

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

PAKISTAN'S UPCOMING ELECTION:

A VIEW FROM THE LATE BENAZIR BHUTTO'S

PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY

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**Presentations:**

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## PROCEEDINGS

MR. PASCUAL: Welcome to this event on Pakistan and the discussion that we will have afterwards. I think there is no doubt that developments in Pakistan over the coming months will entail some of the most significant and difficult challenges before the international community and certainly for the people of Pakistan. The stakes in Pakistan were tragically highlighted with the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on December 27, and in hosting this event, we pay tribute to her commitment to restore Pakistan's democracy.

On February 18 there will be obviously a pinnacle of the political process as Pakistan holds its parliamentary elections. At that point a judgment will have to be made by the Pakistani people and the international community about the credibility of the process, the credibility of the elections, and the credibility of the government that is formed as a result of that electoral process.

It will also set the tone for the future; the dynamics, for example, between President Musharraf and the new government and whether they are able to work together; the role of the military in Pakistan's political life and whether there is potential to move toward a strengthened civilian and secular force internally within Pakistan's governance. It will also influence the capacity to concentrate attention on

the terrorist threat that appears to be partly homegrown and partly foreign in the federally administered tribal areas. The impact on Pakistan I think everyone recognizes is also clear, whether it has been cross-border activity that has influenced the ability of the Afghan state to consolidate itself, and from American perspective has an impact on NATO troops and 35,000 American troops. And in the backdrop of all of this is the reality that Pakistan has nuclear weapons and the concern about the control and safety of those nuclear weapons.

Because of the importance and complexity of these issues, Brookings is hosting this event today and several events over the coming weeks. The event today will focus in particular on representatives of the Pakistan People's Party and the perspective that they bring to the electoral process in the aftermath. On February 6 we will have another event that will focus on some of the military issues and will include several former U.S. policymakers. At that event will be General Karamat, the former Pakistani ambassador in the United States and former Army Chief of Staff and Tony Zinni, Rich Armitage, and Phil Gordon from Brookings. And there will possibly be other events, depending on the availability of some of the possible speakers.

Let me say a couple of words about the people who will be addressing us today. One is Sherry Rehman who was with Benazir Bhutto at the time that she was killed. Ms. Rehman is a member of the

Parliament in the National Assembly of Pakistan and President of the Central Policy Planning and Central Information Secretary for the Pakistan People's Party. She is an award-winning journalist. Many of you know her work from the Pakistan-based "Herald" news magazine. She is a graduate of Smith College in the United States, as well as the University of Sussex, in England. She is well known as a human-rights activist, including the founding chair of the Jinnah Institute which is a nonprofit organization that has sought to strengthen democratic and secular values in Pakistan.

Also speaking will be Senator Javaid Laghari. Senator Laghari is a Pakistan People's Party senator in the Pakistan Senate. He comes from the Province of Sindh. He was elected in March 2006 to a 6-year term. He is also renowned for his expertise in the business and technology sectors including as acting president of SZABIST which is a business school that is widely renowned throughout Pakistan and throughout Asia. In his career he has been actively involved in government in promoting science, technology, and education.

Finally, we will also hear from Bruce Riedel who is a Senior Fellow here at Brookings. Bruce previously worked in pretty much most senior positions that have been associated with the Near East and South Asia in the U.S. government including twice as Senior Director for Near East and South Asian Affairs in the National Security Council, in the

Department of Defense and the Department of State, and as a career intelligence officer.

With that introduction, let me first ask Senator Laghari to come to the podium to address you, then Sherry Rehman, then finally Bruce will close, and then we will have a discussion among everybody who is here. Senator?

SENATOR LAGHARI: Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming over to listen to our viewpoint on this cold, blustery Washington morning.

The weather out in Pakistan is much colder than what it is out here since the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. Actually, the assassination has polarized our country. There is complete shock and disbelief even up to the present day in all the four provinces of Pakistan including the state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. This was our 9/11 and we still have to come out of it.

The reaction to the assassination was spontaneous and hard. Pakistan was burning, and even today it does. It was the Pakistan People's Party, the party of Ms. Bhutto, that pacified the people. Otherwise, the reaction might have overblown.

Talking about the assassination itself, that is what I will be talking about in this first part of our talk. There is a controversy about her assassination. I do not know if those of you who might have been

following the newspapers and the report items. What we see is that the modus operandi on December 27 which was the day of the assassination was very much like October 18 which was the date of her arrival when she was welcomed by two bomb explosions and 193 people lost their lives. We are looking at a period of approximately 2 months during this interim period.

However, nothing changed even after October 18 and there were no drastic security steps taken by the regime to give additional protection to Ms. Bhutto. In both cases, October 18 and December 27, there were security concerns and lapses. The police guards had suspiciously disappeared. The jammers that were given to her for protection were not working. The lights were turned off. And other similar things that I will not go into in detail, but you see the modus operandi was very similar as something that was a conspiracy.

Another strange thing in both cases, the forensic evidence was immediately washed away by the police within a matter of a couple of hours which is very strange. In each of these cases, half-baked theories were forwarded by the regime. For example, even there is a controversy for October 18 whether these were car bombs, whether it was a suicide bomber, whether there was a shootout, whether it was an infant who had a bomb on it. Similarly, on December 27 there is a handgun theory, there is a sniper theory, there is a bomber theory, and there is a lever theory.

Then every time the government keeps on backtracking and changing its statement. So it only adds to the confusion.

October 18 has still not been investigated. On the contrary, the FIR which is called the First Investigative Report that is usually filed by the police station when a crime has been committed was refused to be taken by the police. Actually, Ms. Sherry Rehman herself had gone over the very next day to file a complaint with the police station after the assassination attempt and the police refused to file the complaint. And the statements even 2 months afterwards have not been taken from key people yet, the key witnesses who were present on the truck and who were present in the welcome and who had gotten injured and hurt. So we find all of that very strange.

We strongly believe that December 27 could have been prevented if all of this could have taken place and because it did not take place and it has not continued to take place in the last 2 months, the credibility of the regime and of the government is doubted very much so. It appears very obvious as if they are trying to hide something. If you look at these facts and figures, it would strike anyone as very strange why all of this is happening.

If you look at the recent Gallup polls that come out, it only reinforces the confusion in Pakistan that the people are going through. Nearly half of the people in the Gallup poll suspect that government

agencies or the government-linked politicians are involved in the assassination attempt. Twenty-three percent suspect government agencies which include a number of agencies that work for the official government. Twenty-five percent suspect the government-allied politicians and their coalition partners. Only 17 percent of the people suspect al-Qaeda or Taliban-supported groups, and 16 percent think these were external forces. This is the Gallup poll.

So Pakistani society today is very much divided, disturbed, and if the truth is not uncovered, the situation which is simmering right now may blow out of proportion and that is the only reason that the Pakistan People's Party is demanding that there has to be a United Nations investigation of the Bhutto assassination along the lines of Lebanon Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's for the following reasons. Number one, like I pointed out, the regime has no credibility left amongst the people. Then of course you must have read that Scotland Yard is out there probing, but we find that probe to be very restrictive. If you look at the terms of reference of why the Scotland Yard people are out there, you will notice or you will read that its hands are tied. They are not working independently, they are only to determine the cause of death, and they are only to report to and work under Pakistan government investigators. Very, very restrictive and very, very limited.

Then to add confusion to this, there have been CIA



statements about the involvement of al-Qaeda and Baitullah Masood being responsible. But if you look on the other hand, you will find statements by Baitullah Masood saying we are not involved. So you just do not know what is happening. There has been a recording he denies, and now when the government goes out to look for Baitullah Masood, they cannot find him. They can get his phone number, they can record his conversation, in the recorded conversation they know exactly where is he because he is telling them "I am here," but now 100,000 Pakistani troops cannot find him.

So the people have a right and they are demanding to know the truth and nothing but the truth. Therefore we believe that a larger political investigation under the United Nations will help identify the sponsors, the financiers, the organizers, the perpetrators, and those responsible for the cover-up. That is really what we are interested in. We are not interested in who was the finger behind the trigger or the bomb, but we would like to know who is behind the killing and I guess we have a right to know that, the people of Pakistan and the world community have a right to know that.

Ms. Bhutto had already identified the sources of threat in a letter that she had sent to General Musharraf and also in numerous emails that she had sent out to friends and other foreign dignitaries before she landed in Pakistan. All of that is a matter of record and it has been

reported in the press. None of these suspects are even being questioned by the Pakistani investigators. So this only increases the gap between the people and the government claims, and we believe and we think, and the people think, that it is only the Pakistan People's Party that can bridge this gap, it is only the Pakistan People's Party that can have the people regain the confidence in government institutions, and it is only the Pakistan People's Party that can bring the people together and end this polarization.

How can the Pakistan People's Party do it, which is the party of Ms. Bhutto, how can Pakistan today be stabilized and move forward, and what support do the Pakistan People's Party and the people of Pakistan need from the international community? I would like to request my companion here Ms. Sherry Rehman to please take over and continue.

MS. REHMAN: I hope the mike works better for me. Thank you, Mr. Pascual, Mr. Riedel, and thank you to the Brookings Institution for hosting this invaluable event for us, for giving the People's Party an opportunity to bring to you the challenges that we confront today both as Pakistanis and key members of the political community that is struggling to survive in an environment vitiated by security issues both internal and regional.

Mr. Laghari here spoke about the assassination in some detail. I believe I have a bigger slot if I am not mistaken, so I am going to

take the liberty of going into a few of the challenges that face us, and quickly let's just say that Ms. Bhutto was very clear about one thing. She knew her life was under threat. She took that risk because she believed in the principles she had fought for all her life. She said, "I am willing to put my life on the line for a principle I need to defend, and that principle is the restoration of democracy in Pakistan." Her assassination is largely viewed in Pakistan and elsewhere as an attempt to destabilize the country and as an attempt to break the People's Party. I think most people are aware that the People's Party is the oldest party in Pakistan, it is 40 years old, and it has withstood time, pressures, and immense prosecutions on both its leadership and its workers and has paid untold number of sacrifices for the principles that she went down fighting to defend.

The party under Ms. Bhutto had openly identified dictatorship and extremism as the twin challenges that confront Pakistan today. This was the only party that talked about both challenges equally and it had a program, it has a program to confront these challenges and bring Pakistan back to the moderate, peaceful, stable ways that we remember as children, even as teenagers.

How did the PPP react to the assassination of its leader?

The expectation I think among the people who planned this assassination was that the PPP would splinter, it would break, and it would no longer be the vehicle for mass politics that it has been for so many years. The party

foiled all such attempts. Within 72 hours the party scrambled to unite and it fell back on its institutional offices. We have offices all the way down to the municipal level in Pakistan and we are using them today. Again, I said we made a smooth leadership transition.

How did we do that? Within 72 hours the party was united as a front and within itself. The rank and file and the Central Executive Committee of the party, which is the committee empowered to choose and make decisions with the mandate from the rank and file, chose a new leadership. There has been talk of a will, yes, there was a will read out which indicated Ms. Bhutto's preferences as to how she would like the run in the interim. We however chose a collegial structure. We honored her wishes but chose a collegial structure by unanimous and total consent of the party. The parliamentary leader continued to be Makhdoom Amin Fahim. He has been leading the parliamentary wing of the party for a long time now in Ms. Bhutto's absence while she was abroad. The co-chairmanship of the party for running day-to-day affairs was entrusted to Senator Asif Ali Zardari who has earned his spurs by putting in something like 11 years in prison, most of it is in solitary confinement in Pakistan without cutting a deal or running out to a Learjet standing outside to take him to more salubrious climes. I will not say who has done that in Pakistan, but people have been known to do that. He did make us proud by not cutting such a deal. And the third part of this troika is Mr. Bilawal

Bhutto Zardari who is the 19-year-old son of Ms. Bhutto. The party decided he will be the chairman, if you like, almost in waiting, until he finishes from Oxford in recognition of the sacrifices that the Bhutto family has made for the party for the revival of democracy, it has lost four of its children and members. Ms. Bhutto's two brothers have also been brutally assassinated, and her father as you know was judicially murdered a while ago. Again, he did not seek a pardon and continued to stand up for what he believed in.

The party honored the Bhuttos and it is also an honor for us to continue to be associated with this family. It is not about dynastic politics. It is about recognizing what this family has stood for and the price they have paid. Young Bhutto could have said I do not want this mantle of thorns, I do not want this bloody chair, but he rose to the occasion and stepped up to the plate.

Moving on from there, we also said that we are going into an election and it will be best if we scrambled quickly to unite, paper over any differences, but there are not any. The only impulse now is to take Ms. Bhutto's mission forward to challenge extremism and to also challenge dictatorship, and the third issue now haunting Pakistan which is of growing hunger and poverty. This is a serious issue now not just for anyone running an election, but anyone seeking to stabilize Pakistan through economic and political policy instruments. Recent Gallup polls also

validate our decision that 53 percent of people think that the party acted maturely, swiftly, and very reasonably to unite and choose its leadership as it did.

With the new leadership in place and all our offices carrying on as they did before, we feel confident about the future. We have been through a terrible tragedy. We have had little time to mourn. The party has declared 40 days of mourning but we continue to propose and press for a free and fair election. The regime asked us immediately if the People's Party as victims would want a deferment of the elections, we said we would want that, but they continued, went ahead and deferred to February 18. The thing is that the People's Party feels confident it can win an election and not just because of any sympathy wave. We always win an election because we address the economic fundamentals, we address what worries people at home, we address the schooling of children, the water that is toxic in someone's tap or not available. We address fundamental issues that worry the people and the women and children and minorities of Pakistan. Right now 74 percent of Pakistanis live under \$2 a day. That is a lot of issues to confront as well on just hard economics.

The other issue of course is extremism. Ms. Bhutto saw it as a major issue confronting Pakistan, and we also saw it as our own battle against extremism. Here is how the PPP is different, was different, and

will continue to be different from any other party in the country. We do not have a legitimacy issue. We own the message that we take outside our boardrooms. We are able to project that message without the albatross of illegitimacy like this regime. And if we say we are confronting extremism, we do so facing it squarely from the front. We feel that it is our battle. We feel that it is our war. We do not want to see our children grow up in a country that they do not recognize anymore. There were 42 bomb blasts just this year. We are only into January, so that is 42 over a month. That is not the country I grew up in. That is not the landscape. We want our young people to be looking for jobs, we need them to be educated, and we need them to be out there constructing a progressive, modern Pakistan. That is the route and plan that Ms. Bhutto had, that is our manifesto. I have worked on it with her, and we intend to carry that forward whatever the price we pay.

The difference between the PPP, other parties, and this regime is very clear. We are not hamstrung by issues of illegitimacy. When we carry forward a message, it is endorsed by a heavy mandate. The 2002 election was also won by the People's Party. I see someone laughing at that heavy mandate. It is a coalition mandate usually, but we won the last election too with our hands tied behind our backs. Our leader was not campaigning in the country and we still won that. That party was then broken, a patriot's group was created by unconstitutionally delaying

the assembly, and General Musharraf got his proxies to take a vote, they took votes, and they formed the government by one vote. So unlike Musharraf and his attrition on extremism which is quagmired in issues of both capacity and will, we are not. The PPP has neither problem to contend with and we intend to go forward with a very clear program.

What we need is to go back to our Founding Father's vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This is a vision that was endorsed and forwarded by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, and I quote, he said, "Pakistan needs to be a place where everyone is free to go to their temples, to their churches, and their mosques. They are free to be citizens of a state no matter what their religion, and tolerance is a virtue that we all need to redevelop and rediscover in the new Pakistan." But this is not a new Pakistan. We are revisiting the original Pakistan and having to bring it back from the jaws of the mess that was created by the Afghan Jihad under another dictator, Zia-ul-Haq, throughout the 1970s and 1980s when a lot of U.S. funds were also used and funneled without any accounting through to our security agencies. To this day those security agencies haunt the political classes and structure of Pakistan, distorting the political process, running a state within a state that is very hard to break. These are the jihadist groups that Ms. Bhutto feared would kill her. She felt that they remain entrenched in the security establishment even today. She was absolutely right. You do



not need Baitullah Masood or al-Qaeda to come striking and come calling. Incidentally, when Baitullah Masood or al-Qaeda hit as you all know, they take chest-thumping pride in saying that this is one of our accomplishments. We killed her. She wanted us down. Well, we took her down before you. They have all said we know nothing about this. They may have wanted to consider it, but it has not been on their agenda at least for December according to them. So we are skeptical about the quick shifting of blame, if you like, and the almost knee-jerk reactions that have followed, endorsing the finding of a young boy and putting him up as the assailant.

The reality is as Dr. Laghari said, finding the hidden hand behind the assailant, those who sponsored and who financed, who organized, and who ended up perpetrating that heinous crime, because Pakistan will continue to be challenged. It is not just about getting justice for one person. It is not just about getting justice for 170 people who were massacred on October 18, and I was there on each occasion. It is about reasserting the rule of law in Pakistan so that we can go back to our homes in safety, so our children can go to school, and our young people can find jobs that suit their skills, their talent, and their education.

Most Pakistanis agree with the fact that we need to move away from a fundamentalist or religious dogma-defined campaign, at least those are the figures we have, and I am going to move right on to tell you

about the unfortunate trend that exists today to rig and manipulate this election. We have had local body elections in 2005. There was violence, there was chaos, there was blood on the street, and we are loathe to go into that kind of an election. But we have a clear commitment to always staying in the field and not backing away from any political forum. We seek power and office through the legitimate means of an election. It is our absolute, fundamental right as guaranteed in the Constitution of Pakistan to seek a free and fair election. What we see right now unfortunately is a concerted bid to steal that mandate from democratic forces, particularly the Pakistan People's Party. The reason the election was delayed by the government is also widely seen as a ploy to further manipulate the election and we do have a consolidated report of rigging complaints from across the country. I have that tome lying next to me. If anybody wants to have a look at it, we have it electronically available. Incidentally, Ms. Bhutto was all set to give out that report to a group of I think senators she was due to meet on the 27th at dinner that night before she was assassinated and the report shows how far the Musharraf regime has gone and is planning to go to rig the election.

I am not going to go into details because there are a lot of micro details in terms of process as well as the structure that is running this election. In a sense, there is a strategic environment and a tactical method as to how that vote will be stolen from us. But I will quickly run

you through five points of how their planning of the electoral role is clearly and fundamentally flawed. We have done a lot of work on it and we have reports on how that is going to disenfranchise hundreds of thousands of people.

The Election Commission, which is a constitutional body, is meant to run and administer autonomously this election. It is far from independent. In fact, it has ignored over a thousand complaints sent to it officially by the People's Party. We are extremely institutionalized. We are like a parallel government. We are almost that bureaucratic. There is someone who is always sending out letters, there is someone picking up complaints, there is someone integrating them at the central level. So stuff keeps going out, stuff keeps getting recorded, and the Election Commission is terribly embarrassed that they cannot even process our complaints let alone take action.

The district government and intelligence agencies are openly engaged in electoral fraud. And then there are extensive plans for polling day rigging on election day that has been perfected, by the way, as a near art by the agencies in Pakistan. I am not going to bore you with specific details of rigging but just let you know that the International Crisis Group has documented many of these formulations and it is unfortunate that 90 percent of the equipment that the USA has given the government of Pakistan to fight terrorism or much of the aid is also being used to monitor

and keep a check on their political opponents particularly the PPP. And with reference to polling instruments and monitoring, because we had asked for specific monitoring and the right for monitors to run exit polls to verify the results, we were told that will not be possible. If that is not an exhibition of mala fide intent, you tell me what is.

The International Republican Institute last month pulled out of monitoring the elections in Pakistan because of unusual restrictions placed on monitoring groups by the Pakistani government. They denied the IRI permission to conduct one exit poll and demanded notification of all polling places to be visited which means they will restrict their access and show them only certain boutique polling booths where they feel they have control over what goes on.

They also issued a 150-page manual with restrictions on observers as to how they could operate and that has made it impossible for any monitor to issue a credible election report which is why the IRI is still thinking about not coming. They are not sure what their intentions are, but I quote Lorne Kramer of the IRI who says that, "We have observed 140 elections over the last 20 years and we have not encountered anything like that before." Some of our delegates will be meeting with him later tomorrow or I think the day after, and we do not know what their plans are, but right now we see no bodies, maybe not even the Commonwealth, able to monitor the elections. The 2002 election

incidentally was labeled by the Commonwealth monitors as not just a bit of a fraud but quite a mess. Even so we had the highest numbers, just to put that in perspective.

Lastly, right after the assassination of Ms. Bhutto, on the election round -- I am not done yet -- lastly, the PPP has been subjected to a mass wave of arrests in their home province of Sindh and many in the high-density province of Punjab. Over two-thousand activists have been arrested claiming that they were responsible for post-assassination violence. The PPP does not believe in violence. Within 24 hours we had dampened down any fires we thought would be coming from our direction and I personally saw the police and the PMLQ, which is the surrogate party for Musharraf, running and burning banks and my husband himself runs a microfinance bank, they burnt all those branches down. Many banks were burnt. Who needs to burn banks?

So all that was done, and we now have over 500,000 polling agents, activists, even candidates, nominated on FIRs of first information reports as mentioned earlier. This is like a sword of Damocles hanging on them. Their records are criminalized and they will be under threat of arrest on election day either before or after if they seek to try to fight for their right for the polling agents to be in the booth as needed. I do not want to go into minutiae and the details and the micro situation on the ground, but we will share with you the report if anyone is interested.

So here is the thing. Unless the international community forcefully engages the government of Pakistan against rigged elections, the regime will go ahead with rigging the polls, if indeed they hold them at all. There is a question mark hanging about the intention of this regime to hold these polls on time or keep indefinitely delaying it. Indefinite delays is a tried and tested method in South Asia for just not holding a poll. So for its own future and the civility of the region, we feel that Pakistan needs a free and fair election. There is no question of fighting any international or domestic war on terror without that. And as long as Pakistan is deprived of true democracy, we will see extreme elements of society continuing to be empowered. What happens is and what has been happening, and I have been to forums such as this speaking about how mainstream political parties, the secular ones, the not so secular ones, at least the progressive ones, are being systematically marginalized because they are not willing to be overt and/or covert partners in a military experimental government. We see them marginalized which is ourselves and we see the MMA and the religious parties brought to the front. Of course, international and regional events, the invasion of Iraq and of Afghanistan, has not helped the situation, but domestically speaking, the Islamist parties would not be polling more than 5 percent at best, that is usually what they poll, and considering they have not delivered in their areas in terms of grassroots infrastructure, we are not going to see a heavy mandate for them again if

the elections are free and fair. If the elections are not blocked, we will see a return of the PPP led by the new collegial leadership and we would seek an independent and autonomous election commission formed in consultation with the major political parties for us to agree on the results of that election, and we would seek monitoring by trained international observers who had unfettered access to all polling stations as well as the right to conduct exit polls. And of course, we would like a new neutral caretaker government free of Musharraf's cronies. This one has a prime minister who is the chairman of the Senate elected on a PMLQ ticket. How close to cronyism can you get? This is not a caretaker government, it is not neutral, it is just the Q in another shape. It is the same.

We would also seek that this election if it is free and fair be covered by electronic and print media with the freedoms they had before martial law was imposed on November 3. Many channels and newspapers have come back online on air, but after signing a code of conduct I welcome back GEO Channel to its satellite and cable frequency I believe as of today in Pakistan. But they too have been signing a code of conduct where most of their difficult anchors and perhaps their independent reporters are dampening down discourse. So we would like a reversal of all that and the print and media should be back to the freedoms they enjoyed before November 3. We would need this election arbitrated by an independent judiciary as provided for in the Constitution.

And we would ask for the release of all political activists, journalists, lawyers, and judges who are currently detained.

Quickly winding up, lastly what can the U.S. do? We would urge immediate support for this kind of election and we thank the U.S. Congress for its recent resolution of course about seeking an internal investigation into the assassination of Ms. Bhutto's tragic death. But clearly, we have been hearing noises about the international community's support of free and fair elections, supporting democracy, supporting constitutional and fundamental freedoms, but that talk is not enough. That talk now has to be matched by some walk by both Musharraf and all his supporters. If you are funding his regime, you ask for where that money is going, you have to see that that money is going to aid programs, not cash transfers only to the military. You have to see that you are supporting a transition to democracy. Please understand we are not some republic that has not tasted democracy before. We are fighting for something we have had before, and we are fighting for something we believe in. We are not experimenting with local governments to reach parliamentary, federal, and provincial structures. We have been there, seen that. It has not functioned fantastically, but it has not in many of our neighboring countries and many other countries in the world. It is not the optimal solution but it is the best we can get. I do not want to be making a pitch here for democracy but I end up sometimes ludicrously having to, because we are



told in colder climates that there is a tradeoff between security and democracy, perhaps for some countries, and that is a false choice. Ms. Bhutto always said that it is a false choice. You cannot have security without democracy. We have seen what has happened in Pakistan over the last 7 or 8 years. You have a declining asset in Pakistan. You need investments now in democratic institutionalized parties that believe in what they are doing and can carry their mandate forward with confidence in the future, and with confidence in their own abilities to carry that message without looking over their shoulders that they are basically an illegitimate government. We would not be that.

I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for your time, and I thank you to revisit the old formulas that we have been working with. We clearly need a new equilibrium and a new relationship with the United States. It should not just be a transactional one where money is given and we do certain things. We need to stop fighting with democratic forces, we need to stop muzzling the media, and we need to stop locking up the judiciary. These are things that we need to start looking at very quickly because time is running out. If that election on February 18 does not take place, we will then see more instability in Pakistan. We want to avoid blood on the streets. The PPP and its democratic allies can organize protests, they can fill the streets once we are denied that election, but that is the last thing the PPP wants. We always see ourselves and we are the largest

federal party in the country. We have roots in all the four provinces, we are answerable and accountable to our constituencies, to civil society, to the media, to everybody. We see ourselves as the government, we see ourselves as more responsible than the government because we have to save Pakistan right now. We do not see anyone else doing it in that country. Thank you very much for your time.

MR. RIEDEL: I would like to pick up where Ms. Rehman left off, which is the question of what the United States should do about this. But before I do that I also, like Carlos, want to pay tribute to Benazir Bhutto. I had the opportunity over the last two decades to meet her on several occasions. Every meeting I had with her, I was impressed by one thing, her determination to push forward the cause of democracy in Pakistan.

In the last several weeks, every newspaper, every journalist in the world it seems has had a chance to write about Ms. Bhutto and we have learned all of her frailties and all of her foibles, we have learned all of her strengths and all of her successes. Like the rest of us, she was a human being and she had strengths and weaknesses. But one thing stands out, her indomitable courage in the face of threats to her life to go forward pushing the case of democracy. In her autobiography she lays out how al-Qaeda began targeting her in the mid-1990s. Before most of us even knew there was an Osama bin Laden, he was seeking to kill her.

Whoever killed her this last December, the issue is this, this woman was prepared to give her life for the cause of democracy and for that she will be a hero for the cause of democracy in the world of Islam.

As we speak today, President Musharraf is in Brussels on a European tour. He has asked the Europeans and Americans to end their obsession with the issue of democracy in Pakistan. Unfortunately, I think when you look at the track record of the United States and Pakistan over the last half-century, obsession with supporting democracy does not in fact have anything to do with that diplomatic history. For the last half-century, American presidents have found it all too easy to back dictators and to do little to support democracy in Pakistan. It is unfortunately a very bipartisan track record. President Eisenhower was the first American president to go to South Asia and he embraced Pakistan's first dictator. President Nixon of course famously tilted toward the dictatorship in the world with the foundation of Bangladesh. President Reagan embraced General Zia with full enthusiasm. We now know the Frankenstein that came from that embrace. President Bush the father was the first American president to sanction Pakistan and sanction Benazir Bhutto's first term in office. President Bush more than any other has supported to the tune of \$11 billion a dictatorship in Pakistan.

The Democrats' record though is not much better. President Kennedy hosted then dictator Ayub Khan for a state dinner at Mount

Vernon, the only time Mount Vernon has ever been used for a state dinner. Lyndon Johnson pursued the same policy. President Carter at least was tortured by the murder of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, but he got over it once the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. President Clinton I am proud to say took a tougher line toward General Musharraf in 1999, but even he chose to visit Pakistan and become the first foreign leader to give any sense of legitimacy to General Musharraf.

This sorry track record needs to end. What have we gotten for it? What in particular have we gotten for supporting General Musharraf for the last 9 years: \$11 billion in aid more than half of which has gone into an unaccountable cash transfer to the Pakistani army. We were promised an effective war against terror, we were promised stability, and we were promised a return to democracy. Instead Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and the rest of the al-Qaeda gang remain alive and well somewhere in their lair along the Afghan-Pakistan badlands plotting every day new attacks. Instead of stability, we can all see what we have gotten. It became vividly clear to us in December. Instead of sympathy and support for the United States, we now find ourselves in Pakistan with all-time low approval ratings. Twelve percent of Pakistanis according to the latest poll have a favorable opinion of the United States. Senator Laghari read you the results of an opinion poll about who killed Ms. Bhutto. I think in deference to our sensitivities, he left off one of the numbers. 8 percent

of Pakistanis believe we did it. That may seem like a small number, but why should any Pakistani believe America did it?

The moment of truth is fast approaching in American-Pakistani relations. We have an opportunity now to do something different. Last week President Bush in Abu Dhabi spoke very eloquently about the need for democracy to be the counter to extremism and jihadism in the Islamic world. You will recall in his second inaugural address he said that would be the primary intent of his second administration, to advance the cause of democracy in the Islamic world, that we would embark upon a liberation strategy. The rubber meets the road on February 18 in Pakistan. If we are serious about it, this is the place to do it. We should hold the Musharraf government to a high standard, as free and fair elections as can possibly be held. I think we have heard already a lot of question marks about how free and fair they will be, but that is not an excuse for the United States to be on the right side this time.

We do not know whether those elections will be held in the end. Anyone who can tell you they know what is going to happen in Pakistan tomorrow is a much smarter man than I am. But I think there are some key questions that as Americans we should be thinking about. First, are we prepared to do what is necessary and to say what is necessary in order to ensure these elections are as credible as possible? Will this administration insist that outside observers be given every normal right to

pursue an election? Will the International Republican Institute, after all from Mr. Bush's own party, be given the right to do what it feels is absolutely necessary?

If the elections are held and they are reasonably credible, then there are a number of other questions we need to keep in mind. Will, can, President-General Musharraf really share power with anyone? His track record to date does not suggest so. Will the opposition unite together in dealing with the Musharraf government? They do after all have a common agreement on a charter for democracy and it will be imperative to see whether they are able to work together to support that charter. Will the opposition seek the impeachment of the president? It can do so if it gets a two-thirds majority. Will it be willing to share power among itself? Will the Pakistani army stand aside and let the political process develop? All of these questions are unknown today but in all of them I think the U.S. posture should be clear, standing for the pursuit of democracy.

Let me conclude with this note, Carlos briefly alluded to it, the stakes for Americans. The stakes could not be higher. Every nightmare of the 21st century for Americans comes together in Pakistan. The question of nuclear war, of nuclear proliferation. This is a country that has somewhere between 50 and 200 nuclear devices; the question of terrorism, of jihadism, al-Qaeda and its future. This is a country which in

the last year witnessed 36 suicide bombings against military targets. This is a country which had not see a suicide bombing 10 years ago. The question of democracy, dictatorship, all of these questions, come together in Pakistan. For Americans there could be no country more important in which to come in clearly on one side. Let me finish by saying I fully endorse both the proposal for an international investigation and for the United States to be clear and unequivocal about the need for a credible election process and respecting the outcome once it is in. Thank you.

MR. PASCUAL: Bruce, thanks very much. Senator and Sherry Rehman, thank you for your remarks and for setting the stage here for questions. I am going to come to the audience. To begin with I may interject in a few cases and explore further some of the issues that were laid out. In particular Sherry Rehman, you laid out a very impressive set of requirements to make this election credible starting with an election commission, election monitors, access to the polling sites, exit polls, a new caretaker government, free coverage by the media, an independent judiciary. I think for anybody who has worked on election issues anywhere in the world those are certainly very sound precepts of what needs to happen. So how to get to that point I think is going to be a critical issue and one that I would like to explore further. But the audience has been very patient, so let me first come to the audience. If you can introduce yourself, and please be sure to bring the point to a question.

MR. HARRIET: Judd Harriet, documentary filmmaker. With respect to an international investigation since, as you point out, all the forensic evidence has been washed away long ago, what could possibly be accomplished by this?

MS. REHMAN: Very clearly that is one of the reasons, that is all the more reason, we would need an international investigation. The current regime has shown its mala fide intent. If it is hiding behind incompetence it is a little rich to say that because there is a clear tradition of crime scenes and crime sites being cordoned off for at least 3 days in Musharraf's own crime scenes whenever he was attacked. And we have had the Lahore High Court bombing, that remains intact. There is a cordon sanitaire around that. So while we see that there is a mala fide intent in hosing down key forensic evidence, we as stated earlier are not just looking for the capture of an assailant or two assailants or their handlers, we are looking for the organizers, the sponsors, the perpetrators, and financiers behind such a huge international conspiracy because that is what it clearly is. Whoever is involved, we need to unmask the hidden hand, and the United Nations seems to be the most credible body at this time to be able to conduct and send down a fact-finding mission to get into what events led up to (inaudible) if you like because we would like to match it from earlier than October 18 when we feel that the lack of action provided impunity to the assailants who tried to



attack Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, killed over 170 people, maimed many more. And instead of providing her further protection, impunity was provided to those who attacked and those who planned that attack. So right now we have no credibility in the independence or intention, if you like, of this government. There has clearly been a cover-up in both cases.

MR. PASCUAL: Senator, do you want to add anything?

SENATOR LAGHARI: Yes, I would just add something, that Scotland Yard is already there looking at whatever is left of the forensic evidence. So that is not going to be the focus of a United Nations probe. The United Nations probe of course will go beyond that. And currently Scotland Yard and even the Pakistani investigators, the Pakistani police, have got their hands bound because the suspect that has been named in Ms. Bhutto's letter to General Musharraf and in her emails have not been questioned. They are suspects, and at least they have to be investigated and the way the system works is the Pakistani security dare not go and drop the boat out there. Therefore we need an impartial body. We need a body that goes above and beyond that is free to go and ask questions.

MR. PASCUAL: Let me come over to this side over here.

COLONEL DATTA: Colonel Datta, Foreign Policy Association. With the continued military government in Pakistan for one reason or the other and looking at the present situation in Pakistan, the ground realities, what do you think is the future of dictatorship in Pakistan?

MS. REHMAN: The future of dictatorship is actually a sunset industry as you can see. It is not going anywhere. It is not taking the country anywhere. It is not taking its allies' goals anywhere either. So while we have had many years of either covert or overt dictatorship, democracy is really the answer to Pakistan's survival, stability, and growth in the near future.

MR. PASCUAL: There are a lot of questions coming up so I am going to take two right here at this time and then come back.

QUESTIONER: I want to thank Brookings for arranging this occasion. I am especially grateful to the visitors from Pakistan who traveled a long distance to enlighten us. I have a couple of comments and a question.

MR. PASCUAL: If I can ask you to keep the comments brief.

QUESTIONER: Very quickly, Bruce Riedel, I agree with you. Over 40 years or 50 years we have Americans for too long supporting military dictatorships. I fully agree with you. This is the core for Iraq policy. The Third World countries, find a strongman, throw money at him and his henchmen, and ignore the rest. Those times are not over. The United States can now rectify some of those things by fully participating in observing the forthcoming elections. But it is important to have the restoration of the rule of law and the restoration of a free media for the elections to have any meaning.

My questions to our People's Party representatives here are, one, we in America are concerned about the control and command of our nuclear power. That is often used to justify (inaudible) military dictators. Do you have a policy how that is going to be conducted? My second comment is, yes, the leadership of the People's Party has gone (inaudible) but the best way to honor and celebrate the memory of the Bhuttos would be to widely spread -- to have democracy within the People's Party and not make it a family enterprise. Thank you.

MR. PASCUAL: And right here?

MR. LANDAY: Jonathan Landay with McClatchy Newspapers. I just came back from 2 weeks in Pakistan. The general impression is that no party has the strength to win an outright majority in the parliament. There have been conflicting statements made by senior members of your party about whether or not you would be prepared to go into a coalition with the PMLQ, and I would like to know categorically whether or not you would be prepared to form a coalition with the PMLQ, as at least the general wisdom is that both your parties will win the most seats but neither will win a majority.

MR. PASCUAL: The nuclear question, the democratization of the PPP, and a coalition with the PMLQ.

MS. REHMAN: Let me start with the nuclearization. The command and control is something that was set up by Mohtarma Benazir

Bhutto's government and we were at that time engaged in institutionalizing that structure. I think Pakistan has a very clear command and control system. It has the fifth-largest standing army in the world. So I think that is really something that we do not have to go into but certainly there needs to be defense parliamentary oversight like we propose for everything. We proposed joint bipartisan parliamentary oversight for all such sensitive installations and institutions.

The second was democratization. Actually, I will not even refer to issues of context when we say that the Bhuttos have represented very iconically a certain struggle in Pakistan against the establishment. If you look at the 40-year-old history of the party, and I think I would like to give the senator some time also to give his intervention, but they have embodied almost personally and almost systemically a long, consistent battle more than anybody else or any other party, and they have led that party against a certain reified structure. That battle continues and it is coming to its peak even today.

For us as a party we feel that we are entitled per democratic principle and process to choose our own leader and we made that choice. So I think that while it may look like a family enterprise, it is not. It is a choice we made. And even in her lifetime, Ms. Bhutto was the candidate for prime minister. Today we have not decided on that yet. We could easily have given that out as well. Would you like to add to that?

MR. PASCUAL: On the PMLQ.

MS. REHMAN: I would like to disabuse one concept here.

The Q really is not a political party. You are imaging that the Q is a political party. It is a creation that has been foisted on Pakistan by General Musharraf and it is a group of motley surrogates and proxies who have run parliament as a front for the president, now he is the president, so it is not a question of dividing up power on a dictator's table. We seek power through the ballot. They have sought it through the bullet and we seek power and legitimacy through a free and fair election. And incidentally, if there is a free and fair election, and you are welcome to come and monitor it, I do not think that the Q will be pulling that many votes. I could of course be biased and I have a partisan view.

QUESTIONER: That is what the rigging would be about.

MS. REHMAN: Yes, that is what the rigging would be about where the party has a tradition of going into elections no matter what. We will be contesting and fighting it at every polling booth to fight off that rigging.

But having said that, if the Q still emerges as a party again, we would be seen where we stand and we would be seen where they stand because they are really not a party, they are a group of individuals. There are some people we have worked with in the past in the Q, and there are some people who will be absolutely unacceptable to us as

remnants of martial law regimes. So I hope that answers your question.

SENATOR LAGHARI: Let me add, because I disagree when Sherry says she has a biased opinion about the Q. Let me refer to three independent polls that have taken place in the last 2 to 3 months. I am referring to an RII poll, a Gallup poll, and the Dawn poll. There are three independent polls, and all three polls gave the Pakistan People's Party a clear lead over all other parties, and the next best party that these polls gave popularity to are the PML-Nawaz. So between the two parties of the two former prime ministers, they have an absolute majority. The Q, the PMLQ, is a far third and the religious parties are between 5 to 10 percent of the popular vote. That is their max at the best of their time. Normally they do not get more than 5 percent of the votes. So this is the factual position. And like Ms. Rehman pointed out, the Q really is not a party. It is a hodgepodge. It is a potpourri of a lot of people trying to bring together through the National Accountability Bureau people who have cases against them, the FIRs that we referred to. And they say you have got these criminal cases against you so either you come and support Musharraf and we will let you be ministers and be in the government, or we put you in jail. So it is called a carrot-and-stick approach. So the Q is not a party, it does come on more than 10 to 15 percent, and I see a clear majority here by the democratic forces in Pakistan who would want to put Pakistan onto the right track.

MR. PASCUAL: Bruce, did you want to add anything here?

MR. RIEDEL: I just want to make comment about the nuclear security issue because this really is an issue which I think we have seen has dominated American commentary about Pakistan and is very much in the news from the candidates. I think the common vision, that has been raised of Pakistan that has it on the verge of being taken over by Islamist crazy men which will then have the 100 or so nuclear weapons, is a false issue. As we have just heard, there is no real reason to believe Islamists are on the verge of electoral victory and there is no real reason to believe that they are on the verge of marching on Islamabad even though they have become increasingly dangerous.

I think the more serious thing to worry about is the possibility that a weapon or two could be secreted away from the structure into the hands of terrorists. On paper, Pakistan has a very impressive mechanism and apparatus for preventing that from happening, but the reality that we have seen over the last several months is that the security services are clearly penetrated by extremists. The attacks that we have been seeing going on against army bases, many of which have been inside jobs, show there is a problem. The best solution to that question is to ensure that the oversight of nuclear security is no longer solely in the hands of the military.

MS. REHMAN: Yes.

MS. RIEDEL: We do not do that in this country, we should

not have it done in Pakistan. The civilian government ought to be involved in the question of oversight of the security of the nuclear weapons program.

Last point, people calling for the United States to take unilateral action to secure Pakistan's nuclear apparatus are living in a fantasy world. It would be one of the most dangerous things the United States could ever do. Even talking about it makes a bad situation worse.

MR. JOSEPH: Edward Joseph, Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. Recently an election observer for IRI in Pakistan in Peshawar in fact where I had the honor to meet Benazir Bhutto the day before she died, before her tragic assassination in Rawalpindi the next day. And let me ask you, please, both senator and Dr. Rehman both, the same question that I asked her and especially in light of what you said here today and the confidence that you project about this. Do you see a mutually acceptable outcome to this election given your confidence and given what appears to be the intransigence in the part of President Musharraf? Is there a mutually acceptable outcome that does not involve him stepping down? That is the first question.

The second question goes to the possibility for unrest that you alluded to. Given again your confidence, I am wondering and in fact am a little concerned that expectations on the part of your supporters are so high that they may not be met in large part for the reasons you say, for



the very obvious potential for rigging, but even if that is not, we have a situation where expectations may not be met about the rigging.

Finally, the last point, you did not mention in your very solid, and very correct, list of things that need to be done, I did not hear a clear demand for restoration of the judiciary including Iftikhar. Is that a position of the PPP or is there some equivocation about that? Thank you very much and congratulations to Bruce Riedel for his remarks which I support completely.

MR. PASCUAL: There is one other question right here.

MR. NEHMAN: Asif Nehman. I am a graduate student at George Washington University and a former student of Dr. Laghari's. The one thing that in my opinion, keeping in mind the tempestuous relationship of the Pakistan People's Party with the Pakistan army, is there a change in your calculation with regard to the Pakistan army after General Kayani has taken over as the Chief of Army Staff? General Musharraf is no longer General Musharraf, he is General Retired Musharraf, because General Kayani served as an adviser to former Prime Minister Bhutto as well? I am just wondering if there is a change in the way the People's Party will deal with the army after that or the communication between the two institutions.

MR. PASCUAL: Let's go back to the two of you.

MS. REHMAN: Let me start with the last question, and it ties

into somewhat the other one, the question really about the PPP dealing with the army is always the same. The PPP deals with the army as an institution. The PPP deals with the army as the army of Pakistan. There is no question really about our looking at individuals. General Musharraf had concentrated power in himself, he had amended the constitution, he had gone through many lengths to create a special -- he had done not just one coup, but two coups, one coup and one counter-coup. So that was not something that we have seen as inimical or typical perhaps to the next leadership in the army. We would like to give them the benefit of the doubt. If General Kayani wants to move forward and create space for political parties, if he wants to take the army out of politics which he has indicted he will be doing and for that there is a wait and see because there may be a bit of distance between those dots to connect. So right now that is his declaration of intent. We are taking it as the chief of army staff's new line. That is the one that we expect him to take and it has nothing to do with whether he is General Kayani or general somebody else. There is obviously a toxic overload of baggage with General Musharraf but that was mainly because of his actions, not his person. We very clearly stick to interacting and reacting or behaving institutionally with institutions, and that segues into the judiciary question. We want to seek a restoration of democracy and institutional systems. Our charter of demands, and we have a Charter of Democracy that we signed with the Nawaz League to

strengthen and empower democracy, very clearly states this. And we went to great lengths, we passed a bill also in parliament about how the judiciary would be appointed, how they would not be able to take votes under provisional constitutional orders. We are suggesting bipartisan parliament oversight committees that appoint the judiciary in a transparent manner and we are suggesting seniority as one of the criteria. We have a detailed view and position on how the judiciary would be appointed. We would like to stick to that. We are not looking at Justice Chaudhry or Justice X or Y. We respect him for the position he took. I was with Ms. Bhutto when she tried to visit him at his residence to pay her respects. We were not allowed to go past the barbed wire, but again, it is not about a person. There may be several judges who are appointed back to the Supreme Court, but they would really be put through that mill ideally of that bipartisan committee after the election and a whole setup is restored.

Our position is not that we are against any particular judge. We want to reinforce an institutionalized system whereby there is no controversy about how a judge is appointed and how he or she is pressured into taking a new oath and indemnifying perhaps a dictator's decrees and a corpus of laws that they pass and we are stuck with that like we are stuck with the Eighth Amendment and we are stuck with something called the Seventeenth Amendment. Yes, we would need parliamentary majorities to make such changes, but we have an

agreement of sorts from the Nawaz League. These are the two mainstream parties of the country. If they are returned to parliament, they will cooperate on making such key fundamental changes that would really bring us back to many positions of the original 1973 Constitution.

QUESTIONER: (inaudible) and also the expectations, is it dangerous that your followers might have very high expectations?

MS. REHMAN: Senator Laghari?

SENATOR LAGHARI: I will come to your answer, but let me add on to what she said. The Pakistan People's Party of course believes in the supremacy of the constitution and of the parliament, and it also believes in institution building and the independence of the institutions within the constitution. So it believes in the independence of the judiciary, it believes the military has its own role to play which is protect the borders of Pakistan and for other security matters. Regarding the second question, that is we have to wait until the outcome of the elections. As we move into the elections we do not know what the outcome is going to be but we are optimistic that the Pakistan People's Party will win the larger number of seats in the parliament along with other moderate democratic forces. After the elections have taken place, the parties will be getting together within the parliament and outside the parliament to decide how to take Pakistan toward the right track. And within that system of course various individuals and various organizations will have their roles to play

toward a prosperous and moderate Pakistan.

MR. PASCUAL: If I can jump in here, the ability to move on the right track after February 18 obviously depends on whether there is any credibility in what happens on February 18. Again going back to the comment that you made, Sherry, about the list of requirements for a free and fair election, how does one get there? The United States could certainly call for such steps to be taken. In some ways, one might even question if the United States calling for those steps to be taken is even a positive or constructive thing given as Bruce said the popularity rating of the United States is at about 12 percent. Is there a possibility for all of the opposition parties to come together and make such a joint request? Is it possible to bring a request jointly to some form of international body? Have you considered how you might be able to do that, whether in addition to seeking for a U.N. role for example in an investigation of Ms. Bhutto's death have you considered the possibility of seeking an audience with the U.N. to present the needs and the requirements to support in the spirit of the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights the kinds of steps that are necessary to have a free and fair election? What kinds of mechanisms have you considered to actually try to create real pressure to make those demands into a reality?

MS. REHMAN: First of all, referring to the investigation, we have looked at Article 1373 of the U.N. charter. We are looking of course

at asking other groups and parties to join us in this request, but basically it is a PPP request. We are the largest party in the country and we feel that we are empowered to make that demand given the scale of what happened, given the scale of perhaps the fallout of not meeting such a demand.

Pakistan is at a very critical fork, if you like, between stability and chaos right now. We are looking at an abyss; the abyss is clearly looking back at us. We need to make that clarion call. We are asking only for the United States not to endorse an unfree election, not to endorse and say it is their internal matter. We are looking for what the Commonwealth did last time. They looked at the election and they said this is not a free and fair election whereas the U.S. took a different position because it again saw a tradeoff between supporting Musharraf and upsetting Musharraf. So we would like the United States not to invest in a person. We would like them, and all institutions in the U.S. government, to consider an institutional relationship with Pakistan which is broader based which invests in a system, in strengthening political parties, in better guarantees for an exercise that would have credibility, that would not have a contested outcome, because clearly then once that outcome is contested, it opens up the way for further instability in Pakistan, that may be too late. I do not want to really be a Cassandra and come with scenarios that are upsetting, but that is a prospect that will destabilize

Pakistan. We are seeking to avoid it. We only contest and outcome when we are pushed up against the wall. Even the last election in 2002 we know that we clearly had won the mandate, our parliamentary party was broken by 20 members taken away by the carrot-and-stick approach that Senator Laghari mentioned. We also had in terms of sheer vote count the highest number of votes. We did go into parliament and accept those results in the interests of a stable Pakistan, and we were hoping that we will see movement toward democracy, but in these 5 years all we have seen is movement backwards and we have seen the U.S. continuously endorse that.

MR. PASCUAL: I am going to take one more question here, you have been very patient, and then I am going to give the panelists an opportunity to offer any concluding remarks that you might have.

MS. SCHAFFER: Teresita Schaffer from CSIS. It is lovely to see you again, Sherry, and to greet the Senator. I want to reflect on what Sherry said and what others have said which is that the PPP has really stood forthrightly against the phenomenon of extremism inside Pakistan which I know is a long-standing position of the PPP and a very important one, and also a very important point of convergence with the way I see U.S. interests. This turns out not to be an easy policy to implement, however, and I wonder if you have any thoughts on how you would do that if you found yourselves in government. What would be the

relationship between the military and the civilian parts of government in doing so?

MS. REHMAN: It would be a poisoned chalice to take up government at this point certainly, but it is not a challenge that we would shy away from. In fact, I think it is our responsibility now to step in and move forward with the kinds of programs that the PPP has in terms of handling the growing menace of militancy and terrorism as we see it. We have a clear policy on not just terrorism, but just not to deal with it in terms of security means, there is obviously that dimension to it. There has to be some element of moving against the clear and present danger and it is on our doorstep and we would have to move. You have to make tough choices, you have to make unpopular decisions, but you do it because you have a mandate. You do not have to look over your shoulder, you do not have to apologize. Ms. Bhutto made such decisions always when she was in government. The Taliban was contained in Kandahar. They could not come out of there. There was a university that was shut down in Peshawar because it was beginning to foment and it was beginning to turn into that kind of nursery of terrorism that we speak about, nothing like what we see today, but the signal went out from government very loud and clear.

The tap of funding that is financing the proliferation of such groups, the clear plan of running with the hare and hunting with the



hounds policy, the prevarication, that would have to stop and that is not so difficult to stop. Yes, we would have to be working with the security forces to implement all of that and that is the security dimension of it. The PPP has always understood that the army has to come as per the constitution to the aid of a civilian government. That is its job. It has to take orders from the civilian government and execute those orders as it is told to do so and it has to do so and a PPP government has done so in the past.

But there is a nonsecurity dimension to this also in terms of pure nonmilitary matters and that is dealing with the growth of such militancy, the conditions that lead to such restlessness, the lack of employment opportunities, the lack of education, the lack of political participation. Primarily we are getting most of the recruitment of extremism from a rich vein in the tribal areas in the Northwest frontier provinces, and it's stretching from Afghanistan right down to Quetta and what we call the arc of insecurity for us and for everybody else. Of course, they are penetrating the warrens of our cities as well. But we have to staunch where it starts and we have a very clear policy that Ms. Bhutto had announced while she was campaigning just a few months ago, a month ago, less than that, in those areas where she was prohibited to go but she went. The public response was huge. The FATA areas, the federally administered tribal areas, need to not be federally administered in an old colonial system. Those people need to feel that they are part of

not just the penal code of Pakistan, but they need to feel that they are participants, they are full citizens, and that they can actually have the political parties act fast in that area. We have campaigned for that. She had actually moved the Supreme Court to bring the Political Parties Act to those areas. Number one, that would not be enough, but we had suggested serious investment in development and education in those areas. We had also suggested some customs liberalization for those areas. We brought habeas corpus to Baluchistan, that is the PPP, and that is what we need to bring to those areas. We would have set up the first high court, the first sessions court, and bring that area into the justice system. What we have right now is the old British colonial method of ruling that area through a political agent and his, I will not say her cronies. We have not seen any political agents that are women. And it is an iniquitous system, it empowers and enriches only the tribal maliks, the rest are left out of any fruits of even development. The U.S. I hear is spending some \$750 million in that area if I am not mistaken. Well taken, but I hear on the ground, and I have been a journalist for 20 years, longer than in politics, that that money is not filtering and will not filter down to the grassroots and benefit the people who need it because the corruption net of the maliks is so heavy that everything gets caught up in that mesh on top. We need to change that. We need to bring the regular administrative systems of Pakistan into those areas. It will be done incrementally, but it

has to be done.

And lastly, the Frontier Crimes Regulation has to go. We need to remove the FCR. The Pashtuns in that area resist it. Those who are on the top resist it, but we have to go in slowly and we have to start changing that. They have to be part of the Pakistan penal code. People must have recourse to the justice system prevailing in the country.

MR. PASCUAL: Senator, did you want to add anything?

SENATOR LAGHARI: Actually, in the back, those of you who are interested, we have a part of the Party Election Manifesto 2008 and we have clear reforms directed toward the FATA areas and the Northern areas. We have got madrassa reforms. The Pakistan People's Party is very clear on its election and social agenda for the people. Of course, we understand that two-thirds of our people live below the poverty line. And very little foreign assistance has been directed to uplift our social programs, our election programs. Most of the money of course has been directed toward military assistance and that is where we believe the seed of extremism and militancy comes from. So that the election and social programs of the Pakistan People's Party and the reforms proposed for FATA, the Northern areas, and Kashmir and other areas are very clearly defined in our manifesto and we hope that if we get the opportunity to implement these reforms, we hope that we will be able to move in the right direction.

MR. PASCUAL: Bruce, is there anything you want to add from your extensive study of terrorism generally?

MR. RIEDEL: I want to address Ambassador Schaffer's, I think, excellent question. Let's take the optimal outcome. We have a credible election, we get a civilian government that is able to function and work, and we have a Pakistani army that is prepared to go back to the barracks and work with that. At that point the United States, it seems to me, needs to rethink its strategy toward Pakistan in a really different way. We need an aid relationship that goes beyond just supporting the military and starts looking at trying to rebuild some of the tattered institutions, the education process, for example, in Pakistan. Senator Biden has put together a very interesting idea of a multiyear, multibillion-dollar project to try and do some of those things which would not be subject to annual review by the Congress. That may be unconstitutional, but it is certainly an interesting idea to be thinking about how we could do it.

In terms of military assistance, we ought to rethink that too. Why are we providing F-16s to the Pakistani air force? F-16s are not a very useful weapon to use against a group like al-Qaeda or the Taliban. Why do we provide Pakistan with night-vision devices and then require that once a month all of them be brought back into headquarters and recatalogued which means that once a month the bad guys can know they cannot be seen at night? Do you think they have not figured out what

night to attack on?

We ought to get into a business of providing aid to Pakistan to help rebuild the institutions it needs. We ought to provide military assistance that is going to be most helpful in counterinsurgency, not in fighting conventional war. And we ought to also think about how our diplomacy could be supportive of a new government both to the East and to the West, in increasing the chances of an Indo-Pakistani settlement and in trying to reconcile the Afghan and Pakistan governments and perhaps bring about an end to the abnormality of our two allies in the region not even having agreement on the border between them.

MR. PASCUAL: Let me just allow the two of you, Senator and Sherry Rehman, any final thoughts before we bring this to a close?

SENATOR LAGHARI: No. Actually, I am just grateful and thankful to you and to the Brookings Institution for providing us with this forum so we had an opportunity to exchange thoughts and our viewpoints with our audience at large, and we are thankful to the audience as well for finding the time to meet with us.

MR. PASCUAL: Sherry?

MS. REHMAN: Thank you very much, again, and for excellent comments, also Mr. Riedel for your introducing us, and for everybody here at Brookings. Really I hate to sound like a champion for what we are doing, but the PPP is the only best hope right now for

Pakistan and Pakistan is needed by the region. We are seeking stability and friendship with both our neighbors. As Mr. Riedel hinted, Afghanistan and India are both seen to be friends, they can be allies, they can be worked with, as opposed to being seen as rivals for a shrinking resource. And quickly with that I would like to say that the People's Party has been spearheading the uniting of the SAARC region, the South Asian region, as a common market for trade and just leveling election pyramids. That is the biggest problem in South Asia and that is something we can do with economies of scale and with trade that is unfettered across the borders. The markets obviously function to the detriment not always of each country, but Pakistan and India and Afghanistan have to stop working at cross purposes. We continue to do so and I do think that the People's Party and its allies, even the Nawaz League, have made quantum leaps in that direction. If the security establishment goes around which I think they are willing to now, we can make a lot of progress as long as we are not just looking at terrorism as a high-value target endeavor. Terrorism and extremism have to be tackled at many levels, and that is something that I would like to let everyone think about. Thank you very much for your time and your patience.

MR. PASCUAL: Thanks to all three of our panelists.

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