

# **Militancy and the Pakistan Army**

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# Militancy and the Pakistan Army

There are two main domestic challenges facing the Pakistan Army today: the insurgency in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and the extremist violence that rages throughout the country. The two eruptions are promoted by criminally fanatical groups, which have been cooperating to extend terrorism, with the aim of destroying Pakistan's limping democracy. They base their justification for havoc and slaughter on wilfully misrepresented tenets of Islam and claim that they wish to create a caliphate, but should they ever attain supremacy, their rule would be one of unrestrained bigotry and ferocity. These obnoxious characteristics were amply demonstrated during the brief but horrific reign of the Taliban in the Swat region of Pakistan before the army operation overcame the fanatics and restored a degree of normality.

The army, as directed by the government, has the constitutional duty "to defend Pakistan against external aggression or threat of war, and subject to law, to act in aid of the civil power when called upon to do so."<sup>1</sup> Its military operations within Pakistan, in FATA, the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Balochistan are, therefore, lawful, provided they continue to be under the control of the 'civil power', just as was the army's drive against insurgents in Balochistan, which was ordered by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1973.<sup>2</sup>

The difference between the 1970s campaign against Baloch dissidents (which was ended by General Zia-ul-Haq after he took over in a coup in 1977) and the present conflict in NWFP/FATA is that the Baloch insurrection had little resonance in most of Pakistan, while the conflict in the west that began in 2003, has had grave repercussions throughout the country. In both cases, the scale of operations required many more troops than were in place in the affected regions.

## Complications of Redeployment and Training

The army did not have enough troops in NWFP to combat the growing

insurgency (and had none at all based in FATA; all army units were withdrawn in the period November 1947 – January 1948).<sup>3</sup> It was not possible for 11 Corps and the paramilitary Frontier Corps, both with their headquarters in Peshawar, to conduct operations without considerable reinforcement. 11 Corps had only two infantry divisions to cover the entire region and little in the way of dedicated armour and artillery support, while the role of the lightly-armed, locally-recruited Frontier Corps has always been more akin to policing than engaging in conventional military operations. Dealing with inter-tribe skirmishes and cross-border smugglers is very different to combating organised bands of fanatics, whose primary objective is the destruction of the state.

Therefore, in 2007, it was decided that some units and formations<sup>4</sup> would be deployed from the eastern frontier to the west. But the main problem with this decision, notwithstanding its appropriateness, was that troops facing India along the international border and the Line of Control (LoC) are skilled in conventional warfare tactics, not counter-insurgency (COIN). Along the border, the emphasis is on armour-centric mobility, with the aim of countering a [potential/hypothetical] major Indian advance aimed at deeply penetrating Pakistan (the *Cold Start* doctrine) and even pushing east to take territory (Pakistan's *Riposte*). Formations along the LOC are essentially static and defensive in posture and are not required to have expertise in guerrilla warfare. Retraining would be essential if there was to be a properly conducted campaign against militants in the west of the country. The process would require much time and effort.

But there is yet another factor in the equation of committing troops to tasks: the stance of India. The Indian government and people reacted strongly to the terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November 2008, and blamed Pakistan for fostering those who carried them out. Even more significantly, many in India considered that the Pakistani government actually had some formal and official role in assisting the attackers and most Indians – spurred by an active media – now firmly believe that Pakistan was involved. In this atmosphere, it was tempting for politicians, especially those of the ultra-nationalist persuasion, to beat war drums and threaten Pakistan with dire consequences if there was another terrorist incident, which is very likely.

Although there was no reinforcement or movement of troops on the Indian side of the border after the Mumbai atrocities, Pakistan could not

forget the major deployment (Operation *Parakram*) that took place in 2002, following a terrorist assault on the Indian parliament. They had no reason to be complacent concerning Indian intentions, given the similarity of the Mumbai and Delhi attacks and the ensuing rhetoric, and Pakistan's armed forces were required to remain vigilant. There could be no question of lowering guard on the eastern border unless there was an assurance from India that it would not engage in military action. This was not given.

Even after the initial outburst of anti-Pakistan bellicosity had died down, there came carefully composed but aggressive and confrontational statements by highly-placed Indian officials that gave cause for concern in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. These were measured threats made by prominent national figures, which could not be ignored, and they came in a period of special concern to Pakistan – the very time at which it was necessary to continue relocating troops from the eastern frontier area, in order to combat the menace of terror and insurrection in the west.

On 4 June 2009, the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of India's South-Western Air Command, Air Marshal KD Singh, said in a public lecture, "In case of a misadventure by Pakistan in the shape of a major terrorist attack or the attack like the one we had on the Parliament, attack on our leaders, a major city, public or hijacking an aircraft, can obviously lead to a reaction from India, which could be a short intense war."<sup>5</sup> Then, on 1 November 2009, the Indian Home Minister, P Chidambaram, was reported as saying, "I've been warning Pakistan not to play any more games. Let Mumbai be the last such game. If they carry out any more attacks on India, they will not only be defeated, but we will also retaliate with the force of a sledgehammer."<sup>6</sup>

The threat from Delhi, which many observers had considered to have been negligible, given the apparent pragmatism of the government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, was spelled out in blunt and menacing terms. Given the stature and appointments of those who warned so clearly of conflict, the prospect of an attack could not and cannot be treated lightly. For this reason, many senior military officers in Pakistan argued that denuding formations along the border could have serious consequences, if India decided to engage in a "short, intense conventional war", as a result of another terrorist attack. If there were widespread clamorous allegations in India that the culprits had been trained in Pakistan, then there could be a war and although it might be

“short and intense”, it almost certainly would escalate from conventional to nuclear, if Indian troops penetrated Pakistan’s territory as far as, say, to encircle Lahore. The army, the senior officers felt, would be failing in its duty if it dropped its guard along the frontier; so there had to be compromise, which, in military affairs as in most others, usually results in a less-than-desirable solution.

The army was presented with the problem of retraining a large number of troops and re-equipping them for COIN and anti-terrorist operations, concurrently with assessing India’s posture along the eastern border and deciding how many units may be moved to the west. The threat in the west was growing, and many casualties were being taken, mainly because the units were not experienced in anti-guerrilla warfare. For example, many units had not been trained how to react when ambushed in a vehicle convoy; and the incident of 30 August 2007, when over 200 soldiers surrendered to an initially small force of tribesmen, was a significant embarrassment to the army as a whole. They were released on 4 November following a reciprocal release of some 25 convicted tribal terrorists. The affair was disturbing for the army and the country, especially as the rebels had murdered three soldiers, but President Musharraf reacted in an unexpectedly laid-back fashion and permitted the drama to run its course, which ended in the usual tribal way-with concessions on both sides. In almost all Western eyes, this compromise was seen as a craven submission to the dictates of criminals, and in the tenets of Western-style law, there is indeed no admission of such an advanced style of plea-bargaining. It cannot be expected that the practice of negotiation will be endorsed by Pakistan’s critics, or even by many Pakistanis who consider the tribal regions to be as foreign as any South Sea island. But it is the way of the region, and although it may stoke up trouble for the future, it is well to consider what might have happened otherwise in this and other instances of tribal lawlessness.

There has been domestic and foreign criticism of the Pakistan Army for having few units trained in COIN operations, but given its externally imposed priorities (or perception thereof) on the eastern border, it is unsurprising that such specialised training had not been given precedence over conventional warfare. As was found by the British in Northern Ireland, and then by the US in Iraq and Afghanistan, to commit a unit to COIN if it is not trained in



such skills can be costly in casualties and gravely counter-productive in terms of community acceptance and achievement of the strategic objective. The British, for example, had to design a comprehensive training programme, in which a conventionally-focused unit would take up to eight months to prepare for deployment to Northern Ireland during the conflict with the Irish Republican Army and other terrorist groups. Similar instructions and other preparations were – eventually – realised to be necessary for US troops before deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan, and it was essential that such training be imparted to Pakistan's soldiers, as operations in the tribal areas between 2003-2007 had demonstrated similar weaknesses in procedures. But then another and more pressing threat presented itself, not in FATA, but in one of the 'Settled Areas' – the beautiful Swat region. Unfortunately, when the army had to turn its attention to Swat, the problems in the tribal areas did not go away: they grew in intensity and in importance to Pakistan as a whole.

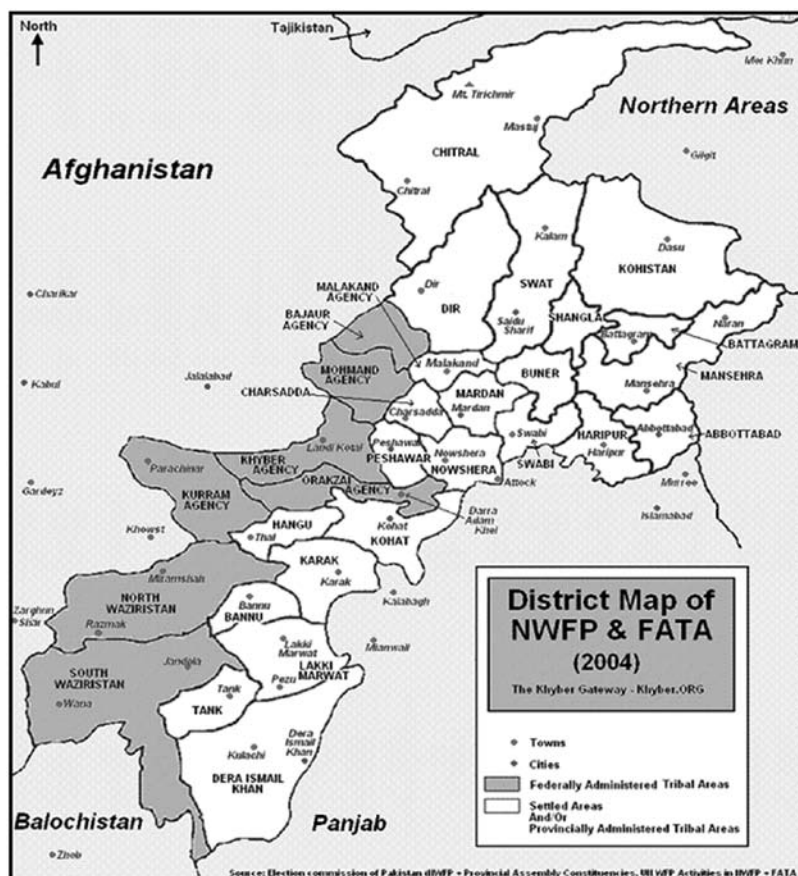
## **The Tribal Areas and Beyond**

There are seven Federally Administered Tribal Areas: from north to south-Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, North Waziristan and South Waziristan. Orakzai is the only one not abutting Afghanistan. FATA is represented in Pakistan's Senate and National Assembly, but their (Pakistan's) laws do not apply, unless ordered by the President, who has executive authority over the region. The agencies are administered by political agents, whose authority has been eroded over the past eight years and who are now largely ineffective. There are compelling arguments for terminating the system, but this would be dependent on bringing the tribal areas into mainstream life in Pakistan, an aim which would meet varying degrees of resistance.<sup>7</sup>

The area covered by the agencies is 27,220 sq km, about the size of Albania or (the US state of) West Virginia, with a population estimated at 3.35 million,<sup>8</sup> 80 percent of which is illiterate (at a generous estimate, only 5 percent of females are literate). The main economic activity is smuggling, although there are some tracts of good agricultural land and sizeable mineral deposits. Kidnapping for ransom is common and poppy is grown for heroin manufacture. The region is almost totally undeveloped with little healthcare, education or access to clean water. Roads are mainly unmetalled tracks and

there are no airports (although there are some landing strips). Weapons of all types, including mortars, heavy machine guns and rocket launchers, are in plentiful supply. Almost all tribesmen carry a rifle as a matter of prestige. There are some 60 main tribes and scores of sub-tribes. All are notoriously quarrelsome and aggressive towards each other, and especially, antagonistic towards foreigners, which include citizens, and principally the authorities of Pakistan.

Adjacent to the FATA lie the Settled Areas of NWFP, north of which lies the former Malakand Division, which comprise the districts of Chitral, Dir, Swat, Malakand and Buner. For the sake of convenience, the region is often still referred to by this name.<sup>9</sup>



Before the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001-2002, there were undoubtedly zealots with quasi-religious agendas in the tribal areas, but the region had been spared the excesses of ignorant and savage Taliban bigots, who had confined themselves to establishing a so-called 'Islamic State' in Afghanistan. After the invasion, however, increasing numbers of Taliban and freelance mercenaries of many nationalities sought refuge in Pakistan, mainly in the tribal areas, where they sought to take over the regions in which they had settled, and from where they mounted attacks across the border. Their presence was welcomed by home-grown extremists, some of whom had been in Afghanistan, who seized on the opportunity to spread their own brand of religious intolerance. There was increasing emphasis on gathering young men into *madrassas*, ostensibly religiously-oriented schools, in many of which they were not only taught to memorise the *Quran* but were encouraged to adopt the mindless bigotry of their mentors. NWFP *madrassas*, and most others, do not encourage the imparting of a general education, with emphasis on open-mindedness, the humanities, and employment-oriented skills.

Given the nature of Pakistan's unsought confrontation with India on the eastern border, there was no possibility in 2001 of mounting, blocking, or search and destroy operations against militants driven out of Afghanistan by the US/British operations at Tora Bora in the east of the country, although the Commander, US Central Command, General Tommy Franks, wrote in 2004 in the *New York Times* (being described as "a member of Veterans for Bush"), "Pakistani troops also provided significant help (during the Tora Bora operation) – as many as 100,000 sealed the border and rounded up hundreds of Qaeda and Taliban fighters."<sup>10</sup>

His claims are fallacious, because the border was not "sealed" and there were no "hundreds" of fighters rounded up. The figure of 100,000 is unsubstantiated.<sup>11</sup> And his statement is at variance with what Secretary of Defence Donald Rumsfeld said in December 2001, "They (Pakistan) must have seven or eight or nine battalions along the Pakistan-Afghan border, which is clearly a deterrent to people trying to come across – trying to escape from Afghanistan, and we took custody of about 20 people turned over to us by Pakistani authorities. These detainees are now being held in facilities at Kandahar. And right now that brings us to the total of 45 Taliban

and Al Qaeda personnel in custody.”<sup>12</sup> The pronouncement about “nine battalions” was erroneous, but was not queried by the media.

The facts are that on 08 December 2001, the then Director General of the military operations, Major General Ashfaq Kayani,<sup>13</sup> spoke with senior commanders and according to one of them, in discussion with the writer, “discussed the implications of (the) coalition forces operation in Tora Bora and the possibility of deploying our troops in the areas opposite the Tora Bora Mountains. Interestingly, our coalition friends had not informed us about their operation in Tora Bora and we came to know about it through the press.” And on 18 December, 11 Corps received orders to move from NWFP to its emergency deployment positions along the Indian frontier, in consequence of the massive Indian build-up to over half a million troops (12 Corps in Balochistan was similarly redeployed). There was, thus, no possibility that the western border could have been blocked or even effectively patrolled, as very few troops were left in the province. The planners in the Pentagon did not take into account the fact that their operations would first fail and then backfire catastrophically.

The US and “Coalition” forces have conducted many operations in the east of Afghanistan, most of which have failed to eradicate extremists, but have resulted in large numbers of Pushtuns and foreign militants seeking sanctuary in western Pakistan. They (extremists) then destabilised not only FATA and much of the North West Frontier Province, but also gave impetus to primitive zealots elsewhere in the country.

With considerable reluctance, the Pakistan Army began low-key operations in the tribal areas in 2002-2003, generally in support of the Frontier Corps. They entered the ‘No Go’ areas, in which no non-tribal had set foot for decades, and tried to bring development to a sadly backward region. But as time passed, it became apparent that not only was the insurgency expanding, with more determination being displayed by well-equipped militants, but the influence of Taliban leaders was becoming dangerously predominant. The tribal system itself, while far from a perfect societal arrangement, was under threat from influential, even charismatic leaders, who cared nothing for time-tested tribal traditions and sought to use the tribes as a base to destabilise the entire country. The entire structure of tribal life, based on a fusion of family and clan allegiances, religion and customs, appeared near to

collapse. It seemed that the hierarchical stability, involving tribal leaders and the *jirga* system that enabled the government to conduct negotiations, could disappear entirely.

In 2007, Waziristan, especially the South Waziristan Agency (SWA), was causing concern to the government of the then President Musharraf, who had ordered the signing of a peace agreement with the local Taliban the previous September. The policy of restricting the army's presence had not worked, and foreign militants had not been ejected, as had been agreed. Extremists operated with impunity, and the writ of the state, never strong at the best of times, had broken down entirely

### WAZIRISTAN – RECENT CHRONOLOGY

**March - April 2004:** Army and Frontier Corps operations ended in negotiations and agreement with the rebel leader, Nek Mohammad.

**June 2004:** Nek Mohammad killed by US drone-fired missile. Agreement collapses.

**January - February 2005:** Peace deal with new rebel leader Baitullah Mehsud brings calm, and army withdraws.

**June 2006:** Rebel leader Sirajuddin Haqqani decrees that the army is not to be engaged militarily. Suicide bomber kills six soldiers in NWA.

**5 September 2006:** Waziristan Accord signed.

**July 2007 onwards:** Attacks by insurgents and army retaliation; army operation against fanatics in Islamabad's Lal Masjid (10-11 July); 60 soldiers and 250 rebels killed in July-August.

**December 2007 - January 2008:** Army operation in Mehsud area partially successful but ends in peace deal with Baitullah Mehsud.

**January 2008:** Rebels capture paramilitary-held forts. 14 Division begins Operation *Zalzala* (Earthquake).

**7 February 2008:** Baitullah Mehsud offers truce.

**21 May 2008:** Agreement signed between rebels and government.

**June 2009:** Army begins troop build-up in SWA.

**6 August 2009:** US drone strike kills Baitullah Mehsud. Replaced by Hakimullah Mehsud.

**October 2009:** Many suicide attacks across the country.

**16 October 2009:** Government orders the army to begin its offensive in South Waziristan next day.

The landscape of SWA is well described in the century-old but still relevant *Imperial Gazetteer of India* which states, “The Mahsud country is a tangled mess of mountains and hills of every size, shape and bearing, and is intersected in all directions by ravines generally flanked through their course by high hills. At first sight, the country appears to be occupied by hills and mountains running irregularly in all directions, but there are well-defined ranges which protect the interior of the country by double barriers, and make penetration into it a matter of extreme difficulty.” It is a major challenge to mount operations against an agile, well-armed, locally-protected enemy with bases in the country that are so suitable for guerrilla-style resistance. The breakdown of the so-called Waziristan Accord was caused mainly by the reaction to the army’s operation against revolutionaries who had taken over the Lal Masjid (the Red Mosque) in central Islamabad. The complex was the fiefdom of two brothers – Abdul Aziz and Abdul Rashid Ghazi – both fanatics, whose equally fanatical father (the founder) had been killed by unknown gunmen at the mosque in 1998. Abdul Aziz had tested the waters of extremism by announcing in 2004 that Pakistan Army soldiers killed in Balochistan (the family is Baloch) and Waziristan should not be buried according to Islamic custom, and his challenge went unmet. His uncompromising confrontation continued, but in the interests of not rocking the boat, the government declined to arrest him. It was considered that direct military action to eject the militants would result in wider violence. As it transpired, this is exactly what happened.

On 31 March 2007, Aziz gave an ultimatum concerning Sharia law. As the *Daily Times* reported, “Maulana Abdul Aziz, the prayer leader at Lal Masjid and principal of Jamia Hafsa, on Friday, gave the government a week’s deadline to enforce Sharia in the country, otherwise clerics will Islamise society themselves. If the government does not impose Sharia within a week, we will do it, Aziz told a gathering after Friday prayers. Similarly, he gave the Islamabad administration a week to shut down brothels, otherwise seminary students will take action themselves. If we find a woman with loose morals, we will prosecute her in Lal Masjid.”<sup>14</sup> For obvious reasons, the government could not permit a parallel system of quasi-legal prosecution, but nothing was done until on 18 May Aziz threatened suicide attacks throughout the country and then openly encouraged desertion from the police, para-military forces, and the army. It became obvious that action had to be taken against these

direct threats to the stability of Pakistan.

The crisis began to come to a head on 03 July 2007 when ‘students’ in the complex fired on police and paramilitary Pakistan Rangers, who were attempting to maintain order outside the mosque, took prisoner and tortured four policemen. When it appeared that a government reaction would almost certainly involve force, Abdul Aziz fled the premises, dressed in a burqa. After being unveiled by a policewoman, he was shown to be a coward and a joke, and most of the young male and female student activists who remained behind in the mosque – some 1,100 in all – decided that they would also leave, which they did without incident. His brother, Abdul Ghazi, remained in the complex and tried to negotiate his freedom, but his demands were both minatory and excessive, involving pensions for family members, pardon for all involved in the siege, and his own safe passage to an unspecified country. He was killed in a well-conducted operation by members of the Special Services Group (SSG) on 10-11 July.

Thus, yet another rift was created between the military (patriotic and constitutional) duty as exemplified by what the SSG achieved at the Lal Masjid, and the normal loyalty any Muslim owes to his or her religion. On the one hand, there was a group of fanatics determined to subvert and destroy the laws of the land, and on the other, the majority of the people of Pakistan, who wish only to be able to get on with their lives, unhindered by self-righteous thugs, whose highly personal and supremely selective interpretations of the word of God cannot be accepted in either intellectually analytical terms or in practical, common-sense, day-to-day living. The citizens of Pakistan were (and are) confused about their religious leaders, whom they have been reared to respect, because some of these figures take advantage of ignorance – the facilitator of religious bigots through the centuries – to purvey their own self-serving explanations of the *Quran* and the Hadith.<sup>15</sup> The army is in the middle, being assailed by wild-eyed, raving pulpit-bashers while attempting to abide by “enlightened moderation” in religious matters, as espoused by their Chief (General Kayani’s views are similar to those of former President Musharraf, who first used that phrase). And a major consequence appears to have been the steep rise in suicide attacks, specifically directed against military targets.

When it became apparent that the peace agreement in South Waziristan

had broken down and that negotiations were no longer feasible, Musharraf ordered the commander of 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Division, Major General Tariq Khan, to assume command of 14 Infantry Division, with its headquarters at Okara (near the border with India) and restore order in the area. The division moved there in early 2007, in Operation *al-Mizan*, and encountered strong resistance, initially taking casualties because of the lack of expertise in COIN warfare. The formation was experienced in fast-moving tactics of conventional war, but understandably, and, as noted above, in common with all formations in the east, had little training in COIN, which Khan had to rectify. This took some time and had to be done concurrently with establishing military dominance over a region occupied by a well-trained and highly-motivated enemy, who had constructed trench systems, bunkers and arms caches and planted mines and IEDs on most of the main routes and some village-linking tracks. Air strikes and artillery bombardments were conducted in many areas in which militants were either based or had concentrated in sufficient numbers to make targeting advisable, mostly in the west of South Waziristan, where in late 2007, there were several attacks, some in support of tribesmen who had engaged militants. There were some notable successes, but also a large number of civilian casualties. In October 2007, for example, some 165 wounded civilians from western regions were treated in the Bannu hospital in the NWFP.

The insurgents preferred to attack lightly-armed paramilitaries rather than the army, and in one demonstration of their capability, on 15-16 January 2008, some 200 of them attacked the fort in Sararogha in South Waziristan, which was manned by a platoon of Frontier Corps soldiers, using mortars and rocket launchers. According to official sources, seven soldiers were killed, 15 escaped and the remaining 16 were deemed “missing” (it appears that some of them were captured and killed). In attempts to propagandise Baitullah Mehsud as a hero, the Taliban announced that he had personally led the attack, although this is considered most unlikely.

But operations then had to be placed on hold because of the deteriorating situation in Swat district, where an agreement with the Taliban had broken down in similar fashion to that in SWA. At the end of the year, there was fierce fighting between paramilitary forces and the followers of Maulana Fazlullah, who behaved barbarically by burning down girls’ schools, destroying



shops, selling “un-Islamic” items such as DVDs, banning women from the women’s market in the main town Mingora, murdering moderate Muslims who sought only to live normal lives free of intolerance and violence, and in general, demonstrating the cruelty and savage persecution that is their trademark. This was a warning of what life would be like in Pakistan and the so-called Caliphate, if such extremists managed to defeat the government.<sup>16</sup> What happened in Swat was an alarm signal, and the army had to act.

## Swat

In 1995, Maulana Sufi Mohammad Khan, an extremist cleric and the leader of the now-banned Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM: Movement for Enforcement of Islamic Law) demanded that Sharia law be imposed in Swat. Fighting took place between the Frontier Constabulary and his supporters, and the provincial government first agreed to negotiate and then gave in to the extremists and permitted Sharia law in the district. The Valley’s main source of income – tourism – collapsed. It was an economic and social catastrophe.

In 2002, Sufi Mohammad encouraged thousands of tribesmen to cross over to Afghanistan to fight against foreign forces, who had displaced the Taliban government. He was imprisoned on his return (and released in a deal in April 2008, then again detained on 4 June 2009), and his place was taken by his son-in-law, Maulana Fazlullah, who began a reign of intimidation and terror in the Swat district and beyond. The police were rendered powerless, most of them abandoning their uniforms and fleeing or seeking alternative employment – or joining the insurgents – and the army’s single under-strength brigade could not establish security.

Eventually, “President Asif Ali Zardari signed the Nizam-e-Adl (Order of Justice) Regulation for Swat on Monday 13 April (2009) after the National Assembly passed a resolution in favour of the draft regulation . . . in accordance with a peace agreement between the NWFP government and Sufi Muhammad, the chief of (the TNSM) and father-in-law of Taliban chief Mullah Fazlullah.”<sup>17</sup> The ‘Order of Justice’ recognised Sharia law in the region and was condemned by many as surrender to the extremists, prompting US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to comment about “abdicating to the Taliban”, but it bought time for the army to redeploy and retrain troops

from the eastern border. Concurrently, however, the militants built bunker and cave systems of considerable sophistication through which the army eventually had to fight.

In the period between August 2008 to mid-2009, the army redeployed formations and units to deal with the emergency in Swat. The campaign eventually involved over 20,000 troops and extensive air support by Army Aviation attack helicopters and Pakistan Air Force fixed-wing ground attack aircraft. The Army Chief, General Kayani, stated, "We are conducting this operation to bring misguided people back on the right path," the phrase for which in Urdu is *Rah-e-Rast*. This was the name given to the army's mission. The army's announcement concerning its orders from the government was that "After the complete breakdown of law and order and the non-adherence of the militants to the peace deal in Swat Valley, the Army was called out in aid of the civil power to eliminate the militants and restore the writ of the Government. The operation will continue until such time as we have liberated the people of Swat from the clutches of the militants. The military will not leave unless it is taken over by the civil administration and the writ of the Government is restored."<sup>18</sup>

Prior operations included emplacement of roadblocks to prevent the movement of Taliban, and it appears that the plan was to deploy into the region in strength, defeat the insurgents in outlying areas, making use of maximum air support, and end the main thrust by taking the town of Mingora (population 300,000), where the Taliban had a major presence.

In March and early April, units of the Frontier Corps moved into southern Malakand Division, mainly in the Lower Dir and Buner Districts, and set up roadblocks. In this task, some army units provided depth and reserves in the event of there being significant opposition. Such a situation did not transpire, although there were some minor contacts.

In mid-April, brigades of I I Corps (HQ Peshawar) took positions in Lower Dir, Buner, and along the Barikot-Mingora axis, securing ground for further northern movement by two brigades of 19 Division (of 10 Corps; home-based in the Mangla area), commanded by Major General Sajad Ghani; two brigades of 37 Division (of I Corps; from Rahwali Cantonment, Gujranwala, commanded by Major General Ijaz Awan); two brigades of 23 Division (of 10 Corps; usually responsible for depth and reinforcement along the Line of Control and probably placed under command HQ 19 Division); and 54

Independent Infantry Brigade (of 30 Corps, HQ Gujranwala; home-based at Sialkot). Overall command was exercised from GHQ Rawalpindi, with the participation of HQ 10 Corps (Rawalpindi). Two armoured units and 2-3 artillery regiments were also deployed, together with logistic elements. Small parties of the Special Services Group were inserted into the north and tasked with securing ground for helicopter landings by more SSG troops.

Preparatory air strikes were conducted on Taliban/*Jihadi* positions identified by army intelligence (whose detachments have cover names and cooperate at all levels with the Directorate of Inter Services Intelligence), and appeared successful, until it became apparent that many insurgents had taken refuge in well-protected caves or in civilian-occupied buildings. Curfews were imposed and the inhabitants began to leave in rapidly increasing numbers, jamming some roads and hindering the movement by military vehicles.

The offensive proper began in Lower Dir on 26 April; in Buner two days later (by the Frontier Corps); and Swat itself on 08 May. In spite of roadblocks, it proved impossible to prevent the exit of the Taliban among the hundreds of thousands of refugees streaming out of the region, although Afghans, Uzbeks and Arabs were among those reported to have been detained. Concurrently, to the north of Mingora, sub-units of the SSG were inserted by helicopter in the Peochar area, where Fazlullah was thought to be based.<sup>19</sup> Nothing was announced officially about their operations, although they may have been involved in the taking of a cave complex on 20 May at Banani Baba Ziarat which, according to Major General Ghani, was a Taliban “training, communication and operational base” of considerable sophistication, having electric lighting, air conditioning and stores of weapons and explosives (the electricity must have been supplied by generators, because the insurgents had destroyed power lines in the region).

19 Division units moved north and struck sizeable resistance, fighting through until they took the centres of Peochar and Bahrain. 37 Division units cleared the region around Mingora and began to fight through the city on 22 May, managing to establish control on the 31<sup>st</sup> of May. In the course of fighting in the north, an Al-Zarrar tank (modified Type 59) was damaged in an ambush that was said to involve IED suicide attacks, but the crew escaped without injury. Army and Frontier Corps casualties were estimated at 85 killed, including seven officers, and over 200 wounded. The army is thinly spread in

the tribal areas, and neither it nor the Frontier Corps (nor the many thousand foreign troops in Afghanistan) have been capable of stemming the flow of Afghan and foreign *jihadis* into Pakistan.<sup>20</sup> On 03 June 2009, the Pakistan Army intelligence became aware that some 200 foreigners, presumed to be mainly Uzbeks and Chechens, had crossed into the Suran Valley of Mohmand Agency, opposite Afghanistan's Kunar province — a key area of resistance to Afghan and foreign forces. It was assessed that they were en route to Dir and Swat to assist insurgents, but there were no reports of any subsequent activities.

The Swat operation was an overall success, although resistance continued after the capture of Mingora, and the displacement of some two million inhabitants was unforeseen to the point of administrative incapacity in dealing with them. But operations had to continue in Malakand, Swat, Buner and Lower Dir, with the aim of eradicating remaining Taliban outposts.

The challenge for the government was and continues to be to restore civilian governance and overall administration as speedily as possible, with the army keeping a low public profile. The intention is to enlist former soldiers in the police force and have as many as 2,500 police personnel in the area.<sup>21</sup> The safe return of refugees was the highest priority. But then, the government had to turn its attention once more to South Waziristan.

### **Operations in Bajaur and South Waziristan Agencies**

While progressively withdrawing troops from the still-threatened eastern border region, and conducting lengthy and demanding COIN training, the army, assisted by the Frontier Corps, blocked routes and carried out preliminary operations in SWA in the spring and summer of 2009. These included targeting of known commanders and bases by soldiers of the SSG, and, as in Swat, strikes by armed helicopters of the Army Aviation Corps, and ground attack sorties by the Pakistan Air Force. Additionally, and most controversially, the United States continued its programme of drone-fired missile attacks within Pakistan, concentrating on SWA. These dozens of attacks had proved to be counter-productive as many innocent people had been killed in the tribal areas, although extremists were killed as well. But there is no doubt that these strikes were illegal in international law, as they did not have the formal acceptance of the government of Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> They have contributed greatly to the anti-US sentiment in the country.<sup>23</sup>

In November 2009, former President Musharraf was quoted as observing that he had been concerned about the US-controlled drone attacks against targets inside Pakistan, which began in 2005. "I told the Americans, give us the Predators. It was refused. I told the Americans, then just say publicly that you're giving them to us. You keep on firing, but put the marks of the Pakistan Air Force on them. That was also denied."<sup>24</sup> The US has created a dangerous example in embracing such cross-border illegality, and although the world is undoubtedly better off without some of the people who have been blown away by US missiles, it is a more dangerous place for the fact that other countries may claim precedent as legitimacy for such operations. The fact that the UN Security Council has not condemned the sovereignty violations would be endorsement enough, for example, for China to take similar action vis-à-vis India, or India with Bangladesh. The implications for Russia's strategy concerning its former satellites, and for inter-state squabbles in South America, are disturbing.

Concurrently, with the build-up for the projected operation in South Waziristan, it was necessary not only to continue to dominate Swat but to clear Bajaur, the northernmost agency, which borders Afghanistan's Kunar province.

The agency had become a haven for foreign insurgents, most of whom had crossed the Afghan border in spite of the large US military presence in Kunar. The commander of Operation *Sherdil*, aimed at ejecting or otherwise neutralising the insurrectionists, Major General Tariq Khan,<sup>25</sup> estimated their strength at some 2,000, including home-grown Taliban, and stated that in spite of many casualties, the strength remained high because of reinforcements from Afghanistan. The operation began in August 2008, and General Khan described the agency as being the "centre of gravity" for the Taliban. "If they lose here," he said, "they've lost almost everything . . . Why we are calling this a test case? If we dismantle the training camps here, the headquarters, the communication centres, the roots which come in, stop the inter-agency movement and destroy the leadership . . . we feel that about 65 percent or so of militancy (in the five northern agencies) will have been controlled."<sup>26</sup>

By March 2009, his forces controlled Bajaur and its surroundings, though at considerable cost by way of soldiers' lives and disruption to the inhabitants. Over 80 soldiers were killed and there was much damage to property, which of course had begun during the militants' reign of terror, when there was large-scale

destruction of schools, health clinics, and houses and shops of those suspected of resenting their domination or behaving in an “un-Islamic” fashion.

Pakistan’s legislators were kept informed about military operations. In addition to regular updating of senior government representatives, a secret session of the Senate and National Assembly in October 2008 was given a comprehensive briefing on the counter-terrorist and COIN campaign.<sup>27</sup> The operation’s success resulted in an agreement with the tribes. As recorded by *Dawn* on 09 March 2009, “(the) Mamoon, the largest and most strategically placed tribe in Bajaur, signed a comprehensive 28-point undertaking to surrender key figures of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan in Bajaur, lay down arms, disband militant groups and stop militant training camps.”<sup>28</sup> While this Accord seemed to stand the test of time, some of the militants who were driven out of the agency appeared to have regrouped elsewhere, as evidenced by, for example, a Frontier Corps’ convoy ambush in Mohmand on 11 November 2009, in which many soldiers were killed.

### Little has changed in the Tribal Areas over the years . . .

“Taliban militants ambushed a convoy of 52 paramilitary Frontier Corps troops early Wednesday morning in Ghanam Shah area of Mohmand tribal region . . . At least 32 security personnel went missing and two soldiers [were] found dead . . . they had been decapitated”

*Dawn*,  
12 November 2009

“. . . a large convoy was held up [at Shahur Tangi] and the leading lorry drivers were shot, while their vehicles slewed across the road. There was no room to turn the other lorries around and thirty-four officers and men were killed and forty-eight wounded during the ambush and subsequent rescue operations.”

*Illustrated London News*,  
23 October 1937

The Frontier Corps came under great pressure throughout much of FATA, because the main commitment of the army was in South Waziristan, where Operation *Rah-i-Nijat* (Path to Deliverance) began on 17 October 2009.



The army was being stretched thin over the region, but the open threat by India's home minister of a "sledgehammer" blow, just after the operation began, could not be ignored. Threatened internally and externally, Pakistan was placed in a most difficult situation as regards troop redeployment. It would be comparatively simple in military terms to deploy 100,000 or even more troops to Waziristan – but they would have to come from the eastern border, and this could not be done, given the seriousness of the warning delivered by one of India's senior (and, with reason, most highly regarded) government ministers. The army and the Frontier Corps were going to have to take on the militants with what they already had in both numbers and equipment.

Before operations began in South Waziristan, however, the army persuaded a powerful Waziri figure, Maulvi Nazir Ahmad, a Taliban devotee, to be at least neutral, with regard to operations, and have the Wazirs refrain from engaging the army or interfering in its campaign against the mutually

distrusted Mahsuds. Maulvi Nazir was at best an unreliable semi-ally, as his beliefs were entirely antithetical to the purposes and objectives of Pakistan as a state, but it was essential that even the most risky tactics be at least explored and, if considered viable, pursued at the cost of appearing to validate a self-declared revolutionary *jihadi*. As recorded by the Jamestown Foundation, “When asked why the *mujahideen* fight the democratic and Islamic government of Pakistan, Maulvi Nazir said Pakistan is run by an infidel government equivalent to Christian and Jewish governments, corroborating his claim by quoting a verse from the *Quran* that forbids Muslims from allying themselves with Christians and Jews. In typical *Salafi* [usually interpreted as ‘fundamentalist’] fashion, Maulvi Nazir considers democracy a defective and mundane system devised by Western infidels.”<sup>29</sup>

Nazir and his adherents had concentrated on crossing the border to attack Afghan, the US and other foreign forces in Afghanistan, and although he indicated that he considered this his priority, it appeared he was willing to deal with the army – until the operation in SWA actually began, when he and another leader, Hafiz Gul Bahadur said, “They were abandoning the peace deal because of continued US missile strikes and Pakistan’s widening anti-Taliban offensive in the north-west.”<sup>30</sup> In the event, however, neither Bahadur nor Nazir seemed to encourage or be involved in attacks on the army during the operation in SWA, but as access to the region is limited, it is difficult to state without qualification that they and their supporters have remained neutral or will continue that stance. What is likely is that the Wazirs will continue to sit on the fence and present a potential problem for the authorities.<sup>31</sup>

Concurrent with operations in Waziristan and Bajaur, it was necessary to maintain a strong presence in Swat, while combating militants in Orakzai, Mohmand and Khyber. The tribals thought they detected weakness, and, as ever, throughout the centuries, sought to take advantage of what they considered a golden opportunity to wreak havoc. The Pakistan Air Force’s F-16s and the Army Aviation Corps’ Cobra attack helicopters made up for lack of numbers on the ground to some extent, although, as the foreign armies found in Iraq and Afghanistan, while fighting a similar war, there is never any satisfactory alternative to occupying and dominating an operational area with ground troops.



Casualties in SWA were high among both the rebels and the army, and in the period between 17 October to 4 November, 42 soldiers and officers were killed and 123 wounded<sup>32</sup> – more than any casualty list in a comparable period of foreign contingents in Afghanistan, some of whose national politicians, military officers and media complained that “Pakistan isn’t doing enough” about combating the threat to the existence of the country.

### **Propaganda and Psychological Operations**

On 16 November 2009, it was reported from Islamabad that the visiting US National Security Adviser, General James L Jones, “praised the Pakistani operation in South Waziristan but urged Pakistani officials to combat extremists who fled to North Waziristan,”<sup>33</sup> which is not only impertinent, in terms of a foreign general prescribing the tactics of a supposed ally, but absurd in the sense of being at variance with reason. Plans had already been made concerning North Waziristan, but in light of Jones’ statement, an operation in the Agency could be propagandised by the Mullah Nazir as evidence of endorsement by the Pakistan army of an infidel general’s instructions. The fact that such guidance was made public was regarded by many in Pakistan as being part of a pattern of condescension and arrogance. Whether or not this attitude is intentional is irrelevant: it is a perception held by many in the army as well as in government and the population at large that the US is at best a patronising ally and at worst an actual enemy.<sup>34</sup>

Of equal significance is the fact that such statements can provide warnings to insurgents concerning possible future operations while being valuable to the surprisingly effective propaganda machinery of the rebels. The Taliban use the Internet, FM radio stations, DVDs and CDs, and printed material to spread their message.<sup>35</sup> The tribes themselves have always had a most effective system of passing information by word of mouth, unofficially – it is amazing how quickly news can be passed over hundreds of miles – and by messenger if formal matters are concerned. The latter method is now in extensive use, given the insurgents’ belated wariness of the vulnerability of electronic transmissions which are intercepted by US and other agencies.<sup>36</sup>

In combating Taliban propaganda, the Pakistan Army has made use of psychological operations, and in 2008, leaflets were air-dropped in South Waziristan, notably round Miranshah (sometimes Miram/Miran Shah) and

Mir Ali townships, both places in which the presence of foreign militants had been detected by military intelligence. The leaflets purported to come from religious authorities and local tribes and some quoted the Saudi cleric, Mufti-e-Azam Sheikh Abdul Aziz, as warning Muslim youths against “false jihad”. Others were more directly aimed at non-tribals; one of them, titled “You Were My Guests,” reads, “Because of you (foreign militants), I am in trouble. My house is under attack and family members are dying and wounded because of you . . . You are using my soil and you are spreading unrest in my area and country.”

As the leaflets were in Urdu, which is not spoken by many residents of FATA and not familiar to Uzbeks and other guest *jihadis*, and the level of literacy is so low, it is unlikely that this psyops effort had much effect, but it is understood that there have been later and more sophisticated campaigns in concert with ground operations. The fact remains that the best weapon against propaganda is truth – but the truth must be palatable. The army and the government agencies can present facts in refutation of Taliban claims, but it is almost impossible to deflect highly effective statements that may be presented emotionally but are nonetheless unquestionably factual. Much publicity has been given, for example, to US drone-fired missile attacks within the territory of Pakistan. It is impossible to deny “the real total of civilian deaths since 2006 appears to be in the range of 250 to 320, or between 31 and 33 percent (of the total number of people killed),”<sup>37</sup> and even if in some Western eyes “only” some 300 Pakistani civilians killed may appear a negligible price to pay for the elimination of militants, the propaganda dividend to the Taliban, while unquantifiable in numerical terms, has undoubtedly been massive.<sup>38</sup> The effect such well-based propaganda may have on the army cannot be accurately judged, but the unpalatable fact is that the army’s tasks are made much more difficult by inferred linkage to US missile attacks. According to sources in Pakistan, psyops leaflets distributed in the border region by foreign forces in Afghanistan have proved to be at best, amateurish and in general, counter-productive.

## Conclusion

Although the army has been stretched thin and has had to make many alterations to its war-fighting posture and training, it has succeeded in

effectively conducting COIN operations in the difficult terrain of the FATA/NWFP. The stability that has been restored thus far, however, depends for its continuation on a blend of military ascendancy and energetic social and economic development aimed at bringing the tribal areas into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and providing reasonable employment opportunities for the youth. The requirement for education is paramount, followed by concentration on health care, communications and political representation. The list of “to do” imperatives is depressingly long, but cannot be ignored. While the army can continue to secure the region, it has to be recognised that this is not its primary function, and that civilian structures for policing and legal process are essential, if the tribes are to be drawn into the mainstream of national life.

Terrorism has thrived in Pakistan largely because the education system has failed throughout the country, thus allowing quasi-religious fanaticism to thrive more than it may have otherwise. The essentiality of education and employment for potentially disaffected young people cannot be over-emphasised. The army can play its part by ensuring that schools can operate without interference, but it is the responsibility of the civil power to build, staff and maintain the schools and to create a societal organisation that supports their operation. Without this realisation, the army’s efforts will be in vain.

The situation in Balochistan is also disquieting because rebels, in the name of nationalism, have attempted to disrupt the province, which is said to be a base for insurgents engaged in conflict in Afghanistan. In November 2009, the central government offered a major package of development and social improvements, including withdrawal of troops, in return for cessation of violence, but the rebels rejected the offer.<sup>39</sup> The need to maintain or even reinforce the army presence in the province is an important factor in the army’s overall planning.

The overall picture in Pakistan is sombre. The army is regarded as a bastion of reliability by most of the population, but it is disturbing that a survey in late 2009 points out, “An overwhelming majority of young Pakistanis say their country is headed in the wrong direction . . . and only 1 in 10 has confidence in the government . . .” The despair among the young generation is rooted in the condition of their lives, the report found. Only a fifth of those interviewed

had permanent full-time jobs. Half said they did not have sufficient skills to enter the workplace. And one in four could not read or write, a legacy of the country's abysmal public education system, in which less than 40 percent of children are enrolled in school, far below the South Asian average of 58 percent." The report included the disquieting findings saying, "The highest-ranking institution was [considered to be] Pakistan's military. Sixty percent of those interviewed said that they trusted it. The second highest were religious educational institutions, trusted by about 50 percent of respondents. The national government came last at 10 percent."<sup>40</sup>

No matter how supportive the public may be of the army as an institution, the military leaders of Pakistan are determined not to have an army takeover again. General Kayani, the army chief, who has indicated he will not seek an extension of his tenure beyond November 2010, is resolute in supporting democratic governance.

But if the civilian government continues to perform as dismally as it appears to have done in 2008-2009, and terrorism becomes rampant to the degree that there is a total breakdown of the rule of law, then there may be no alternative. It is entirely up to the civil power to lead the country, and the world had hopes that the restoration of democracy would lead to economic and social development – the best counter-measure to domestic terrorism – but the citizens of Pakistan have been sadly disappointed.

It is probable that the large increase in US troop strength in Afghanistan will result in larger numbers of extremists crossing the border into Pakistan,<sup>41</sup> in which case the army will be presented with an even greater challenge than in 2007-2009. If stability is to be maintained in the west of the country, the army will require more troops to be moved from the eastern border and can be expected to take more casualties.

It is assessed that the army will abide by its duty under the Constitution "to defend Pakistan against external aggression or threat of war, and subject to law, to act in aid of the civil power when called upon to do so" for so long as the civil power is itself legitimate. And it will continue to commit its soldiers to countering insurgency and terrorism as directed by the government. It is the duty and most important priority of government, however, to create social conditions in which insurgents and terrorists cannot thrive.

## Notes

1. *The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan*, Chapter 2, Paragraph 245 (1).
2. Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan in the Twentieth Century: A Political History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) pp. 392-93. It is notable that the Iranian Air Force assisted in the military campaign against Baloch insurrectionists.
3. "Pakistan's New Frontier Policy: The Withdrawal from Tribal Territory," *Illustrated London News*, 24 January 1948.
4. Fighting units are battalions of infantry and, for example, regiments of armour and artillery, respectively of some 800 and 500 in strength; formations are brigades (usually 4-5,000 in infantry brigades) and divisions (approximately 12-17,000, according to role).
5. "Can Have Short War Against Pak, Says South West Air Chief, Slams China," *The Indian Express*, 04 January 2009, <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/can-have-short-war-against-pak-says-south-w/470870/>, accessed on 04 January 2009; "India can launch a short war in case of Pak misadventure," *Zee News*, 04 June 2009, <http://www.zeenews.com/news536804.html>, accessed on 04 June 2009.
6. "Terror Attacks: Enough is Enough, Says Army Chief," *The Tribune*, 04 November 2009, <http://www.tribuneindia.com/2009/20091105/nation.htm#12>, accessed on 04 November 2009; "Any More Terror Attacks From Pak Will Be Retaliated: Chidambaram," *The Times of India*, 01 November 2009, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Any-more-terror-attacks-from-Pak-will-be-retaliated-Chidambaram/articleshow/5185506.cms>, accessed on 01 November 2009.
7. See Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema and Maqsoodul Hasan Nuri (eds.), *Tribal Areas of Pakistan: Challenges and Responses* (Islamabad: Islamabad Policy Research Institute, 2005). An excellent series of analyses by distinguished experts.
8. Based on the 1998 census, which the government indicates "is likely to have been distorted by problems in gathering data, since tribal custom forbids the disclosure of information about women to outsiders." See "Population," *FATA Government*, <http://fata.gov.pk/subpages/population.php>, accessed on 29 July 2008. The decadal census is unlikely to be conducted in the foreseeable future.
9. In 2000, it was decided to dispense with the tier of government involved in administering Divisions.
10. Tommy Franks, "War of Words," *The New York Times*, 19 October 2004, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/19/opinion/19franks.html>, accessed on 19 October 2004.
11. 100,000 would be more than the then total strength of the Frontier Corps (40,000) and XI Corps (30,000) in the province.
12. "Donald Rumsfeld Holds Defense Briefing," *CNN*, 27 December 2001, <http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/011227/se.02.html>, accessed on 28 December 2001 [General Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff also answered questions].
13. Later Director General, Inter-Services Intelligence; then, in October 2007, Vice Chief of Army Staff, and on 28 November 2007, Chief of Army Staff.
14. "Cleric Gives Govt a Week To Impose Sharia," *Daily Times*, 31 March 2007, [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\03\31\story\\_31-3-2007\\_pg1\\_2](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007\03\31\story_31-3-2007_pg1_2), accessed on 31 March 2007.
15. There are two types of Hadith, or descriptions of the deeds and sayings of the Prophet: the *Sacred Hadith*, in which God speaks through the Prophet; and the *Noble Hadith*, the sayings of the Prophet as recounted by his followers. Arguments concerning relevance and degrees of validity can go on forever, but the opportunities for revisionist interpretation and plain manipulation are, unfortunately, limitless.
16. In early 2009, a video was taken of a 17 year-old girl being mercilessly beaten by a Taliban man while being held down by another, neither of which actions is in accordance with Islamic teaching. The video was shown widely on the Internet and played an important

part in convincing ordinary citizens that the fanatics had to be dealt with. See Jeremy Page, "Video: Radicals Beat Girl, 17, in Islamic Stronghold of Swat, Pakistan," *Times Online*, 02 April 2009, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6022878.ece>, accessed on 02 April 2009.

17. Zulfikar Ghuman and Irfan Ghauri, "Pakistan Signs Nizam-e-Adl After NA Nod," *Daily Times*, 14 April 2009, [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\04\14\story\\_14-4-2009\\_pg1\\_1](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\04\14\story_14-4-2009_pg1_1), accessed on 14 April 2009.
18. Kanchan Lakshman, "Disastrous Peace, Ruinous War," *Kashmir Herald*, 11 May 2009.
19. On 17 November 2009, the BBC reported Fazlullah as saying by telephone to a reporter, "I have reached Afghanistan safely," from where he intended to "launch full-fledged punitive raids against the army in Swat." Hai Kakar, "Taliban Leader 'Flees Pakistan'," *BBC News*, 17 November 2009, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8364243.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8364243.stm), accessed on 17 November 2009.
20. The US blames Pakistan for being unable to prevent border-crossings but ignores the fact that 60,000 US troops are deployed in Afghanistan, of whom half are in the east of the country and are incapable of securing the border on the Afghan side.
21. Haroon Rashid, "Police Return to Former Taliban Haven," *BBC News*, 15 November 2009, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8302950.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8302950.stm), accessed on 15 November 2009.
22. "There is no understanding between Pakistan and the United States on Predator attacks," (foreign ministry) spokesman Mohammad Sadiq said. Zeeshan Haider, "Pakistan Says Has No Deal with U.S. on Drone Strikes," *Reuters*, 28 January 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSISL332751>, accessed on 28 January 2009; After the meeting with General Petraeus, President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan said in a statement: "Continuing drone attacks on our territory, which result in loss of precious lives and property, are counterproductive and difficult to explain by a democratically elected government. It is creating a credibility gap." Jane Perlez, "Petraeus, in Pakistan, Hears Complaints About Missile Strikes," *The New York Times*, 03 November 2008, <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/04/world/asia/04pstn.htm>, accessed on 03 November 2008.
23. Owen Fay, "Pakistanis See US as Biggest Threat," *Al Jazeera*, 13 August 2009, <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2009/08/20098910857878664.html>, accessed on 13 August 2009.
24. Quoted by Seymour Hersh in "Defending the Arsenal," *The New Yorker*, 09 November 2009, [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/11/16/091116fa\\_fact\\_hersh?currentPage=all](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/11/16/091116fa_fact_hersh?currentPage=all), accessed on 09 November 2009. He quotes this writer in the piece, commenting on the unlikely possibility of mutiny in the army.
25. He had commanded 14 Infantry Division in its early operations in South Waziristan, then was appointed Inspector General Frontier Corps, North West Frontier Province. An outstandingly capable officer.
26. Kanchan Lakshman, "The Battle for Bajaur," *Outlook*, 17 October 2008, <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?238667>, accessed on 17 October 2008.
27. This was only the third joint sitting in camera in the country's history, the others having been in 1974 when, shamefully, the Ahmadi community was deemed to be non-Muslim, and in 1988 when the Geneva Accord was debated before the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan. See "Pakistan MPs in Security Briefing," *BBC News*, 08 October 2008, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/7658325.stm>, accessed on 08 October 2008.
28. Ismail Khan and Anwarullah Khan, "Bajaur tribe pledges to end militancy, respect govt writ," *Dawn*, 10 March 2009, <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/the-newspaper/front-page/bajaur-tribe-pledges-to-end-militancy-respect-govt-writ>, accessed on 10 March 2009.
29. Abdul Hameed Bakier, "Taliban Leader Mullah Nazir Defends Jihad in South Waziristan," *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 7, No. 12, 08 May 2009, [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=34959](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=34959), accessed on 08 May 2009.

30. "Pakistani Militants Abandon Deal," *BBC News*, 30 June 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8125725.stm>, accessed on 30 June 2009.
31. It was announced in November 2009 that South Waziristan would be divided into two separate Agencies, based as far as practicable on tribal locations. The Mahsud, the largest tribe in SWA, are mainly in the centre and south west, and the Wazirs, the other main tribe, are generally in the west and north, abutting Afghanistan and North Waziristan.
32. In some foreign media, there is continuing comment about "half-hearted" operations by the army. Apart from the fact that such statements are absurd, the factual evidence of army casualties is evidence enough of commitment. The Pakistan army has lost over 1,200 soldiers in their offensives against the Taliban and other insurgents. It is insulting and nonsensical to claim that its officers and soldiers are being "half-hearted" in its pursuit of extremists who seek to destroy their country. "Waziristan Resistance Dwindles, Says Athar Abbas," *Associated Press of Pakistan*, 05 November 2009, [http://www.app.com.pk/en/\\_index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=89336&Itemid=2](http://www.app.com.pk/en/_index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=89336&Itemid=2), accessed on 05 November 2009.
33. Eric Schmitt and David Sanger, "US Asks More from Pakistan in Terror War," *The New York Times*, 16 November 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/16/world/asia/16policy.html?hp>, accessed on 16 November 2009.
34. "An overwhelming number, 59 percent of Respondents, said the greatest threat to Pakistan right now is, in fact, the US". Fay, n. 23.
35. For example, see Dawood Azami, "Taliban Slick Propaganda Confronts US," *BBC News*, 03 August 2009, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8176259.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8176259.stm), accessed on 03 August 2009.
36. In 2007, the writer was informed by General Kayani, the then Director General of Inter-Services Intelligence, that his agency could intercept at most a hundred electronic conversations at any one time. While Pakistan's domestic intercept capability has improved considerably, the reluctance of the US and British agencies to provide real-time information has detracted from efficacy in counter-insurgency and anti-terrorist operations. The extent and precision of technological intelligence gathering in the region by the US, UK and Australia are awe-inspiring. Interpretation, however, in the final essence, rests with individuals who appear to have little knowledge of or empathy with tribal proclivities or affairs.
37. Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, "Revenge of the Drones: An Analysis of Drone Strikes in Pakistan," *New America Foundation*, 19 October 2009, [http://www.newamerica.net/publications/policy/revenge\\_of\\_the\\_drones](http://www.newamerica.net/publications/policy/revenge_of_the_drones), accessed on 19 October 2009.
38. "The US Predator drone attacks aimed at militant camps within the Pakistani border are rejected by 82 percent (of the population) as unjustified." "Pakistani Public Turns Against Taliban, But Still Negative on US," *World Public Opinion*, 01 July 2009, <http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/brasiapacificra/619.php>, accessed on 01 July 2009.
39. See "FACTBOX-Baluchistan: Pakistan's Biggest But Poorest Province," *Reuters*, 25 November 2009, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSISL542211>, accessed on 25 November 2009 and "Pakistan's Reform Package, Peanuts: Baloch Leaders," *Dawn*, 25 November 2009, <http://www.dawn.com/wps/wcm/connect/dawn-content-library/dawn/news/pakistan/03-pakistans-reform-package-peanuts-baloch-leaders-ss-08>, accessed on 25 November 2009.
40. The results of a survey commissioned by the British Council and conducted by Nielsen. Sabrina Tavernise, "Survey of Pakistan's Young Predicts 'Disaster' if Their Needs Aren't Addressed," *The New York Times*, 21 November 2009, [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/22/world/asia/22pstan.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/22/world/asia/22pstan.html?_r=1), accessed on 21 November 2009.
41. "Prime Minister, Yusuf Raza Gilani has said that the increase in US force in Afghanistan might lead to the spill over of militants in Pakistan and make the situation worse . . .". "US

troops rise in Afghanistan might spill over militants in Pakistan," *The News*, 29 November 2009.