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THE IDEA OF PAKISTAN

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Panelists: AKBAR AHMED, MARVIN WEINBAUM

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[TRANSCRIPT PRODUCED FROM A TAPE RECORDING]

THIS IS AN UNCORRECTED TRANSCRIPT.

P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. COHEN: [In progress] --a couple of months ago, when the book would actually be published. But because of my travel, Strobe's travel, and then the news that Jehangir Karamat would be coming, we wanted to have the official launch at about the same time that Karamat was here. And while he couldn't join us for this launch, he has read the book and says some nice things about it. He is also acknowledged in the book.

What I thought we'd do today is simply give you a taste of the book. What I think is very interesting is one of the questions that was asked here--what happens to the U.S.-Pakistan relationship after we either catch Osama or after, you know, Afghanistan is no longer so critical. And I do discuss that in the book. There is a long discussion of that.

Let me say that the book is not written for today. It's written for tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. It's written five or six or seven years out. I'm academic by nature and by training, so I wanted to go deep into the past to see what the future tells us, what we might learn about the future. So if you're interested in not simply Pakistan yesterday, today, and tomorrow, but a deeper understanding of Pakistan, I do recommend the book to you--even though I wrote it.

I can say honestly that it does contain everything I know about Pakistan--right and wrong; I don't confess to infallibility--but also, I think, what a lot of friends and acquaintances and other scholars know about Pakistan. What I thought I'd do today is, really, share the platform with two of them, two people I've always turned to for an understanding of Pakistan.

First is Professor Marvin Weinbaum, who's a long-standing colleague of mine both at the University of Illinois and now in Washington. And secondly, Akbar Ahmed, who is of course a distinguished professor at American University and a man whose career is magnificent--a movie producer, a government official, an author, a scholar, a diplomat--anything else, Akbar, you've been doing recently?--and really now, I think, the leader in the world of dialogues between Muslims and non-Muslims. There's certainly a series of remarkable conversations he's had with Daniel Pearl's father, which is, I think, an historic event in its own right.

So let me--the way we've just divided this up--and we won't take very long. We just wanted to bring the book up to date, I think, for those of you who have read it and might want to know what our second thoughts are, especially in terms of what's happened in Pakistan more recently. And I think Ambassador Karamat's remarks bring us up to date on that.

I thought I'd ask my two friends and colleagues to talk about the idea of Pakistan--Akbar; and also the State of Pakistan--Marvin. Because the book is conceived as a dual biography, a dual history. One was the history of the idea of Pakistan, how it evolved from the 1930s onward, really; and the second is a biography of the State of Pakistan, how Pakistan as a state entity evolved after its formation in 1947.

So with that, let me ask Akbar to speak just very briefly first, then Marvin, then I'll offer some remarks about U.S.-Pakistan relations. And we'll keep this short. You'll have time for Q&A and so forth.

MR. AHMED: Thank you, Steve. Thank you for asking me to speak about your book. I know you have so many friends in South Asia and so many of them here, so many distinguished people, you could have asked any of them.

I go back to the summer of 1947, a very hot, humid summer. I was about four years old, put in a train with my family, and we took a long, slow journey from Delhi to Karachi, along with several million people. There was a lot of killing that summer, about 2 million people it was estimated; about 15 million people displaced; Muslims escaping from India to Pakistan, Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan to India.

And I often thought of that journey and what we were doing in that train. We were just following the idea of Pakistan. This extraordinary man, Quaid i Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, had become a kind of Moses figure to the Muslims, and we were just following him. It was almost a blind belief in Mr. Jinnah. So the notion of Pakistan, the idea of Pakistan, became very central to my own thinking. And I'm grateful to my friend Steve Cohen for having focused on precisely this issue.

The identity of Pakistan remains problematic--what is the identity of Pakistan. Wali Khan was asked this, and Wali Khan said I've been a Pashtun for several thousand years, a Muslim for over a thousand years, and a Pakistani only for 50 years--this was some years back. And of course this annoyed a lot of Pakistanis. But it pointed to a certain truth in Pakistan, that there is overlapping identity--ethnicity, religion, and nationalism.

And it's more complicated. When I did my own research for my book on Pakistan, my work on Mr. Jinnah, I asked Pakistanis who are your three greatest heroes over the last thousand years--very generally. And they would talk of [inaudible], --Zeb [?], and Mr. Jinnah. And when I asked my Indian friends for their three greatest villains in history, they would select the same three figures. So we are talking of history itself being debated, ideas of Pakistan always under debate.

I think one of the very few exceptions to this black and white perception that Indians and Pakistanis have of the world is none other than our author this evening, Stephen Cohen. A man who can write on the Indian army and then the Pakistan army; a man who can have a gathering like this in Washington, in Delhi, and Islamabad is truly a unique man who is straddling so many different cultures and so many different traditions. And at this time in world history, when after September 11th Pakistan becomes a key ally in the war on terror of the United States of America, Steve's powers of interpretation, his knowledge, his commitment, and above all, his compassion become absolutely crucial. And I personally am grateful that he's here at this moment in time playing this critical role.

Steve, I want you to think about this. When after September people asked questions about Islam and its compatibility with democracy, about the tolerant, compassionate nature of Islam, that we need to really point the people asking these questions to the story of Muslims in South Asia, with a focus on Pakistan. Because it is the movement led by Mr. Jinnah, a man who represents democracy, human rights, women's rights, a man who balances Islam and modernity, this man--and above all, as you know, Steve, a great fan of Abraham Lincoln, so there is a link straight in the founding of Pakistan with the United States of America--who represents democracy. And thus we are able to answer the question, Is Islam compatible with democracy? Yes, it is compatible. And the answer is Mr. Jinnah. Here is the Pakistan story telling us that the idea of Pakistan is rooted in the vision of democracy.

And the second question, compassion and tolerance. Once again, go back to the history of Pakistan, the great saints and scholars of Pakistan, or that region that we call Pakistan. [inaudible] in Lahore, [inaudible] in Ajmer, [inaudible] in Delhi. These

people had a philosophy of life, and that philosophy rested in the saying, the motto, "Sul e kol" [ph] or "Peace with all." Here again, Islam in South Asia is bringing something, I believe, which can contribute to the discussion around Islam in the United States today, when there is so much questioning around the nature of Islam itself.

I want to conclude by pointing out a couple of things that characterize Steve's book. Firstly, he establishes in this remarkable work--and this really is a lifetime's work; it's the cumulative work of a scholar of great, great talent--that Pakistan is a key player. He's established this in the book. It is a key player because of its geopolitical situation, its population, and its vision of itself. Pakistanis come to this world, to the table with an idea of themselves, and therefore an idea of Pakistan becomes very important. Because that idea can then either create, as Steve says, a nation which is part problem, part solution, a nuclear armed monster. He's not into black and white assessments. He's pointing out the nuances and the shades of gray. So he is pointing out that here is a major player, a major ally of the United States of America, and it is a key ally in the war on terror.

He's also pointing out that the engagement needs to be long-term. This cannot be something that's tied up with the finding of Osama bin Laden or something tied up to the elections here. This has to be a long-term relationship or the consequences will be felt both over there and for us over here.

He's also pointing out that the ignorance here in the United States of America of Pakistan is matched by the ignorance of America in Pakistan, that there are no centers of American studies in Pakistan. And I think this is something that can very easily be corrected. Because we need to set this in the overall context of the figures here in the United States of America, where Americans polled, roughly 80 percent admitted

to knowing very little about Islam and to being hostile to Islam. Now, this figure is probably matched in Pakistan and in the Muslim world generally, maybe even higher. Lack of knowledge and hostility. So a dangerous time for civilizations who really know so little about each other. And I'm not talking about the elite represented here, but I'm talking about the peoples who know little about each other and are often hostile to each other.

So the first step, really, in order for us to bridge this is to start learning about each other. There can be no better step than to pick up this book, read it, understand it. Because it really has been written by a guru at the height of his powers, which is a remarkable phenomenon for someone like me, on campus, to say this, but this really is a scholar at the height of his powers and writing brilliantly and with great lucidity.

I'll end with one observation, and that is that Steve does point out that the United States of America needs to help Pakistan realize its own idea of itself, the idea of Pakistan. And the point I made about ethnicity, about religion, and nationalism balancing, this is important to keep in mind. Because every time there is tribalism running rampant or sectarianism running rampant--as it is happening, you have people being killed in mosques, people being shot in mosques--forget Christians and Jews and Danny Pearl being killed in Karachi; I'm talking about Muslims killing Muslims--this threatens the fabric and the idea of Pakistan itself. Similarly, tribalism. And you have a situation in Baluchistan or Waziristan that, again, undermines and challenges the idea of Pakistan.

So, Steve, thank you very much for the book. Thank you.

MR. WEINBAUM: If indeed the idea of Pakistan is problematic, I think even more so the State of Pakistan is problematic.

You know, depending on who you listen to, it's tempting to quote Dickens in assessing Pakistan today, Pakistan State, that these are the best of times, that these are the worst of times. Either, of course, is an exaggeration. But they do point out the sharp differences of opinion on where the State of Pakistan stands today and where it may be headed.

You've heard from the ambassador today, a very honest man of great integrity as we've known him, Steve and I, for a number of years. You've heard here a promising view, a positive view of Pakistan--I think an honest presentation, certainly. And if you had the opportunity, as some of us did, to hear President Musharraf a couple of weeks ago, you would have heard a remarkable extemporaneous presentation on how all is well with Pakistan economically, socially, and politically--and the latter with special regard to democracy. And, too, he was upbeat about India.

But I think a failure to see that the ledger has two sides is to give not only a partial view of Pakistan but, by ignoring some of the realities and slighting these realities--these political, social, and economic deficits--is to threaten in fact what has been accomplished. And I think what is so important about Steve's book is that it is balanced. It does not hesitate to criticize where criticism is due, but of course, I believe, does so in a very constructive way.

Now, looking at the contemporary scene, perhaps looking at the other side of the ledger, since you've heard that these are the best of times, I think that what's transpired over the last five years, since the removal of the Nawaz Sharif government, strikes me most of all for the opportunities that have been missed or are yet to be

realized. After all, Pakistan is not just another developing country. The stakes here are enormous, not just for Pakistan itself, not just for the region, but for the United States. Pakistan's vulnerability to political instability here, I think, is rather critical. And I must say that if there are some priorities that have not been gotten in the right way, I'm afraid to say the United States must bear some of the responsibility for this. Perhaps a moment more on this later.

Now, on assuming power in Pakistan, I think Musharraf hoped, and he certainly promised, to begin to lay out a new political framework for the country, to begin to change what had been, what has been for so long a corrosive political culture. But I'm afraid to say that instead of setting out a new set of rules, that he has fashioned his--the state, if you will, in familiar fashion on retaining and strengthening his own personal powers and those of the military, and in doing so, too often has employed some of the discredited, manipulative tactics that we've associated with the 1990s; while it was hoped, I think, by good democrats and others in Pakistan and elsewhere, that gradually the military's role would be reduced in favor of their playing the role as guaranteers of a democratic system, rather than as rulers of a system; that too much as been spent on protecting the prerogatives at the expense of authenticating democratic institutions.

Now, Steve, I think, does a great deal in the book. Particularly that chapter on the military--which is, naturally, one of Steve's strengths--I think really gives one a very good understanding of the place of the military in the Pakistani State. I must comment in this regard, though, on something more immediate here--which is not in Steve's book but will be, I'm sure, in the second education--and that is the opportunity to further a democratic system here by the president's keeping his pledge to remove his uniform. I submit that his authority would be enhanced, not weakened, by doing so.

And if he chooses, as now seems likely, to renege on this, he will have demonstrated a lack of confidence in his own refashioned constitution, in civilian government, and, interestingly, a distrust for his own military. Ultimately authority comes, in Pakistan as elsewhere, comes from legitimacy and the strength of personality and competence rather than from the office that one occupies. And I share the view of those who believe that Musharraf and Pakistan's military have more to gain from a viable democracy than a quasi-authoritarian state.

Also by way of, I think, lost opportunities, but certainly not necessarily lost for Pakistan, is the pursuit of an agenda of enlightened moderation that most people believe President Musharraf is sincerely committed to. But to have this, Pakistan is going to need more than the inconsistent, incomplete, and sometimes disingenuous policies that have marked its approach toward the country's extremist elements. Now, I think that there have been some very important developments here in terms of greater determination in this area. But we have to be wary about just how consistent this is going to be. He and the military remain dependent on some of the very elements that stand in the way of the progressive agenda that I believe he wants. And to remain suspicious and dismissive of many of the mainstream political forces in Pakistan, I think, will stand in the way of his ability to succeed.

Even in the area of the greatest accomplishment to date under the Musharraf administration, the macro economy--and we've heard a great deal about this today, and understandably so because there is much to be proud of here--the fact remains, however, that for most Pakistanis life over these five years has not gotten better, perhaps has gotten worse or certainly more difficult. Now, one can be hopeful, as I think that the government is, that the economy's trickle-down will alleviate this

hardship in time. But one cannot overlook the structural impediments which I think stand in the way. For one thing, of course, social investment continues to be starved and must be addressed. And such formidable issues as the birth control issue, land reform are entirely off the table at the present time.

Together, these and other deficits in the political, economic, and social spheres threaten to erode what has been President Musharraf's impressive popular base. Overall, the president has excelled at playing the role of a marginal satisfier, showing enough progress to please all of those making demands or expecting actions. Tactically, he has been brilliant. But strategically, too often his vision has failed or at least, at best, been nearsighted. Asserting his indispensability for Pakistan, as he has recently, is not enough. It's not the recipe for sustainable policies and, I believe, for a sustainable democracy.

However much Musharraf has been an asset to the United States, and indeed he is, building relations with Pakistan as we have around one man is, I believe, to rest it on a very fragile partnership. Too frequently, especially in our single-minded concern with cooperation on counterterrorism, our relationship is perceived to be with Musharraf and his military rather than with Pakistan and its people. I commend Steve's book on Pakistan to you because I think that as you read it you will come away with the kind of in-depth understanding of Pakistan which will lead you both to celebrate in the best of times with what has gone quite well in the last few years with Pakistan, but also to recognize the dangers that are lurking out there to the country if it fails to recognize that the true basis for Pakistan's future remains with Pakistan's people and with the well-being and enlightenment of Pakistan's people. That, I think, as I say, you're going to appreciate far greater in reading Steve's new book.

MR. COHEN: Thank you, Marvin, and thank you, Akbar, for those kind remarks.

Let me say a few words about U.S. and Pakistan, but first I wanted to pick up on something that Akbar mentioned when he asked Pakistanis who their favorite people were. I had an interesting conversation--my wife was with me at Punjab University about six years ago. And we asked a class in the political science department, graduate students, who their favorite leader for Pakistan would be. And Jinnah's picture was up on the wall, as he is in all official offices in Pakistan. I said, you know, leaving aside Jinnah, and they all agreed that a new Jinnah would be the person to lead Pakistan. There was some consensus on Nelson Mandela, and I thought, gee, that's really good, you know, it's wonderful to hear Nelson Mandela, everybody's hero, can't go wrong with Nelson Mandela. But then the next two candidates were Saddam Hussein, still alive and still active, and Ayatollah Khomeini. I stopped the discussion. I didn't want to hear any more.

What was clear was this tremendous schizophrenia among young Pakistanis. And every time I've gone to Pakistan since the '70s, I've tried to visit universities and talk to students there to see what they were thinking. As Aristotle says and points out in the "Politics," if you know what they're teaching in the schools today, you'll know what the country will look like tomorrow.

That's one of the more frightening aspects about Pakistan, clearly a combination of incompetent democracies and, I think, ignorant and malevolent military dictatorships in the past really destroyed the Pakistani educational system, what there was of it, and that gives me the greatest concern about the future of Pakistan. I've tried

in the book to present enough information, enough data, enough sources and references to allow the reader to come to his or her own opinion about the future of Pakistan.

But let me say a few words about foreign policy because this is where things are perhaps changing fastest. As General Karamat mentioned, as Ambassador Karamat mentioned--I have to get used to the new title--we've had a very erratic relationship with the Pakistanis, and the Pakistanis are discovering the basis for some of that up-and-down and in-and-out relationship, that we saw them in terms of purely anticommunist, balancing the Soviet--first the Chinese and the Soviets, then just the Soviets, whereas they thought our aid was being given to them to balance the Indians. Of course, the Indians assumed this all along, because it did have that effect. I think as they read our history and as new documents appear, a more accurate picture of the past is becoming clear. Ambassador Dennis Kux's book on U.S.-Pakistan relations has gone a long way to clarify that in the minds of many educated Pakistanis.

What is new about the relationship, though, in this strategic era--that is, the era of anti-radical Islamism and especially the alliance to defeat Taliban and al Qaeda in Afghanistan--what is new is really three things. First is that the U.S. comes into the relationship with a strong tie to India. This is unprecedented in history, and as Ambassador Karamat pointed out, it gives us new kinds of leverage in South Asia. And I hope that that leverage is used for the better, not for the worse. And so far, the Bush administration, and I think before that to some degree the Clinton administration, saw it in these terms, that a good relationship with India strengthens our position with Pakistan for the good of Pakistanis as well as our good, and a good relationship with Pakistan can be by the Indians to improve U.S.-Indian relations and, I think, India-Pakistan relations. It's a bizarre triangle, but I think it can be--if it's watched carefully, I think it can be

balanced and managed to everybody's benefit. The danger, of course, is that we wind up fueling both sides of an arms race. And that's what we're doing now.

But if we do that in a conscious, aware manner, I think we can manage, say, arms sales to Pakistan, military technology to India in a way which does not destabilize the conventional arms race. Because at the end of that road, of course, is a nuclear arms race. And that's the second different thing about the region. India and Pakistan are both declared and probably deployed nuclear weapons states. This is different than anything we've seen in the past. We have to stick with the region if only to prevent another war from breaking out between India and Pakistan. And, of course, the phenomenon of nuclear technology and perhaps fissile material leaking out of Pakistan is an even more frightening prospect, and clearly that's a second important interest we have in South Asia--besides an interest in a relationship with both countries--a concern about proliferation and a nuclear war in South Asia.

Finally, what I think is new at the table, something we never quite had in this way before, is a greater sensitivity about the future of Pakistan itself. I think American analysts and American policy makers are aware that Pakistan is no longer important only because of its strategic location and seen as an asset, but that a failed Pakistan, a Pakistan which broke up or which went berserk in some way, could be a calamity for America, for China, for India, and of course for Afghanistan--and above all, for the Pakistanis. And I think that's one of the major incentives I had in writing the book, that no longer is Pakistan important because of its strategic assets as an important piece of geography, but a failed Pakistan or a Pakistan which went off the rails could be a tremendous danger to the United States.

How should we approach Pakistan? The book has a long section on that, in fact a whole chapter on that. But I agreed with the 9/11 Commission report, which makes Pakistan one of three critical countries for America to deal with--the others being Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan. Pakistan needs a long-term relationship with the United States, and I have no doubt about that. This drives some of my Indian friends crazy, although the reviews of the book in India have been pretty good. But I think that it's in India's interest, among other things, that we do have a good relationship with Pakistan and to prevent Pakistan from becoming the kind of crazy, dangerous state that, you know, some people have tried to portray it.

In this relationship, what is important--and I served two years in the State Department; I learned this that way rather than reading textbooks--personal relationships are important. And the Musharraf-Bush relationship is clearly important. As an academic, I was unaware of this and I always thought that personal diplomacy was just a lot of hot air. But it does make a difference if the president or other senior officials have what they think is a personal relationship with another head of state. They meet themselves once, they get to know each other; meet themselves twice, they're old friends, you know, bosom buddies. I gets it's a phenomenon of diplomacy. But I think it is important that we see Musharraf for what he is and not for what we imagine him to be, in both a positive and a negative fashion.

In the book, there are some comments about Musharraf, a few of which I might want to take back. But I let them stand. You write a 300, 400 page book and there are a lot of things in there, and I come back to Musharraf many times in the book. But I think my assessment is that he's certainly no Ataturk, which was his role model. But he's certainly a far more capable man, or certainly a man who seems to be learning

and growing in the job than I would have predicted shortly after he took over. I met him right after the coup and had a long conversation with him, and I met him again and, frankly, I was not overwhelmed by, you know, then-General Pervez Musharraf. But I think he may be the kind of man--perhaps like Harry Truman or Lal Bahadur Shastri in India--a man who nobody has very high expectations of, is not seen as a great man originally, but really sort of grows into the job.

What's more important, perhaps, in his own personality and his own development as an individual is who the people are around him. And I think this is where he'll be judged and this is where he'll stand and where he'll fall. If he picks people, like General Karamat, for example, to advise him and to work with him and to carry out particular tasks, I think Pakistan can really, perhaps, turn that corner. If he picks people who are simply the old hacks and the incompetents, people who are not up to the job, people who are somebody's cousin or relative, who are politically trustworthy but have no other qualifications, then Pakistan is going to be in deep trouble. There are some specifics discussed in the book, and I won't mention the ministries, but clearly education is an important issue and, to me, in the long term it's the central issue. And there his choices have been mixed at best.

And I think that, of course, in the case of Shaukat Aziz, he's made a man prime minister who's quite extraordinary. But whether Shaukat is up to the job of being a prime minister as opposed to being simply a finance minister, I don't know. So I think that personalities are important.

Let me conclude by saying this, as I've gone around the country on a couple of book tours. What I find striking is the assertion by Americans that behind Musharraf lies chaos. And I agree with Marvin, and perhaps Akbar--I don't know if

you'd agree with this--that the individual is important but not central. I think that Pakistan is more than President Musharraf. I think that there's an army behind him, he controls the army, all of the corps commanders are his appointees, and it's a very stable establishment. It's not a radical establishment in any sense of the word. I keep on reading reports by otherwise responsible authors and scholars that the army's infested with radical Islamists who are just waiting to get their hands on the bomb and drop it on New Delhi or Bombay, or America. And that's just not the army that I've studied and written about. I think that's fantasy. That's our own fears projected on Pakistan.

But what could happen in the long run, and the book is really written six or seven or eight years out, and one of the key chapters sort of projects different futures for Pakistan seven or eight years out, is that if the Musharraf experiment does not succeed, or the experiment conducted by others who follow Musharraf does not succeed, then we will be faced with the kind of situation where, I think, radical Islamists could get their hands on nuclear weapons and nuclear material. And I think that's a critical issue for America to face up to--in a sense, preventive action now, rather than waiting later, is critical and that this administration should not push it down the road to another administration.

In that sense, let me say that I plead guilty in part because I spent two years in the Reagan administration in the policy planning staff and there were a lot of issues we dealt with. And we kept on saying to ourselves, Afghan-related issues, Pakistan-related issues, well, let's just get through the crisis now, let the next administration deal with this. And one of the faults of the American system is that there's an enormous tendency to sort of not think beyond the next election. And Bush has four years in a row now to deal with these issues. He's got a team on board that's

pretty well experienced, and I would hope that they stabilize the relationship with Pakistan and of course continue to build the relationship with India.

With that, let me stop here and, really, ask you to respond. We'll give you a couple of minutes to ask questions of all of us.

QUESTIONER: Khalid Lasin [ph], Delhi Times [inaudible].

Steve, one of your great observations is that the Pakistan army cannot manage Pakistan and it won't let anybody else manage it.

I noticed from the Web site of the State Department that Pakistan's profile, where it says "Type of Government," it has been modified to read "Parliamentary democracy." I would like to ask you how you interpret this.

MR. COHEN: Well, it's clearly not a parliamentary--it's got a parliament, but it's not a parliamentary democracy. I think that--Khalid, I did say that--I guess you put it right--that the army can't run Pakistan but won't let anybody else run it either. And I think that's the central dilemma of Pakistan. I wrote about it in those terms in a book I wrote on the Pakistan army in 1985. Let me back up--I wrote a book on the Indian army that was read by President Zia. He invited me to come to Pakistan in 1978 and '79 and then 1980. And I spent a month or two months with the army itself, talking to people. Really, it was an extraordinary experience for a professor. And I came to the conclusion in 1985, when the book was published, that, really, the army can't run Pakistan and won't let anybody else do it either. There had to be a phased-stage withdrawal of the army from politics.

I asked Musharraf about that, and I've asked other generals about that, and, you know, they're very distrustful of the civilians. And I point out in the book as well as in personal conversations, well, of course they're not competent, you don't give

them a chance to learn their job. And I always felt that the army really should take advantage of Pakistan's federal system, in a sense allow things to happen in different parts of the country which may be different and really allow the politicians to grow and to learn their profession. The politicians have their problems, obviously, but I think that in the long run going through the Pakistan Military Academy, the Staff College, the War College, and Defense University there doesn't equip you to run a country. It equips you to do other things, but not run a country.

So I think that for the survival of Pakistan, the army has to figure out a way of getting itself out of politics, out of the economy, out of the social life of the country. The problem is that in recent years it's embedded itself further in the economy in particular. And my hope is that--"hope"; hope is not a policy, but hope is something worth having. My hope is, expectation is that if the detente with India continues, then the army will find that one of its major jobs is diminished in importance, and that is defending the country against India. So a normalization of the relationship between India and Pakistan could give the army an opportunity to extract itself to some degree from politics.

So I see the relationship with India in particular, supported by the United States, and a growth of political parties in Pakistan really leading to a normal Pakistan five, six, seven years from now. Musharraf has said that he would stay as president for another term, and I find that an acceptable condition. But in that term of office--it's going to be five years or so--he really should the parties to reactivate themselves, especially the mainstream parties. And I think then you will find, as we've known in the past from all the previous elections, that the radical Islamists and the Islamist parties are actually a very tiny minority of Pakistanis. They don't get many votes. And if you allow

the mainstream parties--the PML, the PPP--to campaign freely and operate freely, the do garner a lot of votes.

But I think that before that will happen, the army has to be satisfied that Pakistan's security problem is at least manageable and that this allows them to withdraw from politics. Because they simply don't trust the politicians when it comes to foreign and security policy. That's why I'm not too upset over this national security council--that General Karamat proposed, in fact, and was fired because of that--because I think bringing the army in in the short run allows you to get out in the long run.

QUESTIONER: Henry Sokolski with the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center.

I know very little about Pakistan, but one of the things that impresses me about this panel is that there a Jew and someone who is in dialogue about Mr. Pearl. Some people have told me--I don't know if it's true, but there are a lot of anti-Semites in Pakistan. Now, they may not be in the elite, or they may be in the elite. But I was wondering, given your expertise, which is unique on this panel, some people say that a secular state is one that is not particularly anti-Semitic. You know, the Jewish question has been running through the thread of history for secular states. Let's think out 50 years. What are your thoughts on how much of a problem this is and, academically, what would you do for the educational system to steer Pakistan away from what some critics say is a problem?

MR. WEINBAUM: Can I address this? I think it would be incorrect to characterize Pakistan that way. I've worked in Pakistan for more than 35 years and I have never once had difficulty in that regard. Now, you can say not everybody recognizes your background. Obviously, something can become a problem if you make

it a problem. But I think most Pakistanis are very well able to separate out those who may hold views on policies they don't agree with from what someone's faith is. I really believe that the heart of Pakistani thought here is not a fanatical view. Yes, it's held by some elements, particularly this Deobandi tradition, which happens to be much more virulently anti-Shiia than it is anti-Christian or Jew.

So I think it would be wrong to characterize Pakistan that way. Obviously, the Israel-Palestinian issue has taken on a higher profile recently, but that's in large part a function most recently of Iraq and it's been part of the larger phenomenon here of this view that somehow the United States has become anti-Islamic. I can perfectly well see that if some reasonably good settlement is reached between Israel and its Arab neighbors and the Palestinians, that Pakistan will have no trouble with this.

I think you heard General Karamat say--and indeed, it's very interesting. Because after President Musharraf was here, and it was in this country that he said, I would like to open up a dialogue, a debate in Pakistan on the recognition of Israel. When he went back, indeed a debate opened up. I was there at the time. And one might have thought this would have been closed down very quickly. Well, he kept his word. There were articles over the news papers. And the remarkable thing was that they were very rational arguments. They were all based on what was in Pakistan's national interest. I didn't see in any of this dialogue here the emergence of any bitterness which would reflect anti-Semitism.

MR. AHMED: I want to make a comment on that also. It's an important question because it reflects on the idea of Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah, who founded Pakistan, spent the first and only Christmas in Pakistan in a church with the Christian minority. His famous statement was that "I would prefer to be the protector general of the

minorities than the governor general of Pakistan." He was a man totally committed to understanding, to tolerance, to dialogue with the minorities.

On the theological level, there is no such thing as anti-Semitism in South Asia and Islam. This is something that you're imposing from the United States of America onto South Asia and Islam. And the reason is that, for South Asian Muslims, a Semite is an Arab who's also a brother Muslim. So when you say "anti-Semitism," it makes no sense to Muslims in South Asia. Indeed, there are tribes, many Pashtun tribes, and I can quote them to you, who have genealogical tables that trace their descent from the 13 Lost Tribes. They will say "we are descended from the Lost Tribes of Israel."

So when you impose this modern jargon on these traditional people, it makes little sense. It only makes sense in the context of the politics of the last decades. When Pakistanis see Palestinians being killed, homes being destroyed, they become very emotional. There's no doubt about it. As the ambassador said earlier, if this problem is resolved, and we pray it's resolved, that both are able to live in harmony, in dignity and peace as independent states, then you will see that Pakistanis will immediately cool off in terms of their what you call anti-Semitism--I would simply say "standing up for what they identify as some injustice happening in the Middle East."

I want to end by referring to Danny Pearl. Danny Pearl was brutally killed in Karachi, as we all know. We know that he was forced to say "I am a Jew" and killed after that in a really savage way. To me, that's more a failure at a certain level in Pakistan society, and you have to put it in that context. Karachi, where this happened, was the city where I grew up. In fact, Nagar [ph] here is a neighbor of ours in a certain part of Karachi. It was a very different Karachi when Pakistan was formed, a couple of hundred thousand people. Today it has a population of something like 15 million. So all

the services are bursting at the seams--law and order, health, education. So you put an incident like that in that context. People are being killed whether they're Shiia, Suni, Christian, Jewish. It's simply a huge megacity finding it very difficult to cope. Because I find many gray areas around this whole episode of Danny Pearl and what was behind that. Anti-Semitism, as we understand it here in the West, I'm not so sure is one of the motivating factors.

So once again, I would request you to, when you think of South Asia and Islam, put it in that context. Look at it in the context of the culture of South Asia. Even the confrontation with Hinduism, which is a thousand years old, I pointed out in my brief presentation, resulted in synthesis and dialogue and understanding on so many fronts, where there was a merger in terms of ideas, culture, even intellectual fusion. We have the great scholar Professor I.J. Singh sitting here, and he'll confirm that Sikhism itself is a synthesis between Hinduism and Islam. And that also is a very strong tradition of South Asia and Islam.

MR. COHEN: Henry, one of the times I went to Pakistan, I was with some army guys. And they said, well, you know, a lot of Pakistan's problems are caused by the Jewish lobby in Washington, or the Israelis or something. I said, "I'm Jewish," and they say, Oh. There was sort of a silence. And they said, well, at least you're People of the Book--you know, part of the Abrahamic tradition. Unlike those Hindus, you know. And, you know, there are problems with that.

The books looks at this issue at some length. And I looked at it because in my first book, The Pakistan Army, there was a discussion of the comparison of Israel and Pakistan, two states founded on the basis of religious premise. And the book was banned by Zia. He apologized to me. He said, "Professor, we have to ban your book

because we Muslims are sensitive about this issue." And then he eventually lifted the ban just before he died. He also said about me, he said, "Well, that's a pretty good book for a Jew."

[Laughter.]

MR. COHEN: But I understood where he was coming from, because we had a long discussion about religion and professionalism. He said--see, and I think Zia represents not the extreme Islamist view, but an Islamist view, sort of a little bit off to that edge from the center of Pakistani opinion. He said that, "Well, you can be a good physicist or chemist or soldier or professor, but you're better if you believe deeply in religion." And I think he was thinking of Dr. AQ Khan, frankly, at that time. That was that period.

This book, really, looks at the issue at greater length. And I argue that three countries that were formed as homelands were a persecuted religious minority. Actually, there were four, counting Bosnia. One was Israel, of course, for obvious reasons. The second was Pakistan, the Indian Muslims who felt they couldn't live as minority among Indian Hindus. And the third was the United States. It was formed as a--really, it became a refuge for persecuted Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, from Great Britain. In a sense, we all share the problem of that identity and also the problem of reconciling our religious roots with the problem of governance and secularism, or governing our lives and protection of minorities by other than religious criteria.

And this is where the Pakistanis are really groping, and Jews don't figure in this at all. I think their major problem, as Akbar said, is inter-Islamic struggles

between Sunis and Shiias, let alone the Ahmadias, who were simply outlawed as Muslims in Pakistan.

QUESTIONER: I just wanted to ask all three of you, both on the Indian side and the Pakistani side there's a question of what you learn in school books is what you become. What little I've read suggests that there's a large lacuna in Pakistani textbooks. I mean, there's the Buddhist period and the Muslims come in 900, and then there's a vast gap. I suspect--I haven't seen Indian textbooks--I suspect some of them the BGP recently tried to change.

Has there been any movement in terms of NGOs or intellectuals saying, hey, this is a bad thing, we really--I know there are some NGOs working in India are saying, hey, this is really where our future lies, is to confront our history honestly. Because I think that, too, is a web that will weave our two countries together.

MR. AHMED: Yes, you're right. In fact, we grew up, or we have grown up in our respective cultures, looking at each other through that particular filter of historical prejudice. I gave the example of these three figures. And I wasn't being frivolous, because in India I did see how these three figures are viewed and seen. Just the fact that any incident that takes place in Pakistan, even today in spite of the detente, in spite of the thaw, which we all pray continues, if there's an incident in Qatar, bombs go off, or an incident in India, the people of Pakistan will immediately pick this up. They may not say it too loudly these days, but they will say the Indian security agencies are always behind this. In India, I felt that anytime there was anything was happening, whether the monsoons were late, whether they lost a cricket match, they would say the ISI is to blame for this.

So there is this mindset. We have to overcome this simply by understanding our own cultures and our own features. And one way of doing this is, really, to learn about each other and read about each other. I think that that really has to be emphasized irrespective of the politics of India and Pakistan. Because very often, that politics dominates everything else, whether it is the textbook, whether it is the interpretation of history itself.

MR. WEINBAUM: Let me just very specifically say there is need for a great deal of progress in this realm in Pakistan. I think enlightened Pakistanis recognize this. There has been severe criticism of the way in which certain events have been depicted. The progress has been very slow here. But then again, in this country we are, you know, also debating what ought to be in our textbooks. As long as that tension exists between the two and as long as they see their struggle in existential terms, which they still do, you're naturally going to have those kinds of distortions. But I think a positive development is the that there are Pakistanis, not just Indians, who today say we've got to do better by our students in giving them a fair depiction of history.

MR. AHMED: And I have the same problem in the United States. I go all over the country, I talked to distinguished audiences like this, and I ask them could you please put up your hands anyone who's heard of Mr. Jinnah. And there's very, very few hands, as you can imagine. Of course, when I say "Gandhi," everyone puts up his hand. So the process of education has also to be a two-way affair. People in the United States have to understand and appreciate and come to know people like the founder of Pakistan, who for Pakistanis is a combination of Washington and Jefferson and all these great figures rolled into one. Still, very few people know about him.

QUESTIONER: This question is for Dr. Cohen. I would like to ask you if you could just elaborate generally on your observations of the young Pakistanis that are coming of age under the Musharraf government. Is there a culture of self-reflection or is it kind of a renewed projection of Pakistan's problems on external factors?

MR. COHEN: That's a tough question because--I'm trying to think back to my most recent visits to the campuses and so forth in the past five years. I think what is most distressing has been the attitude of young Pakistanis that they want to leave the country. If they can, they want to get out. They want to come to America or they want to go to Britain or Australia. America's no longer as easy to get to. And the long lines in front of the U.S. Embassy for many years were a bad sign, not a good sign. And the Pakistani Diaspora was not coming back, because there wasn't anything to do in Pakistan. I hope that--again, hope is not a policy, but I hope things are changing. But I don't have any evidence one way or the other.

I think Musharraf, as Akbar has said, I think Musharraf came into office with a lot of general support, unlike Zia, who came into office deeply hated by half the country. And Musharraf has squandered some of that support, but on the other hand most Pakistanis feel that he's a force for stability. And Pakistanis need stability. But they also need, in a sense, domestic revolution and change. My best scenario would be that Musharraf would become a revolutionary, a quiet revolutionary, one who would impose--impose or force change in a whole range of areas.

To me the big question about Pakistan is whether it can improve the economy, where he spent a lot of time on this with very good people; transform the educational system, which is crucial for the long run; manage the sectarian issue, which is partly theological and partly otherwise; deal with the nuclear issue, deal with India,

deal with Afghanistan, deal with his own army, deal with the Americans--that's an enormous agenda. And, you know, I wish him well, because my future and the security of my children may depend on his success. That's why I think we have to invest in Pakistan. Even if there are a lot of doubts and a lot of questions as to whether he's the right man or whether he's the only man, or what, I don't think we can let this opportunity pass.

So I'm evading an answer to your question. But the young Pakistanis I've met in close groups, like summer workshops I've founded, I think are marvelous people. They're really--they suffer somewhat, compared with their Chinese and Indian counterparts, by not being as well educated and haven't traveled as much. But otherwise, there are a lot of very good people that, I think, if given the chance, they would come back to Pakistan, they would pursue careers in Pakistan. But the economy has to grow for that to happen.

QUESTIONER: I'm Pete Chetley from Brookings. My question follows up the earlier session. AQ Khan. In the whole history of the world since nuclear weapons, I don't think there's been anybody who's been quite the rogue proliferator as AQ Khan. And my personal impression is that the explanations by the Pakistani government have been pretty cavalier and not very persuasive--comments like "we had nothing to do with it, the government; this all happened." I just find that really hard to believe.

So my question is, I'm very worried about this and I have no confidence in future explanations of the Pakistani government that now things are things are under control, this won't happen again, et cetera. The cow's out of the barn. And what can the

U.S. do about this? How can we trust the Pakistani government about their future explanations that things are now under control?

MR. WEINBAUM: You know, about all we can do at this point is to get to the bottom of what did happen. And I think that's the worrisome part here. There is concern here that what we've done is we've given Musharraf a pass on this. We've enabled him to immunize his military and their involvement in what went on. I must say, I spent four years in the State Department on the intelligence side, and I'm very upset because we took as long as we did to blow the whistle. It really was the Libyan affair which really moved things.

And I remain upset by this because I think what we've done is we've allowed--and he repeated it when he was here, Musharraf; he said you do not have the right to interrogate AQ Khan. You or the atomic energy people, International Atomic Energy people, do not have that. This is our responsibility and we will share with you what we have. After having, I think, not leveled with us as long as they did, to now go back and expect that they're going to be forthcoming on the full story, I think, leaves one with a certain degree of cynicism. I'm very--I'm as upset as I suspect you are.

MR. COHEN: I share Marvin's views.

Let's take a few more questions. I know it's getting late and you all want to rush off to supper.

QUESTIONER: My question--rather, statement, is about Islamophobia in this country and anti-Semitism in Pakistan. I was in Pakistan in 1996 and this was my first time after 11 years. And I observed, there's a lot of anti-Semitism in that country, but I think it is very, very superficial. And the reason it's there, because of poverty, because of lack of education, because of lack of opportunities. Based on this, politicians

are able to channel that frustration and anger against Israel. I think the minute Pakistan has any kind of diplomatic relationship with Israel, this issue would get resolved.

My question is about Islamophobia in this country. I've been living on the Hill for several years. I would go to several [inaudible], and it shocked me how ignorant people are about Islam. They think they're some kind of, you know, religion from jungle and people are so uncivilized. And then I talk with these people. I tell them, listen, do you know who was Jesus and who was Moses and who was Mohammed? They were like first cousins. And who are you guys? You know, you are dishonoring this American Christianity and you have so condescending feeling in talk about Islam and you are so ignorant, and you should think about this before you, you know, insult those people.

MR. COHEN: We get the point. What's the question?

QUESTIONER: I'm sorry. I forgot my question.

MR. COHEN: Well, we'll take that as a comment. But we share your concern.

QUESTIONER: I'd like to get back to the idea of Pakistan. I'd like to tap into the panel's knowledge base. Three questions: What were Jinnah's religious beliefs? And what were his original visions for Pakistan, the land of Pakistan? And do you see those visions ever being realized?

I'd like your comments and predictions.

MR. WEINBAUM: We have the expert here.

QUESTIONER: Yes.

MR. COHEN: Dr. Ahmed not only wrote a book about Jinnah, but also was one of the producers of a film about Jinnah.

MR. AHMED: Well, if you want to know about Jinnah's vision for Pakistan, read his first two speeches to the constituent assembly, August 1947. Pakistanis seem to have forgotten those speeches. But those lay out the vision for Pakistan. It is a tolerant, modern democracy. It is a religion he could--these are his lines. He says Hindus are free to go to their temples, Christians to their churches, Muslims to their mosques. He's very clear about poverty, the gap between the rich and the poor, about corruption. He has a vision of a country run by religious groups, he says, no, Pakistan will not be a theocracy. Again, I'm quoting him. At the same time, he points out that we will be inspired by the principles laid down by the prophet of Islam.

So here again is an attempt to balance tradition and modernity, and that's what makes him so relevant for us today. Because he provides a model of a modern, democratic, Muslim leader. And when you look at the landscape in the Muslim world, 57 states, how many modern Muslim leaders do you see who are democrats? Very few.

In terms of realized, I don't think it has been realized. We need to constantly keep that vision of Jinnah's Pakistan before us because, if we don't, then Pakistan really implodes into ethnic, sectarian, and religious confrontations and conflicts. Because that vision is no longer holding Pakistanis together. And I have found that during my work on Jinnah that he was the one person who transcended loyalties. So whether they were ethnic loyalties or sectarian loyalties, people responded to Jinnah. I found whether they were Christian groups or Hindu groups or Muslim groups, Shiia or Suni, they all looked up to Jinnah. So he was a unifying factor, one of the very few in Pakistan. And I would say that it's in the interest of every government to revive that vision, because that is a very strong, a very modern vision for Pakistanis. And it gives them a lot of pride. It is one thing that gives Pakistanis pride.

MR. COHEN: That gentleman in the corner has been waiting patiently. This will be our last question.

QUESTIONER: Al Milliken, affiliated with Washington Independent Writers.

Picking up on this idea of merging with other cultures and beliefs, do you see Pakistani Muslims viewing their development as Muslims very differently than Arab Muslims? If Arab Muslims have had their major interpersonal and cultural and business relations outside their own faith with People of the Book, Jews and Christians who profess belief in one god, did it make a difference that most Pakistanis had their major relationships with Hindus, believers in multiple gods?

MR. COHEN: I'll say one brief word and let Akbar respond, I think, more qualified than I.

I think that Pakistani Muslims--Pakistanis are almost all Muslims; there are some small Hindu and Christian populations--are really South Asian in culture, and that flavors the kind of Islam that they practice. Arabs are Arabs, and their Islam is different. You get Arab Christians, but Arab Muslims are quite different than--Arab culture is perhaps a greater impact, a greater variable. So I think that as much as anything, the cultural underpinnings, rather than the religious faith from on top, are relevant.

MR. WEINBAUM: I just wanted to respond before, because Akbar, I think, is, again, the expert on this.

Don't confuse the fact that Muslims in South Asia are in a way consumed with their religion, that their religion penetrates every aspect of their culture and society and their lives. That's not necessarily the same thing as being fanatical about your

religion, about being willing to tolerate differences within your own religion and with other religions. Too often here we've equated those things, and that's not the case. By and large, whether we're talking about Indians or Pakistanis or Afghans, these are people who have a strong--for one thing, many of them, a Sufi tradition rather than this, what we would say, a more formalistic or radical tradition that we associate with Deobandi Islam. And that Sufi tradition is a far more relaxed version. Again, it's part of their lives, it envelopes their entire lives, but doesn't necessarily make them intolerant.

MR. AHMED: I find this question very interesting. I've been trying to do some analysis in terms of Islam in regions. So if you look at the Middle East and you see the confrontation--sometimes friendship, harmony, sometimes confrontation between Jews, Christians, and Muslims, it is still taking place within the Abrahamic traditions. And they're fairly well defined: invisible omnipotent god, messengers, text, a notion of the after-life, a ledger in life, and so on. Identifiable within the same tradition.

Now, Islam in India a thousand years ago meets a very different tradition: Hinduism, Buddhism--completely different. And Islam has to adjust. And Islam does adjust. So Islam in South Asia, remaining Muslim, at the same time develops this reaching out to a non-Abrahamic faith, where it's able to live in great tolerance.

The example I want to give you is Akbar, the great Mogul emperor. Akbar rules what today effectively would be Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. I mean, this is really one-fourth of humanity or one-fifth of humanity. And Akbar creates a new capital outside Delhi, at Fatehpur Sikri. And at the entrance to this capital city there's a huge portal, a grand entrance. And on this entrance, Akbar has inscribed a quotation from Jesus. Now, I find that a remarkable example of Muslim tolerance. I don't think any civilization can give me an example like this, where a

Christian king would quote the prophet of Islam, for instance. And here is Akbar, who could have quoted his own prophet, someone nearer to his own tradition, yet he's quoting Jesus. So Islam in South Asia does have a very strong tolerant streak in it. And I think, again, we need to remind Pakistan of that. Our challenge is precisely that. And Mr. Jinnah, in a sense, represents that particular tradition.

MR. COHEN: I would also add that Islam in South Asia also was one of the innovators in radical Islam. And the Deobandis and others contributed to the Muslim brotherhood. In a sense, a lot of Middle East radicalism now is originally theologically from South Asia, and in a sense Islam is complicated by Christianity or Judaism. And it's these different traditions sometimes at war with each other. In fact, the internal wars are more interesting than wars between religions.

We have time for one final question.

QUESTIONER: Is there much of a Shiia-Suni rift in Pakistan? I mean, there was the killing, I believe, of about 50 Shiia last year during the Ashura. Was that highly, highly anomalous or is that--does that speak to a rift there?

MR. WEINBAUM: It is a very serious issue today in Pakistan. Again, it's limited to some of the most extremist groups which happen to be of this Deobandi persuasion. And one of the elements of Deobandism, which comes from a school of thought which emerged out of the Raj in India, one of the strongest elements there is a hostility toward the Shiia branch of Islam. And what is going on today, I think it's one of the most serious challenges facing the Musharraf government, a military-led government, in many respects, that cannot control this kind of violence which is taking place, some of it being fueled from the outside, but a great deal of it having internal origin as well.

And so you're absolutely right that this is something that Pakistan is grappling with right now and it is one of the really corrosive elements in the country that has to be, I think, faced in a far more vigorous way than the government is prepared to do at this time. Because if it really goes after these elements, many of which are jihadi elements, it's going to be stepping on some groups that it has indeed patronized over the last decade.

MR. AHMED: And again, you have to put it in context. There may be something like 13 million Shiias. It's a large population. Iran is a very defined self-consciously Shiia nation, and it has borders with Pakistan. And there's a long history of synthesis, getting on with each other, harmony, but also conflict. So you need to put that in context.

QUESTIONER: There are concerns that you may have a Shiia-dominated government and there are concerns also about this Shiia crescent that may go as far as Beirut or Damascus. Does that resonate at all in that conflict in Pakistan?

MR. AHMED: Not in Pakistan. I think that's the heated imagination of journalists who are thinking of a Shiia crescent and so on. Don't take that too seriously. Even the Shiia government in Iraq will have problems in trying to create that kind of a crescent. A Suni crescent, yes; not a Shiia crescent.

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