

**Center for the Study of Pakistan  
Columbia University in the City of New York**

## **Pakistan and the United States: A Future Unlike the Past?**

**Saeed Shafqat\***  
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Dr. Saeed Shafqat has PhD (political science) from the University of Pennsylvania. He is Quaid-i-Azam Distinguished Professor and Chair, Center for the Study of Pakistan at Columbia University. His books include: *Political System of Pakistan and Public Policy (1989)* *Civil- Military Relations in Pakistan (1997)*, *Contemporary Issues in Pakistan Studies (2000, 3rd edition)*.

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### **Abstract**

*In the past three years (2001-2004), Pakistan-United States relations have undergone a fundamental restructuring. At state and policy levels there is growing appreciation of the constraints and opportunities of a possible strategic partnership. This paper provides an overview of the changing dynamics of Pakistan–United States relations and argues that, despite some disabilities and limitations, Pakistan has an opportunity to forge a strategic partnership with the US. The US does have apprehensions about Pakistan’s domestic predilections and somewhat ‘problematic foreign policy goals:’ the perceived threat of Jihadi groups, domestically and regionally (Afghanistan and beyond), the possibility of escalation in Kashmir, the nuclear issue and Pakistan’s trustworthiness in supporting the ‘war on terror.’ This paper contends that, both countries now seem to have a realistic assessment of shared strategic objectives and challenges the conventional view of Pakistan-US relations as tactical and transient. It underscores that change in global and regional geo-political environment necessitates a strategic partnership. Unlike the past, today, there is some reason for optimism. Between September 2001 and June 2004, the US and Pakistan have made significant progress towards initiating solid policy measures to promote a strategic partnership.*

need to be open and forthcoming in spelling out before its public how such a strategic partnership would serve citizen needs and national interest. A military hegemonic system does not secure Pakistan’s national interest nor does it help in changing the ‘hearts and minds’ of Pakistanis towards the US. This demands investing in political parties—reform, democratize and help them evolve programs of social action.

Pakistan has the potential and institutional capacity to adopt the path of sustainable economic development and democratic governance and strategic partnership with the US holds the promise of both. Pakistan is facing a geo-strategic and economic transformation in and around its neighborhood that will hit us not over the course of a few years but over the course of the next generation. For Pakistan, now is the time, to renew and revamp the terms of a long-term relationship with the US and establish a strategic partnership rooted in the vision of tomorrow’s promise and not in the soreness of the past.

contributed towards confidence building and greater promise for cultural and economic exchanges; its sustainability still hinges upon agreeable resolution of Kashmir and that is showing little progress and the whole peace process could falter.

The US need to be more energetic in persuading Musharraf to initiate a process of inclusion and dialogue with the mainstream national parties the PPP and the PML-N, if Pakistan were to strengthen and expand strategic partnership with the US. Pro-democracy elites, social groups and citizens feel marginalized as they perceive that the US has failed to demonstrate seriousness of purpose in promoting democracy; and that it is not applying sufficient pressure on Musharraf and the military they complain. They contend that the Musharraf regime must create space for the mainstream political parties; war against terrorism is narrowly focused and driven by security considerations alone. While the MMA and religious right assert that Musharraf is pursuing American agenda against Islam and Islamic groups under the garb of “war against terrorism”.

General Musharraf is walking on a tight rope and confronted with serious domestic challenges. He makes a case for ‘enlightened moderation’- liberal, modern, progressive (but not necessarily democratic) vision of Pakistan and in reality accommodates and makes pact with the religious right. Musharraf may not recognize but others must that ‘enlightened moderation’ would become meaningful only if the military were to extricate from politics. In order to disrupt Musharraf ‘s dependence or connivance with the religious right the Bush administration could contribute towards encouraging the PPP and PML-N leadership to reform their leadership and democratize their political parties to develop a shared vision with Musharraf for moving Pakistan to a sustainable democratic order. Ultimately, the civil and military leaders of Pakistan have to work out the parameters of a shared vision.

As analyzed above the US and Pakistan have made significant progress in the security areas but Pakistan needs to deepen and expand relations in the economic arena, where institutional and educational reform, strengthening of civil society and the party system could press forward liberal political space and foster norms of democratic governance. These are the areas where the regime needs to be swayed by international community and domestic pressure. Musharraf could reorder domestic priorities to ensure strategic partnership with the US. The more vigorous the regime becomes in sustaining and expanding the liberal political space the brighter the prospects of building a sustainable strategic partnership with the US. Such a change could recast the US concerns on nuclear proliferation and religious militancy in Pakistan. The actual test for Pakistan is at two levels; internally, to create and expand political space for enlightened, liberal and progressive interpretation of Islam and also devise ways to strengthen the role of pro-democracy forces. Externally, to reassure the US that Pakistan’s nuclear assets are not only safe and secure but also that it is no more involved in any proliferation of nuclear technology. That it is credible partner in war against terrorism and does not provide any sanctuary to Taliban or bin Laden remnants.

The military and political leaders in Pakistan must recognize that they would have to pursue internal reform, build consensus on democratic governance, create conditions for economic revival, improve human rights, and be bold and imaginative in seeking normalization of relations with India to achieve a sustainable strategic partnership with the US. It is a tall order and Pakistani leaders and policy intellectuals

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In June 2003, President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan paid his third official visit to the United States in less than two years and was lauded by President Bush, as a “*courageous leader and a friend of the United States. America has a strong relationship with Pakistan . . . the friendship between the United States and Pakistan is vital to the security of South Asia.*”

President Musharraf reciprocated, “*We have reviewed in depth with President Bush how to strengthen and expand the Pakistan-U.S. bilateral relationship and to give it greater depth and meaning. Both sides have reaffirmed that our ties should be made more broad-based and multifaceted and placed on a long-term and predictable basis. The United States has accordingly agreed on a multi-year economic and defense related package for Pakistan. This exemplifies the U.S. commitment to remain involved with us for a long term. We look forward to diverse programs of cooperation in the economic, commercial, and political and the defense sectors. We also expect greater people-to-people contacts and close interaction between the parliaments of the two countries to promote the cause of democracy.*”

Transcript, Bush-Musharraf statement, June 25, 2003

### **Introduction**

Does the Bush-Musharraf statement imply that a strategic partnership between the United States and Pakistan is on the horizon, or is this only another fleeting moment of tactical alliance? Analyzing previous patterns, Denis Kux has perceptively observed that the two have lacked solid underpinnings of shared national interest. Cohen characterizes the Pakistan-US relations as “episodic and discontinuous”.<sup>1</sup> Why have they not been able to develop areas of common security interests? Do they now have shared strategic goals and security concerns? While Kux and several other observers remain skeptical of the durability of any long term US-Pakistan relationship, I would argue that the relations

<sup>1</sup> . Denis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan 1947-2000: Disenchanted Allies* (Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001) pp 360-61. Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, D.C: The Brookings Institution, 2004) p. 304.

between the two are undergoing a fundamental restructuring and are moving towards a long term and enduring partnership. Unlike past relationships, this one has a future.

Strategic partnerships are facilitated and built around at least four factors: (1) shared strategic goals (2) shared threat perceptions (3) shared values and (4) shared economic interests. Let me offer a brief explanation of these factors. For our purposes the shared strategic goal means, that the potential partners, irrespective of their size or power, have a broad agreement on mutually beneficial goals and are willing to pursue these as strategic objectives. In over half-century relationship the US and Pakistan have shared such strategic goals as Containment, Afghan *jihad* and now, the war against terrorism; however the two countries differ in their interpretations of threats and their intensity, which continues to be a problem area. Do the two have a shared threat perception? I would argue, during the Cold War Pakistan was apprehensive of India and suspicious of the Soviet Union but friendly with China. Pakistan and the US developed a shared threat perception about Soviet Union. The intensity of this threat perception varied; for example, after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan perceived Soviet intervention as an existentialist threat and had to sensitize the US about it, the two were slow and cautious to expand a shared “ideological” view of the threat. By most accounts it was a tactical alliance, although it had the bearings of a strategic partnership. This tactical nature of relationship continues to linger in Pakistani memory and the US remains a vigorous tactical ally but a reluctant strategic partner. Both remain captive to the experiences of the past. Has Pakistan and the US learnt from their past experience? Are the two close to a strategic partnership? Today, the conditions are more than conducive for a long-term partnership. However, the challenge for Pakistan and the US is to create an environment of greater trust and confidence on at least three issues, international terrorism, nuclear proliferation and steering Pakistan towards a democratic order and representative government; and that means, not simply staying focused on war against international terrorism but also taking steps to identify and expand areas of long-term cooperation. On its part, Pakistan would need to be more forthcoming in recognizing the internal sources of terrorism and rooting these out and building broader consensus on disengaging military, expanding democratic governance and pursue socio-economic reform. While the US would need to be more sensitive to Pakistan’s security needs: supporting up gradation and modernization of weapons systems and professional training programs for the military. In that sense security relationship would be one pivotal component of any long-term partnership.

Pakistan’s record on promoting and sustaining representative government and democracy remains dismal. While building relations with Pakistan the US has been guided by security considerations and pursuit of national interest; on occasions it has been constricted and opportunistic. As a result the US and Pakistan has not been able to evolve any consensus on shared values: such as, liberalism and sustenance of a democratic order although Pakistan has generally accepted and followed the practice of free market economy. The US could have contributed more to support democratization in Pakistan; in fact, the popular belief among Pakistanis is that the US has opposed democratic movements and patronized military regimes.

On the economic front, the US remains the largest trading partner of Pakistan. US investment has grown in recent years, particularly in pharmaceuticals, telecommunications and energy and oil exploration. In any case, economic development

apparent that the old policy of non-recognition of Israel has outlived its utility. Pakistan needs to initiate a dialogue among its policy planners and the citizens on how to recast and redefine a policy towards Israel. In the Pakistani security perception and policy considerations, India, remains central and any new alliances India pursues could impinge upon Pakistani-US bilateral ties and expectations. Like India, Pakistan could also revise its policy towards Israel and deflect some of the hostility that emanates from the US Congress and Think Tanks to the promising Pakistan-US strategic partnership.

In the post Kargil and particularly 9/11 period the US has consistently and shrewdly decoupled its policy towards Pakistan and India. The US has carefully crafted its role as a ‘facilitator’. For example, on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2002 (and the US has consistently maintained this position) this is how Mr. Boucher, the State Department spokesman provided a glimpse of US role and expectation in a briefing on US, Pakistan - India relations, he said:

*“We have very important relationship with India and Pakistan. These are different relationships based on the circumstances and opportunities that we have with each of these countries. We think that strong relationships with the United States could be the basis for progress in the region, easing tensions in the region, and we are willing to use our relationship to try and accomplish that for the sake of both countries.”*<sup>59</sup>

The US would need to do more than simply ‘easing tensions in the region’ if it aims to win the war on ‘terror’ and that is where a strategic partnership with Pakistan becomes a meaningful choice. A premature withdrawal and an inconclusive outcome in Afghanistan could not only destabilize Pakistan but the entire region, and that could have global consequences. The Bush administration appears to recognize the long-term need of Pakistan, however it has been reluctant to adopt measures that could make Pakistan a strategic partner. In March 2004 the US accorded the status of major Non- NATO Ally (MNNA) of the US and that is significant step towards strengthening security relationship but does not guarantee strategic partnership.<sup>60</sup> Pakistan is allowed to receive and purchase sophisticated weapons from the US but that has not led to any formal security relationship. This US ambivalence puts enormous pressure on Musharraf regime to ensure that Pakistan is not treated, as a ‘frontline state’ again and that the two have shared goals and strategic interest. Musharraf regime would be well advised to come clear on two important fronts; curb religious extremism and nuclear proliferation.

The US could also show greater rigor in facilitating normalization of relations between India and Pakistan by persuading the two to step forward from merely engaging in dialogue to take concrete decisions for conflict resolution. The resumption of dialogue between India and Pakistan since January 2004 is an encouraging development and has

<sup>59</sup> . For details see, [Dawn](#), Novemer, 3,2002 (online edition). India’s Deputy Prime Minister visited Washington, commenting on Indo-Pakistan relations and US involvement, the State Department Spokesman repeated the same theme, see, [Hindu](#), June 10,2003(online edition)

<sup>60</sup> . The granting of this status opened up possibilities for Pakistan to receive and buy US military technology, promote military to military relations and paved way for long-term US-Pakistan relations. For a details, see report by Qudssia Akhlaque, “Pakistan eligible for ant-terror technology: MNNA status”, [Dawn](#) on line edition, June 24,2004. Strobe Talbot, President of the Brookings Institution and former US deputy secretary of the state (1994-2001) warned that conferring of this title was a “major gaffe”. He said that in lecture at the Harvard Club of New York. For details, see, [CASI NOTES](#), January 2005. P.4.

a year, this could help Pakistan create a critical mass of academics and professionals, if properly utilized.

### Summary and Conclusion

These are good portents for promoting a durable relationship that could provide new opportunities for developing shared goals. While rejuvenating alliance with the US, General Musharraf has been equally vigorous in strengthening ties with China, mending fences with Russia, seeking engagement with Iran and pursuing normalization with India. He has demonstrated that building alliance with the US includes strengthening relations with China, mending fences with Russia and improving relations with other regional players. A stable and secure Afghanistan with a supportive Pakistan could open up window of opportunities of cooperation among the states of the region. With the removal of Taliban the prospects of cultural, economic and strategic cooperation between Pakistan and Iran have considerably improved and that holds promise for South and Central Asia. However, the US continues to be suspicious of Iran's nuclear program and perceives it as state harboring terrorists.<sup>56</sup> The US is also apprehensive of growing China-Iran ties. Washington would not welcome any warming up of Iran-Pakistan ties. Iran is equally wry of too cozy Pakistan-US relationship. Given this context, Pakistan would need to tread relations with Iran with caution and prudence. Confidence building with Iran and pursuing construction of oil pipeline is in Pakistan's national interest and needs to be pursued deftly.

On the other hand, in the post 9/11 phase there is an upsurge in the India-Israel strategic partnership. The US has facilitated this and, of course, does not see it as hostile to its security concerns.<sup>57</sup> In Pakistani perception expanding Indo-Israel partnership is a worrying strategic development. Until very recently in Pakistan, any India-Israel strategic partnership was considered a "figment of imagination and hallucination of the religious right" and serious scholars and policy makers were generally dismissive about it. Now, it is a new and vibrant reality. It has generated some debate in Pakistani media; some security analysts point out that Indo-Israel strategic partnership would affect Pakistan's conventional, nuclear arms and even intelligence capabilities: while the religious right vociferously portrays it as "Hindu, Jewish, Christian" conspiracy against Pakistan.<sup>58</sup> The Indo-Israel partnership would have implications for Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia and could influence the shaping up of US-Pakistan relationship. Pakistan would need to rethink and redefine its policy towards Israel under the changed circumstances. It is

<sup>56</sup> . Condoleezza Rice in her confirmation hearings before the Senate Committee said "Iran cannot be a legitimate participant in the international system, in international politics and pursue nuclear weapons." [Http://: www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com) January 19,2005 accessed on February 15,2005.

<sup>57</sup> . On this point and larger question of why the US is tilting towards India, see, Afzaal Mahmood, "The India-US strategic ties" *Dawn*, February 5,2004. Online edition accessed on February 15, 2005.

<sup>58</sup> . Mian Tufail Mohammad, opcit. Also, see *Daily Jang*, dated January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2005 which published an interview in Urdu by Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres, the next day the offices of the newspaper were vandalized but it generated considerable debate in the media whether Pakistan should recognize Israel.

and modernization in Pakistan has been driven by US economic and military assistance and aid. The US has launched initiatives to enhance governance skills of Pakistani military and bureaucracy by providing opportunities for professional training and institutional collaboration and is also supportive of reform in the education sector. Pakistan needs to improve its human and property security environment to attract foreign direct investment. Despite mixed results, on both sides there is a growing awareness that building a sustainable alliance with reciprocity and commitment to carry out obligations is essential.

In the post 9/11 world the US policy toward Pakistan has undergone a paradigm shift that needs to be understood in the broader context of 'all the changes in the global environment,' particularly in South and Central Asia. It is too obvious; that the shift is driven by the security imperative. Considerations of oil flow, energy needs, regional stability (elements that will be relevant in the changing global environment for the foreseeable future) and the war on terrorism make it vital for the US to remain engaged with Pakistan. On previous occasions (1954-65 and 1981-89) supporting Containment Pakistan had provided the US with three essential tools: logistical support, airspace use, and intelligence gathering and today the Musharraf regime continues to sustain the US led war against terrorism with vigor. What is different this time? This time there is an element of necessity and long-term need, rather than mere preference for short-term tactical reliance. First, strategic and security interests defined and driven by long-term geo-strategic considerations remain central to US-Pakistan relations. The dynamics of change in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean will keep the US engaged in the region for an indefinite period of time. Second, it is equally important to recognize that the US has always had an abiding interest in Pakistan. Although, on occasions, the US has distanced itself from Pakistan and resorted to 'coercive diplomacy,' i.e. no certification plus economic sanctions in 1990, it did not disengage completely. Thirdly, Pakistan may have been a disposable ally in the previous decades, its status as a nuclear power, regional position in relation to India and China, and recent revelations of nuclear proliferation through Dr.A.Q. Khan (widely recognized in Pakistan as the father of the bomb), and the rise in religious militancy are a further source of anxiety for some analysts. In short strategic interests and security considerations, namely, terrorism, nuclear proliferation, religious militancy and larger regional interests continue to define and shape US-Pakistan relations. Finally, despite limitations, there are signs of serious concern and commitment both in Pakistan and the US in containing terrorism and supporting educational and economic reform.

The US and Pakistan would need to invest more in cultural, educational and economic policy arena to build a sustainable and credible partnership. Both have an opportunity; the US has demonstrated will and commitment to provide economic and military assistance to the tune of 3 billion dollars, Pakistan needs to devise policies of socio-economic reform and demonstrate will that it is ready to embrace democratic governance, curb religious extremism and stop any and all nuclear proliferation. Pakistan cannot afford to miss this opportunity, if it does, it will miss the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### American Perception and Policy: Is there a difference?

The evolving US-Pakistan partnership is under constant scrutiny because of an unending flow of media reports and writings in America and Europe that continue to portray a “fanatical and nuclear-armed Pakistan” as the “real rogue” state and, in the eyes of some, a threat larger than Iraq. Continuing the argument, despite overthrow of Taliban, the regime in Afghanistan is fragile and Al-Qaeda remnants are increasingly operating from Pakistan.<sup>2</sup> The celebrated American journalist on intelligence and espionage Seymour Hersh labels Pakistan as the “most dangerous friend”<sup>2a</sup>. There is a perceptible difference between how the Bush administration describes the relationship with Pakistan and how the US policy ‘think tanks,’ academia and media community evaluate the trustworthiness of Pakistan. Journalistic and scholarly writings remain skeptical and do not infuse much confidence in Pakistan’s ability to transcend the trends of Islamic militancy and social and political turbulence. Allegations of Pakistan’s involvement in nuclear proliferation continue to appear routinely in the American media.<sup>3</sup> The intellectual and policy environment in the US remains less than enthusiastic about any sustained partnership with Pakistan. In my assessment this policy environment is likely to persist unless Pakistan shows demonstrable progress towards socio-economic reform and democratic governance. As it stands, today *Pakistan is seen as an undesirable but unavoidable ally*.

<sup>2</sup> . For a scathing critique of Pakistan’s nuclear program, possible link with the ‘Islamic terrorists’ and imagined help to ‘plot the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks’, see, Bernard Henry Levy, Qui a Tue Daniel Pearl? (Grasset; 536 pages). Book review, “*Who Killed Daniel Pearl? The Economist* May 24<sup>th</sup> 2003.p83. For further details on similar theme and vulgarization of nuclear symbolism in Pakistan, see, Bill Keller, “*The Second Nuclear Age*”. The New York Times Magazine, May 4, 2003, section 6.pp.48-95. James Risen and David Rhode, “A Hostile Land Foils the Quest for bin Laden”, <http://www.nytimes.com> December 13,2004.

<sup>2a</sup> . Seymour M. Hersh, The Chain of Command: The Road from 9/11 to Abu Ghraib (New York: Harper Collins, 2004). In his chapter, “A Most Dangerous Friend”, he uses ‘gambling’ on Musharraf and Pakistan interchangeably and details nuclear program, militancy and anti-Americanism among Pakistanis as worrisome.pp287-296.

<sup>3</sup> . For a think tank assessment see Chairman’s Report of an Independent Task Force Council on Foreign Relations and Asia Society, New Priorities in South Asia: US Policy Toward India, Pakistan and Afghanistan (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2003) pp 39-63, see, Douglas Jehl, “CIA says Pakistanis gave Iran Nuclear Aid”, <http://www.nytimes.com> November 24,2004. For a litany of charges against DR.Khan and involvement in nuclear proliferation, see, Seymour M. Hersh, “*The Deal: Nuclear traders and the hunt for bin Laden*” The New Yorker, March 8, 2004.pp.32-37.

scrutiny and pressure for oversight and compliance from the international community and the US. On the other hand given Bush administration’s own reservations on the CTBT, it is not applying pressure on India and Pakistan to sign the Treaty. But the US has been focused and firm in seeking assurances from both countries on restraint on weaponization and deployment of their nuclear capabilities and urging them to elaborate on confidence building measures.

(3) Revival of Defense Consultative Group (DCG) and restoration of IMET. In the post 9/11 situation revival of IMET has been high on the Pakistani agenda and has found receptive ears in Washington. During 2003-4 it is projected that 100-300 officers of Pakistan’s armed forces will undergo IMET. The DCG was conceived to be a forum for security policy dialogue between US and Pakistan. Since its revival in late 2001 it has begun to provide opportunities of regular meetings, high level exchanges on military to military cooperation, transfer and purchase of military equipment and technology from US to Pakistan, combating terrorism and promoting security and strategic relations between the two countries.<sup>54</sup>

(4) Development Assistance and Economic Cooperation: The United States is Pakistan’s biggest foreign investor and also the single biggest trading partner of Pakistan as well as the destination for the highest country-to-country exports from Pakistan. In the post 9/11 period the Pakistani economy has been turned around through structural reforms made possible by strong US support. Over the four years (2001-04) period foreign exchange reserves are up to \$ 12 billion from 1 billion, GDP growth has averaged over 5.5% and targeted at 7-8% over the next three years. Exports are growing at 13% and fiscal deficit is less than 4%. Defense expenditure has decreased not only as a percentage of the total expenditure-6% to 3.4% but in absolute terms also. Large-scale manufacturing is up 18% and the private sector is growing-- 87% of the banking sector is in private hands. 12.5 billion dollar bilateral loans from the Paris Club have been rescheduled freeing resources for social and infrastructure projects. The USAID office has been revived and US assistance is flowing at an average of 500-700 million annually. For 2005-2009 an economic package of \$3 billion has been agreed for economic and defense needs. Besides half of the US debt has been written off. US support for Pakistan’s reform agenda gives her access to an average 650 million dollars from the World Bank’s IDA. A Joint US-Pakistan Economic Forum has been established. Exim Bank and OPIC are giving guarantees to the private sector.<sup>55</sup>

In August 2002 the USAID signed a \$ 100 million five-year bilateral agreement to help improve the quality of education in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh, Baluchistan and Tribal Areas. In this project the USAID is focusing to strengthen education policies, increase the capacity of teachers and education administrators, adult literacy and establish teaching methods that instill democratic attitudes among children and educators and draw families into the life of the school community. This is a small but significant step towards educational reform in Pakistan. Yet another positive development is that the US has increased the award of Fulbright fellowships to Pakistan from 10-12 a year to at least 100

<sup>54</sup> . For details see, Shakil Shaikh, “Pak-US DCG optimistic about revitalizing ties” <http://www.jang-group.com/thenews/sept2002-daily/27-09-2002/main/main3.htm>. Also see, Joint Statement on US-Pakistan Defense Consultative Group; <http://www.dod.mil/releases/2003/nr20030924-0474.html>

<sup>55</sup> . For this information I am indebted to Pakistan’s Consulate in New York.

In short, Musharraf's pragmatic, risk taking and liberal progressive style and rhetoric roused lot of expectation within Pakistan and globally, however, his performance particularly on the domestic front has remained far from satisfactory. On the domestic front he remains a reluctant liberal who is unable to make a clean break with the religious right and on the foreign front he continues to manage as a risk taker and pragmatic tactician who is impaired in strategic vision. Despite these limitations, Musharraf has been skillful and successful in bonding credible personal relations with Bush administration. The test of his leadership lies in converting this political capital into a robust and sustainable strategic partnership between the US and Pakistan. Would Musharraf succeed in building a sustainable strategic partnership between Pakistan and the US?

In the forgoing section, I have argued that in the post-9/11 phase despite some disabilities and limitations, Pakistan has an opportunity to forge a strategic partnership with the US. The US does have apprehensions about Pakistan's domestic predilections and somewhat 'problematic foreign policy goals', namely ;( 1) the threat of Jihadi groups (Islamic militants) domestically and 2) regionally (Afghanistan and beyond), 3) possibility of escalation in Kashmir, 4) the nuclear proliferation, and 5) trustworthiness in supporting the "War on Terror". Both seem to have a better appreciation of each other's constraints. This has led more regular and frequent contacts at the highest level; for example, between September 2001 and June 2004, the US and Pakistan have made significant progress towards removing misperceptions and initiating solid policy measures to promote an environment of trust and confidence at state to state level. In three years Musharraf and Bush have met three times; the (former) Secretary of State, Colin Powell has visited Pakistan twice, and, at other, levels significant exchanges have taken place. This has led to spin off effects of evolving strategic partnership in four areas:

(1) Removal of sanctions: since September 22, 2001 the waiver of all three nuclear related sanctions i.e. Pressler, Symington and Glenn have been put in place. The Glenn sanctions were also waived for India. The waiver of these sanctions removed restrictions in four areas: (a) All economic and development assistance sanctions which include agricultural credits, loans by International Finance institutions, commercial bank loans, and EXIM Bank credits for Pakistan. (b) Military sanctions (including Munitions list license and foreign military sales [FMS]) and military spare parts, both official and commercial. (c) Revision of some 92 Pakistani entities, involved in nuclear and missile activities, barred in 1998 from buying US goods. (d) Dual use items and high-tech which includes performance computers (HPCs). The lifting of the nuclear related sanctions and democracy related sanctions (section 58) is arguably the most important development in Pakistan-US relations since 1990. It has now opened the way for substantial economic and military re-engagement between Pakistan and the US. In February 2005, President Bush waived the democracy related sanctions as well. Thus, virtually accepting Musharraf regime as democratic.

(2) Pakistan's status as a nuclear power has raised its strategic relevance for the US. Non-Proliferation will continue to be a focus of US policy; given the revelations about Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan's nuclear proliferation network, Pakistan would remain under

On the other hand, the US State Department and CentCom continue to identify and appreciate countless ways in which Pakistan is 'reciprocating its obligations' in the US-led war against terrorism.<sup>4</sup> Appearing before the House Armed Services Committee United States House of Representatives July 2003, General Tommy Franks former Commander of CentCom stated, "Pakistan's support has been fundamental to our success in Operation Enduring Freedom. President Musharraf has committed substantial national resources against terrorism to include arresting a number of Al-Qaeda leaders, freezing the accounts of known terrorists and banning fund-raising to support Kashmiri militancy. He has pursued these actions despite ongoing tensions with India and significant domestic pressure, and he continues on a path toward democracy and sustained economic development... CentCom will continue to support our mil-to-mil relationship and build closer security cooperation with Pakistan."<sup>5</sup> In August 2003 after Joint Chiefs chairman General Richard B. Myers' visit to Pakistan, the Defense Department official said that, 'Pakistan is providing "phenomenal" support to the United States'.<sup>6</sup> In May 2004 commander of the US forces in Afghanistan Lieutenant General David Barno commending the support of Pakistan said, " I can tell you that Pakistan is widely known as tremendous partner with the US and coalition forces during the war on terror... There have been more Al Qaeda turned over and arrested by the Pakistani government and military than any other government we have worked with around the world."<sup>7</sup> . More recently the 9/11 Commission Report, applauding the active assistance of Pakistan in dislodging the Taliban and capturing and handing over 500 Al Qaeda operatives to the US, has recommended that, "the United States should support Pakistan's government in its struggle against extremists with a comprehensive effort that extends from military aid to support for better education, so long as Pakistan's leaders remain willing to make difficult choices of their own."<sup>8</sup> In the light of these assessments of the US policy makers (State Department and Pentagon), Pakistan becomes a "pivotal state" and potential strategic partner. The burden of converting this window of opportunity into a strategic partnership lies increasingly on the Musharraf regime and the US policy makers would need to demonstrate level of commitment and strategic foresight.

This demands not only an appreciation of geo-political dynamics and a shared security sensibility. It also implies that without improving governance and reducing regional tensions, the war against terrorism could become a long haul. Regional stability and the success of war against terrorism are dependent on two critical factors: first,

<sup>4</sup> . For example, to date Pakistan has arrested 500 terrorists and handed over to the US majority of al-Qaeda leaders, it is ranked third in the world in seizing terrorist assets (behind US and Switzerland), see, U.S Department of State. 2002 Patterns of Global Terrorism Report, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgrtrpt/2002/pdf/>. For provision of air bases, naval facilities, collaboration with FBI and other intelligence activities, see United States Central Command. [http://www.centcom.mil/operations/coalition/accesed on 5/19/2003](http://www.centcom.mil/operations/coalition/accesed%20on%205/19/2003)

<sup>5</sup> . Statement by General Tommy Franks, United States Army, Former Commander, Central Command, Before the House of Armed Services Committee United States House of Representatives, July 10, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> . For General Richard B. Myers visit to Pakistan comments, see, [www.defenselink.com/mil/accesed on 5/19, 2003](http://www.defenselink.com/mil/accesed%20on%205/19/2003).

<sup>7</sup> . Daily Times, online edition, May 12, 2004

<sup>8</sup> . The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States- Authorized Edition (New York/London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2004) p. 369.

Pakistan's domestic stability and preservation of territorial integrity, second, the reduction of tensions between India and Pakistan. These two factors have a symbiotic relationship. From December 2001 - 2003 the escalation of tensions between the two neighbors reached a point where they expelled each other's diplomats and, in late 2002, raised up massive troop mobilization to evoke the specter of nuclear war. Finally, in January 2004, after intense behind the scenes prodding and persuasion from the US State Department and CentCom, signs of improvement and possible change became discernible. Their first manifestation appeared in the form of the April 2003 'hand of peace' initiative on Kashmir by Prime Minister Vajpayee. Later, in December of that same year, two assassination attempts on General Musharraf may have forced Indian and Pakistani leaders to explore ways of reducing tension, giving credence to the role of US as the 'facilitator'.

### Changing Dynamics of Pakistan-US Relations

In order to understand where we are going, we have to understand from where we are coming. The history of US-Pakistan relations is a story of friendship, apprehensions, tactical alliance, some successes, and a few disappointments and yet, despite all these odds, it has endured. In a way, it's a relationship of agony and ecstasy. It is agonizing because Pakistan's domestic predilections and its recent adoption of nuclear weapons runs contrary to the US stated position of promoting democracy and curbing nuclear proliferation. It is ecstatic because on occasions the two have built swift and short tactical alliances that were perceived by many in Pakistan as a strategic partnership. What does this tell us about Pakistani elites and dynamics of US-Pakistan relations?

I would argue that the dynamics of the US-Pakistan relationship be analyzed by focusing on three variables: (1) *preferences of Pakistani elites*, (2) *the perceived threat from India and consequent desire to enhance military capability*, (3) *Cold War and the US Containment policy*. These variables continue to be relevant. Over a period of time their dynamics may have produced a "roller coaster ride" leading to periods of highs and lows in US-Pakistan relations.<sup>9</sup> However, in my view they continue to endure and resurge.

Like many developing states, the foreign policy making process in Pakistan is an elitist phenomenon. Institutionally the military elites and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs largely dominate the foreign policy making process. Public opinion of civil society has little input and impact, however, it would be fair to state that in recent decades the role of public opinion, particularly the print media has gained momentum. The foreign policy making elites cannot be totally oblivious to public sentiment (for example, the public support and sentiment for Kashmir, the nuclear issue or even sympathy for the Taliban regime). While political dispensations of the leaders their perception of security concerns and preferences do have an impact on the formulation and conduct of foreign policy. In the perception of Pakistani political leaders, geo-political considerations weigh heavily. It is important to note that Pakistani elites have been strongly pro-US/ West. Elites in Pakistan are confined largely to a cluster of 1,000 to 3,000 people who staff the top levels of military, bureaucracy, business, media, religious institutions and political parties. In

<sup>9</sup> . For a detailed account on this theme, see, Denis Kux, "A Ride on the Roller Coaster: US-Pakistan Relations 1947-1997" in Hafeez Malik (Ed) pp287-312.

(3) **Contradictions of Peace-Making and Enlightened Moderation**--January 2004 and beyond.

The third phase of Musharraf's leadership began with hope and promise for peace and enlightened moderation. It was a culmination of Musharraf's January 2002 speech, where he had laid down the contours of Pakistan's revised Kashmir policy; showing resolve to combat terrorism- that is renouncing support for any cross border violation. In January 2004 on the sidelines of SAARC meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan and India embarked on what has been called a "composite dialogue process". Both sides agreed on a framework to discuss and resolve all outstanding issues including Kashmir through peaceful means<sup>49</sup>.

The Joint Statement was done with considerable degree of behind the scene dialogue and prodding and persuasion by the US. India was open about recognizing the role of US as a 'facilitator' and that is a major change in the dynamics of US -Indo-Pakistan relations.<sup>50</sup> The dialogue process between India and Pakistan was applauded by the international community, has been well received by the public and business communities in both countries, however its sustenance hinges on how the two sides approach the Kashmir dispute. Musharraf has begun to show signs of frustration by finger pointing that India is not responding to his 'flexible' overtures on Kashmir.<sup>51</sup> As a result the peace process remains fragile and uncertain.

In June 2004 Musharraf called upon the Pakistanis, the Muslim Ummah, and the West, particularly the US to adopt his concept of 'enlightened moderation' to meet the challenges that confront them. To the Muslim world, he pleaded, "*shun militancy and extremism and adopt the path of socioeconomic uplift*" and to the West and the US he asked, "*resolve all political disputes with justice and to aid in the socioeconomic betterment of the deprived Muslim world*."<sup>52</sup> Nobody contested the wisdom of 'enlightened moderation' but many found serious gaps between what Musharraf professed and practiced.<sup>53</sup> This has deepened the crisis of his leadership's credibility. To restore and refurbish his 'enlightened moderation' credentials, he needs to right size the role of MMA and adopt measures to encourage inclusion of mainstream political parties. He needs to demonstrate that the military is willing to devolve real power to the elected public officials.

<sup>49</sup> . For full Text of Indo-Pakistan JointStatement, see: <http://www.thehindu.com/2004/02/19/stories/2004021907780101.htm>

<sup>50</sup> . For details on this point see, Josy Joseph, "What Made India Trust Musharraf" <http://www.rediff.com> January 28,2004 accessed on February 15, 2005

<sup>51</sup> . For example on February 5,2005 observing the Kashmir Solidarity Day, General Musharraf said, "Pakistan has made it clear to the Indian leadership and the world leaders that there cannot be lasting peace in the region and the dialogue process will not move ahead if the Kashmir problem is not resolved." The Times of India online edition February 14,2005, accessed on February 17,2005.

<sup>52</sup> . Pervez Musharraf, "A Plea for Enlightened Moderation: Muslims must raise themselves up through individual achievement and socioeconomic emancipation" Washington post online edition Tuesday, June 1,2004: p. A 23.

<sup>53</sup> . For a critique of Musharraf's plea see, Samina Ahmed and John Norris, "A 'Moderation' of Freedom: Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf Isn't Practicing What he Preaches" Washington Post online edition Tuesday, June, 15,2004: p. A23



The conduct, planning and the results of the October 2002 elections revealed yet another facet of Musharraf's leadership<sup>46</sup>. The critics continue to contend that the large-scale victory of PML (Q) and Muthida Majlis Ammela (MMA) was engineered. These allegations have tainted the credibility of the electoral process.<sup>47</sup> What is more troubling than the electoral outcome is the manipulative manner in which the military regime excluded the mainstream political parties (PPP and PML-N) from forming the governments, both at the national and provincial levels. This lent credence to allegations of the regime's connivance with the MMA. The referendum and election results not only produced skepticism about Musharraf's seriousness of combating terrorism but also impaired his leadership's progressive and liberal credentials. These policies of accumulation of personal power and propping up of religious right exposed Musharraf's liberal and progressive pretense.

In the eyes many analysts, more than relations with the US, it is the domestic predilections and problems of Pakistan that continue to attract greater attention; escalating sectarian killings, exclusion and de-institutionalization of political parties, the signs of a tribal uprising in Baluchistan and the growing disconnect between the state and civil society.<sup>48</sup> Ironically, it is the Pakistani elite's inability to build consensus on parameters of democratic governance and reluctance of the military to transfer real power to elected public officials that has become a source of alarm. Musharraf and the military by propping up PML-Q and MMA were able to construct a coalition of a segment of land owning, tribal, trader/business and religious groups. This constellation of social forces and interest groups has been collaborating with the military since Zia years (Ch.Shujjat, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, Maulana Fazalur Rehman, Maulana Sami ul Haq); their leadership is well versed in the craft of building factional coalitions but lack the will and vision of constructing a broad based coalition representing various interest groups. By their very structure these factional coalitions are driven by politics of exclusion rather than inclusion. These factions band together and are dependent on military to sustain power; hence they collaborate with the military to exclude the PPP and the PML-N and other popular forces. For the past two years the MMA has not only clung to power, it continues to support Taliban and persists with the rhetoric of Islamization. Musharraf had the opportunity to alter the constellation of political forces yet he did little to make a clean and irreversible break from the existing pattern of power.

<sup>46</sup>. For reportage and analysis on the subject see, Idrees Bakhtiar "*Battlefield Parliament*". Pp.20a-23 and Aasim Sajjad Akhtar, "*Soldiers of Fortune*". Pp37-39. The Herald, December, 2002

<sup>47</sup>. For an informative analysis on the formation and development of MMA, see, M. Ilyas Khan, "*Inside the MMA*", The Herald, November, 2002.pp44-47.

<sup>48</sup>. Territorially Baluchistan is the largest and most underdeveloped province of Pakistan. The province witnessed an influx of over a million Afghan refugees in the 1980s and Taliban's rise and fall also affected the public in several ways. In post 2001 as the federal government accelerated plans to develop the Gwadar port development, it re-opened issues of provincial rights and representation, which had not been addressed over the years and ignited protests and discontent. For overview of political developments see, Ayesha Siddiqi, "*Solving Balochistan Puzzle*" [http:// www. Thefridaytimes.com](http://www.Thefridaytimes.com) October 29-November 4, 2004.

ethnic composition these elites are predominantly Mohajir, Punjabi and Pushtoon, the Sindhis and Baluch remain marginal. There is a natural inclination among these elites, whether civilians or military lead the government, to seek strong relations with the US. This trend dates back to the 1950's: as the US embarked on the policy of containment, Pakistani elites found it opportune to join the US-led alliance. While the US was focused on containing communism, Pakistan was motivated to contain India.

### **The Cold War Era 1947-91 and the Centrality of India**

Since the very inception of Pakistan, its leaders perceived India as the primary security threat .The war over Kashmir in October 1947 only aggravated their anxieties. Fear of India produced a syndrome of insecurity that bolstered the military in Pakistan from its very inception. Pakistani ruling elites have shown strong pro-US and anti-India attitude and orientation. They were also weary and skeptical of Soviet intentions.<sup>10</sup> In short, the civil and military leadership in Pakistan was quick to build a consensus on an India centric foreign policy. To combat the Indian threat; they adopted a two-pronged strategy of seeking alliance with the US and pursuing friendship with China. During the 1950's, they vigorously sought US military, economic and technical assistance while discreetly and cautiously cultivating relations with China. It was not a smooth relationship from the outset but the Chinese leadership was astute in sustaining this relationship. Having secured an alliance with the US in 1954 (SEATO) and in 1955(CENTO), the Pakistani leadership quietly and effectively seized the opportunity that the 1955 Bandung conference of Non-Aligned States provided to establish a contact with the Chinese leadership. Thus, from mid 1950's Pakistani elites were able to build consensus on pro- US, pro- China and anti- India foreign and security policy. It was not, however, until the Sino-Indian conflict in 1962 that a durable friendship between Pakistan and China emerged.

This leads me to argue that from Liaquat Ali Khan to Musharraf, leaders in Pakistan have been steady in adopting a pro-US foreign policy (except for Z.A. Bhutto). Kux documents that the first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan (1947-51), making an official visit to Washington in May 1950, left a "positive impression" on the Congress and the White House,<sup>11</sup> thus laying the foundations of Pakistan's strategic dependence and pro-US policy. Liaquat and many of his contemporaries were convinced that adopting a pro-US foreign policy was in Pakistan's national interest, as it promised economic assistance and military support. On its part, the military, led by Commander- in -Chief of the Pakistan army, General Mohammad Ayub Khan, was relentless in persuading the civilian leadership to join the US-led alliance.<sup>12</sup>

It is worth noting that whatever the differences and disabilities of the political leaders and civil and military bureaucracy on domestic politics during the 1950s, they seemed to have a broad consensus on one foreign policy goal--- an alliance with the US. This is also to suggest that voices of dissent or opposition to a pro-alliance policy remained marginal. The alliance forged a partnership between the civil and military

<sup>10</sup> For an insightful analysis on the subject, see, Hafeez Malik, "*Pakistan's Relations with the Soviet Union and Russia*" in Hafeez Malik(ed) Pakistan: Founder's Aspirations and Today's Realities (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001) pp313-351

<sup>11</sup> . Denis Kux (2001) p.35.

<sup>12</sup> For some perceptive insights and observations on the subject, see, two early accounts, Mohammad Ahmed, My Chief (Lahore: Longmans, G, 1960) pp74-75.and Fazal Muqem Khan, The Story of Pakistan Army (Karachi, Oxford University Press, 1963). Pp15-155.

bureaucracy and strengthened their position in relation to political parties. Giving Pakistan military a new sense of confidence and in October 1958 it replaced the façade of parliamentary government with military rule. This was a serious jolt and a set back for the possible institutionalization of a party system which reflected the disarray of pro-democracy forces in the country but certainly laid the foundations for a pro-US foreign policy.<sup>13</sup>

Analyzing the response of US policy makers, Kux methodically explains they moved reluctantly and with caution to Pakistan's overtures seeking US economic and military assistance (As they are now to avoid Indian sensitivities). When they opted to support Pakistan, it was not simply that Washington "liked" Pakistani leaders but also because of their frustration to win over Indian leadership to their side.<sup>14</sup> The US frustration did not imply that they perceived India as a threat. On the contrary, Pakistan's security considerations have long been India centric, built around the dispute over Kashmir. When it comes to **US-Pakistan relations**, differing attitudes towards India figure prominently and affect policy outcomes. In Pakistan's security considerations, India was and remains a major threat, while the US does not see India in that light at all. For the US during the Cold War, Communism was the threat and containment the goal. During the Cold War years the centerpiece of US policy was containment of the Communist block led by the Soviet Union and China. To achieve this goal the US adopted a policy of making alliances with states that were on the periphery of these countries. Essentially, the US-Pakistan relations evolved and are embedded in geo-strategic considerations. As noted above after joining the SEATO and CENTO, Pakistan began to provide the US support in three areas: allowing the use of Pakistani air space and airfields, logistical support, if and when needed, and collaboration with US in intelligence gathering. In return for these services, Pakistan received military equipment/training (participated in programs for training officer cadres in the armed forces) and financial and intellectual support for building economic institutions. For example, one of the most significant achievements of the military alliance with the US was the creation of the Planning Commission, an institution that became pivotal for economic planning, development and growth of Pakistan during the 1960's.

The scale and size of this collaboration has varied under different regimes, nevertheless, institutional linkages were developed between the US Defense Department and the Pakistani military. Despite difficulties in US-Pakistan relations, these linkages have endured and helped the two countries to stabilize situations of regional crisis.<sup>15</sup> Pakistani decision makers maintain that the policy of alliance with the US "was not flawed conceptually though it suffered at times from errors of judgment."<sup>16</sup> Interestingly, Pakistan's strategy of building an alliance with the US and cultivating friendship with China peaked when in July 1971 Pakistan brokered friendship between the US and China.

<sup>13</sup> . For a detailed analysis see, Saeed Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan: From Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to Benazir Bhutto* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1997) pp21-55.

<sup>14</sup> . Denis Kux, p 35.

<sup>15</sup> . ibid pp359-363.

<sup>16</sup> . Abdul Sattar, "Foreign Policy: Relations with the West, China and the Middle East" in Hafeez Malik (ed) pp352-413.p 404.

India. As noted above, any discussion of a security threat to Pakistan from India must include the possibility of a nuclear conflict.

From Kargil we learn that the likelihood of a localized conflict to escalate to an undesirable level between India and Pakistan is real. Amassing of Indian troops along Line of Control (LOC) since December 2001(demobilized in April 2003) was of obvious concern to Pakistan post 9/11.Since 1998 Pakistan's defense has been based on the concept of deterrence of India's conventional forces by nuclear weapons. Thus, maintaining its nuclear forces is of vital concern to Pakistan but it must be taken in a fashion that it does not antagonize the US. Pakistan insists that it needs a legitimate deterrence to an Indian attack and should not be seen as an irresponsible nuclear power. It must be recognized that any conventional conflict along the LOC in Kashmir risks endangering Pakistan's relationship with the US on "War on Terror". This brought up an interesting dichotomy between global and domestic security concerns in that a successful US/Pakistan relationship has led to international aid to soften Pakistan's domestic political and economic pain, thus giving Musharraf some leverage to manage the domestic front on his own terms.

#### **(2) Accumulation of Personal Power: Inclusion of the Religious Right and the Promise of Containing International terrorism**

In the second phase (January 2002- December 2003) Musharraf's pragmatic handling of security and foreign policy concerns was considerably compromised by a series of missteps in domestic politics. As mentioned above, this somewhat favorable external environment emboldened Musharraf and he ill advisedly decided to hold a referendum in April 2002 that got him elected as President for five years.<sup>44</sup> The referendum was a hoax and damaged the reputation of Musharraf within the country and at the global level. It was a first step towards personal aggrandizement and only concentrated more powers in the office of the President. He did not stop there. In July 2002, he stridently announced the Legal Framework Order, introducing radical changes in the 1973 constitution (29 amendments), giving powers to the president to dismiss the prime minister, creating the National Security Council (with three services chiefs and chairman joint services staff), restricting the powers of the parliament and of the elected public officials.<sup>45</sup> Reinforcing the belief that Musharraf and the military was not ready to step down from its hegemonic position in the Pakistani power structure. These changes were not welcomed by the major political parties and did not win any friends for Musharraf abroad. Consequently, the impact of some of the positive constitutional changes---such as lowering of the voter age to 18 years, provision of mandatory 33% women seats and the restoration of joint electorate--- was compromised.

<sup>44</sup> . Referendum Order No 12 of 2002. On April 30, 2002 referendum was held and the voters were to give "yes" or "no" answer to the question: "Do you want to elect General Pervez Musharraf as the president of Pakistan for the next five years for: survival of local government system; restoration of democracy, continuity and stability of reforms; eradication of extremism and sectarianism, and for the establishment of Quaid-I-Azam's concept of Pakistan?"

<sup>45</sup> . For text of the Legal Framework Order, 2002 see, <http://www.Dawn.com/2002/08/22/top3.htm> For some interesting and critical editorial comments see, "Dancing With Dictators", <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/09/01/opinion/01suni.html> . For a wide ranging interview with Musharraf and some interesting insights on the domestic and security concerns of military regime, see, Isabel Hilton, "The General in His Labyrinth: where will Musharraf lead his country?" *The New Yorker*, August 12, 2002, pp42-55.

of Kashmir” but Pakistan sponsored cross border “terrorism” that needs to be curbed. On the other hand Pakistan, insisted and maintained that violence in Indian held Kashmir was indigenous and a response to India’s repressive policies; Pakistan was not abetting or aiding this.<sup>40</sup> This heightened tensions between India and Pakistan and forced US to engage with both to ensure that it does not escalate into a nuclear conflict. The US pressure forced General Musharraf to make major policy speech in January 2002 .In which he assured the international community that Pakistan was committed to combat terrorism; it would not allow its territory to be used by any outside group. The speech was also a reflection of realistic attitude and rational strategy, where he theoretically revised Pakistan’s Kashmir policy by denouncing cross border terrorism<sup>41</sup>. He imposed a ban on five Jihadi groups, but India remained skeptical and insisted that the regime needs to demonstrate ‘convincing commitment’ that it has stopped the ‘support of terrorism’.<sup>42</sup> The international community remained hopeful and some applauded Musharraf’s risk taking and pragmatic leadership.

Here one needs to recognize Musharraf’s vulnerabilities. Regionally, Islamic militancy, if unchecked risks quickly bringing Pakistan and India toward conflict in Kashmir. This is exacerbated by the “War on Terror” and the failure of the Afghan state. As more Islamic militants tied to the Taliban regime begin slipping into Pakistan and Kashmir, the possibility of backlash against the Musharraf regime or violence in Kashmir increases. India has tried, at times successfully: to piggyback the “War on Terror” with regard to Kashmir.<sup>43</sup> However, if Musharraf clamps down too hard and is viewed as giving in on the Kashmir issue, he risks a domestic political backlash from the same constituency. Thus, Islamic militancy is both a domestic and regional security concern because of its ability to destabilize the state and/ or to drag a wider regional conflict with

<sup>40</sup> . The Spokesman of Ministry of Foreign Affairs routinely takes this position in press briefings. For a recent statement on the subject see, Transcript of the Press conference addressed by the Foreign Office Spokesman, November, 29,2004.[http://: www.mofa.gov.pk](http://www.mofa.gov.pk) accessed on February 14, 2005.

<sup>41</sup> . For the text of Musharraf speech, see, [http://www.pak.gov.pk/public/president\\_address.htm](http://www.pak.gov.pk/public/president_address.htm) accessed on 2/7/02. Pakistani President made this televised speech on January 12<sup>th</sup> and early in the week British Prime Minister Tony Blair met him and nine US Senators and Congressmen also met him and before his speech they announced that Musharraf was about to make major policy speech. For details see, Irshad Ahmed Haqani, “President’s Proposed Speech”. <http://www.jang.com.pk/jang/jan2002-daily/10-01-2002/editorial/coll.htm>

<sup>42</sup> . See, statement and press conference by Jaswant Singh, Minister External Affairs, December 31,2001 and January 13,2002.[www.indianembassy.org/press\\_release/2002](http://www.indianembassy.org/press_release/2002)

<sup>43</sup> . *ibid*

Pakistan’s pro-US foreign policy has its critics, the best of which are reflected in the works of Tariq Ali, Hamza Alvi, Jamil Rashid, Gardezi, Ayesha Jalal and more recently Hassan Abbas. They have argued that from its very inception the US was able to develop structural presence in Pakistan.<sup>17</sup> Both civil and military elites in Pakistan were more than eager to seek US support. Once Pakistan joined the SEATO and CENTO pacts, its dependence on US military and economic assistance developed to an extent that Pakistan became a “client state” and its own foreign policy became subservient to US policy and interests. Through military alliance and by providing economic assistance, the US was able to deepen its linkages and presence in the military and economic sector. Resultantly, they argue, it has compromised Pakistan’s national sovereignty, hampered the growth of a party system and representative institutions and encouraged military intervention. Although they admit the military is part of the problem, the US is seen as aggravating and abetting these problems. From this perspective Pakistan is characterized as a vassal state.

Pakistani elites pro-US dispensations strengthened the position of the military in relation to elected public officials, political parties and the parliament. At times, **sustaining pro-US policies** has produced tension and cleavage among the Pakistani elites but, by and large, they have continued to dominate the policy process. It is significant and noteworthy that the foreign and security policy-making elite has considerably shrunk. Increasingly, under President Musharraf, the military has assumed the role of defender, definer and keeper of Pakistan’s national interest—widening the gulf between pro-US elites and the larger public.

#### **Break Up of Pakistan and Nuclear Issue**

During the Cold War, Pakistani elites equated (Indian non-alignment) as alignment with the Soviet Union and their worst fears came true in August 1971, when India signed a twenty year (1971-91) Treaty of Friendship. In the words of a former Pakistani prime minister, “this treaty enabled India to launch its armed invasion of East Pakistan in November 1971”. Ironically, the only time the US ever supported Pakistan against India was the famed “tilt” during the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war. The successive civil and military regimes cannot be exonerated from contributing to the split of the Pakistani state; however, Indian military intervention and Pakistan’s humiliating military defeat then, left a deep scar on the Pakistani national psyche .At the popular and elite level it promoted and solidified the belief that India has not accepted the creation of Pakistan and aims to reabsorb it. Break up of Pakistan aggravated its insecurity syndrome—breeding humiliation, hostility and antagonism towards India. This distrust and deeply ingrained hostility has continued to be a major obstacle for ‘untangling’ India and Pakistan.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup> See, Tariq Ali, *Military Rule or People’s Power?* (New York: William Morrow and Co, 1970) Hamza Alvi and Khusro Amir, *Pakistan and the Burden of U.S. Aid* (Karachi: Syed and Syed, 1965) Hasan Gardezi and Jamil Rashid (ed) *Pakistan: The Roots of Dictatorship* (London, Zed Press, 1983) Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan’s Economy of Defence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America’s War on Terror* (Armonk, New York: M.E.Sharpe, 2005)

<sup>18</sup> . For a theoretically rigorous and analytical exposition of India –Pakistan antagonism, see, Sumit Ganguly: *Conflict Unending* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) Eric S.Margolis, *War at the*

In the post 1971 period, fear of India changed from a perceived threat into an existentialist threat. Despite, national humiliation, military defeat and break up Pakistani elite and public resisted accepting India as the dominant regional power. Relations with India began to be seen not as a territorial conflict on Kashmir, but Kashmir became a symptom of a larger existential malaise in which India was *deux-ex-machina* out to undo Pakistan. Securing territorial integrity of Pakistan and combating hostile designs of India came to dominate elite thinking. To counter Indian threat, the political leadership in the “New” Pakistan began to ponder about the nuclear option. In 1974 India’s testing of a “peaceful nuclear explosion” heightened Pakistan’s insecurity syndrome. This changed the nature of political discourse in the region.

The Pakistani elites responded by presenting the nuclear option as weapon of necessity, survival and national prestige. Initially, Pakistan sought guarantees and protection from the nuclear powers, including the US, against a nuclear India. However, the pleas of Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto fell on deaf ears and he decided to secure a nuclear processing plant from France.<sup>19</sup> The US tried to dissuade Pakistan from embarking on such a path but did not succeed. Pakistan’s ambition to acquire nuclear weapons became a major irritant in US-Pakistan relations. This again demonstrates how US-Pakistan relations are deeply embedded in security considerations. In 1977 when the military overthrew Bhutto’s government, Bhutto insinuated that the US encouraged his ouster because he had resisted the US pressure to acquire nuclear processing plant. However, the military regime did not abandon the nuclear program and was quick to build national consensus around it as a weapon of national need, survival and prestige. President Carter (1976-80) who had built his foreign policy around nuclear non-proliferation and human rights, found the military regime’s record on both- dismal. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter visited India and Iran but refused to stop in Pakistan. He also cancelled the sale of 100 A-7 jet fighters to Pakistan. Carter invoked the Symington Amendment and discontinued all military and economic assistance to Pakistan. Pakistan’s nuclear program became a major irritation for the US and continues to evoke unease among the policy makers and the community of policy intellectuals.<sup>20</sup>

#### **Afghan War, US and Pakistan: Tactical Alliance or Strategic Partnership?**

In 1979 two developments in the region, Iranian Revolution (February) and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (December) changed the fortunes of the military regime in Pakistan. Now, President Carter tried to mend fences with the Zia regime and even glossed over Pakistan’s nuclear program and made a swift offer of \$400 million in economic and military assistance. But Pakistani president General Zia-ul-Haq played hardball and rejected the offer as “peanuts”. Meanwhile the military regime nervously worked on its wish list of military and economic assistance to contain the Soviet Union,

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Top of the World: The Struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet (New York: Routledge, 2001) in his chapter on, “*The Hatred of Brothers*” provides a chilling account of distrust between India and Pakistan. pp154-178. For yet another portrayal of India as one of the ‘world’s longest-suffering victims of terrorism’ and Pakistan’s ‘unremitting antagonism’ aiming at ‘destabilization of India as a whole’, see, K. Shankar Bajpai, “*Untangling India and Pakistan*” Foreign Affairs, May/June, 2003. pp.112-126.

<sup>19</sup> . Shirring Tahir Kheli, The United States and Pakistan: The Evolution of and Influence Relationship (New York; Praeger, 1982) pp 123-24.

<sup>20</sup> For details and subsequent visit of Zia to Carter Whitehouse in 1980, see Denis Kux (2001), pp238-242, 253-55.

Taliban and pressurizing Pakistan.<sup>36</sup> What really changed was that in the wake of 9/11, the American leadership was focused and determined and demanded compliance of these demands.

Second, Musharraf was quick in introducing changes in the military top brass. It is plausible to argue that some in the military top brass were reluctant to ditch the Taliban so readily; two of his closest associates were prematurely retired within weeks. In October 2001, immediately after the US started bombing Afghanistan, Musharraf made a decisive move and brought about changes in the top military brass. He unceremoniously replaced Generals Mahmud (chief of ISI) and Usmani (Deputy Chief of army Staff) and promoted General Aziz to a ceremonial position of Chairman Joint Chief of Services Staff – a cosmetic position. Having made these changes, he moved confidently to deal with the religious groups and Jihadi organizations. He carefully and cautiously chose to arrest selected religious leaders and banned five of the Jihadi groups, which had been labeled as “terrorists groups” by the US State Department. The regime also took steps to exert greater control on the Madrassas (i.e. curriculum review, fundraising, registration), attempting to contain the problem of Islamic militancy.<sup>37</sup> Musharraf has been skillful and flexible but not firm in dealing with religious opposition parties.

Third, despite his rhetoric and brinkmanship on Kashmir, he has been prudent and forthcoming in initiating a broad ranging dialogue with India and his trip to Agra in July 2001 (despite the outcome) was a good beginning. Since then he has said on several occasions that he was willing to have a dialogue with India anytime anywhere. But in the eyes of many he was unable to match his words with action.<sup>38</sup> What needs to be recognized is that over the years India and Pakistan have remained suspicious of each other’s intents and, in the wake of Kargil, the gulf has widened. Once again, Kashmir and India became focal point in US-Pakistan bilateral relations. Immediately after 9/11 India vociferously alleged that Pakistan was harboring “terrorists”, that it was encouraging cross border incursions in Kashmir, and that it was not doing enough to curtail the cross border violations.<sup>39</sup> Indian strategy like Israel in Palestine was that it is not “occupation

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<sup>36</sup> . For a revealing and chilling account of US-Taliban secret liaisons, see, Jean-Charles Brisard & Guillaume Dasquie, Forbidden Truth: US-Taliban Secret Oil Diplomacy and Failed Hunt For Bin Laden (New York: Thunder’s Mouth Press/Nation Books, 2002) pp3-47 also see, Steve Coll, Ghost Wars: The Secret Story of The CIA, Afghanistan and Bin Laden, From the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001 (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004) pp.336-352.

<sup>37</sup> . John Burns, “Pakistan Moves Against Groups Named by India”: www.nytimes.com December 29, 2001.

<sup>38</sup> . For an assessment of Musharraf’s approach towards Kashmir and views of opposition parties and other critics see, Zahid Hussain, “*Kashmir: The Long Road to Peace*” Newsline online edition, November 2004.

<sup>39</sup> . Between September, 11th 2001 and October 7, 2001, on the one hand India offered the US its bases for launching a war on Afghanistan and on the other hand vigorously campaigned to declare Pakistan as a ‘terrorist’ state. India felt further disconcerted, once US decided to use Pakistani bases for logistics, air and intelligence operations. For Indian position see, note on Global Terrorism; www.indianembassy.org/policy/Terrorism/index.htm .it clearly implicates Pakistan in cross border violation and terrorism. After December 13, 2001 terrorist attack on Indian parliament India began to compare it with 9/11 attacks on WTC, see for example Prime Minister Vajpayee’s address to the nation on December 31, 2001, statement by L.K Advani, Home Minister at a press conference in Washington, D.C January 9, 2002.

### (1) **Bold, Pragmatic and Risk taker: 9/11 to January 2002**

During the first phase (9/11 to January 2002), Musharraf conveyed the impression of a bold, pragmatic and decisive leader. He made several decisions; first, he showed courage, took risk and chose to join the US led coalition against international terrorism. Calculating the scale and size of domestic opposition, he was convinced that the Taliban would melt down under American military power. Once he realized that President Bush was determined to dislodge the Taliban, he chose to join the US led coalition. While the government's decision to support the US, evoked some protests in Karachi, and in parts of NWFP and Baluchistan but there was no major upheaval. This helped Musharraf to claim that a majority of Pakistani citizens support his decision. The alternative would have had disastrous consequences: international isolation, threat to nuclear and military assets; and a possible economic melt down. Under the circumstances, Musharraf made a bold, pragmatic, swift and firm decision. At the international level he had to meet the expectations of not only the US, but also the global community; at the domestic level, he had to ensure that he was able to carry the military high command and his nation along with him. His detractors have described his decision as opportunistic; some even alleged that he has compromised national sovereignty.<sup>34</sup> Politics in Pakistan has been fractious and extremely partisan. Musharraf had to draw a line between emotion on the street and the national interest. His levelheaded attitude and rational strategy was equated with capitulation. This view has gained authenticity by Bob Woodward's timely account of decision making at the White House. Woodward conveys that through the US Under Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, President Musharraf was given an ultimatum, "*Pakistan faces a stark choice, either it is with us or it is not. This is a black and white choice with no gray...the future begins today*". But what is not given equal importance and Bob Woodward draws our attention to this fact that Secretary of State, Colin Powell, told President Bush that in order to dislodge the Taliban and displace al-Qaeda, "*whatever action he (Bush) took, it could not be done without Pakistan's support*".<sup>35</sup>

Paradoxically, it was a grand reversal for both the United States and Pakistan. It began where it had started in 1980—Pakistan. Only the 'terms of endearment' had changed, as the war against 'Soviet infidels' could not be won without Pakistan; similarly the war against 'international terrorism' could not be fought without Pakistan. It was a geo-political necessity. Pakistan's geographical position became regime's lifesaver. Musharraf seized the moment and capitalized on "Pakistan's support" against the War on Terror. He reciprocated by calming the anxieties of American vulnerability. There is considerable evidence to suggest that the US had been pursuing the so-called 'seven demands' since the Clinton-Nawaz July 4, 1999 meeting, secretly negotiating with the

<sup>34</sup>. See for example, Ayaz Amir, "A banana republic without the bananas" Dawn online edition February 1, 2002 accessed on 2/8/02. Mian Tufail Mohammad (Former chief Jamaat-e-Islami) "*Events of 9/11 and the Real Objectives of America*". [www.jang.com.pk/jang/apr2002-daily](http://www.jang.com.pk/jang/apr2002-daily) accessed on 09/04/02. (Urdu).

<sup>35</sup>. Bob Woodward, *Bush At War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002) p. 47. The seven demands were; stop al-Qaeda operatives at your border and end any and all support to Osama bin Laden, provide, "blanket over flight and landing rights"; permit air, naval bases and borders; give intelligence, immigration information; "Condemn the September 11 attacks and 'curb all domestic expressions of support for terrorism against the United States, its friends or allies'; stop all fuel shipments to Afghanistan and stop Pakistani citizens to join Taliban; sever diplomatic relations with the Taliban and help the US in its efforts to capture Osama and if the evidence proves that al-Qaeda is indeed linked to the terrorist attacks. pp.58-59.

from the incoming American president. The Iranian revolution and Soviet intervention, proved cataclysmic for Pakistan, in two ways; on the one hand, they redefined US-Pakistan relations and, on the other, encouraged the military regime to forge an alliance with the religious groups. It was in the context of Iranian revolution and Soviet intervention that the US began to review its Gulf and Middle East policy. Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the Gulf States monarchies fearful of spillover effects of the Iranian revolution, emerged as natural allies. This also drew a political line between Sunni and Shiite Islam. Saudi Arabia availed this opportunity to develop linkages with various Sunni groups in Pakistan and also asserted for leadership of the Islamic world. It was the US policy response to these events that gave Pakistan the status of a 'frontline state'. In the light of these changing geopolitical realities the US developed a policy of 'dual containment' i.e. containing both Iran and the Soviet Union, thus, during the 1980s Pakistan-US collaboration focused around one goal--- defeating Soviet Union in Afghanistan. The issues of divergence, namely, the nuclear program and relations with India (i.e. the Kashmir issue) remained on the back burner. Given the Soviet-India Friendship Treaty during the Afghan war (1979-88), India-US relations remained "estranged", while the US-Pakistan alliance blossomed.

To repel Soviet intervention, President Reagan's administration rebuilt a framework of US-Pakistan collaboration that provided an aid package of military and economic assistance to achieve the policy goal.<sup>21</sup> In 1981 President Reagan announced a \$3.2 billion aid package spread over six years at \$400 million per year for military purchases, including F-16s and \$100 million per year in economic aid. The collaboration between the two had started at a modest level of covert operations (100 man CIA task force and Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan working together). In December 1981, Pakistan was given a six-year waiver of the Symington amendment sanctions. US-Pakistan collaboration in the Afghan war had worked so well that even before the first aid package expired, President Reagan delivered another \$4 billion package, \$2.20 billion in economic and \$ 1.72 billion in military aid.

#### **Security Imperative and Jihad**

To attain this goal, the US encouraged Pakistan to forge an alliance among various factions of religious groups in Afghanistan. This led to the creation of a complex network of Intelligence Agencies (US, Saudi, Pakistani), religious parties and Jihadi groups (Little did its architects envision that one day it would become a primary source of International terrorism). The result was the emergence of an 11 party coalition under the umbrella of the Hizb-e-Islami led by Gulbudin Hekmatyar.<sup>22</sup> From its inception to degeneration (the Geneva Agreement in 1988), this alliance worked in close association with the military regime of Zia-ul-Haq, which in turn instrumentalized the Jamat-e-Islami of Pakistan as its principal political arm.<sup>23</sup> The US policy intellectuals promoted a favorable policy environment and gave legitimacy to these Afghan warriors by using the metaphor "Mujahedeen"-those who was fighting a holy war against the infidels. This metaphor had an effect not only on the popular consciousness of Afghans, but also gave

<sup>21</sup>. Kux (2001). Pp 256-268, for a Pakistani perspective, see Shahid M.Amin, Pakistan's Foreign Policy: A Reappraisal (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000) pp132-42.

<sup>22</sup>. John.K.Cooley: Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism (London: Pluto Press, 1999) pp57-64.

<sup>23</sup>. Mushahid Hussain, "*Jamaat-I-Islami and Power Structure*" The Nation, Lahore June 15, 1992.

boost to the revival of Islamic sentiments among the religious groups in Pakistan. These developments provided the Zia regime an opportunity to provide patronage to the religious groups and also to develop an institutional linkage that lent legitimacy to their operations. In December 1987, the US Congress approved another \$ 480 million aid package and extended the Symington waiver for another two and half years. In 1988, President Reagan certified, “Pakistan does not have nuclear weapons”. However, with the signing of the Geneva Agreement (1988) the US began to re-examine its relations with Pakistan, which marked the parting of ways between the US and Pakistan military. Pakistan’s nuclear program and its management of post Soviet withdrawal Afghanistan became key issues of disagreement in bilateral relations. The Soviet pull out in 1989 effectively meant that the US goals had been achieved and there remained no long-term interest in the region. With this, the US withdrew from the region in haste and in 1990, it stopped already promised \$564 million in aid, stopped the delivery of 28 F-16s, for which Pakistan had already paid, and to cap it all, President George H. Bush refused to certify that Pakistan does not have nuclear weapons; thus the Pressler amendment is brought into play invoking sanctions against Pakistan. With this the flow of military aid to Pakistan ceased. The military to military ties were also severed.

During 1950’s and 1960’s these ties were substantial and had expanded during the 1980’s, especially between the Air Forces. After 1988, these cuts included the International Military Education Training (IMET) program. Resultantly, IMET funding for Pakistan remained at zero between 1990-2002. Attempts at improving the security relationship between the US and Pakistan began when the US, Secretary of Defense, William Perry, proposed reviving some military to military contact during his visit to Islamabad in 1995. This resulted in the 1995 Brown Amendment, which eased sanctions somewhat, but did not result in lifting the ban on military assistance<sup>24</sup>. The upshot of all this for Pakistan has been that during the decade of 1990s while the civilian regimes struggled to sustain democratic set up, there was little cooperation between the Pentagon and Pakistan military.

During Afghan war (1979-88) Pakistan benefited from collaboration with the US; Pakistan’s defense personnel with US training, acquired skills in intelligence gathering and combat.

A number of recent studies provide graphic details of collaboration between the US and Pakistan under the Reagan-Zia administration. It was perhaps one of the most effective and successful collaborative ventures developed by the two countries. The US and Pakistan fostered a coalition of Muslim holy warriors that promoted International Islamism to combat and defeat communist Soviet Union, costing about \$ 7 billion.<sup>25</sup> Thus, a large number of Islamic militants were mobilized from Muslim states. This nexus was built around the concept of Islamic jihad against the ‘infidel’ Soviet forces. According to Ahmed Rashid, *‘the effort of the two was to turn Afghan jihad into a global*

<sup>24</sup> . Saeed Shafqat (1997) p245

<sup>25</sup> . Mary Ann Weaver, Pakistan: In the Shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002) pp56-54, Kux (2001) PP 261-69. According to Jones, “In the course of their campaign to remove the Soviets, the US had spent huge amounts of money—over US \$ 7billion according to one estimate—to create an effective Mujahideen force”. See, Owen Bennett Jones, Pakistan: Eye of the Storm (New Haven and London; Yale University Press, 2002) p.27

struggling to muster enough strength to demonstrate that it has shared goals and qualifies to be a strategic partner. In the following section I will analyze the predicaments and expectations of the US and Pakistan in developing a strategic partnership.

### **Post 9/11 World and General Musharraf’s Paradox**

In the post 9/11 world, the US policy of Containment has reappeared in a new form--- its stated goal is containing “international terrorism”. The epicenter of this –Al-Queda is still far from completely defeated, straddles across Afghanistan and Pakistan and reportedly has cells in more than sixty states. Thus, while the Cold War and the Containment may have become irrelevant for Europe and other parts of the world, its relevance and significance has not diminished for Pakistan, South, Central Asia and the Middle East. After 9/11 when the US decided to launch a “war on terrorism” and named it “Operation Enduring Freedom” it offered a grim choice to the world: “*You are either with us or with the terrorists*”. Pakistan’s decision to join the international coalition against global terrorism was not an easy one. It had to be mindful of public sensitivities. As discussed in the foregoing section, for over two decades Pakistan had been deeply involved in Afghanistan. It was the principal architect and key ally of the Taliban government. While distancing itself from Taliban: it had to ensure that it was not rousing hostility from its own Pashtun population in the NWFP and Baluchistan provinces. Confronted with a resolute and focused Bush administration it seems to me, *Pakistan had one grand option--- optimize its geo-strategic position and demonstrate its best diplomatic skills under an extremely intricate global and regional environment*. In an analysis of the US-Pakistan relations, in the late 1960’s Zulfikar Ali Bhutto observed and that resonates for Pakistan in the post 9/11 world order. He wrote: “*It is safer and more prudent to avoid head on collusion with a global power. It is wiser to duck, detour, step aside and enter from the back door. It is futile to try to win over or implore a Global Power to change its policies by continued direct efforts on the plea of justice or alignment. Reminders of services rendered in the past are of no avail. Neither cringing nor sycophancy, neither sentiment nor argument, carry weight in such dealings. The simple fact of the matter is that, in the long run, a Global Power is not likely to be outwitted, so it is better for a small nation to take a realistic attitude and evolve both policy and strategy on rational rather than on subjective lines.*”<sup>33</sup>

For me it is hard to speculate, whether General Musharraf took a leaf from Bhutto’s insights. However, it is evident that he was swift in weighing his options. This was a defining moment for his leadership. He showed signs and roused expectations of a transformational, pragmatic and forward looking leader but his actions and performance remains constricted. The paradox for Musharraf was how to harmonize the global security imperative with the compulsions of domestic politics? In these cataclysmic circumstances he revealed two facets; one foreign and the other domestic and, on both, his performance record has been mixed. I would assess and evaluate Musharraf’s leadership into three phases. (1) Bold, Pragmatic and Risk taker--9/11, 2001 to January 2002. (2) Accumulation of personal power, inclusion of religious right and promise of containing terrorism-- January 2002 to December 2003 (3) Contradictions of peace-making and enlightened moderation-January 2004 and beyond.

<sup>33</sup> . Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, The Myth of Independence (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1969) pp14-15

## Nuclear Explosions and Kargil

In May 1998, as India detonated a nuclear bomb, it put enormous pressure on Pakistani leadership. The internal demand and expectation was to explode a bomb; the external pressure was to resist the explosion. This time around the civil and military leadership was able to build and demonstrate consensus and on May 28th 1998 Pakistan also conducted nuclear tests. The tests were an attempt to demonstrate that the Pakistani state was capable of meeting Indian challenge. To know that Pakistan also has nuclear capability would make the public feel a little more secure about its ability to defend against potential Indian aggression. From a geo-strategic point of view, Pakistan would have been remiss if it did not respond to India's nuclear testing. This intensified the arms race in South Asia, given the uprising in Kashmir that has led to over 60,000 deaths since 1990, and serious allegations and some evidence of Pakistan abetting and supporting cross border infiltration, the region began to be seen as a nuclear flash point. The US responded by imposing sanctions on India and Pakistan; thus, the nuclear tests re-engaged the US in India and Pakistan. The US adopted a quiet diplomacy of encouraging India and Pakistan for bilateral talks. This resulted in Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to Pakistan and the Lahore Declaration 1999.

It was obvious to many that the Pakistani political elites were extremely divided on how to press forward with redefining relations with India. Apparently, the military was not fully convinced on the urgency of the peace process. Now there is evidence to suggest that while Indian Prime Minister's visit was on, Pakistan's military was preparing to launch the Kargil operation. The diplomatic fall out from Kargil was huge for Pakistan; it marked a paradigm shift and the US decisively tilted towards India. At the global level, Pakistan was stigmatized as an "irresponsible state".<sup>32</sup> It produced a crisis of reputation and Pakistan was dubbed as a "rogue state" whose conduct as nuclear weapons state could not be trusted. During July-September 1999 two decisions by the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif: first, to withdraw Pakistani troops from Kargil and second, yielding to the US pressure to withdraw support for Taliban widened the gulf between the civilian government and the military and paved the way for the military's coup. In October 1999 when General Musharraf, overthrew the government of Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan was increasingly isolated and relations with the US were at their lowest ebb.

Ironically, 9/11 changed the fortunes of Musharraf's military regime as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan had changed the fortunes of Zia's military regime in 1979. Pakistan was once again a 'frontline state' and necessary but unavoidable ally. Both the US and Pakistan were faced with a critical question; would it be a tactical alliance as in the past or a strategic partnership for the future? As it turns out the US is focused on tactical alliance but hesitant in developing a strategic relationship while Pakistan is

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the Taliban regime \$42 million in the "war against drugs". On the US tilt towards the Taliban see Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia* (New Haven: Yale university Press, 2000) pp159-69. He seems to suggest that the Unocal lobbying explains the tilt. Also see, Barry Meier, "Most Afghan Opium Grown in Rebel-Controlled Areas" *New York Times*, and October 5, 2001.

<sup>32</sup> . See for example, Ashley J. Tellis, C.Christine Fair, Jamison Jo Medby (Ed), *Limited Conflicts Under the Nuclear Umbrella: Indian and Pakistani Lessons from the Kargil Crisis*. (Santa Monica, CA; Rand, 2001) pp91.

*war waged by all Muslim states against the Soviet Union*'.<sup>26</sup> In fact, the Afghan war not only gave new life to the coercive capacity of the State, but also provided an incentive to expand its manipulative competence. The Pakistani ISI got deeply involved in the training and recruitment of Mujahideen: it had to devise strategies to motivate the Afghan groups to sustain the war. The collaborative arrangement between the US and Pakistan relied extensively on recruitment and training. The US experts gave training to the ISI on a broad range of tangible and intangible areas, 'endurance, weapons, sabotage and killing techniques, communications and other skills.'<sup>27</sup>

Since Pakistan and the US could not develop a shared security vision for disengagement, therefore the Jihadi's (holy warriors) were left to pursue their own devices and interests who turned against America. The Afghan Mujahedeen's concepts of war against Soviet Union had a deep impact on Muslim consciousness in Pakistan, Afghanistan and the surrounding areas. The US-Pakistan collaboration in pursuit of the Afghan war had four consequences for Pakistan; first, it led to the growth and expansion of religious groups in Pakistan; second, it promoted the Jihad culture; third, it led to proliferation of portable weapons and the militarization of Pakistani society. Finally, laden with the successful outcome of the Afghan war (dismemberment of Soviet Union) the newly mobilized, armed and trained religious groups began to seek autonomy and confront their US/Pakistani patrons. This led to factionalism and fragmentation of the religious parties, because religious groups began to jostle for procuring funds and training. This tension produced personality-centric factions among the religious groups. In 1980-88, the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e Islam (JUI) split into about 11 factions, while the Jamiat-ul-Ulema Pakistan (JUP) divided into 5 factions. Each of these factions began to center around a religious leader, who aimed to create their own Madrassa. Religious education and training for jihad became complementary.

The Madrassas developed into sanctuaries of religious zealots and served as a ladder to political power. The factional religious leaders began to encourage some form of military training; therefore, jihad was portrayed as a tool to achieve a higher goal for the glory of Islam. Thus, for motivation and mobilization, jihad was propounded as a legitimate concept to wage war against infidels. Supporting the Afghan Mujahideen against the Soviet Union was equated with supporting Islam. Besides jihad, the other consequences of the Afghan war were the proliferation of portable weapons, the drug trade and scramble for donations for the Madrassa's. By 1990, there were 1,700 Deeni Madrassa's, most of which emerged during the Zia years.<sup>28</sup>

With the implementation of the Geneva Peace Accords, the US began to disengage from the Afghan war, but it was disengagement without dismantling the infrastructure that it had built for jihad against the Soviet Union. The religious-political groups involved in jihad were not fully convinced about disengagement, therefore the culmination of the Geneva peace process marked the parting of ways between the US policy makers and the 'holy warriors'. In 1989, as the Soviet military withdrew from

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<sup>26</sup> . Ahmad Rashid, "The Taliban: Exporting Extremism," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 1999, pp 22-35

<sup>27</sup> . John Cooley, pp 80-105.p80.

<sup>28</sup> . Saeed Shafqat, "From Islam to Islamism: The Rise of Dawat-ul-Irshad and Lashkar-e-Taiba" in Christophe Jaffrelot (Ed) *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?* (New Delhi/London: Manohar/Zed Books, 2002) pp131-147.

Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze visited Pakistan in February and offered a package of technological and economic cooperation. However, the Benazir Bhutto (1988-90) government could not avail the opportunity imaginatively. Pakistani elites lost an opportunity to mend fences with the Soviets and continued with a policy that perceived Soviet Union as hostile and inflexible.<sup>29</sup>

With the US disengagement and Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, a new phase began in the development and orientation of the religious-political groups. These groups began to seek greater autonomy from the Pakistani state and the US experts. The US once again put on the 'security lens', with the religious groups portrayed and perceived as 'terrorists' and 'engines of Islamic fundamentalism'. Thus, the pattern of religion and politics in Pakistan underwent a paradigm shift. Some of these religious-political groups began to take not only an anti-American, but also an anti-democracy position. The changing equation in the US-Pakistan alliance brought the realization among the religious-political groups that; in the post-Geneva period the US not only disengaged itself from the Afghan war and religious groups, but also was hostile to those who persisted in pursuing the 'holy war'. It is in this context that one may analyze the emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan (1994) and the Lashkars in Pakistan. This changing equation has propped up and enlarged what are called the Jihadi organization and weaponized vigilante militias.

Yet another significant consequence of the Afghan war was that it reinforced the military's hegemony in Pakistani politics. It also revitalized the institutional linkages between the US and Pakistani military in areas of intelligence gathering, logistical support and training. As noted above, since Pakistan and the US could not develop a consensus on an exit strategy from Afghanistan, the collaborative effort never matured into a strategic partnership and both had to pay a heavy price. With hindsight, there is a growing consensus among the US policy intellectuals, policy makers and academia that an unplanned US disengagement left various Afghan factions and Islamic militants, who were mobilized from Arab states and other parts of the world, to wage and sustain a war against the Soviet Union and to pursue their own devices. Consequently, some of these Islamic militants began to channel their resources and energy into waging a Jihad against the US.<sup>30</sup>

### **US and Pakistan- A Decade of Missed Opportunities: 1991-2001**

During this decade, Pakistan made a painful transition towards electoral but "illiberal democracy" and struggled fruitlessly to institutionalize a parliamentary form of government. Pakistani political leaders and the military elites also found it difficult to build consensus on the orientation and direction of the domestic political order and foreign policy goals. With the end of cold war Pakistan was confronted with the challenge of reconciling security imperative and institutionalizing democracy? The tension between the security imperative and democratic impulse ruptured the fragile democratic order in Pakistan. The first signs of this disconnect between the civilian and military leadership appeared during the Gulf War, when the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (1990-93) aligned itself with the US led international coalition,

<sup>29</sup> Hafeez Malik, "*Pakistan's Relations with the Soviet Union and Russia*". Pp 313-351, pp340-47 in Hafeez Malik (Ed).

<sup>30</sup> Owen Bennett Jones pp 26-33

while the Chief of Army Staff (COAS) publicly supported the Iraqi position by advocating the concept of "strategic defiance"; the Bush administration was infuriated. Understandably, this did not endear the US to Pakistan. Following the break up of Soviet Union and after the Gulf war, the US began to construct a "new world order" and shifted its focus towards Russia and Eastern Europe. Pakistan was left to pursue its own dispensations and devices in Afghanistan. The inability of political parties to build a minimal consensus on domestic issues, particularly the role of Jihadi groups, gave the military an opportunity to redefine and reconstruct Kashmir and Afghan policy. On both the issues, the military began to rely ever more on the Jihadi groups. This policy had implications on domestic and foreign policy goals. Pakistani policy analysts and strategists argued that in the wake of a successful culmination to the Afghan war, they felt that the collapse of the Soviet Union had drastically diminished the prospects of a neutral Afghanistan; therefore, it was imperative for Pakistan to have defense in depth. This was a risky strategy and faulty assumption but Pakistan embarked on a policy of seeking a sympathetic, if not friendly, government in Kabul.

During 1989-91, a number of unrelated developments--an uprising in Indian held Kashmir (1989), civil war in Afghanistan (1989-94), dismemberment of the Soviet Union, Gulf War, and termination of Indo-Soviet Friendship Treaty (1971-91), proved fortuitous for Jihadi groups and the Pakistan military. The military elites began to advocate that an unstable Afghanistan provided Pakistan an opportunity to adopt a policy of strategic depth; therefore it was desirable to have a government in Afghanistan that is sympathetic towards Pakistan. To achieve this goal they adopted a two pronged strategy: First, given their linkages with various Afghan factions, the military elites appeared confident that such a goal is attainable, they began to coordinate with the religious groups and that led to the emergence of Taliban. Second, the uprising in Indian held Kashmir, led the Jihadi groups to believe that here is an opportunity where Jihad can be pursued; it suited the needs and worldview of many private groups and of some in the Pakistani governments. This reactivated and energized a new nexus among the religious groups and the Pakistani Intelligence Agencies.

During the 1990s successive civil governments in Pakistan vigorously internationalized the Kashmir dispute and also abetted and supported the Jihadi groups. The unending militancy and conflict in Kashmir aroused allegations that Pakistan was supporting cross border terrorism against India. In war torn Afghanistan, India, Saudi Arabia and Iran, besides Pakistan, began to compete for a sphere of influence and control among various Afghan factions. With the rise and success of the Taliban, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan began to be seen as patrons of Taliban, while India and Iran were seen as supporting factions hostile to the Taliban. The US monitored the changes in Afghanistan with caution and during July 1999 - July 2001 it continued to maintain discrete contacts with the Taliban, simultaneously giving a nod at Pakistan's pro-Taliban policy. This strategy embroiled Pakistan into Afghan's civil strife and in 1994 (as the Taliban movement gained momentum and swept the country through 1996), Pakistan acquired the status of a Taliban ally and was one of the three states (with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) which recognized the Taliban regime until it was overthrown in October 2001.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> . After the Nawaz-Clinton meeting on July 4, 1999, the US had been putting pressure on Pakistan to curb the activities of Taliban, demand extradition of Osama and yet continue to explore the possibility of oil pipeline through Afghanistan. The US government itself tilted to the Taliban in 1996 and later in 2000 paid