>

## F. PAKISTAN'S STRATEGY

Pakistan's first line of defense against the Soviet expansion was to strengthen the resistance, thus, the hope was that Soviet forces would get bogged down in Afghanistan, while trying to maintain control over the supply of weapons to the resistance. They also sought to keep the resistance within bounds that would not risk provoking a Soviet reaction.<sup>92</sup> All of this was to be supported by a retention of the political initiative.

To achieve its objectives, Pakistan first had to raise, organize and enable the ill-equipped Afghans guerrillas to fight effectively. To accomplish this, forces were deployed along many fronts, under different local commanders, in a covert fashion. The number of major groups that coordinated with the armed struggle from across the borders at one time stood at over 150.<sup>93</sup> It was no mean achievement to integrate most of them into the famous *group of seven*. All of this required a large amount of training, funds and resources, requiring Pakistan to mobilize international support, as well as to equip and train its own forces.

One positive aspect of the Soviet invasion was the renewed interest of the United States in Pakistan. Gen Zia made use of this new situation to strengthen his armed forces and, in the process, ensure the survival of his own regime. The United States put non-proliferation issues on the back burner, lifting their arms embargo. A debt of \$5.1 billion was also rescheduled. As a matter of fact, the earlier tilt towards India by the United States was now counter-balanced by it giving equal importance to Pakistan's security. China also declared its full support of Pakistan. So, too, did Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other conservative Muslim countries.<sup>94</sup> In 1982, President Reagan gave \$3.2 billion in aid to Pakistan<sup>95</sup>. In sum Zia got what he wanted.

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<sup>91</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 61.

<sup>92</sup> Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*, 209.

<sup>93</sup> Lt Gen (ret'd) Asad Durrani, "The Afghan Tangle," *The News*, 30 Dec 1997.

<sup>94</sup> Matinuddin, *Power Struggle in Hindu Kush*, 120-121.

<sup>95</sup> Kux, *The United States and Pakistan: Disenchanted Allies*, 252.

As it became clear that the war would be a protracted one, the U.S. used the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to set up an arms “pipeline” through Pakistan by which to funnel aid to resistance groups. Pakistan army directly supervised the transport of most of the weapons.<sup>96</sup> By the mid-80s, tens of thousands of weapons were being distributed by Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) agents to the Mujahideen, via their party warehouses. The support for the Jihad was gradually stepped up under the leadership of Gen Akhtar Abdul Rehman (head of the ISI).<sup>97</sup> Thousands of Afghan guerrillas came to Pakistan to get training. From 1980 to 1987, Pakistani Army teams from the ISI went to Afghanistan to advise and assist the Mujahideen in their operations. All resistance commanders inside Afghanistan were required to join one of the seven Peshawar-based parties, as it was only through these parties that arms were distributed.

Among the seven recognized parties, some were closer to the Pakistani establishment than others were. The Islamists section which was particularly favored by Pakistan was Hizb (the Hekmatyar party) due to its having close ties with the Pakistani Jama’at, both parties being predominantly made up of Pashtuns. However, Pakistan’s government, more or less, maintained an even-handed policy towards alliances, wanting to maintain unity, and thereby hoping to control the resistance by avoiding any imbalance towards Islamists.<sup>98</sup>

The role of the ISI increased between 1983 and 1986, leading to a marked improvement in the performance of the Afghan resistance. The most significant role played by ISI forces was the establishment of the seven-party alliance in 1984. This alliance considerably reduced the disunity and chaos in the guerrilla operations inside Afghanistan.<sup>99</sup> Though the CIA played a role in this, the ISI was at the forefront, giving strategic direction to the movement, and controlling operations. The CIA usually relied on the ISI and based its information on ISI intelligence units, also allowing the ISI to play a major role in policy formulation. Thus, the ISI effectively managed the raising, training,

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<sup>96</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan’s Endless War*, 61.

<sup>97</sup> Burke, *Pakistan’s Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, 89.

<sup>98</sup> Roy, *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*, 210.

<sup>99</sup> Tanner, *Afghanistan*,

equipping, paying and sending a mercenary army of Islamists volunteers into battle against the red Army, though with CIA cooperation and Saudi finances.

Saudi Arabia generously supported the movement and gave hundreds of thousands dollars to assist the resistance movement. Sheikhs, emirs, princes and devout businessmen throughout the Gulf region made huge channels for funding, becoming of critical importance during the 1990s.<sup>100</sup> Thus combined effort forced Moscow to consider retreating from Afghanistan.

### **1. Pakistan's Diplomatic Efforts**

Simultaneously, Pakistan worked vigorously at obtaining a diplomatic solution to the problem. A resolution condemning the Soviet invasion was adopted by UN General Assembly in January 1980 (Appendix 'A'). Pakistan realized that the world community was overwhelmingly against the Soviet invasion, giving it diplomatic strength in their Afghan policy. From then on, keeping the number of votes increasing at each UN session became an issue of Pakistan's international credibility. The resolution adopted, being retained for the seven years following the 1980 date, attracted ever-greater support, increasing from 111 votes in 1980, to 123 in 1987.<sup>101</sup>

After hectic diplomatic efforts over the ensuing eight years, on April 14, 1988, the historical document was finally signed at Geneva (Attached as Appendix 'B'). The Geneva Accord was a face-saver for the Soviet Union, as it could claim that it pulled out of Afghanistan as a result of a negotiated settlement. On the occasion of their signing, Pakistan and the United States declared that it did not imply recognition of the regime in Kabul. The United States also declared that it reserved the right to provide arms to Afghan parties, and restrained should Soviet Union from doing so.<sup>102</sup> Subsequent developments in Afghanistan proved that these two clauses of the accord would have great implications on the future stability of Afghanistan.

### **G. ANALYSIS OF GENEVA ACCORD**

This thesis suggests that, in regard to Pakistani interests, it is vital to analyze why the Geneva Accord failed to bring an end to the war in Afghanistan. In this regard, three

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<sup>100</sup> Burke, *Al-Qaeda : Casting a Shadow of Terror*, 66.

<sup>101</sup> Sattar, *Relations with the West, China, and the Middle East*, 385.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 394.

issues must be analyzed in order to see if the results achieved could have safeguarded Pakistan's national interests.

### **1. Formation of Interim Government**

The issue of forming an interim political government even before the withdrawal of Soviet troops first came up during the eighth round of Geneva talks, in November 1987. The Soviets proposed that their pull out would take seven to twelve months if there was an agreed upon formula for the composition of an interim government. Pakistan and the United States both rejected this proposal because it linked the withdrawal to the establishment of a provisional administration in Kabul. Subsequently, the Soviets dropped the offending clause. However, this may have been a missed opportunity for Pakistan. Perhaps General Zia's decision not to accept the proposal was based on the assumption that the Mujahideen would be able to topple the Kabul regime soon after the withdrawal of Soviet forces. That is where Pakistan and its intelligence agencies failed, as they were unable to assess the military situation more objectively. The Soviet forces had dumped so much ammunition into Afghanistan that it proved to be enough for Najibullah's forces to fight a prolonged war against the Mujahideen. Moreover, it appeared that the ISI was not aware of the sharp differences that existed among the Mujahideen. Thus, Pakistan did not predict the power struggle that would arise among different factions of the Mujahideen after the Russian troops had left Afghanistan.<sup>103</sup>

General Zia was late in realizing that the Mujahideen did not have the ability to overthrow Najibullah's government by force, though contrary to what they had claimed earlier. Thus, Zia's fresh proposal of establishing an interim administration came late in the proceedings, nor could he develop a consensus in his own camp, nor with his allies (i.e., the United States and other Muslim countries). Moreover, by this time, the Soviet leadership had given indication that it would be withdrawing from Afghanistan, even without having signed the accord.<sup>104</sup>

In hindsight, it has been argued that General Zia's decision to continue supporting the military solution to defeat the Kabul regime (over political alternatives) led to a

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<sup>103</sup> Matinuddin, *Power Struggle in Hindu Kush : Afghanistan 1978-1991*, 205.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 207.

mishandling of the situation. The final outcome proved very costly for both Pakistan and Afghanistan.

## **2. Continuation of Arms Support**

The issue came into the discussion in the last sessions of the negotiations. The Soviets were not willing to halt its supply of arms to the Kabul regime, which it recognized as being a legitimate government. The United States continued to press cessation of military aid to both parties. Before signing the accord, Pakistan urged simultaneously ending the military assistance being given by both superpowers. Most of Afghan leaders were not in favor of this negative kind of symmetry, believing it would place them at a great disadvantage, as the Soviets might dump a considerable amount of weapons before withdrawing. In the end, both superpowers agreed on a positive symmetry, i.e., the USSR and the United States would continue to provide weapons to their Afghan allies. This was not at all a satisfactory arrangement, suggesting a continuation of the conflict. Therefore, the only way the Mujahideen could have been supported was through Pakistan, a direct contradiction of Instrument I of the accord.<sup>105</sup>

As a consequence of this clause, the Soviets left behind military hardware worth more than one billion dollars to strengthen the Kabul regime. They were even allowed use of bases inside the Soviet Union for their air force, from which they flew to take the town of Kunduz from the Mujahideen. Thus, even during the withdrawal of Soviet forces, the Mujahideen continued to attack the Soviet convoys and the air bases, as Soviets were using these for stockpiling arms and ammunition in the guise of supplying food.<sup>106</sup> The United States continued to support the Mujahideen via Pakistan. However, U.S. aid reduced considerably over the period, even stopping temporarily. Meanwhile, the Kabul regime intensified their effort to crush the Mujahideen movement, violating Pakistan's borders at will. Similarly, the Mujahideen continued to fight against the Communist regime.

## **3. Mujahideen's Participation**

The main actors on the Afghan stage were the Kabul regime and the Mujahideen, while others played supporting roles. When negotiations started, the Kabul regime

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<sup>105</sup> Matinuddin, *Power Struggle in Hindu Kush : Afghanistan 1978-1991*, 210.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 260.

refused to talk with the Mujahideen. However, this was only their initial reaction. As the Mujahideen captured more areas, the Kabul regime may have felt pressured into accepting the Mujahideen's participation. The matter should have been pursued with Kabul for Mujahideen inclusion in the talks. The division among Afghan Mujahideen groups was another obstacle with which Pakistan had to grapple. Pakistan pursued the Mujahideen to form a political front so that the UN could be pressured into the negotiation process. However, the two groups remained divided until 1985, at which time nominal unity was shown by the Mujahideen groups.<sup>107</sup>

#### **H. RESPONSE TO GENEVA ACCORD**

As the Mujahideen had opposed talks from the beginning, they rejected the Accord, out-right. Iran-based Mujahideen also rejected the accord, claiming they had not been party to it. Due to presence of the United States, Iran did not associate itself with the Accord. Meanwhile, both superpowers continued their military support of their allies in the war. This made impossible for Pakistan to abide by Article I of the Accord (i.e., stating the non-interference in the internal matters of the Afghanistan). According to Mattinudin, the "Geneva Accord was therefore, a dead letter ab-initio".<sup>108</sup> Whereas, the Geneva Accord achieved the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, it was not able to fully resolve external dimensions of the conflict, while failing to even touch internal issues. Moreover, none of the signatories of the accord were sincere in their promise to abide by the terms of the agreement. As described by General Mirza Aslam Beg, while discussing Pakistan's Afghan policy in the 1980s, highlighted the fact that,

The political dimension of the Afghan conflict was not given adequate attention. Emphasis was placed on seeking a military solution and on the withdrawal of the Soviets troops from Afghanistan. In depth study and serious efforts on promoting an alternative to the Kabul regime was not made in time.

If this was the outcome, the question arises, "Why had Pakistan signed the Geneva Accord in its present form?" Probably Pakistan felt that this was their only option left. For, even if Pakistan had not signed the Accord, the Soviets would have withdrawn their troops, anyway. However, this withdrawal would have been on to the Soviets own

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 210.

schedule, while giving support to the Kabul regime till very end. Furthermore, such a withdrawal likely would not have been total, and it would have caused further deterioration of relations between Pakistan and the USSR. Moreover, the United States had lost interest in Afghanistan after achieving its objective of a Communist roll back.<sup>109</sup> Nor had anyone visualized at that time that Soviet Union would collapse so soon.

## **I. CONCLUSION**

Through out the Afghan war, Pakistan was an indispensable party to any effort to bring conflict to an end, be they political or military. Whereas, Pakistan's short-term objective had been to secure Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, its long-term interest was to have a friendly government installed in Afghanistan. Pakistan was able to achieve its first objective, and its Afghan policy won broad-based international sympathy and support. The impact of this policy was that Pakistan's armed forces received state-of-the-art military hardware. Not only was its potential of withstanding pressure from India increased, but funds became available for economical development also. Perhaps more importantly, Washington seemed obliged to turn a blind eye towards Pakistan's nuclear program; a nuclear program which had reached the capability of producing weapons by 1983. These were some of the strategic considerations behind Pakistan's Afghan policy.<sup>110</sup> On the negative side, hosting millions of Afghan refugees has put great pressure on the country's economy. Furthermore, the almost constant conditions which surrounded the protracted war in Afghanistan gave rise to "warlord-ism," rather than developing real, enduring leadership. It also gave birth to the trends of "Jihad," religious militancy, narcotics trafficking and smuggling. Overall, Pakistan's Afghan policy, up to the signing of the Geneva Accord and the Russian withdrawal, appeared to be a success. However, Pakistan failed to achieve its long-term objective of establishing a friendly regime in Kabul.

This failure may have been because there were a couple of major flaws in the Geneva Accord. First, there was not a provision for the establishment of an interim government in Afghanistan. Second, the continued military support of Najibullah by the Soviet Union made it possible for the Communist regime to survive for another three

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<sup>109</sup> Ibid., 233.

<sup>110</sup> M Amin, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: A Reappraisal*, 101.

years. Had military support to both parties (i.e., the Mujahideen and Najibullah) dried up, the outcome might have been different, as suggested, for example, by the collapse of Najibullah's regime on April 16, 1992, within three months of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. It was probably too ambitious for Pakistan to have demanded so much from a superpower who had lost interest in the region, as well as perhaps also being beyond its capability.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned, no credit should be taken away from Pakistan because it had to work within many political constraints. Among other things, these included the interests of those who were giving Pakistan aid, the threat of the Soviet Union, the presence of millions of Afghan refugees and keeping unity among the Mujahideen groups. To maintain equilibrium with so many divergent interests, while coming out successfully at the conclusion, was not an ordinary feat with such a crisis in the region.

After the Soviet withdrawal, it was Pakistan's long-term objective that made Pakistan's Afghan policy-makers strive to continue their involvement in Afghanistan. ISI remained committed to installing a pro-Pakistan Islamists government in Kabul. As a result, the hard liners in the ISI and the Army were in a stronger position than ever before. All these would be discussed in chapter IV.

## **IV. PAKISTAN'S AFGHANISTAN POLICY: POST SOVIET WITHDRAWAL-1989 TO 2001**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

Pakistan's Afghanistan policy after the withdrawal of the Soviet Union appeared confused, and it has been criticized for its failure to play a positive role in bringing about a lasting solution to the Afghan problem. The regime installed by Moscow under Najibullah fought for three more years, finally collapsing in April 1992, after which a bloody power struggle ensued among Mujahideen parties competing against each other for the right to rule Afghanistan. As such, Afghan leaders could not develop a consensus in the formation of a unified government in Kabul. Pakistan attempted to bring some unity among the warring factions through the Peshawar and the Islamabad accords, but both failed to achieve the full compliance of the Afghan leaders.

Since the Soviet withdrawal, a number of factors came into play that made the Afghanistan's situation highly complicated. Perhaps the most salient factors are the failure of the international community to install an interim Afghan government (due to an ill-conceived Geneva Accord), the U.S. policy of distancing itself from the region, and the subsequently collapse of the Soviet Union, all conspired together to create a political vacuum in the region. Additionally, the emergence of the new Central Asian Republics (CARs), each arising as a consequence of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, brought about political and economic changes in the region, further aggravating the situation.

Consequently, the factional fighting among the Mujahideen groups created an opportunity for external elements, this time from Iran, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, as well as from Russia, each having its own interests in Afghanistan. Not surprisingly, this created conflicts of interest among the regional and global contenders, leading to a civil war in the region, and culminating in the emergence of the Taliban in 1994. By supporting the Taliban, Pakistan hoped to accomplish several things. For example, it desired to redress its security issues relative to India, curb Pashtun nationalism, and create a corridor for trade with Central Asia. For a short time, the Taliban regime did serve Pakistan's objectives. But Pakistan, due to its support for the Taliban regime, gradually found itself isolated from the rest of the international community, ultimately ending up being

embarrassed by having to take U-turn in its Taliban policy after the events of September 2001.

This chapter will seek to answer the question: “Why was Pakistan’s Afghanistan policy unable to help bring a lasting solution to the Afghanistan crisis?” To fully comprehend the situation during the period between 1989 to 2001, this thesis has further divided the period into three phases: 1)1989-1992, 2) 1992-1994, and 3) 1994-2001. Each phase is marked by major changes in regard to the internal political situation of Afghanistan, and the corresponding changes in Pakistan’s strategies to achieve its objectives. After discussing these phases, the international response to the Taliban regime will be deliberated, focusing on the United States and Pakistan’s policy towards the Taliban. In conclusion, a critical analysis of Pakistan’s Afghanistan policy will be given.

## **B. POST SOVIET WITHDRAWAL PERIOD**

The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan came as a relief for the world, in general, and for Pakistan, in particular. However, the war involving the Mujahideen was not over, rather it entered into the phase of civil war. For Pakistan, too, the Jihad continued, as Pakistan’s objective of toppling Najibullah’s regime was yet to be achieved. From this point onward, it was no longer a struggle to get the Russian out of Afghanistan, but a civil war was being waged between the Kabul regime and the forces that opposed it. Since 1989, the struggle for power in Afghanistan has gone through different phases. These phases can be divided in the following periods:-

- Phase I (1989 to 1992) The Mujahideen struggle to remove Najibullah’s regime
- Phase II (1992 to 94) The Mujahideen’s struggle for power amongst themselves
- Phase III (1994-2001) The rise and fall of the Taliban

### **1. Phase I (1989 to 1992): The Mujahideen Struggle to Remove Najibullah’s Regime**

After the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, it was believed that the Soviet puppet government in Kabul would be overcome in a matter of days. The Mujahideen, with the assistance of Pakistan, formed an Afghan Interim Government (AIG) in Feb 1989,

consisting of leaders from seven parties.<sup>111</sup> The next stage, the ISI believed, was to seize a city that could act as a seat for the new administration. Once the Mujahideen were installed on Afghanistani soil, they hoped, the resistance of the Kabul regime would collapse. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto sanctioned the launch of an ill-conceived military campaign to capture Jalalabad. In March 1989, massed fighters from almost every faction attacked Jalalabad. The battle for Jalalabad turned out to be disastrous for the Mujahideen. It now appears that the ISI had made a catastrophic miscalculation, the assault was poorly organized, not only, there was factional in fighting and a lack of supplies but also there were tactical inadequacies. As a result, more, than 1000 Mujahideen were killed, with several thousand being injured. On the other hand, the Kabul regime received a big boost. The defeat had strategic implications for the Mujahideen, as many countries, including Pakistan, would have recognized the (Afgan Interim Government) AIG, had Jalalabad fell.<sup>112</sup> Pakistan's Afghan policy also changed after the Mujahideen's failure to capture Jalalabad. Without totally losing faith in the AIG, Islamabad began to search for political solutions to the problem, also. An example of this was the removal of Maj Gen Hamid Gul as the ISI chief.<sup>113</sup>

In fact, the Mujahideen were unable to defeat Najibullah's regime until April 1992 for two major reasons. The first reason was that the Soviet arms support to Najibullah's regime continued, whereas the U.S. arms support to the Mujahideen had declined appreciably. Soviet aid approached \$300 million in 1989. By contrast, U.S. aid to the Mujahideen dropped to \$ 40-50 millions per year in the 1980s.<sup>114</sup> The United States had, indeed, lost a great deal of interest in the conflict. Whereas, it had successfully helped block Soviet aggression, subsequently, neither the U.S. public, nor the U.S. government had any enthusiasm in regards to the Afghan civil war.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Kamal Matinuddin, *Power Struggle in Hindu Kush: Afghanistan 1978-1991*, 228-229. Matinuddin writes, "Only Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Malaysia recognized the AIG. Pakistan did not recognize the AIG as it considered to be pre-mature as it was not broad-based. Had Pakistan recognized it, it would have been embarrassing as the differences among them had arisen soon after its formation".

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 272.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 335.

<sup>114</sup> Tanner, *Afghanistan*, 273.

<sup>115</sup> Tanner, *Afghanistan*, 274. Tanner writes, "The Mujahideen, who were predominately Muslim Fundamentalists, were becoming dangerous after the Iranian revolution. Therefore, the Bush administration began to favor a peaceful solution to continuing support to the Mujahideen"

The second major reason for the continuation of the Afghan conflict was the inability of the Afghan resistance to demonstrate a credible alternative to what was already being offered. The AIG was doomed by the perpetual bickering of the Peshawar party leaders (who were its primary participants). The Shia minority was excluded from playing a role in the AIG, as they were the major resistance commanders inside Afghanistan. The AIG split apart in late 1989, divided by internecine violence between the forces of Hekmatyar and Massoud.<sup>116</sup>

Subsequently, the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 proved to be fatal for Najibullah. Deprived of Soviet arms, money, and diplomatic support, he had no alternative, but to leave power in April 1992. Soon thereafter, a struggle for the succession began among the Mujahideen parties.

## **2. Phase II (1992–94) Mujahideen's Struggle for Power**

The resignation of Najibullah created a power vacuum, and there was no government, at all, for one week. Major warlords, Hekmatyar, Masood, and Dostum had their eyes set on Kabul, and much bloodshed was expected. This, however, was averted by Pakistan's timely mediation. Pakistan played a key role in bringing Afghanistan out of this power vacuum. Talks between the Mujahideen leaders and Pakistani Government began in Peshawar.

An interim government was formed based on the April 1992 Peshawar Accord. All the parties' leaders signed the accord, excluding Hekmatyar. Pakistani officials maintained a neutral stance, because the friction between Pushtun and non-Pushtun parties could have cast shadows on the NWFP and Baluchistan. It was decided that for two months Mujadadi would be the acting President, to be followed by Rabbani for four months. At the end of the six months, Shoora would be held to choose the government for the next eighteen months, after which time elections would be held. It is ironic that while the talks were going on, the forces of Hekmatyar and Mosood were fighting for control of the capital.<sup>117</sup> The internecine fighting was expected, as those knocking at the doors of Kabul belonged to different tribal groups of religiously oriented political parties, each

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<sup>116</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 70.

<sup>117</sup> Tanner, *Afghanistan*, 276.

having distrust of the others.<sup>118</sup> The power struggle was typical of the intra-Afghan character, i.e., with no heed being given to any external counsel. In the race to capture Kabul, Rabbani and Masood forces were the first among other Afghan contenders to acquire power in the center. This had serious implications for the future of peace in Afghanistan.<sup>119</sup>

In June 1992, Mujadadi reluctantly, but peacefully, handed over power to Rabbani, whose interim government was to rule for four months. The new government relied on Masood and Dostum's forces to maintain military control of Kabul. Hekmatyar bombarded the city with rockets, denouncing the government as being a communist regime in disguise. Rabbani precipitated the crisis when he refused to step down from the office of president, as per the Peshawar accord, after four months tenure, and, in December 1992, was elected president by a false Shoorā that was dominated by his supporters.<sup>120</sup> Afghan society was completely divided over the Shoorā. Hekmatyar, who was offered the seat of prime minister, refused to share power with Rabbani, maintaining that Rabbani's government had no legality. Hekmatyar termed it to be an act of war against other organizations.

Pakistan then started new mediatory efforts to enable the warring Afghan leaders to resolve their differences. While heavy fighting was going on in Kabul, on March 1, 1993, eight major party leaders reached an agreement in Islamabad to allow Rabbani to finish an 18 month tenure as president, with Hekmatyar as prime minister and Masood as defense minister. The Saudi and Iranian governments, as well as several Afghan groups, were also invited, making it an joint peace effort.<sup>121</sup>

Although the Islamabad accord was signed in solemn ceremonies in Saudi Arabia, it was never implemented. The cabinet to be formed by Hekmatyar was not accepted. He demanded removal of Masood from the post of Defense Minister, which was not

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<sup>118</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon : Afghanistan : 1994-1997*, 7.

<sup>119</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 21. Rashid describes the situation, "As such of Afghanistan's subsequent civil war was to be determined by the fact that Kabul fell, not to the well-armed bickering Pushtun parties... but to the better organized and more united Tajik and Uzbek forces from the north.... It was a devastating psychological blow because for the first time in 300 years the Pashtuns had lost control of the capital. An internal civil war began immediately as Hekmatyar rallied the Pushtuns and laid siege to Kabul and shelling it mercilessly"

<sup>120</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 74.

<sup>121</sup> Sattar, *Relations with the West, China, and the Middle East*, 395.

agreed upon. The country, again, plunged into civil war. Fighting flared repeatedly between groups who allied themselves with each other in various constantly shifting positions, and mainly along ethnic lines. For example, Pushtuns in the South, Uzbeks and Tajiks in the North and Shi'a Hazaras in the center battled each other. There were also repeated incidents of Russian forces shelling Afghan territory, or attacking Afghanistan from Tajikistan.<sup>122</sup>

Following Rabbani's re-election as President in June 1994, Islamabad accused the Afghan leader of perpetuating his power illegally. The relation between Afghanistan and Pakistan deteriorated when the Pakistani embassy was attacked with rockets by anti-Pakistani protesters. To add to this, Rabbani started developing relations with India, evoking a bitter response from Islamabad.<sup>123</sup>

After the withdrawal of Russian troops, the worst period in Afghan history began, the state-society relationship having completely broken down. There was no central rule, no mechanism for exercising state power, and no security. At this point, Afghanistan was in a state of virtual disintegration, the country being divided into warlord fiefdoms. Rabbani was controlling Kabul, Ismael Khan was controlling Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif was under Dostum, the south-eastern districts were controlled by Hikmatyar, etc.<sup>124</sup> Up until this time, the actual faces of almost all the Afghan leaders had been given exposure to their nation. However, now they witnessed their leaders making and breaking alliances almost overnight. These Afghan leaders were either incapable, or unwilling, to put things back on the right track. Not one of them proved to be trustworthy, failing even to fulfill the promise made in the Holy Kaaba. Afghanistan had almost become a failed state, as the writ of the government did not even extend its reach to its own capital city.<sup>125</sup>

All the while, the international community seemed to have lost interest. The only active players were the Iranians, the Russians and the Pakistanis, as each vying for influence and the furtherance of its own agenda (including ethnic and other interests), while caring little for the welfare of the Afghans. Amidst this turmoil in Afghanistan, a

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<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>123</sup> Riffat, *Pakistan's Relations with Afghanistan : Continuity and Challenges*.

<sup>124</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 21.

<sup>125</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon: Afghanistan: 1994-1997*, 24-26.

reactionary movement emerged from Kandhar, attracting enormous support from the tired Afghan population. The leaders of this movement called themselves the *Taliban*.

### **3. Phase III (1994 To 2001) the Taliban Regime**

The Taliban consisted of poor, Afghan students, who had been educated in Pakistan's religious schools. Their objective was to assist the Afghan Mujahideen in evicting Soviet forces from Afghanistan. Many of them were orphans of the so-called 'Afghan Jihad'. They rallied around Mullah Omar, a former Mujahid, reacting against the chaos that had followed the Mujahideen victory, while blaming currently existing Afghan leaders for bringing death and destruction to their homeland.<sup>126</sup>

The Taliban's first, large military operations took place in October 1994, when it seized the Pasha munitions depot, and the town of Spin Boldak, situated on the Pakistani border. Spin Boldak was held by Hekmetyar's group at the time. The capture of arms provided them with an enormous quantity of military material, including rockets, ammunition, artillery and small arms. Thereafter, the Taliban took control of Kandhar without any resistance. By December 1994, the Taliban had spread to the northern and eastern outskirts of Kabul, towards the strategic town of Herat.<sup>127</sup> Within three months, the Taliban had taken control of twelve provinces, opening the road to traffic and disarming the population. As the Taliban marched north to Kabul, local warlords either fled or surrendered to them. Mullah Omar and his army of students were on the march across Afghanistan. During this time, the Taliban met with phenomenal military success, including the capture of several important cities, like Herat in 1995, Jalalabad and Kabul in 1996, Kunduz in 1997. They also captured Mazar-I-Sharif in May 1997, and after losing it, recaptured Mazar-I-Sharif in August 1998, as well as capturing Bamiyan in September 1998.<sup>128</sup> By the year 2000, about 90% of Afghanistan was under Taliban rule, and they held 27 out of 29 provinces. The only group posing any resistance to the Taliban were the Tajiks, but this was only in the north.

### **C. PAKISTAN'S GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

For security reasons, having a friendly government in Afghanistan has been Pakistan's long-held desire. However, the emergence of CARs after the collapse of the

<sup>126</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 23.

<sup>127</sup> Afghanistan: Crisis of Impunity, 15.

<sup>128</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 108.

Soviet Union brought renewed interest into the region. Successive Pakistani governments were anxious to open up direct land routes for trade with the Central Asian Republics. Ever since the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, Pakistan had been looking for such an environment. Among existing Afghan leaders, Hekmatyar, being Pushtun was felt to be the leading figure, over other warlords. Therefore, Pakistan had aimed to place Hekmatyar in power in Kabul in order to have a friendly government in Afghanistan.<sup>129</sup> Although Pakistan had hoped to establish a friendly regime in Kabul, the record shows that whenever the question of peace and settlement in Afghanistan came up, Pakistan had always cooperated in the settlement of the crisis. This is proven by its roles in brokering the 1992 and 1993 Accords, where Pakistan promoted the acceptance of Rabbani, a non-Pushtun, as president.<sup>130</sup>

By the end of 1994, Pakistani policy makers realized that Pakistan's hope of having a friendly Afghan government was unlikely to come true. Moreover, Pakistan was tired of backing Hekmatyar, who was losing ground militarily, and the continuous nature of the war was having a negative impact on the socio-economic life of Pakistan. The drugs, Kalashnikovization and the heavy burdens associated with hosting Afghan refugees were all growing threats to the internal security of the country. Under these circumstances, not only did Islamabad view the rise of the Taliban as increasing the prospects of bringing peace to the region, but also many members of international community saw things similarly.

### **1. Pakistan's Support of the Taliban**

Pakistan impressed by the Taliban's success in suppressing unruly Mujahideen commanders and imposing peace in and around Kandhar, decided to encourage the Taliban as an alternative to the Rabbani regime (which also had established links with the Indians).<sup>131</sup> Bhutto's interior minister, Maj Gen. Naseerullah Babar, considered the Taliban to be a perfect tool for Pakistan in opening up trade routes into Central Asia; routes that had been blocked by all the turmoil in Afghanistan. To coordinate its assistance to the Taliban, an Afghan Cell was created in the Ministry. The ISI provided

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<sup>129</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 26.

<sup>130</sup> Kux, *United States and Pakistan 1947-2000, Disenchanted Allies*.

<sup>131</sup> Dennis, *United States and Pakistan 1947-2000, Disenchanted Allies*, 335.

transportation, fuel, communications equipment and advice to the Taliban movement.<sup>132</sup> The Taliban also enjoyed support from Pakistani religious elements. For example, the Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam of Fazal ul Rehman, as well as the famous Akora Khattak madrassa (headed by Maulana Semi-ul-Haq) all lent their support.<sup>133</sup> In regards to their funding, the duties imposed on trucks transiting Afghanistan from Pakistan became the Taliban's most important official source of income. In addition, smuggling, and 20% of the income of poppy dealers, went to Taliban accounts.<sup>134</sup> Arab terrorist financier, Osama bin Laden, and the U.S. oil company of California (Unocal) have also been instrumental in providing funds for the Taliban.<sup>135</sup>

Pakistan accorded the Taliban diplomatic recognition on May 25, 1997 after Mazar-i-Sharif had fallen to the Taliban for the first time, when the movement appeared to be on the verge of conquering all of northern Afghanistan. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates followed the suit two days later.<sup>136</sup>

Politically, by recognizing the Taliban regime, Pakistan opted for an 'open play' and high-risk policy with regard to Afghanistan. In taking this initiative, Pakistan did not consider the reactions of its neighbors. For example, Iran, a traditionally close friend, was never happy with the Taliban. Official recognition by Pakistan further widened the gulf between these two countries, with Iran eventually asking India to do everything in its power to help stem the crisis in Afghanistan. The policy also caused deep resentment in the CAR countries; many of whom Pakistan had hoped to engage in lucrative commercial deals. As a consequence, and because of its refusal to rein in both the Taliban and Pakistan's Islamic parties, CAR states started to ignore Pakistan. These states started to look towards Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan and even Russia, as potentially being their partners in the development of their oil and gas pipelines for export.<sup>137</sup> Additionally, by recognizing the Taliban, Pakistan gave preference to the Pushtuns, thereby losing any

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 335.

<sup>133</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon : Afghanistan : 1994-1997*, 24-26.

<sup>134</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 191-192.

<sup>135</sup> Coll, Steve, *Ghost Wars*. (New York, The Penguin Press, 2004), 332-338.

<sup>136</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon : Afghanistan : 1994-1997*, 141.

<sup>137</sup> Jalalzai, *Taliban And The Great Game In Afghanistan*.

hope of a peace settlement with Rabbani, Masood and even Hekmetyar for if their Policy fails.

#### **D. THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S REACTION AND THE FALL OF THE TALIBAN**

The Taliban had an extreme interpretation of the Sharia, or Islamic law that appalled many Afghans, and the Muslim world. They not only closed down all girls' schools, but women were virtually eliminated from public space by being forbidden to work outside of the home. They also banned every conceivable kind of entertainment. The Taliban's brand of Islamic fundamentalism was so extreme that it appeared to denigrate Islam's message of peace and tolerance, as well as its propensity to co-exist with other religious and ethnic groups.<sup>138</sup>

The Taliban's enforcement of such practices sent ideological shock waves throughout the region. Few Islamic countries endorsed the Taliban version of the Sharia law, but most considered this matter to be an internal affair. Iran openly denounced the Taliban regime, considering them to have been the creation of the United States and Saudi Arabia in order to contain Iran. Moscow's opposition to the Taliban appeared based on the apprehension that, with their religious zeal, they would pose a threat to the internal stability of the Central Asian Republics.<sup>139</sup> Iran found that its own interest coincided with Central Asia and the Russian federation, making an alliance with them against the Pushtun Sunni Taliban movement. Henceforth, Afghanistan became a pawn in the hands of regional and extra regional actors such as, Iran, Turkey, India, and Russia. Furthermore, four of the CAR nations backed the anti-Taliban, Northern Alliance with arms and money. By contrast, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia backed the Taliban.<sup>140</sup>

As the Taliban were being isolated from other regional countries, Pakistan put forward a peace formula, with the aim to allay the fears of Iran and the Central Asian

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 118-121.

<sup>139</sup> Riffat, *Pakistan's Relations with Afghanistan : Continuity and Challenges*. Riffat writes, "After the fall of Kabul a summit meeting of the leaders of the Republics of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian federation was held in Almaty, which called for taking adequate steps to prevent the spread of fundamentalism and instability from South to Central Asia."

<sup>140</sup> Rashid, 197-201 and also see Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 5.

countries regarding the Taliban.<sup>141</sup> Simultaneously, Pakistan persuaded the Taliban to accept a broad-based government in Kabul; one in which all major ethnic tribes would share power. The Taliban, however, refused to accept any such formula in which they were to share the power with the Northern Alliance, who controlled less than 10% of territory at the time. This was an indication to Pakistan that the Taliban had transformed themselves, from being a subservient political client, into an independent regime and, thus, it may no longer be possible for a Pakistan to manage the Taliban, as it could lead to anarchy on its side.<sup>142</sup> The Taliban, to reduce their dependence on Pakistan and to get some autonomy, began cultivating close ties with Osama-bin-Laden. He set up a private base near Jalalabad in 1990, not only supporting the Taliban financially, but also sending several hundred Arab-Afghans to participate in Taliban military campaigns in North.<sup>143</sup> Due to bin Laden's terrorist activities, the Taliban came under intense international pressure, the UN even imposing sanctions in November 1999. However, these sanctions did not force the Taliban to give up bin Laden. New sanctions imposed in December 2000, these being in response to an attack on the USS Cole in the port of Aden, also failed to work.<sup>144</sup>

Pakistan, now realizing that it was being isolated due to its Afghan policy, downgraded its recognition of the Taliban in 1998 under pressure from the United States.<sup>145</sup> The September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States presented Pakistan with a difficult choice: either it had to join the United States in its war against bin Laden's al-Qaeda network, or it had to persist with its pro-Taliban Afghan policy and, as a consequence, continue to suffer condemnation by the international community, seeming guilty by association with bin Laden's al-Qaeda network. The Taliban, though starting out as an asset for Pakistan, had now become a strategic liability. The logical response

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<sup>141</sup> Riffat, *Pakistan's Relations with Afghanistan : Continuity and Challenges*. Riffat writes, "The peace formula stressed the following. (a) Immediate cessation of armed hostilities and compliance with the cease-fire by all parties.(b) Imposition of an arms embargo on Afghanistan. (c) Support for the efforts of the UN special mission for promoting reconciliation and peace. (d) Formation of a monitoring mechanism for verification of compliance with the cease-fire and arms embargo".

<sup>142</sup> Feroz, "Rough Neighbours : Afghanistan and Pakistan".

<sup>143</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 154.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 155.

<sup>145</sup> See "Crisis of Impunity: The Role of Pakistan, Russia and Iran in Fueling the Civil War" in *Afghanistan*, journal of Human Rights Watch, vol 13 no.3© (July 2001), 20-22.

appeared to be to keep the security and integrity of Pakistan of paramount importance. Therefore, Pakistan had to take a U-turn in its Afghan policy.

#### **E. THE UNITED STATES' TALIBAN POLICY**

Washington had always regarded Afghanistan as being an area of Soviet interest. Following the Soviet's physical involvement in Afghanistan, the United States had been very happy to see the Soviets bleed there, thus scoring a diplomatic victory over the Soviet Union. However, after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, the United States appeared to have lost interest in Afghanistan, having withdrawn from the scene, and leaving warring Afghan factions to fight amongst themselves. "The United States shared responsibility for what happened to Afghanistan after the Soviets left", wrote Anthony Lewis, in *The International Herald Tribune*.

The independence of the Central Asian states, with their rich oil and gas fields, combined with the interests of Pakistan and Iran in Afghanistan, revived American interests there.<sup>146</sup> On November 18, 1996, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Robin Raphel, stated that "the Taliban are a completely indigenous movement...and that, even though their policies reflect extremism, the best way to moderate them is to engage them".<sup>147</sup> Two motives behind the United States' initial encouragement allegedly given to the Taliban stand out: First, the Taliban was anti-Iranian and pro-Western in their orientation; Second, the United States wanted to check the influence of Russia in Central Asian States by giving alternatives trade routes through Afghanistan (e.g., a case in point was the Taliban's backing of the *UNOCAL* project by the U.S. government). At one point in time, the U.S. State Department even declared that it would establish diplomatic relations with the Taliban. However, the announcement was soon retracted.<sup>148</sup> All this was done while some of the highest officials of the United States were visiting Afghanistan and talking to the Taliban. Similarly, Taliban delegates also visited the United States, giving the impression that the United States was supporting the Taliban.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War*, 164.

<sup>147</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 335. also see Nasim Zehra, "Pakistan's Afghan Policy", *Defense Journal* (December 1999) available on, <http://www.defencejournal.com/dec99/afghan.htm>, assessed on 20 December 2004.

<sup>148</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 166.

<sup>149</sup> Coll, *Ghost Wars*, 335-337. also see Michael Moore, *Fahrenheit 9/11*, (Los Angeles: 2004), filmstrip.

Subsequently, commencing in late 1997, the U.S. policy turned against the Taliban because of their behavior toward women. On May 5, 1999 the U.S. Senate passed S.Res 68, calling on President Bush not to recognize any Afghan government that discriminated against women.<sup>150</sup> Thereafter, the United States' relations with the Taliban further deteriorated when they provided support to bin Laden and refused to accept a broad based government in Kabul. Terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001 shocked the entire world, the Bush administration attributing it to Osama-bin-Laden and his organization, Al-Qaeda. The United States quickly worked to gather international momentum, embarking upon a military operation against Afghanistan on October 7, 2001. Within two months, the Taliban were routed and their regime came to an end.

#### **F. ANALYSIS OF PAKISTAN'S AFGHAN POLICY**

Ever since the power struggle between the rival Afghan militia began, Pakistan's objectives have been:<sup>151</sup>

- To help obtain a friendly government across its western border. It was thought that a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan would give Pakistan 'Strategic Depth' against India.<sup>152</sup>
- To gain access to Central Asian markets.
- To gain a safe route for oil and gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to the Arabian sea.
- The repatriation of Afghan refugees.

Pakistan was unable to achieve any of its above mentioned objectives; a failure which could be attributed to flaws in its Afghan policy, as well as to other contributing factors. Taken together, this made it difficult for Pakistan to achieve its goals. This will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

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<sup>150</sup> Kenneth Katzman, "Afghanistan: current issues and U.S. Policy" *CAS Report for Congress*, RL30588 (October 7, 2003), 4. Kenneth writes, "U.S. women's rights group like Feminist Majority and National Organization for Women mobilized to stop the Clinton administration from recognizing the Taliban regime unless it altered its treatment of women".

<sup>151</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon: Afghanistan: 1994-1997*, 141.

<sup>152</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 186-187.

## **1. Flaws in Pakistan's Afghan Policy**

When analysis of Pakistan's Afghanistan policy is done in hindsight, one can find a number of flaws during this period. These are listed below:-

a. Pakistan's Afghan policy was based on the wrong assumptions.<sup>153</sup> That is, after the withdrawal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, and once Najibullah was forced to quit, Pakistan assumed that the Afghan factions would be able to establish a stable government. Similarly, when the Taliban appeared on the radar, Pakistan hoped that if its full support was given to the Taliban in overthrowing Rabbani, they would be able to capture power and Pakistan would be able to reach out to the CARs. Pakistan also assumed that a Taliban dominated government in Kabul would be permanently friendly towards Pakistan, would recognize the Durand Line, and curb Pushtun nationalism. But the Taliban not only refused to recognize Durand Line, but also did not agree to drop Afghanistan's claim to Pushtunistan. Rather, fugitives from Pakistan openly lived in Afghanistan during Taliban rule.<sup>154</sup> Dr Eqbal opined that inadvertently, Islamabad was setting the stage for the emergence of a powerful Pushtunistan movement.<sup>155</sup>

b. After Soviet withdrawal, Pakistan should have minimized the role of ISI in Afghan affairs, the foreign office only being given the basic responsibility of policy formulation. In fact, civilian leadership had very little control over the Pakistan's Afghan policy.

c. Pakistan's internal, political instability also contributed to its failure to form any long-term Afghan policy. Between the time of President Zia's death in 1988 and 2001, a span of 13 years, a total of five changes of government took place in Pakistan. For the first time, it was apparent that Pakistan's Afghan policy and its domestic policy were not coordinated, having an adverse affect on the outcome of its Afghan policy. Consequently, there was a lack of coordination between different departments having anything to do with Afghan affairs. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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<sup>153</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon: Afghanistan: 1994-1997*, 220.

<sup>154</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 187. Rashid writes, "Notorious killer Riaz Basra was a guest till the Taliban regime fell".

<sup>155</sup> Dr Eqbal Ahmed, "What after 'strategic depth'", in *Dawn*, August 23, 1998. Eqbal writes, "I have met some of them (Afghans) and found ethnic nationalism lurking just below their 'Islamic' skin. It is silly to presume their debt to Pakistan as an impediment to their ambitions". Available on [http://www.bitsonline.net/eqbal/articles\\_by\\_category.asp](http://www.bitsonline.net/eqbal/articles_by_category.asp). Accessed on April 12, 2005.

(barely involved in Afghan policy), ISI and the Ministry of Interior often made independent decisions, without consulting each other first.<sup>156</sup> A case in point during Benazir Bhutto's time in Pakistan occurred when General Babar, acting as head of Ministry of Interior, was deliberately cutting out the ISI and the Army of policy-making decisions because these groups were considered to have supporters from Zia's era. On the political front, Bhutto leaned towards Jammat-e-Ulema-Islam in order to out-duel Sharif, Hizb-e-Islami (Hekmatyar) and Jammat-e-Islami. Therefore, as such, ISI and Ministry of Interior were following their own Afghan policies.<sup>157</sup> The result was a lack of coherence in policy.

d. Knowing the history of Afghanistan, as well as the national characteristics of Afghans, leads to the expectation that too much involvement in the internal affairs of Afghanistan tends to raise the reaction level of other groups. Moreover, to rely on one group to achieve long-term objectives may have been a wrong policy to be followed in Afghanistan. It ended up being counter-productive, as those not favored by Pakistan remained unfriendly to it, even after some solution to the Afghan problems was found. Perhaps Pakistan should have been content with having an independent, integrated and friendly western neighbor, irrespective of which political faction or ethnic community was in power.<sup>158</sup>

e. Pakistan should have worked through the United Nations, rather than getting directly involved in trying to bring about a broad-based government in Afghanistan. Moreover, it should have taken into account the interests of its neighbors, which included, not only Iran, but also Uzbekistan, Turkministan, and Tajikistan. Similarly, no consideration was given to Russia's political influence over the Central Asian republics. Logically, Russia and Iran would never have let Central Asia or Afghanistan simply fall into Pakistan's lap.

f. As related to the acquisition of a friendly government, maintaining a regime in Afghanistan who was also a client would have required monumental resources. It was not possible for Pakistan to afford such a task from its economy that was

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<sup>156</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon: Afghanistan*. also see Ahmed Rashid. *Taliban*, 184.

<sup>157</sup> Burke, *Al-Qaeda: Casting a Shadow of Terror*. 115

<sup>158</sup> Matinuddin, *The Taliban Phenomenon: Afghanistan*, 221.

dwindling in resources, itself. Moreover, the cost of reconstructing Afghanistan was conservatively estimated in 1998 to be approximately \$ 40 Billion Dollar.<sup>159</sup> This amount would be difficult to provide for even the wealthiest nations.

g. Pakistan, instead of looking for political solutions, sought military solutions, first, through Hekmatyar, and then through the Taliban, each having a unique set of implications.<sup>160</sup>

h. When Afghanistan was under Soviet influence, a hostile Afghanistan mattered to Pakistan, and many of its external policies were influenced from Moscow. Pakistan's fear of an Indo-Afghan-Soviet nexus was appeased by the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Therefore, there was a need to carry out a realistic re-orientation of Pakistan's security concerns.

## **2. Contributory Factors**

Although there were flaws in Pakistan's Afghan policy, there were also a few other contributory factors, further complicating an already very complex situation for Pakistan.

a. As discussed in Chapter III, the basic flaw was in the Geneva Accord, because it did not provide for the peaceful formation of a unified government for Afghanistan. As such, the Geneva Accord had the limited objective of getting the Soviets to withdraw from Afghanistan. The second flaw was that both superpowers continued their arms support to their proxies; had the arms support been allowed to dry up, the civil war could not have otherwise been prolonged.

b. The collapse of the Soviet Union was a something that no one had visualized at that time. Consequently, the new independent states emerged with their own agenda and interests, thus creating a new situation in the region.

c. Soon after the Soviet withdrawal from the region, the U.S. interests also vanished. The United States' retreat from the region, combined with the collapse of the Soviet Union, created a power vacuum that could be filled by new actors in the region,

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<sup>159</sup> Eqbal, *What after 'strategic depth'?*

<sup>160</sup> Charles L. Glaser, "Political Consequences of Military Strategy: Expanding and Refining the Spiral and Deterrence Models" *World Politics*, 44, (Princeton University Press, 1992), Glaser writes, "Analyses of military strategy often overlook its political consequences, its effects on adversary's goals and understanding of defenders resolve. As a result, they prescribe the wrong type of military policy and reduce states' security".

including Iran, CARs, Saudi Arabia, Russia, India and China. Entry of these new actors into the power game, along with their vested interests, further complicated the situation.

d. Iran also contributed to the escalation of the crisis by fueling the war, while playing the “Shia card.”<sup>161</sup> As a matter of fact, some analysts have concluded that Iran’s policy in Afghanistan has kept the pot boiling in Afghanistan so that it could gain control of land routes and pipelines to Central Asia.<sup>162</sup>

e. Initially, the United States also concurred with Pakistan’s policy, because it saw Afghanistan as a pressure point for Iran, but more so for its own economic interests in CAR’s oil resources. It changed its view only after Osama bin Laden landed in Afghanistan. The United States’ support to the Taliban emboldened Pakistan in its course of following its Taliban policy.

### **3. Implications for Pakistan**

When a country opts to follow a certain foreign policy, it has its internal, as well as external, implications. These need to be kept under consideration while assessing the successes and failures of the policy. Similarly, Pakistan’s Afghan policy had far-reaching consequences for Pakistan’s own society. The impact on Pakistan of the Afghan crisis started after the Soviet invasion in 1979, and continues to cast its shadow, even today. The negative impacts of the Afghan crisis have left a deep impression on the socio-cultural, political and economic landscapes of Pakistan.

Since the Soviet Invasion, 3.2 million refugees have migrated to Pakistan. Despite the withdrawal of the Soviet Union, these refugees stayed in Pakistan due to the continuous civil war in Afghanistan. The presence of these refugees thus far has had deep social and economic impacts upon Pakistan. Not only did the Afghan refugees rupture the flimsy social fabric of Pakistan, but it also directly contributed to producing extremism, Jihaddi culture, violence, crime and corruption in the country. The religious fanaticism that emerged on the domestic scene in Pakistan in the early 1990s had not been seen in Pakistani society before. This trend was a direct result of militancy and sectarian violence, which kept creeping back into Pakistan’s society because of its support of the Afghan Mujahideen. Consequently, while Pakistani society became more radical in many

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<sup>161</sup> Afghanistan: Crisis of Impunity, 20-22.

<sup>162</sup> Musa Khan Jalalzai, *Taliban And The Great Game In Afghanistan*. 123

ways, it also became more conservative in its outlook on other religious matters. This trend gave rise to sectarian violence in the country.<sup>163</sup>

Between 1979 and 1985, the number of heroin addicts in Pakistan grew from zero to 1.5 million. The drug menace, and the addictions it brought, started to gain a strong grip on Pakistani society; something it had not experienced before. Pakistan's Afghan policy also adversely affected the Kashmir struggle movement, as it lost the world's sympathy, due to Pakistani and Arab recruits joining the fight and turning to the Taliban Jihad.<sup>164</sup> The Indians capitalized on this mood, defending their own atrocities in Kashmir, and a perfectly legitimate freedom struggle was branded as inspired by extremism and sponsoring terrorism.<sup>165</sup>

Another area where Pakistan was badly affected due to the Afghan crisis was in its economy. Due to rampant smuggling through the Afghan Transit Trade, Pakistan lost billions of rupees. Also, the Central Board of Revenue (CBR) estimated that Pakistan lost US \$ 80 million in customs revenue in the financial year 1992/93, \$ 280 Million Rupees in 1993/94, \$ 600 million in 1997/98.<sup>166</sup>

## **G. CONCLUSION**

After the Soviet withdrawal, the Mujahideen became warlords, starting to seek personal power in a cut-throat competition against each other. Afghanistan's continuous violence especially frustrated Pakistan, because it prevented the country from realizing its aspirations in both trade and influence in the Central Asia region. Pakistan, however, did try to bring some unity among Mujahideen groups, e.g., through the Peshawar and Islamabad accords, but failed to ensure compliance by either side. The failure of the Mujahideen to stop fighting amongst themselves led to the emergence of the Taliban. The Taliban brought about peace and tranquility, but their draconian measures and religious fundamentalism caused alarm and disappointment in the region and throughout the world at large. The dispute between the United States and the Taliban on the issues of terrorism

<sup>163</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 194. Rashid writes, "More than 1600 serious incidents were recorded between 1987 and 1997, 478 persons were killed and some 2300 were injured. The year 1997 was the worst in which serious incidents were recorded claiming over 200 lives and 1998, which started was another year of worst sectarian violence and religious fanaticism".

<sup>164</sup> Rashid, "Taliban: Exporting Terrorism" *Foreign Affairs*, 78, 6 (New York: Nov/Dec 1999), 22. available on [http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url\\_ver=Z39.88-2004](http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?url_ver=Z39.88-2004), assessed on December 20, 2004.

<sup>165</sup> Asad Durani, "Taming the Taliban" *The News*, September 20, 1998.

<sup>166</sup> Rashid, *Taliban*, 190-192.

and Osama-bin-Laden, led to the imposition of sanctions on Kabul. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on the United States, combined with the Taliban's refusal to hand over Osama-bin-Laden, led to the U.S. military action in Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, and led to the ultimate collapse of the Taliban regime. For Pakistan, joining the US-led coalition against international terrorism reflected a major policy shift towards Afghanistan.

The failure of Pakistan's Afghanistan policy during this period can be attributed to a number of factors. The major flaw was in the Geneva Accord, which had limited agenda of ensuring withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan. It did not provide a framework for the establishment of an interim government after the Soviet withdrawal. Moreover, the Geneva Accord did not bring an end to the arms supply of both superpowers to their respective parties. As a result, armed confrontation between the Kabul regime and the Mujahideen continued. The shortsightedness of U.S. policy allowed communist Afghans to retain power in Afghanistan, despite the Soviet withdrawal. Subsequently, the emergence of CARs states, as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, further complicated the situation. With both superpowers gone from the region, new actors exploited the situation for their own vested interests, thereby fueling the ongoing civil war in Afghanistan.

In retrospect, one observes that during this period Pakistan also did not form a coherent foreign policy with which it could handle the Afghan situation appropriately. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) and Ministry of Interior, each made independent decisions; decisions which they thought were in the interests of the country. One of the causes that contributed in its failure to form any long-term, coherent response to the Afghan crisis was Pakistan's internal political instability. Moreover, unlike Pakistan's previous Afghanistan policy, two factors stand out as distinctively different during the period under discussion. First, Pakistani policy-makers considered it to be their legitimate right to install a pro-Pakistani government in Kabul, as a prize for having supported the Afghan cause during the war against the Soviet's.<sup>167</sup> Second, with the emergence of CARs, Pakistan's objectives in Afghanistan were not only

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<sup>167</sup> Brig Khan, Feroz, "Rough Neighbors: Afghanistan and Pakistan", in *Strategic Insight of Center for Contemporary Conflict* (January 2003) available at <http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/archiveTopic.asp> Assessed on December 12, 2004.

limited to strengthening its own security, but now economic interests also figured prominently. Because Pakistan was obsessed with accomplishing these desires, getting overly entangled in the internal political crisis of Afghanistan, in the end it proved detrimental to its own security.

## V. CONCLUSION

### A. INTRODUCTION

Until September 11, 2001, Pakistan's Afghanistan policy was in disarray. Although Pakistan has changed its policy, there persists a certain kind of inertia. The Taliban have been routed, but some elements continue to operate in a "gray area," in the porous tribal region, on the border. Similarly, some elements in the Afghan government continue to remain hostile to Pakistan. Afghanistan is gradually returning to normalcy, but it is still years away from becoming a coherent nation-state. At present, the strong presence of coalition forces has given some semblance of stability to Afghanistan, both in its military and in its political spheres. Pakistan's role in Afghan affairs is minimal, although it continues to be the economic lifeline of landlocked Afghanistan. The entrenched, erstwhile Northern Alliance (comprised of Tajiks and Uzbeks) remain both powerful and hostile towards Pakistan. In view of regional and global changes, there is a need to review Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan. The salient question is, "What policy options may exist for Pakistan towards Afghanistan at the present time?"

As Pakistan reviews its long-term strategic policy, it must take into account dynamic changes in the global and regional environment. Pakistan needs to develop a link between its Afghan policy and the prevalent situations at the regional and global levels. At the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, tensions continue to mount and it appears that the ongoing chill between the countries might last awhile.<sup>168</sup> However, there are powerful elements that could prevent a total breakdown of the bilateral relations, such as, ethno-linguistic affinity, commonality of cultural and religious traditions, positive refugee experiences, and economic interdependency. Policy-makers on both sides should be cognizant of these factors while framing policies.

Given the course of analysis, and the likely political disposition in Afghanistan, as well as its potential effect on Pakistan, the formulation of any Pakistan-Afghanistan policy should arise out of the strategies of influence in state-to-state relations, such as a

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<sup>168</sup> Exchange of fire between border security forces of Pakistan and Afghanistan indicate the tense relations between both the countries. See for details feature by A.R. Siddiqui, "The Trouble Borders" in *Dawn*, January 14, 2005, available on <http://www.dawn.com/2005/01/14/fea.htm>, assessed on April 15, 2005.

policy of reassurance.<sup>169</sup> Within the broader framework of policy of reassurance, a “Policy of Constructive Bilateral Engagement”<sup>170</sup> is a recommended mode of discourse.

This chapter begins by describing the present geopolitical environment in Afghanistan, followed by a deliberation upon the factors that have the potential to affect Pakistan’s Afghanistan relations in a positive way. Before policy recommendations are given, the current factors in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations will be discussed.

## **B AFGHANISTAN’S PRESENT GEO-STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT**

For the sake of brevity, only the broadest conclusions with regard to the analysis of the present geo-strategic environment in Afghanistan will be discussed. These conclusions are given to demonstrate the conditions in the formation of any policy.

### **1. Afghanistan’s Internal Situation**

Afghan society remains deeply divided along predominantly ethnic lines, where religion is often used to compliment one group’s feelings of ethnic superiority over other groups, e.g., in a group’s claiming to be better Muslims.<sup>171</sup> Even the struggle against the Soviet occupation was, at heart, an ethnic struggle, with various tribes outdoing others to claim national superiority (and, therefore, demanding a bigger slice of the aid “pie”). This phenomenon, along with fear of Pushtun domination felt by some in the Northern Alliance, led to the opposition of the Taliban Islamic Militia. It is envisaged that Afghanistan is not likely to emerge as a single, ethno-political unit in near future.

The law and order situation in Afghanistan is likely to remain a source of worry for the United States and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Such concerns are due to the ethnic polarization of the society, and the inability of the ISAF to win Afghan’s acceptance easily. As long as non-Pushtun elements, dominated by the Panjsheri Tajik elite, continue to assert their new-found political power in an attempt to marginalize the Pushtun majority, there will be reciprocal actions by the Pushtuns. Only the successful formulation of a government could avoid a potential of ethnic conflict.

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<sup>169</sup> Gross Janice Stein, “Deterrence and Reassurance: Behavior, Society and Nuclear War”, Vol 2. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 32.

<sup>170</sup> Hass, Richard N and O’Sullivan Meghan L. *Honey and Vinegar: Incentives, Sanctions, and Foreign Policy* (Washington: Brooking Institution Press, 2000) Ch 1 and 9.

<sup>171</sup> For the details of the phenomenon of militias and their role in Afghanistan see Antonio Giustozzi, *War, Politics and Society in Afghanistan 1978-1992* (London: Hurst & Co., 2000), 198-225.

Moreover, reformed Taliban members will have to be re-integrated into the state structure, as their continued marginalization is likely to be counter-productive, for ethnic and political reasons.

At present, for many Afghans, the most immediate issue is personal security and their main concern, for now, is to survive under war-like conditions.<sup>172</sup> As long as contending powers and adjacent states seek their own subjective aims in Afghanistan, internal instability in Afghanistan will likely persist.

## **2. The Global and Regional Scenario**

Afghanistan will remain in the lime light due to the ongoing war on terrorism. Major players—i.e., the United States, Russia, India, Iran, and the entire Islamic world--will remain involved in Afghanistan for the foreseeable future. Another point of interest that will keep Afghanistan relevant to the international community is the proximity of Afghanistan to several of the largest hydrocarbon reserves in the Caspian Region. The prospects of the Caspian Region might, therefore, continue to affect the foreign policies of all regional countries, like Pakistan, Iran, India, China, and Russia, as well as other interested stake-holders, like the United States, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Thus, these players may continue to affect the Afghan situation, either directly or indirectly.

While commenting on some of the important player's policies, vis-à-vis Afghanistan, it is envisaged that Russia will apparently continue to follow a hands-off policy in Afghanistan, at least as long as the United States remains militarily committed to the region. Another reason this policy might continue is that the Russian buffer zone, in the form of its former CARs, is not threatened, and its economic interests are not endangered by the Coalition's operations in Afghanistan. China, while committed to domestic economic development and internal reform, will likely watch the situation from the sidelines. The Chinese are already flooding the Afghan market with their merchandise. Similarly, India will likely continue to exert its traditional influence on Afghan affairs. India's strategic interest is to tie down substantial Pakistani military forces along the Pak-Afghan border. Presently, India is heavily investing in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. To demonstrate its assistance, it is spending millions of

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<sup>172</sup> Michael O' Hanlon, "Afghanistan Index: Tracking variables of Reconstruction and Security in Post-Taliban Afghanistan" (The Brookings Institution; Washington DC, May 19, 2005), available on line, [www.brookings.edu/afghanistanindex](http://www.brookings.edu/afghanistanindex), assessed on July 1, 2005.

dollars in various projects as a goodwill gesture.<sup>173</sup> But, a large embassy in Kabul, and proliferating consulates in Kandhar, Herat and Jalalabad are busy cultivating relations with important military commanders, who operate close to the Pakistani border.<sup>174</sup> This, of course, is a source of anxiety in Pakistan, since not too long ago this area was in Pakistan's backyard. Two other important actors, i.e., Iran and Pakistan, are likely to jockey for influence through proxies to benefit from the riches of Central Asia. The re-emergence of Pakistani leverage is dependent upon the political disposition after the Afghanistan's parliament elections, assuming that the election rectifies the on-going ethnic tensions.

### C. CONVERGING FACTORS IN PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS

Notwithstanding the issues of Durand Line and Pushtunistan, there are number of factors which affect Pakistan and Afghanistan relations in a positive way.<sup>175</sup> These factors can not be wished away by any government in Afghanistan. These could be termed as converging factors in Pakistan's-Afghanistan relations, which have had the centrifugal pull to keep both countries closer to each other. The policy-makers in Pakistan are to keep these things in mind while formulating Afghanistan policy.

**1. Economy.** Being land-locked, Afghanistan, for trade, relies on the port of Karachi for the majority of its imports and exports. This has traditionally been the greatest point of leverage with Pakistani authorities whenever Afghanistan has created trouble on the border, or raised the issue of Pushtunistan. The Afghan business class has a considerable stake in re-exporting/smuggling items imported through this arrangement back into Pakistan. Moreover, Pakistani currency is freely exchangeable anywhere in Afghanistan. Wheat, edible oil and petroleum products are imported exclusively from Pakistan, and the NWFP government, generally, includes the Afghan wheat requirements

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<sup>173</sup> Statement by Mr. V.K. Nambiar, Permanent representative, on the Situation in Afghanistan at the Security Council on April 6, 2004. <http://www.un.int/india/ind910.pdf>, assessed on April 20, 2005.

<sup>174</sup> Rahimullah Yousafzai, "Pakistan's Loss in Afghanistan is India's Gain" in *The News*, July 13, 2003.

<sup>175</sup> Inam ul Haque. *Afghanistan Crisis—Challenges for South Asia*, Research Paper, National Defense College, 2003-04. I agree with the opinion of the author and share the similar views.

in its provincial forecasts. Most Afghan men have, traditionally, sought temporary employment in Pakistan during winters, especially in the NWFP.<sup>176</sup>

**2. The Welfare of Refugees.** After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, 3.5 million refugees entered Pakistan. Despite not being a signatory to the Geneva Convention on Refugees (of 1951), Pakistan was actively involved in the rehabilitation of refugees. Consequently, the Afghan Refugee Commissionerate was established for the welfare and rehabilitation of the refugees.<sup>177</sup> While in Pakistan, refugees have been provided healthcare, education, including vocational training to females, and employment opportunities, besides being provided a host of other facilities. Notwithstanding the negative social implications, and the recurring maintenance costs associated with these refugees, perhaps the biggest Pakistani benefit would be young Afghans who better understand the significance of their lives in Pakistan. They grew up in Pakistan, and have been well-educated in Pakistani schools, colleges and universities.<sup>178</sup> They are the sources of “*soft power*” for Pakistan on Afghanistan.

**3. Religion.** Traditionally, the Afghan clergy have looked towards the subcontinent for their religious education. Deoband, in India, was taken over by the *Darul Ulum Haqqania* in *Akora Khattak*, near Nowshera. As a result, *Darul Ulum Haqqania* is the alma mater of most Afghani scholars. There are many Afghan mullahs, acting as imams in mosques of the NWFP. Religious affinity, strengthened by ethnic bonds, provides the strongest bond between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

**4. Cultural & Ethnic Affinity.** Perhaps the strongest binding force which binds the populace on both sides of the border is ethnic commonality. In fact, most Pakistanis consider themselves émigrés from Afghanistan, or some other part of Central Asia.<sup>179</sup> The ethnic identity of the major ethnic group, i.e. Pushtuns, is based upon a complex mix of various factors, such as history, language, the commonality of racial

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<sup>176</sup> Daily, *The News*, December 8, 2003. The paper while referring to President Karzai reports that, “At present there are some 30,000 Pakistani workers engaged in the Afghan reconstruction with 10,000 as carpenters only”.

<sup>177</sup> Daily, *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore, January 19, 1985.

<sup>178</sup> Daily, *The News*, September 1, 1998, 5. The paper reports, “By 1998, five universities names Syed Jamaluddin Afghani University, Ahmed Shah Abdali University, *Hewad* University, *Ummatul Momineen* University of Women and Islamic *Pohantoon* were operating in Peshawar alone not to mention the scores of schools & colleges”

<sup>179</sup> For a fulsome account on genealogy see Caroe, *The Pathans*, 3-24.

stock and traditions. Despite the existence of the Durand Line, there is no government-imposed restriction on the movement across the Line. Therefore, tribes on both sides still engage in travel and trade. Whereas the majority of Pushtuns find assimilation on either side unproblematic, their orientation has remained strongly towards Pakistan. Now, given the current situation, this free movement is part of the problem. Movement across the borders, hitherto soft, has now to be regulated and controlled.

#### **D. CURRENT FACTORS IN PAKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS**

The geo-strategic compulsions defined above, can be termed as constants that can not be ignored by any Afghan government that is either friendly, or unfriendly, towards Pakistan. This section will now identify and analyze the *situational variables* that might help better define Pakistan's policy towards Afghanistan.

##### **1. Terrorism**

Since the United States bombing of Afghanistan, Pushtuns, being the supporters of the Taliban movement, are the main target of the Northern Alliance. Until the elections, the Northern Alliance was successful in preventing Pushtuns from sharing any political role in the country. However, there is a growing realization, among all involved, that exclusion of the majority Pushtuns from the political process for any longer would be counter-productive to the peace and stability of Afghanistan. Therefore, there is a need for an early *détente* with a people who have been politically marginalized based on bias and ethnic opposition. Moreover, the issue of Arab and other foreign fighters using Afghani or Pakistani soil for their campaign against the West has been a source of concern for both countries, especially for Pakistan. Pakistan needs to remain committed in its fight against terrorism, as a resurgence of terrorism is likely to have grave destabilization consequences over the entire region.

For the success of the war against terrorism, as well as the need to address the Pushtun Taliban sense of deprivation/alienation, while discouraging the use of Pakistani soil as a staging ground for attacks inside Afghanistan, both countries would need to engage in more positive and solution-oriented cooperation, rather than negative rhetoric and hostility.

## 2. Economic Dimension – The Route to Central Asia

A lot has been written about the prospective exploitation of the energy reserves of Central Asia through Afghanistan and on to the Pakistani port of Gwadar. There has, especially, been a focus on pipeline politics, a subject addressed below.

Initially, Azerbaijan was considered to be practicable area of oil and gas reserves in Central Asia, due to its proximity to the Mediterranean Sea and Europe. The options considered by Unocal of the United States, and Delta Oil of Saudi Arabia included the existing transit routes through Russia and the prospective route through Turkey (Baku-Djeihan-Ceyhan). Russian unwillingness to allow transport of CARs oil at the cost of its own oil exports made the first alternative less attractive. Therefore, the Turkish route was adopted, after problems in Armenia were settled. Later, proposals were made to link the Turkmenistan reserves to Baku through a pipeline under the Caspian Sea. However, this project would be both costly and time consuming. Uzbekistan faces a similar problem, due to the location of its reserves and, therefore, remains interested in working out projects oriented towards Pakistan through Afghanistan or Iran.

One of the obvious contenders in this game is Iran. But Iran, due to its cold relations with the West, and in particular, with the United States, on the nuclear issue, is presently not in any position to influence decision making in Afghanistan. The Pakistani option, besides the prospect of providing international exports, is considered to be more promising for the rapidly expanding, power hungry Indian market. However, the proposed project, called the “Trans-Afghan Pipeline,” going from the Daulatabad gas fields in Turkmenistan to Multan/Gwadar, through Afghanistan, is feasible even without India, as the growing Pakistani domestic market makes it a profitable venture.<sup>180</sup> Thus, Pakistan is actively developing a deep-sea port in Gwadar with Chinese assistance, and is constructing coastal highway and rail/road links with Afghanistan.

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<sup>180</sup> “Trans-Afghan Pipeline feasible despite India’s Obduracy” in the Daily *The News*, July 4, 2003. {The gas pipeline is approximately 1270 kms long with the potential of carrying 20 billion cubic feet of gas a year. The construction of project is valued at US \$ 2 billion. The oil pipeline is 1900 kms and is priced at US \$ 8 billion. The economic prospects are substantiated by facts that the farthest capital i.e. Almaty (Kazakhstan) is only 1040 kms from Islamabad, while the distances to other ports are much more than this}

### **3. The United States' Presence in Afghanistan**

The last element that continues to define Pakistan's policy framework is the United States presence in Afghanistan, as well as in Pakistan.

The United States' interests in Afghanistan have been curtailment of Islamic extremism, improvement in human rights and the economy. In its war against terrorism, hunting down Osama bin Laden and rooting out Al-Qaeda is the primary goal of the United States. Although, the status of this theater became secondary since the Iraq war came to the fore, to achieve its objectives, the United States, is compelled to maintain a sizable strength in the Arabian Sea. The cumulative effect of these extra-regional forces, in and outside Afghanistan, serve to limit Pakistan's freedom of action in Afghanistan. Pakistan's partnership in the war against terrorism has helped Pakistan retain some influence. Consequently, the United States' presence provides a window of opportunity for Pakistan to resolve the issue of border with Afghanistan.

With the above reference points serving as the basis, an objective appraisal of the policy options of both countries will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

#### **E. AFGHANISTAN'S POLICY OPTIONS**

As a matter of fact, any policy formulated at Kabul will likely be ineffectual without total implementation by all the organs of the state. The last 25 years of war have seriously damaged state institutions, infrastructure and the society, as a whole. It will take some time before the institutions are functioning normally and a trained administration is in place. In view of the fragmented state of Afghanistan, it will also take sometime for a coherent policy to emerge. In the immediate future, the majority of Afghan leaders will likely try to contain any Pakistani influence, due to their recent experience with the Taliban. Afghan rulers are likely to expand their dependence to countries other than Pakistan, such as Iran and India. The possible nexus of Iran, India and Afghanistan will be seen as strategic envelopment by Pakistan. As always, Pakistan is wary of any involvement of India in Afghanistan affairs. Left unchecked, such developments will lead to resurfacing of irritants, like Pushtunistan, the Durand Line issue and cross border movements.

Afghanistan will do well if it finds that war against terrorism is in the mutual interest of both Pakistan and Afghanistan. This also implies that both countries must have

cooperative policies towards the U.S.’ efforts against terrorism in the region. This obvious benefit will derail if interference in Afghanistan from India and Iran is not curtailed. Pakistan will react by using its clout in the tribal region, should it find that outside countries are causing malfeasance in sensitive border areas of Pakistan.

However, for now, rapprochement between Pakistan and Afghanistan is likely to continue, as the broad-based, ethnically balanced Afghan government gains control after the 2005 parliamentary elections. The full effects of this policy are not likely to be visible before at least one more elections, and until the time all Pushtun refugees can be motivated to return.

## **F. PAKISTAN’S POLICY OPTIONS**

After establishing the current geo-political environment of the region, and with the analysis of the variable parameters that have traditionally influenced Pakistan’s Afghan policy options (and continue to do so), it is possible to discern the conceptual contours of the policy to be followed. This section will identify such contours, while offering certain recommendations.

At the moment, Pakistan and Afghanistan relations are following a very delicate course. Misperceptions about each other’s motives and/or intentions are high. Pakistan has to be careful in selecting policy options. There are two courses which can be adopted by Pakistan as influencing strategies; one is *Coercive Diplomacy*, and the other is a *Policy of Reassurance*. It is pertinent to briefly discuss both of these policies, while drawing conclusions about their efficacy, and offering guidelines for policy-makers.

### **1. Coercive Diplomacy**

Coercive diplomacy is a form of compelling another to act in a certain way, and should be distinguished from war. Coercive diplomacy has two hallmarks used to change an opponent’s behavior: threaten use of force or actually use limited force; and use other means such as diplomatic isolation and economic sanctions. However, coercive diplomacy is not an easy strategy to successfully implement. Evidence from several case studies suggests that success in calibrating the use of force and diplomacy has been very limited.<sup>181</sup> Data reveals that the success rate of coercive diplomacy over the years may be

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<sup>181</sup> For a detailed study see Robert J Art and Kenneth Waltz, eds. “ The Use of Force: Military Power and International Politics” ( Maryland: Rowman & Little Field Publishing Group), sixth edition, 2003.

less than 30%. Such data provides good, theoretical reasons as to why coercive diplomacy is not an effective a tool in all the situations.<sup>182</sup>

Statistics related to the use of coercive diplomacy with regard to Afghanistan are not different from other places, rather, one finds that Afghanistan has been more resistant to coercion than some nations have been (especially when used militarily). For example, Pakistan's economic blockade of Afghanistan during the 1960s, the United States' cruise missile attack against Osama Bin Laden's hideout in 1998, economic sanctions against the Taliban regime from 1998 to 2001, and, finally, the failure of coercive diplomacy after 9/11 are cases in point.

If adopting such a policy, Pakistan would have two points of leverage available to them to exert pressure on Kabul. One is economic, and the second is military. The military option would appear to be out for now, since Pakistan has already suffered a great deal as a political consequence of military strategies.<sup>183</sup> The only option, then, appears to be economic. As discussed earlier, Afghanistan is a land-locked country. Therefore, Pakistan can deny Afghanistan port facilities, thereby, adversely affecting its economy. Moreover, Afghanistan's population is heavily dependent upon Pakistan for the import of wheat, rice, grains, etc. Thus, Pakistan can restrict the export of such commodities to Afghanistan, which would affect the population and, in turn, the government. Two points needs to be kept under consideration while pursuing this option: First, any economic sanctions applied against Afghanistan would affect the Afghan population, directly, and would likely have negative fall-out, perhaps in the form of domestic resistance to this policy in Pakistan. Second, as Pakistan's own economy does not have the resilience of its own, it would probably be adversely affected, due to a loss of revenue. That means the cost of such policy might exceed any possible gains. Therefore, coercive diplomacy, in any form, will be counter-productive to Pakistan's own national interests.

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<sup>182</sup> Art, "Coercive Diplomacy"

<sup>183</sup> See chapter 4, and for theoretical details see Charles L. Glaser "Political Consequences of Military Strategy: Expanding and Refining the Spiral and Deterrence Model" in *World Politics*, Vol 44, No 4. (July 1992)

## 2. Policy of Reassurance

Because coercive diplomacy as a strategy may be too ineffective and risky, diplomacy might best be mixed within a broader context of other strategies for conflict management. These strategies are often grouped together under the rubric of “reassurance,” and can complement coercive diplomacy by helping to reduce uncertainty and miscalculation, often endemic to adversarial relationships. These may be more useful when leaders are heavily constrained by political weakness, or when there is pressure from more than one source. Reassurance measures are likely to be more relevant to conflict situations, propelled by mutual hostility and mistrust, than they are to those situations that are largely issue-driven.<sup>184</sup> Historical and comparative research suggests that strategies of reassurance can restrain the development of informal means of competition. Thus, irrevocable commitments can help to reassure a vulnerable adversary, reduce the likelihood of miscalculations, and create alternatives to the use of force.<sup>185</sup>

Stein points out the applicability conditions for the success of strategy of assurance when he writes, “Strategies of reassurance are most likely to succeed with an adversary who is concerned largely about its own security and does not seek primarily to exploit.”<sup>186</sup> For the successful implementation of the strategy, the state must overcome strategic, political, and psychological obstacles. Cognitive barriers can easily give wrong signals. Therefore, it is important that while implementing reassurance strategy, the target state should be assured that its weaknesses will not be exploited and that the state does not pose a threat.<sup>187</sup>

With regard to Afghanistan, twenty years of war has completely crippled its economy. It would take another two decades for Afghanistan to play any meaningful role in the world’s politics. Afghanistan is an ethnically divided country, and thus can, easily be exploited by outside actors. The general election held in 2004 brought an elected government, but to bring unity in a traditionally fractured country is a long process. The government of Karzai needs security and reassurance from outside actors for help to stabilize his regime. Pakistani policy-makers can help by appreciating this requirement,

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<sup>184</sup> For detail see Stein, “Deterrence and Reassurance: Behavior, Society and Nuclear War”, 32.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>187</sup> Jeff Knoff, Class notes NS4669, “Conflict and Cooperation in World Politics.” March 2, 2005.

and by adopting policies that helps develop trust. Afghan leaders need to be reassured that Pakistan is sincere in restoring peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Given the course of this analysis, and the likely political dispensation in Afghanistan, and their potential effects on Pakistan, the “Policy of Constructive Bilateral Engagement” is recommended as a strategy of reassurance.<sup>188</sup> Under this policy, Pakistan should remain effectively engaged at all levels in Afghan affairs, protect its legitimate interests and avoid leaving a vacuum. This involves targeting a whole range of domestic actors, civil society groups and the governments. The recommended measures include all possible and visible assistance in education, healthcare, industry, banking and defense sectors. The obstructive, and at times offensive, Afghan rhetoric must be ignored, and over-reaction should be avoided to facilitate maintaining this aim.<sup>189</sup> Pakistan’s own leverage, in various forms, should be strengthened, and efforts made to understand Afghan sociology (by incorporating informed/expert input into policy formulation).

## **G. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Diplomacy plays a key role in the foreign policies of states and other international actors. This is the most cost effective of foreign policy tools.<sup>190</sup> Diplomacy is, basically, an art of communication and is a specialized field. In the past, Pakistan gave scant attention to this all-important tool of relations with its errant neighbor and in achieving its policy objectives in Afghanistan. Pakistan’s Afghan policy was largely determined by the ISI and, therefore, the role of the Pakistan Army and ISI should be minimized in the future. The responsibility of policy formulation and implementation should be shifted back to the Foreign Office. Moreover, to ensure transparency, non-confidential matters of policy should be debated in the parliament for the sake of political credibility. Additionally, the opinions of sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists should be sought while recommending response options to the government.

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<sup>188</sup> Hass, “Honey and Vinegar”

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., For details as to how engagement strategies be implemented.

<sup>190</sup> Brian White, “Diplomacy”, in *The Globalization of World Politics*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 329.

2. Pakistan has genuine concerns over Afghanistan's internal instability, because it has a direct impact on Pakistan, itself.<sup>191</sup> However, Pakistan should refrain from interfering in Afghanistan's internal matters and avoid engineering the political shape of Afghanistan. Pakistan may foster relations with saner elements of the Northern Alliance, but without playing favorites.

3. Pakistan's government should continue to advise the United States about the pitfalls of branding the entire Pushtun population as "the Taliban." Not all Taliban members are Al-Qaeda operatives. The Taliban are also Pushtuns and are integral to Afghanistan. To integrate the Taliban into the system, constructive engagement with the moderate members of the Taliban should be ensured through the religious establishment in Pakistan.

4. The Afghan government must be continuously apprised of the negative security implications of the Indian presence in Afghanistan in large numbers. It must be emphasized that a deteriorating security situation in Pakistan is also to the detriment of Afghanistan, due to the potential of the violence spilling-over Pakistan's borders. Finally, Pakistan must actively seek collaboration with Iran, and other Central Asian states on Afghanistan.<sup>192</sup> With India, since a dialogue and peace process is under way, Pakistan should also put on its agenda and express its apprehension about India's involvement in Afghanistan.

5. Pakistan has the potential of playing a pivotal role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. In this regard, all possible and visible assistance in areas such as, education, healthcare, industry, banking and defense, should be provided for Afghanistan's reconstruction. Pakistan should also actively participate in the reconstruction efforts of Afghanistan in accordance with the priorities of the Afghan government. By planning its own economy to fit the needs of a reviving Afghanistan, Pakistan stands to profit

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<sup>191</sup> Marvin Weinbaum, "U.S. involvement in Afghanistan since 9/11". Paper presented by Weinbaum in two days workshop on Afghanistan organized by International Relations Department of the University of Karachi. Weinbaum said "If Afghanistan fails; Pakistan will be in trouble as there will be revival of extremism having enormous implications for the entire region". Available on line <http://www.dawn.com/2005/03/04/local41.htm>, assessed on April 15, 2005.

<sup>192</sup> The strategic significance of the region is clear from the fact that India has the only military base outside India in Tajikistan. India helped the regional countries, especially Tajikistan, against the onslaught of the Taliban by supporting the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. See in "Central Asia, new focus of India's oil diplomacy" in *The Hindustan Times*, available on line, [http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/181\\_1308782,0002.htm](http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/181_1308782,0002.htm), assessed on April 15, 2005.

handsomely. Investment in certain sectors and industries (e.g., transport and cement) would have a particular payoff. At the same time, Pakistan provides Afghanistan with a potential market for certain higher-value agricultural commodities and possibly cheap electrical power. Additionally, early stabilization of Afghanistan will be helpful in the repatriation of the Afghan refugees from Pakistan and, thereby, significantly alleviate the burden on Pakistan's economy.

## **H. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UNITED STATES**

The United States, while learning its lessons from past mistakes of abandoning Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal, needs to remain actively committed, until a broad based stable government is established in Kabul, having proportional representation by all the ethnic groups. Moreover, the efforts need to be directed to extend the control of the center to the periphery, so that law and order is achieved by the government, and not by the tribal leaders. Additionally, sufficient funds for the reconstruction of the country should be provided and routed through the center to the tribal leaders/governors, to increase their dependency on Kabul.

The United States and Pakistan's interests in Afghanistan are now reasonably well linked, particularly in the war against terrorism. Pakistan is, undeniably, the most important country in the region, and Washington's relationship with Islamabad is the chief determining factor in what happens to Afghanistan. Therefore, the United States should accommodate Pakistan's concerns in Afghanistan especially vis-à-vis India, and, most importantly it must help to resolve the issue of Durand Line between Pakistan and Afghanistan, once and for all.

## **I. CONCLUSION**

The September 11 incident has provided Pakistan with an opportunity to reconsider its Afghanistan policy, and regain its lost status in the international community. The present ongoing cold relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan will remain for some time. But if the two countries continue to improve relations and allay misperceptions, it is likely to improve. The historical, geographical and cultural interdependence between Pakistan and Afghanistan is bound to play its role in strengthening the relations between the two countries. Similarly, there are factors that will affect Pakistan's Afghanistan relations. Issues, such as the Durand Line and

Pushtunistan questions, the war on terrorism, the hostile involvement of India and Iran against Pakistan may be contentious ones and pose difficulties. Yet, trade with the Central Asian Republics, energy pipelines, and the United States presence in Afghanistan are positive factors that are harbingers of a new era of peace and harmony in the region.

The futures of Pakistan and Afghanistan are linked. The analytical framework suggests options for both countries to pursue certain policies. For Afghanistan, it is hoped that the present regime will pursue a friendly policy towards Pakistan. It must realize Pakistani concerns identified above and expect pragmatic accommodation and cordiality in the future from Pakistan. A stable, broad-based government in Afghanistan for at least next two terms will give sufficient sustainability to Pakistan-Afghanistan relations.

Pakistan, for its part, must constructively engage Afghanistan, at all levels. This is the only way to ensure, retain and enhance Pakistan's leverage with regard to Afghanistan. Afghanistan is too important for Pakistan to ignore and Pakistan cannot follow a hands-off policy. However, Pakistan needs to avoid a "hands-on" policy as well. The policy formulation and implementation should be done by the foreign office, and must have input from eminent "Afghanologists." Pakistan's investment in Afghanistan is considered to be too heavy, and too critical to be wasted. Pakistan has a great stake in the emergence of a stable, prosperous and friendly Afghanistan. Long-term instability in Afghanistan could put great strain on Pakistan's economy and society, and carry implications for its national security. Therefore, it needs a strategic vision in terms of devising a long-term Afghan policy consistent with its national interests. Pakistan must be willing to settle for an Afghanistan it cannot control, but has no need to fear.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **U.N. RESOLUTION OF 1980**

The resolution was based on the following four principles:

1. Preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan.
2. The right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and freely choose their own political, economic and social systems.
3. Immediate withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan.
4. Creation of the necessary conditions to enable the Afghan refugees to return homes in honor and safety.

### **GENEVA ACCORD**

The Geneva Accord consisted of four instruments:

1. Instrument one was signed between Pakistan and Afghanistan. This pertained to the principles of mutual relations, in particular, emphasizing non-interference in each other's internal affairs.
2. Instrument two was signed between the USA and USSR and guaranteed that there would be no intervention and interference by them in the internal affairs of the high contracting parties.
3. Instrument three was signed between Pakistan and Afghanistan and concerned the voluntary return of refugees. This was a vital element from Pakistan, but it would only come into effect if the proper environment prevailed in Afghanistan.
4. Instrument four was signed between Afghanistan and the USSR, specifying a time frame for the withdrawal of Soviet troops. The reduction was to commence on May 15<sup>th</sup> of the same year. The withdrawal was to be completed in 9 months, with one half leaving Afghanistan by August 15, 1988.

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