

SOUTH ASIA

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Asian Aftershocks: Strategic Asia 2002-03

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On September 11, 2001, the world learned that the United States was terribly vulnerable to a concerted terrorist attack. Two South Asian states, Afghanistan and Pakistan, were close to the heart of the problem. Both showed that terrorist organizations can be found where corrupt ideologies intersect with maldeveloped societies: Afghanistan was a state that had been commandeered by terrorists; Pakistan had the potential to move in the same direction. The terrorists who attacked the United States were trained in and directed from Al Qaeda leaders based in Afghanistan; in turn, Pakistan was supportive of the Afghan regime and cultivated its own home-grown Islamic radicals, many of whom supported Al Qaeda.

This discovery has transformed the world's understanding of South Asia. Until the attacks of September, most attention had been devoted to India, the region's rising power. New Delhi was seen by the Clinton and Bush administrations as a possible Asian strategic partner, and Indians, Americans, and others spoke of New Delhi extending its economic, military, and cultural influence throughout the Indian Ocean area, and working closely with the United States in keeping regional peace. But September 11 set in motion a complex diplomacy that sorely tested the new Indian-U.S. relationship and revived U.S. ties to Islamabad. It also produced a major India-Pakistan crisis that just might lead to a fundamental transformation of regional politics. This transformation in turn could possibly liberate India from its "Pakistan problem," enabling it to play a more significant role as a major Asian power, not as a mere regional one.

This chapter addresses the major post-September 11 concerns of U.S. policy-making toward South Asia. First, the chapter summarizes the mixed regional picture that existed on the eve of September 11, when Pakistan seemed to be in decline, India was

seen as a rising Asian strategic power, and the tensions between them appeared to be manageable.

Next the chapter examines the regional consequences of September 11. The most visible was the U.S. military operation in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, which opened the path for the restoration of a free Afghan state. Another consequence of September 11 was the revival of close U.S.-Pakistan relations, which raises the prospect of a long-term U.S. commitment to helping Pakistan contain its own Islamic radicals and cease its support for such groups in neighboring countries, including Afghanistan and the Indian-governed portions of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Defying past experience, the U.S.-Indian strategic relationship was also strengthened, and the United States has, for the first time in fifty years, good relations with both South Asian powers, raising the question as to whether Washington will use this position to help both states move toward some kind of agreement on Kashmir and other issues.

The chapter then addresses the six-month long India-Pakistan crisis. This stand-off was the latest in a series of increasingly frequent and intense India-Pakistan confrontations. Like its predecessors it had the potential to escalate rapidly to a nuclear war, with profound strategic implications for Asia and the United States.

Finally the chapter examines U.S. choices in this region of Strategic Asia. Is South Asia a new area of engagement for American diplomacy? If so, will this engagement focus largely on a rising India or will it encompass the still-powerful, but troubled, Pakistan? Washington must weigh the relative importance of a number of interests and devise a policy that balances the new concern with global terrorism with earlier concerns about preventing a nuclear war in South Asia and strategic cooperation with an emerging India.

Before September 11: A Strategic Snapshot

On the eve of September 11, India was widely seen to be “rising” by many American observers, Pakistan was clearly floundering, and the Taliban seemed to have established itself as the dominant force in Afghanistan, albeit one that had made important enemies

around the world.¹ The nuclear programs of both India and Pakistan continued apace. Internal unrest continued in Nepal and Sri Lanka, but this had few strategic implications since New Delhi permitted friendly outside powers (Canada, Britain, Israel, and the United States) to work with regional governments to contain extremist and separatist movements. As for China—an important non-regional player in South Asia—its military and political support for Pakistan continued. China’s growing trade ties with New Delhi did not translate into progress in resolving the long-standing India-China border dispute.

There was widespread consensus that India had ridden out the storm of anger triggered by its nuclear tests of May 1998, and that accommodation by the major powers, especially the United States, was at hand. One Indian commentator noted that by early 2001 “India was basking in new diplomatic glory. It had resisted the coercive measures of the international community; reordered relations with the major powers to its advantage; and managed an armed conflict with its nuclear neighbor with some responsibility and political success.”² India sought, and soon received, tacit U.S. acceptance of its new nuclear status, as Washington searched for ways to modify the elaborate sanctions regime. India’s economy continued to grow at a healthy rate, although there were several soft areas, especially manufacturing. India’s domestic politics appeared chaotic, faction ridden, and violent in many states, but this is to be expected of a country undergoing several simultaneous economic, class, caste, and ideological revolutions. Democracy may not have been the best framework to foster rapid economic growth, but it certainly was the only one that could hold together this gigantic and complex state-civilization.

In contrast, Pakistan was widely perceived to be on the verge of failure. When the military seized power in October 1999, some Pakistanis acknowledged that their state had “failed,” but noted that it had failed four or five times earlier, most dramatically when half of Pakistan’s population—East Pakistan—became the state of Bangladesh in 1971. The natural comparison with India reinforced this judgment. Pakistan’s official economy was flatlined or worse; its core institutions were in shambles; it was supporting the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, which alienated two major states, China and the United States; and in mid-1999 it precipitated a limited war with India in the Kargil region of the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir. This war resulted in a humiliating withdrawal of

Pakistan's forces and set in motion the coup that removed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif; it also saw the United States siding with India against Pakistan openly and firmly for the first time in 50 years.

Pakistan was also becoming an ideologically divided state, and even the return of the military to power in October 1999 could not stem the increase in domestic terrorism. This trend was epitomized by the systematic assassination of Shi'a physicians, which contributed to an exodus of some of Pakistan's most talented professionals. Senior police officers acknowledged that terrorists could strike in Pakistan at any time and any place that they wanted. Paradoxically, these issues were more freely debated in the Pakistani press than they had been for years, and Pakistan's non-governmental organizations were thriving, perhaps because so many state institutions had collapsed.

In sum, South Asia presented a mixed picture in late fall 2001. Relations between India and Pakistan were badly strained, with India refusing to resume its strategic and political dialogue until Pakistan ceased its support for insurgents and terrorists in Kashmir. Unwilling to restrain even its own domestic extremists, Islamabad continued its support of the Taliban in Afghanistan and allowed a variety of Kashmir-oriented groups to operate from its territory and those parts of Kashmir that it controlled.

Nevertheless there were promising developments. India-Pakistan cross-border trade had greatly increased³ and in early 1999 a promising summit between Nawaz Sharif, the Pakistani prime minister, and Atal Behari Vajpayee, India's prime minister was held in the Pakistani city of Lahore. This meeting set out a full menu of arms control and confidence building measures, none of which were consummated. The goodwill in India engendered by this summit vanished overnight after Pakistan initiated a military probe across the Kashmir Line of Control (LOC) at Kargil later that year. Indians were infuriated when it was revealed that General Pervez Musharraf (as army chief) was planning the Kargil incursion even as the Lahore Summit was in progress.

A second summit was held on July 14–16, 2001, in the Indian city of Agra between Vajpayee and General/President Musharraf—who had displaced Sharif. Agra was a spectacular failure, with each side accusing the other of bad faith. It was also South Asia's first televised summit and had a negative impact on public opinion in both

countries. Pakistanis concluded that President Musharraf acquitted himself well on enemy territory, while the Indian impression was that he was an arrogant huckster who upstaged Vajpayee. In truth, neither side had prepared well for the meeting and there were political and bureaucratic elements on both sides who were pleased that it failed.

As for outside powers, China was playing its diplomatic cards very carefully, while the United States actively sought an expanded relationship with India. Beijing did nothing to damage its good relationship with Pakistan, but it was alarmed by Islamabad's support for Afghanistan's radical Taliban regime. The Taliban allowed Afghanistan to be used for the training of radical Chinese Muslims, especially minority Uighurs.⁴ The Chinese pursued a policy that would enable them to pressure Afghanistan to cease this support, and on the very day of the World Trade Center/Pentagon attacks Beijing signed an aid agreement with the Taliban.

The Bush administration built upon the Clinton administration's "discovery of India" and set out to create a comprehensive and positive relationship with New Delhi. It valued India's expanding political and economic power and its democratic political order. Strategically, New Delhi was also viewed as a potential counterweight to a rising China. Like its predecessor, the Bush administration recognized the potential political importance of Indian-Americans, and sought to harmonize its foreign policy goals in South Asia with the desires of this very affluent community. The Bush administration accelerated the process of normalization by shifting America's non-proliferation policy away from preventing India (and Pakistan) from acquiring nuclear weapons, to one of encouraging them to be more responsible nuclear weapons powers. South Asia was not considered an area of imminent crisis—but the events of September 11 were soon to alter the circumstances.

Consequences for South Asia

Shortly after the attacks of 9/11 official Washington uncovered the link between the hijackers and South Asia. The hijackers all had ties to Al Qaeda, and the headquarters of this foundation-like organization, with its separate fundraising and operational wings and a grant-making arm, was situated in Afghanistan, with cells in dozens of countries around

the world. Afghanistan's Taliban regime allowed Al Qaeda to operate freely there, but the Taliban were in turn dependent upon Al Qaeda. Complicating matters, the Taliban regime was also backed by countries that were nominally friendly to the United States, notably Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Pakistan.

Washington was confronted with a cascading series of tasks in South Asia, each generating more and more demands on U.S. military and diplomatic resources. Any attempt to strike back at Al Qaeda would mean a confrontation with the Taliban, and any action in Afghanistan would require Pakistan's assistance. In turn, this would entangle the United States in the complex India-Pakistan dispute.

Nearly a year after the terrorist attacks, some of the original U.S. objectives in South Asia have been achieved, notably the total destruction of the Taliban, the eviction of Al Qaeda from its Afghan stronghold, and the beginning of a new era for the Afghan people. However, September 11 also brought to the surface some of the fundamental contradictions in Pakistani policy, exacerbated a major India-Pakistan crisis (discussed below in a separate section), and caused a number of other powers to reassess their South Asia policies.

Afghanistan: Total War in a Small Place

The Taliban government not only tolerated Al Qaeda, it was militarily and financially dependent upon it. There may be cases of "state-sponsored terrorism," but Afghanistan was an example of a terrorist-sponsored state since Al Qaeda provided the Taliban with armed units, financial assistance, and a link to the outside world. After demanding that the Taliban turn over its "guest" terrorists and being rejected, the Bush administration launched a concerted war, Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), against Al Qaeda and the Taliban regime on October 7.

OEF had two urgent aims. The first was a total war against Al Qaeda, obliterating it as an organization and killing, capturing, and punishing the top leadership and as many of its cadres as could be located. The Bush administration invoked the language of total

war against what was viewed as an implacable and unscrupulous enemy. The war against Al Qaeda escalated to a war against “international terrorism.” This was originally defined as terrorism directed against the United States, but ultimately included any group that America identified as “terrorist.” There is still no precise definition of terrorism, but it has been long understood to include unprovoked attacks on unarmed and innocent civilians. This has led India, Israel, and Russia to press the United States even harder for support to counter terrorist operations—however defined—directed against them, and one consequence has been that the United States modified its “war on terrorism” to include groups other than Al Qaeda that had also been active in Kashmir.

This phase of the war went better than most military experts predicted. Although there are no reliable casualty figures (or even good estimates of Al Qaeda’s numbers), the organization is now reduced to guerilla-scale operations in Afghanistan.⁵ OEF was extended to Pakistan’s Federal Administered Tribal Area (FATA) in April 2002.⁶ These operations generated considerable information about Al Qaeda’s global networks, yet only a few of the top leaders have been captured or killed and the organization may still mount large scale terrorist attacks. Several terrorist attacks in Pakistan, including the bombing of a church in Islamabad, a suicide car bomb that killed over a dozen French technicians in Karachi, the murder of U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl, and an attack on the American Consulate in Karachi show signs of Al Qaeda involvement, although no organization has claimed responsibility for them.

One factor that may abbreviate the U.S. commitment to Afghanistan is the prospect of significant military action against Saddam Hussein’s regime in Iraq, and informed observers have urged Washington to first complete the task in Afghanistan.⁷ Without a strong foreign presence, either in the form of U.S. units or the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), or a cohesive Afghan army, there is a risk that Afghanistan’s neighbors may again seek allies and friends among the warlords. This outcome is made more likely by the active Iranian and Indian efforts in Afghanistan, the latter exploiting its strong ties to the dominant Tajik element in the Afghan army.⁸ Pakistan regards such influence as threatening to its own interests in Afghanistan, fearing that India will provoke the Pushtuns to revive claims for a greater “Pakhtunistan,” which

would include parts of Pakistan. The major concern that all parties will face, perhaps by mid-2003, is the question of what America will do if Afghanistan should fall once again into civil war while the United States is preoccupied elsewhere.

Pakistan: A New Alliance with the United States

September 11 has produced closer ties between the United States and Pakistan. It has also revealed and intensified the fissures within Pakistani society, placing those ties at risk. Recognizing that Islamabad's cooperation would be vital to any operation in Afghanistan, the Bush administration turned to Pakistan within a day of the attacks, wielding sticks but also offering carrots. Washington made seven demands of Islamabad, and Pakistan's President General Pervez Musharraf agreed at once to the U.S. ultimatum. These demands included (1) stopping Al Qaeda operatives at the Pakistan border and ending all logistic support for Osama bin Laden; (2) providing blanket overflight and landing rights to the United States; (3) access to Pakistani naval and air bases and along the border; (4) immediate intelligence and immigration information; (5) condemnation of the September 11 attacks and the curbing of "all domestic expressions of support for terrorism against [the United States], its friends or allies"; (6) termination of fuel shipments to the Taliban and the flow of Pakistani volunteers going to join the Taliban in Afghanistan; and (7) breaking diplomatic relations with Afghanistan and providing assistance to the United States in bringing the Taliban and Al Qaeda down if the evidence strongly implicated Al Qaeda and the Taliban continued to harbor it and bin Laden.⁹

President Musharraf had no choice but to accede to the American demands. Almost bankrupt, Pakistan was vulnerable to economic pressure; it was also diplomatically isolated because of its support for the Taliban and its toleration of radical Islamic movements on its own territory.

The newly expanded Indian-U.S. relationship subsequently had little direct impact on American operations in Afghanistan, but it provided Washington with political leverage, as it made credible the implied threat that, if Pakistan did not cooperate with the United States, the latter might side with India on Kashmir and other issues.

Besides hosting over 2,000 members of the international press corps and 3,000 Americans on temporary duty, Pakistan provided significant assistance to the war effort. Musharraf retired or transferred some of the senior officers associated with Pakistan's support for the Taliban; several air bases were made available to the United States, and part of the Karachi airport became a logistical staging ground. Pakistan allowed its airspace to be used by U.S. and allied aircraft for OEF operations in Afghanistan, and some U.S. forces joined with Pakistani troops to carry out operations within Pakistan itself. Finally, Islamabad has shared intelligence with the United States and shows signs of intensifying its drive against domestic radicals, some of whom have Al Qaeda ties.

In return for Pakistan's cooperation, Washington lifted nuclear sanctions, suspended the "democracy" sanctions that had been in place since the 1999 coup, and put together a package of nearly \$1 billion in debt relief.¹⁰ Pakistan has also received at least one payment of \$100 million for the use of its air bases, but Washington refused to sell Pakistan any new weapons.

The United States and Pakistan are now uneasy partners in a marriage of strategic convenience. Pakistan expressed the hope that Washington would become more active on the Kashmir dispute, but the United States was in no mood to endanger its new relationship with New Delhi. Pakistan also asked for military equipment and sought economic help in the form of increased textile quotas (textiles are Pakistan's most important export), but the Bush administration was unable to persuade Congress, and the feeling persists among Pakistanis that Washington wants to keep their country on a short tether, just as the feeling persists in Washington that Pakistan remains unhealthily fixated on Kashmir. However, the subsequent India-Pakistan crisis did lead Washington to pledge that it would pursue the Kashmir problem in exchange for President Musharraf's pledge to cease Pakistan's support for cross-border "militants."

Pakistan's Islamic Dimension

A quarter of the world's Muslims live in South Asia. India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan each have over 130 million Muslims, and Pakistan was the only modern state founded explicitly as a homeland for Muslims. However, South Asian Islam is notable for its diversity and variety. The attacks of September 11 and the subsequent fighting in Afghanistan were seen by the region's Muslims through very different lenses.

Operation Enduring Freedom was accepted in Bangladesh and by Muslims in India even if it was not admired. Aside from a few fringe groups that supported the Taliban, most of the nearly 300 million Muslims in these countries saw the U.S. response as justified, if harsh. There were no Indians or Bangladeshis on the aircraft that slammed into the Pentagon and World Trade Center buildings. The most important "civilizational faultline" in South Asia does not fall between the predominately Muslim states (Pakistan and Bangladesh) and predominately non-Muslim ones (India, Sri Lanka, Nepal), but within the overwhelmingly Islamic Pakistan.

While most Pakistanis practice a moderate form of Islam, the civilizational faultline that really counts runs through the middle of Pakistan. A violent, aggressive Islam has taken root in South Punjab, parts of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), and in some urban areas, including the metropolis, Karachi. In these regions organized gangs, usually based on one or another Shi'a or Sunni sect, terrorize the population and wage war with each other and against the Pakistan government. They are often affiliated with a sympathetic *madrassa*, which acts as a recruiting ground for pro-Taliban fighters. Ideologically-linked *madrassas* form a circuit that extends through different parts of Pakistan and terror and death squads travel through the countryside almost at will. When OEF began, these *madrassas* turned out volunteers to fight the Americans, and thousands of young Pakistanis were captured or killed in Afghanistan.

Al Qaeda and the Taliban have a strong presence in Pakistan, especially in the Northwest Frontier Province and parts of Punjab. While there were no Pakistanis among the hijackers, several of them were trained in Pakistan or had passed through Pakistan on their way to the frontlines of Afghanistan or Kashmir, and one senior Al Qaeda leader was captured in a joint operation in the Punjab city of Faisalabad. This means that

Pakistan is the “sea” in which Islamic radicals swim, but it does not necessarily mean that Pakistan is becoming a radical Islamic state.

Pakistan’s Islamic parties and movements are very diverse. Some seek to foment a global Islamic revolution, others would be content to introduce more Muslim or Islamic elements into Pakistan itself. The former would use Pakistan as a base camp for global revolution. They are bitterly angry at the military and other members of the Pakistani establishment and they constitute the greatest risk to foreigners living in Pakistan, as well as to the Pakistani leadership (the brother of Pakistan’s interior minister was assassinated by one such group in December 2001). They are also strongly anti-American, not only because of Washington’s support for Israel and the present Saudi regime, but because of America’s support for moderate Pakistani governments over the years. Finally, most of these groups are fervent Sunnis and anti-Shi’a. Although small in numbers, these radical groups have been willing to employ deadly force within Pakistan against liberals, “secularists,” Shi’as, and now foreigners. Although they represent a threat to public order and are capable of assassination and murder, they do not have wide political support.

The Muslim groups and parties located toward the center of Pakistan’s political spectrum do have more support, but even then it does not compare with the “normal” political parties, the Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League (PML). The most centrist Islamic party, the Jama’at-i-Islami, is also the largest and best-organized, although it also has done poorly at the polls. Its ideology has spread widely in the army, the bureaucracy, and in some of the universities, especially in Punjab. The Jama’at has forced the two major parties to become more “Islamic” than they might have been otherwise.

The Jama’at propagates the view that Pakistan should be a modern, but Islamic, state, and, by the party’s participation in electoral politics, it acknowledges the legitimacy of western-derived institutions such as parliament. The Jama’at was a proponent of nuclearization, but it has also been a critic of the military, especially after the army withdrew its covert support for the party. The Jama’at regards Musharraf as particularly threatening because of his “secular” tendencies. While bitterly critical of India, the

Jama'at's leadership craves acceptance in the international community and thus presents a moderate face to the world. The Jama'at also sees itself as an advocate of modernity, desiring Pakistan to be a marriage of Islam and technology.

Ethnic, linguistic, and economic issues, not religious ones, have dominated Pakistani politics. The power of the religious parties derived from the patronage of the state; from Zia's time onward the religious parties were used to balance the secular (and more influential) PML and PPP. The religious parties have never polled more than 2 to 3 percent in a national election, and some now question whether the parties' street power can threaten any military regime or democratically elected government or whether they will ever have the votes to win a free election.¹¹ The World Trade Center attacks did not strengthen radical Islam in Pakistan—or anywhere else in South Asia—but they did illuminate the deep fissures that exist between moderate and radical Muslims in these societies.

Pulling Up the Roots of Terrorism and Reforming Pakistan

Pakistan's size (it will soon become the world's fifth most populous state), ties to many Arab and other Islamic states, nuclear capabilities, and critical location make its survival important to many powers. Yet its weakened administrative structures, especially an ineffective system of revenue collection and a corrupt and timid judiciary, will continue to cripple it. Moreover, the fundamental fear of India and the obsession with Kashmir will continue to constrain Pakistan's ability to reform.

Pakistan has many possible futures, some of them unpleasant and dangerous. It could split up into its constituent ethnic/linguistic units or civil war might break out; more likely would be the emergence of an autocracy, perhaps inspired by Islamic precepts. In each of these cases, Pakistan is likely to produce many more, not fewer, Islamic extremists and terrorists, and its nuclear weapons program is likely to accelerate, not slow down. A failing Pakistan could spew out terrorists and fissile material, or even whole

nuclear weapons, in many directions and would be a matter of grave concern to its powerful neighbors, especially Iran, China, and India.

When he came to power in 1999, General Musharraf indicated that he sought to turn Pakistan into a moderate, liberal, Muslim state along the lines envisioned by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's most important founding father. This plan and Pakistan's opposition to terrorism were forcefully restated in a dramatic speech delivered in Urdu over Pakistan television on January 12, 2002.¹² Musharraf proclaimed that no internal extremism would be tolerated and no safe-havens for terrorists operating across Pakistan's borders would be provided. He stated that Pakistan itself had been a victim of terrorism (referring both to sectarian violence, but perhaps alluding to various Indian actions), and rejected his military predecessor's support for Islamic militants. A joke made the rounds in Pakistan after the speech that if the pious, Islamic Zia *died* in 1988 he was finally *buried* in 2002.

Islamabad's support for the Taliban and the Kashmiri jihad had important domestic political consequences for Pakistan. Most of these Islamists had a tie to Pakistan's security establishment. In fact, Pakistan's employment of militants and religious extremists dates back to operations in East Pakistan, when the army used militant Islamic groups to intimidate dissident Bengalis. The victims included intellectuals and educators, many of whom were murdered. The alliance between the army and violent militants was strengthened by Zia and his successors who gave the Interservices Intelligence Directorate (ISI) an overt role in domestic politics. Various militant Pakistani outfits were used to intimidate Pakistani political parties. The Afghan and Kashmir operations strengthened domestic Islamic radicals, who were visibly and publicly defiant of Islamabad even after the military coup in 1999—perhaps because many of them felt they still had official support.¹³

There was a deeper problem with Pakistan as well. It had once been a moderate Islamic state, and under Ayub Khan in the 1950s and 1960s even military rule was applied with a light touch. It was verging on middle-income status in the 1960s and East Asian experts were encouraged to study Pakistan's model developmental programs. But

by the late 1990s Pakistan's very identity was deeply contested. One of the first states to be created on the basis of a shared religious identity, a "homeland" for Indian Muslims, Pakistan had strayed far from the vision of the *Quaid-i-Azam* (the Father of Pakistan), Mohammed Ali Jinnah.¹⁴ Jinnah had envisioned a secular, democratic state, tolerant of its own religious minorities (Hindu or Christian) and of different Islamic sects. (Pakistan has a 12 percent minority Shi'a community, plus other sects such as the Ahmediyyas.) However, it has been very difficult to translate this vision into contemporary political idioms; while lip-service was paid to Jinnah, in practice Pakistan was becoming an increasingly backward-looking and bigoted state.¹⁵

After Musharraf's January 12 speech, there was a series of highly publicized murders of foreigners, continuing sectarian violence in Pakistan, and additional evidence that Al Qaeda and the Taliban have made Pakistan their new home base. Despite his public pledges, Musharraf is either unwilling, or unable, to crack down on Pakistan's home-grown Islamic radicals. The difference between "unable" and "unwilling" is the substance of a major debate that is raging in India, the United States, and Pakistan itself.

Some would argue that this shows how little control the government has over radicals and that Musharraf needs to be supported, even strengthened, as he attempts to rid Pakistan of these elements. Those who hold this position, including many senior U.S. officials with extensive contact with Musharraf and the Pakistani government, note that Musharraf and the army have reversed their Afghanistan policy and that with additional inducements—and perhaps additional pressures—the United States can convince them to do what is in Pakistan's own interest.

On the other hand, there are experts, especially in India, but also in the United States, who would frame the problem differently. They assert that Musharraf is *both* unable and unwilling to abandon the Islamic radicals, because they have penetrated into his own army and intelligence services as well as the deeper crevices of Pakistani society.¹⁶ They point to the mushroom growth of the *madrassas*,¹⁷ the open display of arms, and the defiance of the government and conclude that Pakistan's problems are too

deeply rooted for even a well-intentioned reformist general to tackle—and many doubt whether Musharraf is well-intentioned.

Pakistanis have themselves embarked upon a major debate about their state's support for Islamic militants, including those operating in Kashmir. This debate has expanded to include the future of Pakistan's entire foreign policy and the very identity of the Pakistani state. The supporters of Islamic militancy argue that Pakistan must abandon its dependency upon the United States and support the Islamists against India, ultimately forcing India to come to the bargaining table or even triggering a wider revolution in India itself.¹⁸ This view, which parallels that of Hamas and Hezbollah and other radical groups attacking Israel, is not widely supported, but it is held by those in influential positions in Pakistan's security establishment and it dominates the more Islamist and militant political parties.

Yet, the mainstream of Pakistan's establishment, which supported this policy for at least a decade or more, now has second thoughts and more accommodating strategies are being widely discussed. For the first time since 1990 Pakistani intellectuals are speaking out on the Kashmir problem, many of them suggesting publicly what has been known privately for well over a decade—that Pakistan cannot sustain this kind of operation in the face of Indian resistance, international opposition, and resentment among the Kashmiri Muslims themselves, who regard their “liberators” as no less ruthless than the Indian security forces.¹⁹

Musharraf has come out publicly in favor of the more moderate position, but he continues to walk a narrow line between the militants and the moderates. Yet Musharraf lacks charisma, popular support, and an efficient civilian administrative structure. His power base is in the army, and he did appoint all of the powerful corps commanders to their present positions. However, a series of large-scale public protests could make him dispensable as far as his colleagues are concerned, and there is always the possibility that a cabal of officers might depose him, and the risk of assassination remains very high.²⁰ Musharraf's “victory,” in a stage-managed referendum that asked the Pakistani people to support him in the presidency for another five years, badly eroded his legitimacy, and

revealed a political tin ear. Musharraf's most important asset is that at the moment there is no other military or political figure who can plausibly challenge him, nor does it seem likely that he will be abandoned by his powerful foreign supporters including the United States, Saudi Arabia, and China.

The full restoration of democratic government and efficient rebuilding of the Pakistani state is a long and difficult journey. Although most members of the Pakistani elite are formally committed to the restoration of democracy, they are also uncomfortable with the idea of mass democratic politics. Politics is still the avocation of the rich and influential, seen more as a civic obligation than a career. In terms of democratization, Pakistan is ahead of many Arab states, but behind the thoroughly politicized and democratized India, Sri Lanka, and even Bangladesh. Pakistan is not likely to see a truly democratic state emerge until some kind of accord is brokered between the military and the politicians. It is a state that has an army that cannot govern but that will not allow civilians to rule. All failing states have weak armies; Pakistan's army is strong enough to prevent state failure, but it is not imaginative enough to impose the changes that might transform the state.²¹ Pakistan's future remains uncertain, but there is no doubt that it has a core of able, trained officials and an elite that could transform the country. Transformation will require international support, the abandonment of quixotic foreign policy goals, and India's tolerance.

In summary, there is no certainty that Pakistan will become a normal state, but there is a high degree of certainty that if it fails to do so then Pakistan will have strained relations with most of its neighbors, and potentially with states further afield, especially if it becomes a base for Islamic terrorism on a wider scale.

Angry India

The events of September 2001 led to closer ties between India and the United States. They seemed to validate India's views regarding the threat of Islamic terrorism and

increased India's sense of righteousness. They also enhanced India's willingness to threaten Pakistan with the use of force.

India had long argued that Pakistan was a particularly dangerous state, supporting Muslim terrorism in India and Afghanistan, and New Delhi was frustrated by Washington's seeming apathy toward the issue. The attacks of September 11 seemed to vindicate India's position that terrorism, rather than nuclear proliferation or Kashmir, was the major strategic issue in South Asia. This argument was generally accepted, but it was also recognized that India's policies in Kashmir were partially responsible for the rise of separatist feelings. After the attacks, New Delhi immediately found a more attentive audience in Washington and other western states as far as terrorism-related matters were concerned. Indians were, however, taken aback by the simultaneous revival of close U.S.-Pakistani ties following September 11.

To India's chagrin, Pakistan was transformed overnight from a "failing state" to a "frontline" state, and became the recipient of western (especially American) attention, aid, and praise. The United States tried to balance its interests: while there were loans to Islamabad to rescue it from economic catastrophe and some sanctions were lifted, Washington tried to accommodate India by pressing Islamabad to cease its support for its homegrown Islamic radicals and for cross-LOC operations in Kashmir. The Bush administration also assured Indian leaders that the forces based in Pakistan and military and economic assistance provided to Pakistan were designed to assist the war against terrorism, and were not directed against New Delhi.

Despite the events of September 11, Washington also wanted to preserve President Bush's "one big idea" concerning South Asia. This idea was that India was the regional power that counted, and that there was an opportunity for long-term U.S.-Indian strategic, economic, and political cooperation between two states that were once characterized as estranged democracies.²² Thus, Indian-American military cooperation increased dramatically, much of it designed to improve India's counter-terrorist capabilities.

The two countries also revived earlier plans for defense cooperation. Indian forces are expected to train alongside American units in Alaska, the first significant new arms sales to India in over a decade were announced in April 2002, and American and Indian special forces engaged in joint training in Agra. This was an especially symbolic choice because Agra is the location of the Taj Mahal and the site of the failed India-Pakistan summit.²³

As for Kashmir, the most visible issue dividing India and Pakistan, the Bush administration at first demonstrated that its pre-September 11 pro-India policy was intact by steadfastly refusing to discuss “mediation” between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. Indeed, two days after President Bush met President Pervez Musharraf, the United States also ruled out “facilitation”—a lesser form of engagement.²⁴ This policy was to change only two months later.

The Operational Code of the Indian Strategic Elite

The events of September 2001 strengthened the core beliefs of the Indian strategic elite. These include assumptions about India’s special quality as a state, its place in the world, and the policies of other important states.²⁵

Indians of all political stripes, including many leading Muslims, believe that India is a distinct civilizational entity. Like China, India embodies a distinct and great civilization in a single state. The Indian strategic community accepts the notion of “civilizational” competition, and Samuel Huntington’s arguments are well-known and appreciated in New Delhi. This state-civilization is viewed as having been culturally, politically, and militarily influential throughout the known world. The means by which it spread its influence were morally sound, since India’s civilization and culture were spread by example, not the sword. Other great civilizations, including Europe, Islam, and China, owe much to India for its unique contributions to their cultural, philosophical, and moral growth. This suggests, to India’s leaders, that there is a historic obligation or duty to restore Indian influence in Asia and the world and that states opposing India’s

restoration to the front ranks are either ignorant, malign, or jealous of India's civilizational greatness.

September 11 strengthened this belief in India's civilizational distinctiveness in two ways. First Indian civilization is explicitly compared with Islam and the conclusion is that India is both enduring and moderate. The Indian elite believes that "Indian-ness" will persist and prevail. There are Indians who assert a more militant Hindu-based civilizational identity, and those (such as the Nehruvians), who praise India's secular qualities (made possible, many would argue, by the tolerance built into polytheistic Hinduism), but both groups agree that the pluralist, complex Indian civilizational core is well-suited to the modern world, certainly more so than militant Islam, and perhaps more so than the materialist West. The events of September 11 and their aftermath strengthened the belief in India's civilizational distinctiveness. The September attacks seemed to show that India was not the only civilization under attack by radical Islam and that the West and India must form a defensive coalition.

As for method, the Indian strategic elite believes that while force should not be the *first* policy option, it is the *ultimate* option: India did lose its historically preeminent position because it was reluctant to defend itself against the invasions of Muslim and European adventurers. The impact of September 11 was to strengthen the argument that India has achieved moral superiority by its restraint, so that when it does eventually use force against its enemies—especially Pakistan—it will be even more in the "right." Like water building up behind a dam, the longer India waits to retaliate against its enemies, the greater the flood will be, but it will be a morally just flood. Thus, the inhibitions against using force now seem to be lower than ever before. The examples of the United States, which acted swiftly in Afghanistan in response to the attacks, and of Israel, which responded to Palestinian terrorist attacks, are cited as proper models for a vigorous and proud India to emulate. When the 2002 crisis between India and Pakistan ended, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee exulted that India had won a "victory," but without a battle.

India's Relations with Pakistan, China, and the United States

The attacks of September 11 and the subsequent terrorist acts in India have temporarily tilted the balance between India's doves and hawks in terms of how they view India's relations with Pakistan, China, and the United States. Indian moderates, who advocated accommodation with Pakistan and China, are now hard to find. Few Indians publicly argue for an understanding with Pakistan, dialogue, the benefits of trade, or cultural exchanges. The attacks in Kashmir and New Delhi brought into public discourse a view that was once only uttered privately: Pakistan is an accident of history, and must be forced to its knees or destroyed. This is not yet the dominant view, but its growth over the past few years is striking, stimulated in part by intense television coverage of the Kargil war, the failed Agra summit, and the 2002 crisis.

India's highly vocal and politically ascendant hawks fall into three categories: those who would lure Pakistan into a military confrontation, leading to a final triumph over the Pakistan army (the aborted 1987 Brasstacks model²⁶); those who believe that Pakistan merely needs a push in the form of increased support for separatist forces in the Sind, NWFP, and Baluchistan, which would lead to a civil war and the breakup of Pakistan (the 1971 model); and those who believe that India's greater economic potential will enable it to naturally dominate Pakistan and persuade its outside supporters that Pakistan is a failed state (the Soviet model). If India were to achieve a seven percent or even a five percent growth rate—instead of the three percent it had managed over the past decades—then Delhi could play a significant role in Asia *and* cope with the residual threat from Pakistan; its advanced technologies would put it in a different league, its relative domestic order would make it more stable than Pakistan, and in any case Islamabad was (before September 11) quickly losing whatever friends it had. It was thought that India's economic growth would leave Pakistan behind, forcing it to recognize India's dominance. This view proved overly optimistic as it underestimated the difficulty of turning economic potential into actual growth and it ignored the assets available to even a struggling Pakistan.

While India did double its GDP from the time major economic reforms were initiated (in 1992), growing an average of six percent every year, economic growth is now slipping, and India will do well to achieve four percent in 2002. This weak performance is not the result of some cyclical movement; analysts fear that India faces the prospect of “permanently sluggish economic growth” unless radical measures are taken to restructure the economy.²⁷ India also lacks a strategic economic asset—it is not a source of energy, it produces no vital raw materials, and it lacks a manufacturing capacity of consequence. The one bright spot, its niche role in the software industry, is just that—a niche, not a dominant presence.²⁸

These three positions have in common two ideas: that Pakistan is a fundamental threat to India and that Islamabad is inherently vulnerable. They differ only in their estimate of the risk and cost of a direct Indian military initiative, but the events of September 11 and December 13, (the date of the attack on the Indian parliament) gave the military option new life, in part because the long-range strategy of economic domination seems to be less realistic.

China raises the most disagreement among Indian strategists. Some still argue that accommodation with China is possible, but the realists who dominate the current BJP-led coalition argue that India and China will inevitably clash since China is inherently expansionist, it is still a colonial power in Tibet and Xinjiang, and it fears the example of Indian democracy and the expansion of Indian-U.S. strategic ties, especially in the Indian Ocean region. The attacks of September did nothing to change these views dramatically, but Indians have noted that it was China that urged Pakistan to join the war on terrorism and restrain its own Islamic extremists. There is clearly a convergence of interests between India and China in this regard, as there is between India and the United States.

The United States is seen by the core “realist” group of Indian strategists as a once-misguided state that now recognizes (albeit not fully) India’s rightful role in South Asia, and its potential as a partner out-of-region. However, Indian leaders see Washington as an immature power that still does not know its own interests and cannot be relied upon on matters of vital importance to New Delhi. A strategy of appearing to

accommodate Washington's *idée fixe* of the week is acceptable, as long as it does not compromise long-standing Indian principles and enduring interests.

India's Domestic Factor

Events following the attacks of September 11, including developments within India, demonstrated that while India seeks recognition as a rising or emerging state, its political elite remains preoccupied with domestic politics. The dominant ruling party, the BJP, governs by consent of a shaky and heterogeneous coalition, and coalition partners regularly extract concessions from the BJP which weakens its own core support of hardline Hindus. Further, Indian politics remains violent and chaotic, and the violence is not confined to the poorest and most backward states. It was Gujarat, one of India's richest states, that saw in February-April 2002 the mass murder of over a thousand Muslims and the transformation of over 100,000 into domestic refugees.²⁹ The BJP is also divided internally between modernizers and those who would favor a closed, autarkic economy, and it has found it difficult to undertake systematic economic reform at a pace that would significantly change India's role as the dominant power in a problematic region. Even the new Indian-American relationship is held hostage to this weak economic performance, and while the United States has officially ignored the mass killings in Gujarat, additional slaughters are likely to bring wider international condemnation, making it even more difficult for New Delhi to allow outside powers to play a diplomatically helpful role in Kashmir.

While September 11 increased Indian distrust—even hatred—of Pakistan, made China seem less of a threat and more of an ordinary competitor, and led to expanded Indian-American cooperation on a range of issues, these attitudinal shifts may be temporary. Only a few years ago India and Pakistan were practicing highly-praised summitry, there was deep distrust of China, and the United States was seen as implacably hostile to a rising India. Given the very low levels of trust (and understanding) between the major players in South Asia, the wheel of opinion could turn again quickly, and as is noted below, change might come via domestic developments within India or Pakistan.

The Compound Crisis of 2002

History may yet judge that the most important event to occur in South Asia in 2001–02 was not the overthrow of the unsavory Taliban regime by U.S. and allied forces, but the extended crisis between India and Pakistan. This prolonged stand-off threatened to escalate into a major, and possibly nuclear war, but its denouement opens a new opportunity for India to establish a normal relationship with Pakistan. If this is opportunity is lost, then crisis will become the normal state of affairs in South Asia.

Regional Crises

The crisis of 2001–02 was the latest in a series that began in 1987. The first was triggered by the Indian military exercise code named Brasstacks. This exercise involved provocative Indian military deployments in the Rajasthan-Sind area. Pakistan responded in kind, the Indians paused, and the crisis evaporated. It was only later that the international community learned how close the two countries had come to war. This conflict was the last moment that the two countries might have waged a purely conventional war; some time between that 1987 and 1990 both countries acquired simple nuclear weapons.

The second crisis occurred three years later, lasting from January to May of 1990. This crisis was the product of domestic political instability in both countries, the eruption of separatist violence in Kashmir, and serious misjudgments in Islamabad and new Delhi.³⁰ The 1990 crisis was intensified by the belief that India and Pakistan each had a few nuclear weapons. Subsequent press reports alleged (incorrectly) that Pakistani nuclear weapons were moved in the middle of the crisis, making the 1990 crisis a more threatening event in public perception than it really was.

Although crisis alarms were sounded in 1992 and 1993, both turned out to be false. In May 1998 both India and Pakistan tested a variety of nuclear weapons, declaring themselves to be full-fledged nuclear weapons states. They have also engaged in

competitive and well-publicized missile-testing programs but there have been no more nuclear tests.

Only 16 months after the tests (and after the apparently successful Lahore summit) India and Pakistan fought a limited war in the Kargil region of Kashmir. This exercise in limited war, or as it is often called, “low-intensity conflict,” was instigated by the Pakistan army when it infiltrated guerillas and Pakistan army regular forces across the contested Line of Control (LOC), threatening India’s position in the Siachin Glacier region, as well as the strategically vital town of Leh to the southwest.³¹ Unfamiliar with the response of both a mass democracy and the international community, the four Pakistani generals (including Musharraf) who planned the operation, believed that India could be forced to come to the negotiating table and that a dialogue over Kashmir would ensue. Instead, they precipitated South Asia’s first televised war and generated massive suspicion—even hatred—in India, emotions that were intensified by the failed Agra summit of July 2001.

Several hundred troops were killed at Kargil, and for the first time in 30 years India launched air strikes. These targeted Pakistani forces and irregulars who had infiltrated into Indian-administered Kashmir. India also pulverized Pakistani positions with thousands of artillery shells and the ground, air, and naval forces of both countries were mobilized.

Relations between India and Pakistan had scraped bottom. Both sides were extremely suspicious of the other’s motives, and there was no popular support for détente. Kashmir was the main focal point of the rivalry, but the two states could not even agree on how to talk about it. India insisted that Pakistani support for “terrorism” be stopped before a dialogue began; Pakistan claimed that India’s refusal to talk about Kashmir increased the risk of nuclear war in South Asia. The crisis of 2002 was to transform this debate, perhaps decisively.

Kashmir Redux

Kashmir remains one of the world's most complex disputes. Indians and Pakistanis are divided as to whether their fundamental differences are territorial (e.g., Kashmir), involve authority over people (e.g., Kashmiris, but also India's Muslims), or ideological. The complexity of this dispute gives it some of the qualities of a civil war, with domestic, economic, international, ideological, and military factors all intertwined. There are those on both sides who argue that they will never have a normal relationship until one side or the other gives in completely—whether on the territorial issue, the “people” issue, or the ideological issue—or all three.

India's strategy, as the status quo power, is eventually to settle for a compromise solution, approximately the present LOC with some adjustments. This would leave the prize of Kashmir, the Vale, in Indian hands. New Delhi would continue to maintain a large security presence in the state, while attempting to micromanage Kashmiri politics—or at least those Kashmiris living under its control. Delhi sees time as on its side, and assumes that sooner or later Pakistan will lose interest as the Kashmiris become more closely tied to India. This strategy has not shown results in the last 40 years, but many Indian officials argue that 40 or 50 years is nothing—what counts is that India not show signs of weakness on Kashmir, lest other provinces and regions of the country seek a separate status also, leading to the eventual breakup of India.

Pakistan's approach to Kashmir combines four motives: a desire for revenge; a desire for justice; a desire to keep the larger and more powerful India off balance; and a desire to divert public attention from domestic economic and political problems. The revenge factor flows from India's management of the vivisection of the old Pakistan in 1971. Even Pakistanis who acknowledge that the West had alienated East Pakistanis still regard the Indian intervention as evidence that India does not accept the legitimacy of Pakistan—or would like to reduce Pakistan to a vassal state, turning their country into “West Bangladesh.”

A sense of grievance and injustice also pervades Pakistani attitudes. Most Pakistanis think that India has flouted all standards of decency in its relations with the smaller and weaker Pakistan, and Kashmir is seen as the most outrageous example of

India's disregard for international principles. The Pakistan army also sees Kashmir as a way of keeping India off balance, and has been merciless in its attempt to disrupt Indian rule there by any means, even at the cost of thousands of Kashmiri lives. It is likely to continue this strategy if only to ensure that Indian forces are bogged down in Kashmir, and unable to confront Pakistan proper across the international border.

Finally, successive Pakistani governments have used the Kashmir issue to generate national unity and patriotism. This is a "cause" that seemingly unites all Pakistanis, according to the government, and the government-sponsored academic and think-tank community, and the Pakistani "establishment" in general. However, public opinion polls support the impression that Pakistani attitudes on Kashmir fluctuate greatly. Pakistanis in Sind, Karachi, and Baluchistan care much less about Kashmir than those living in the Punjab and Islamabad, and, in hard economic times, the salience of the issue slips even further.

Kashmir is the most important single conflict in the subcontinent, not just because its territory and population are contested, but because larger issues of national identity and regional power balances are embedded in it. "Solving" the Kashmir dispute means addressing these larger concerns, and they cannot be addressed without new thinking on Kashmir and Kashmiris.

Terrorism in Kashmir: Deed and Response

In October 2001 a group of armed militants attacked the Kashmir state assembly in Srinagar, killing 38 people. The chief minister of the state, Farooq Abdullah, called on the Indian government to strike at militant training camps across the LOC and in Pakistan. Subsequently, an attack on the Indian parliament building on December 13, killed 14 people. Parliament was in session, and several senior parliamentarians and government officials narrowly escaped injury. Indians were infuriated and the Indian government, blaming Pakistan, announced a total military mobilization. It also suspended flights to Pakistan, reduced the size of its diplomatic establishment in Pakistan, and threatened the one India-Pakistan agreement that works, the 1960 Indus River Treaty.³²

The December 13 attack heightened the already intense Indian debate over the proper response to terrorist attacks. At one extreme, reflecting the views of some hawks in Vajpayee's cabinet and elements of the military, the Pakistani provocations were described as acts of war and seen as justifying a military response.³³ Indian moderates urged patience and dialogue, but as each attack took place, these voices were silenced, and Indian opinion eventually was overwhelming in favor of some military response against the camps, and many also urged that India attack Pakistan itself, removing what was described as the ultimate cause of terrorism. Indian opinion was inflamed, and the government did everything it could to throw fuel on the fire, as one hawkish statement followed another.

After four months of continuing low-level terrorist attacks and some incidents along the LOC, another atrocity took place on May 14, when 33 army personnel and their families were killed in a suicide/terrorist attack on the Kaluchak army camp in Jammu. This heightened the sense of crisis, as New Delhi put even greater pressure on Washington to force Pakistan to turn over 20 named individuals accused of terrorism and to stop militants from crossing the LOC. New Delhi may have had a third goal, forcing a change in the Pakistani leadership. By mid-May there was widespread speculation that limited military action could break out at any moment.

A High-Risk Response

What was India's strategy, given the inflamed state of public opinion and the reality of terrorism in the heart of New Delhi? Early in the crisis India's strategy of choice was characterized as "coercive diplomacy" by Brajesh Mishra, the national security advisor. Pakistan called it "brinkmanship" and tried to depict India as an irresponsible provocateur. A more neutral term would be compellence—the threat of escalation to compel an adversary to carry out an action. Compellence's twin, deterrence, is the threat to use force to dissuade an adversary from moving. When deterrence works *nothing* happens, when compellence works *something* happens.

India's compellence strategy was aimed more at the United States than Pakistan. Delhi guessed correctly that Pakistan would ignore its demands but it hoped that the United States would take the threats more seriously. From Washington's perspective there were a number of reasons to do so. There was a possibility that the U.S. war on terrorism would be disrupted by an India-Pakistan war, and that conflict in South Asia might even go nuclear, creating a crisis with world-wide implications. Washington was also faced with a demand from a new "natural" ally, a state it viewed as a rising power and a potential balancer of China. Finally, India was taken seriously because it was threatening to do exactly what the United States had accomplished in Afghanistan and what Israel was doing (with American support) in the Middle East.

The Indian government thus successfully reframed the South Asian debate over peace and war. Echoing the American and Israeli responses to terrorism, Indian officials argued that the issue facing the international community in South Asia was no longer "Kashmir" but terrorism. India refused to talk about Kashmir until terrorism ended, exactly the same position held by Israel (and backed by the United States). This strategy effectively neutralized Pakistan's long-standing argument that peace would come to South Asia once India began to negotiate the Kashmir dispute. India ran the risk of being labeled the aggressor because of its open threat of war, but it correctly judged that it had found a way to bring international pressure to bear upon Pakistan.

This was not the first time that India tried compellence. During the Kargil conflict in 1999 it abandoned its earlier assertion that nuclear weapons would deter all war in South Asia, and moved to the position held by Pakistan—that nuclear weapons deter nuclear and large scale war, but provide the opportunity for "limited" war, i.e. war conducted at a sub-nuclear level and with due regard for the risks of escalation. Pakistan has for many years supported what it termed "militants" to compel India to come to the negotiating table and discuss Kashmir; ironically, India arrived at the same strategy, and successfully turned it against Pakistan.

While Indian forces were fully mobilized as early as December 18, they were kept in their field formations for a full six months after the roll-out of the compellence strategy. Even after the crisis appeared to be resolved in mid-June, Indian officials, while

claiming a “victory without war,” again threatened war should Pakistan not comply with India’s demands as transmitted through Washington.

As a strategy, compellence does carry with it some risks and has to be carefully applied to be effective. There is always a danger that the response of the other side may be miscalculated and that it will simply not comply with a demand. In this case India was not pressuring Pakistan directly, but was applying pressure on the United States and other countries, which would, in turn, apply pressure on Islamabad. Pakistan was correctly seen as exquisitely vulnerable to such indirect pressure, in part because its economy was so weak, and in part because it had been implicated deeply by its support of the Taliban and its tolerance of radicals on its own territory. India had placed Musharraf in a corner: if he argued that he did not want to stop the militants then he would be admitting guilt, if he argued that he could not stop them he would be admitting incompetence, inviting his own removal.

There was also the risk that a threat would not have been taken seriously and that India had to do something to retain its credibility. In this case New Delhi kept its military on high alert from mid-December 2001, despite considerable hardship. In fact, the government emphasized the army’s anger and kept up a steady stream of public threats. It also stressed the horrible nature of the attacks: two of them (the attacks on the Kashmir legislature and on the Indian parliament) were on the very parliamentary institutions that were so highly valued in the West—and which Pakistan lacked—and one of them, the attack at Kaluchak, had targeted women and children.

Finally, to be effective in persuading third parties, the demands made by a state engaged in compellence should echo the policies of major powers. India ensured that its demands on Pakistan resembled those of the United States vis à vis states alleged to be supporting terrorism and those of Israel on the Palestinian leadership. Indian diplomacy thus put Washington in a position where it was being asked to support Indian policies that mirrored its own and where failure to support such policies could trigger a major war and undercut Pakistan’s support for the war on terrorism.

Military Calculations: Conventional Forces and The Nuclear Balance

No comprehensive military strategy will work without appropriate and adequate military forces. A rational leadership will initiate the use of force only if it believes that doing so will help achieve its political objectives, that it can manage the response of the other side, and that it is willing to move up an escalation ladder of increasing force.

Throughout the 2002 crisis there were repeated assertions by each side that the military balance was in its favor. From an outside perspective, the “objective” military balance, determined by simply counting numbers, appears to favor India, though not overwhelmingly so. The force ratios are such that neither side can undertake a major conventional attack with a high degree of confidence in its success, and both sides remain vulnerable to low level pin-pricks, all of which have the potential for escalation. Both sides also recognize that a nuclear exchange of any consequence would be devastating to their respective societies, and that “victory” in such a war would be Pyrrhic.

During the 2002 crisis it was frequently asserted that the conventional military balance overwhelmingly favored the much bigger India.³⁴ India did defeat the Pakistan army in East Bengal in 1971, it successfully pushed back most of the Pakistani encroachment in the recent Kargil conflict, and Indian officials and publicists boasted that they would put Pakistan in its place once and for all if it did not cease its meddling in India.

This was not the view from Pakistan’s army headquarters in Rawalpindi. There, senior officers were confident they could deter any large-scale Indian attack and respond effectively to small-scale incursions. As the crisis began to mount they argued that while Indian forces can mass at any place along the international border or the LOC, Pakistan has adequate reserves to meet and stop them. Pakistan also had the option of moving across the Line of Control in Kashmir or the international frontier at several points. It planned to do this in 1987 when it threatened a counter-attack against the then turbulent Punjab. Rightly or not, some Pakistani generals believed that India’s Sikh population was not loyal to Delhi, and some ideologues argued that India’s vast Muslim population (numbering over 130 million) was a potential fifth column, especially after the Gujarat riots. This confidence in their own abilities to defend Pakistan goes hand in hand with the

army's deep distrust of New Delhi, and their assumption that India had a wider goal, the destruction of the state of Pakistan.

Actual ratios of Indian superiority were not overwhelming and the figures do not account for the qualities of leadership, morale, intelligence capabilities, logistics, doctrines, and the role of outside powers in pushing the military outcome in one direction or another.

The actual ratio of critical weapons between India and Pakistan has not changed for many years, and still hovers around 2:1 for aircraft, and 1.5:1 for tanks and armored personnel carriers. India has a substantial naval advantage (5:1), but the Pakistan navy would be fighting a defensive battle, and any Indian attacks on ships bound for Pakistani ports would immediately involve other countries, since Pakistan's own merchant navy is quite small. India, in turn, would have to be wary of Pakistan's small but fairly modern submarine fleet.

Moreover, India's larger army is tied down in internal security duties in a number of places, especially Kashmir. There are substantial shortages of officers at lower ranks, and the quality of equipment of both military establishments is not significantly different. Neither country comes up to a high European standard, although the discipline and infantry-level skills of both far surpasses that of most non-western military establishments.

In 2002 the outcome of a short conventional war between India and Pakistan was hard to predict, but might have been another standoff. The way in which a conventional war might escalate to the nuclear level has been much talked about but is even more unknowable. India probably did not have conventional dominance, but its strategy of compellence succeeded because of the risk that Pakistan would eventually have been forced to move up the escalation ladder to the use of nuclear weapons.

India and Pakistan went overtly nuclear in 1998, and since then they have slowly assembled nuclear doctrines, picking up bits and pieces from strategic and tactical nuclear doctrines of the United States and other major powers. The crisis of 2002 accelerated this process, but their doctrines, like their weapons and missiles, are still new,

and raise questions about the stability of the relationship between these fledgling nuclear powers. Table 1 summarizes recent estimates of current Indian and Pakistani nuclear capabilities, as well as their delivery systems, which for Pakistan are largely missiles and for India are largely aircraft.

Until recently there were no substantiated reports that nuclear weapons had been deployed to operational field commands. Most academic analysts assumed that India and Pakistan had not “mated” their nuclear warheads with delivery systems (aircraft or missiles), and that warheads were stored in an unassembled form.³⁵ These assumptions may be incorrect and, according to a study of the 1999 Kargil crisis by a senior American official, the United States was then convinced that Pakistan had deployed its nuclear weapons.³⁶ There are still no reliable public estimates of the “strategic warning time” of each state—the time it would take them to assemble, mate, and deploy nuclear weapons in the field. This could be a matter of days, hours, or even minutes. In a crisis, uncertainty over the preparedness of the other side (or ignorance of one’s own capabilities) could lead to considerations of a pre-emptive strike, and the revelation that Pakistan had deployed its nuclear force in 1999 may itself influence regional strategic planning. The region’s nuclear status appears to be in flux, and almost all independent observers now agree with the assessment of the Central Intelligence Agency that the possibility of a nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan was higher in Spring 2002, and the chance of war was higher than at any point since 1971.³⁷

Pakistan has a straightforward view of nuclear weapons, derived from the Pakistan army’s contacts with NATO nuclear training teams in the 1950s. Nuclear weapons are *weapons*, to be used according to the threat facing the state. Tactically, they could be used on the battlefield to make up for Pakistan’s deficiency in conventional forces; strategically, they could be used against Indian cities should Pakistan be on the verge of total defeat (or of losing a major part of its territory as it did in 1971 when East Pakistan fell to Indian forces). As its nuclear doctrines are still evolving, Pakistan has not made it clear where the line would be drawn between a tactical and a strategic use of nuclear weapons, and ambiguity is an inherent component of any deterrent strategy. As the crisis progressed, Pakistan was to discover that the world no longer regarded a first-

use doctrine, even at the tactical or battlefield level, as politically acceptable, and India was to skillfully exploit Pakistan's statements that Islamabad would use nuclear weapons if the threat was great enough.

More provocatively, the Pakistan army had very early developed the idea that once the region went nuclear, then Pakistan could be more open in its support of Kashmiri separatists and other Islamists operating against India.³⁸ Pakistan would use its nuclear umbrella as a way of pursuing a low-intensity war against India, and it was assumed that India would not be able to respond at the conventional, let alone the nuclear level.

The Indian view has always been more complex, and derived from civilian thinking about nuclear weapons. The Indian strategic elite was once highly critical of the use of nuclear weapons. Even used as a deterrent, they were scored as immoral weapons of the strong used against the weak, allowing a cheap victory by advanced, western, technological powers over less-developed Asian ones.³⁹ Indians prefer to think of their power as entirely defensive and thus entirely *moral*. There thus arose a discrepancy after India tested and declared itself to be a nuclear weapon state. On the one hand, India had a purely defensive military strategy, developed in the context of conventional weapons, which emphasized territorial denial and defense. On the other hand, India was beginning to manufacture nuclear weapons—the deterrent par excellence.

India developed a novel theory of nuclear weapons that framed its new nuclear status in acceptable moral as well as strategic terms. The result was a theory of nuclear weapons that was dissociated from war.⁴⁰ Developed by K. Subrahmanyam, General K. Sundarji and others, this theory had three components. The first was that India's nuclear weapons were not instruments of war, but were designed entirely to *prevent* nuclear war—and would only be used if India were attacked by nuclear weapons. India's response would be swift and certain; the aggressor would be punished. India's nuclear weapons would remain "moral" in that they would only be used against an aggressor. The second part of this doctrine combines morality with grand strategy: India's nuclear weapons would allow it to pressure the other nuclear weapons states to reduce or

eliminate their nuclear forces, thus paving the way for global disarmament, and, incidentally, increasing India's relative power, since in a nuclear-armed world India would be among the few nuclear "haves." Finally, a "principled" no first use doctrine was announced. All of this culminated in the idea of a "non-military" nuclear weapon, strongly criticized by the nuclear "realists," such as Bharat Karnad, on the one hand, and by the nuclear abolitionists, such as Kanti P. Bajpai, on the other.

Kargil was powerful evidence to Indians that their "draft" nuclear doctrine—the government has not actually declared it to be government policy—was inadequate. India's nuclear weapons did not deter Pakistan from this operation; if anything, becoming a nuclear weapons state made the Indian security establishment overconfident. The recent Indian pronouncement of a "limited war" doctrine was the logical response. Indians believed in extended deterrence, but after Kargil they came to the conclusion that they had an ineffective low-level response and a high-level response that was not credible. Defense by punishment did not work—because India could not attack Pakistani high-value targets for fear of retaliation on their own cities. Now, India is moving to a limited war doctrine, trying to retain a façade of "victory" in a situation where compromise and blurred results are inherent. This new doctrine is disliked by the politicians and nuclear absolutists who argued that nuclear weapons would ensure India's security: it gives the military more of a role in decision-making; moves to actual use of nuclear weapons (and hence puts pressure on deployment decisions); and moves India in the direction of Pakistan's first-use doctrine.

India claims that it is prepared to "win" a war that by definition is kept limited in intensity or scope. However, it takes two sides to limit a war and there is always a temptation for either side to escalate to prevent a defeat. Kargil was typical: India claimed victory although it suffered significant casualties; Pakistan claimed victory because of India's losses. It may be that both sides tacitly understood that this was the way in which the war would end. To some extent, the 2002 crisis also ended this way, with each side claiming to have "won" a victory that was made possible by its powerful military capabilities.

The 2002 crisis led to a further evolution of the nuclear doctrines of both India and Pakistan. The public side of the process began with a widely circulated statement by the chief of Pakistani nuclear planning to a group of Italian scientists—who carried the message immediately to India. The gist of Pakistan’s evolved position is that it had a number of “red lines,” i.e. actions by India that would trigger the use of nuclear weapons. These included an economic or sea blockade, a military threat in the plains, meddling in Pakistani politics, a cut-off of water from the Indus River, and other activities. In return, the Indian chief of the army staff, General S. Padmanaban, held a press conference in which he declared that India’s “no first use” doctrine might be more flexible than previously thought. Not only would India respond to a direct nuclear attack on India and Indian forces by a nuclear counter attack at a time and place (and magnitude) of India’s choice, but New Delhi might use nuclear weapons if they were first used *anywhere* by Pakistan, including Indian military forces on Pakistani soil. In response, Pakistan’s President Musharraf gave an interview to the German magazine, *Der Spiegel*, in which he reiterated Pakistan’s position: if the pressure from India became too great then “as a last resort the [use of] atom bomb is also possible.” A government spokesman, probably Rashid Qureshi, Musharraf’s close confidant and press spokesman, elaborated: “Only if Pakistan were threatened to disappear from the map, the pressure of our people to take this option would be too great. Then it will be valid. In an emergency also, the atom bomb.”⁴¹

In comparison with India, Pakistan’s case was much simpler. Pakistan’s nuclear doctrine was developed entirely by the armed forces (and almost entirely by the army). It was strongly influenced by early NATO doctrine—NATO and U.S. teams used to lecture at Pakistan’s Staff College on this subject. Nuclear weapons are seen as the great equalizer, and Pakistan allows for their first use in the face of a large Indian conventional attack, let alone an Indian nuclear strike.

Since 1990, Pakistan has used the risk of escalation to nuclear war to shield a policy that combines an element of punishing India with an attempt to compel it to offer concessions on the Kashmir issue. The tests of 1998 emboldened Islamabad in this strategy: if pain will force the Indians to change their policies on Kashmir, more pain will

speed up the process. For Pakistan there was no need to change its military doctrine after 1998, it was simply more effective when nuclear weapons came out into the open. There has been a recent softening of the *presentation* of Pakistani policy by Musharraf, but not a fundamental change in the strategy of pursuing a limited undeclared war against India, leaving open the possibility of a limited nuclear war.

Domestic Factors

A final component of the 2002 crisis was domestic political uncertainty in both India and Pakistan just at the moment the crisis reached a peak in March and April. Two developments were particularly important; one was the decline in General Musharraf's popularity and the other was an outbreak of communal violence in Gujarat.

General Pervez Musharraf came to power in 1999 without much popular support, but he was not personally disliked. He thought that a referendum might solidify his position as Pakistan's national leader, and one was held on April 30, 2002. This was widely seen in Pakistan as a crudely manipulated victory. For India, Musharraf's dismal performance raised the possibility of his departure from power, either by a coalition of political opponents, the army, or one of Pakistan's outside supporters, notably the United States. Balancing their desire to remove Musharraf was the Indian concern—shared by many Americans—that his successor might not be a more pliable civilian or even a moderate-liberal general, but one of the hawks that had come to a position of influence after the 1999 coup. India oscillated, therefore, in its personal attacks on Musharraf; privately, Indian leaders expressed their dislike for him, but for the most part they publicly insisted that he would be acceptable if he yielded to Indian demands on cross-border movements.

The other important domestic event took place in India. When New Delhi made its demands of Islamabad in December and placed its forces on alert, most Pakistanis regarded the Indian buildup as motivated by an election scheduled for February 14–21, 2002. The election passed, but Indian pressure showed no sign of softening—and

Pakistanis assumed that New Delhi was merely waiting for an appropriate moment to cut its losses and abandon its provocative armed diplomacy.

Instead, relations between the two countries took a nasty turn, giving a new twist to what Pakistanis still regarded as a synthetic crisis. On February 27 a train carrying radical Hindu fundamentalist volunteers returning from a pilgrimage in Ayodhya was attacked by a Muslim mob and at least 60 passengers, including women and children, were burned alive in a railway carriage in Gujarat. Hindus retaliated, killing at least 2,000 Muslims in the state, ironically once Mahatma Gandhi's home.⁴² Thousands more were relocated to camps, fearful of returning to their homes and businesses. The BJP chief minister in Gujarat refused to resign and explained that the Hindu retaliation was "understandable." The killings continued for the next three months.

For most Pakistanis, Gujarat was further evidence that India was now governed by intolerant Hindus. Further, as many Pakistanis were despairing of their own country, the "idea" of Pakistan as a homeland for India's Muslims was strengthened. On the Indian side government officials accused Pakistan's intelligence agencies of masterminding the original attack on the train.

India's first televised, communal bloodbath interacted with the larger India-Pakistan standoff. Many nationalists, and especially those on the Hindu right, saw an opportunity to teach India's Muslims a "lesson" by attacking Pakistan, arguing that a short, sharp war would cut Pakistan down to size, and that the only language that the Pakistani generals understood was force. Until the passions faded, Pakistanis were even less likely to support any concessions on Kashmir, and Pakistani militants argued that support for the Kashmiris was doubly justified after Gujarat. Despite a few very hawkish speeches, even Vajpayee was under attack from the Hindu right for being "soft" on Pakistan.

Resolving the Crisis

As in 1999, U.S. intervention proved to be decisive in defusing the 2002 India-Pakistan crisis. For years, the Indian government had formally resisted the idea of a more active

U.S. role in the India-Pakistan conflict, while the Pakistan government eagerly sought the intervention of outside powers. These positions were modified when India accepted an U.S. role in pressuring Pakistan in Kargil. New Delhi's rigid insistence on bilateralism in its dealing with Pakistan was again bent to give U.S. diplomacy an opportunity to "deliver" Musharraf in 2002. The BJP-dominated government was supported in this view by virtue of its alliance partners as well as some opposition leaders who openly favored a more active U.S. role.⁴³

Washington's first high level engagement took place in January, with telephone calls from President Bush to the leaders of the two countries, followed by a visit from Secretary of State Colin Powell. However, the crisis persisted through the successive months as India continued to insist that its conditions be met before it would draw down its forces along the border and the LOC. Other countries played complementary roles, but it was renewed U.S. intervention that finally ended the crisis in mid-June.⁴⁴

Washington had assumed that the South Asia crisis might go away. It knew that the infiltrations were continuing, but it did not have direct information about the numbers or the identity of the cross-border infiltrators. Further, it was suddenly preoccupied with events elsewhere, notably the breakdown of Israeli-Palestinian relations and the continuing war against Al Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan, which had spread to Pakistan. There was little inclination to put much pressure on Islamabad when the latter's support was vital to America's own war on terrorism.

Yet India persisted, continuing the military build-up and issuing increasingly threatening statements. By May it was widely believed that a war was inevitable, and much of the public discussion was simply over whether and when it might escalate to a nuclear exchange. Indian officials fanned the war fever by releasing information about India's nuclear command and control arrangements, and there was suddenly a burst of publicity about nuclear protection and the availability of fallout shelters. India's leading news magazine carried a vivid account of the consequences of a nuclear war for Indian cities.

However, when Pakistani officials stated that they would have no recourse but to use nuclear weapons if India were to invade in large numbers, New Delhi quickly

branded Pakistan as playing a dangerous game of nuclear brinkmanship, and reiterated India's position of "no first use." This may have been unpersuasive to experts, since it is an unverifiable policy, but it had the desired effect of alarming a number of governments, and these, led by the United States, began to put more and more pressure on Musharraf to halt cross-border infiltration.

On May 13–15, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Christina Rocca visited New Delhi and Islamabad, but She got nowhere in conversations with regional leaders.⁴⁵ The visit coincided with the Kaluchak attack. In the meantime, the United States issued a warning to its citizens that they leave India (earlier travel warnings were already in effect for Pakistan), and it airlifted non-essential government personnel and dependent family members back to the United States.

This warning was justified in terms of the objective risk to Americans should major war break out between India and Pakistan, but it certainly had other consequences. Investment in India was already in decline. In the three weeks after the May attack on the army camp, investors pulled at least \$48 million out of the Bombay Stock Exchange. The travel advisory was a signal that India might not be such a good place to invest after all. The Indian software industry was hurt by the postponement of visits from foreign clients, and Indian businessmen were shocked, informing both their U.S. counterparts and the Indian government that the travel ban would have grave consequences for India's already staggering economy.

The U.S. decision also demonstrated to the Indian government that, while the United States sympathized with Delhi's concern about terrorism, there would be a tangible price to pay if India were to persist in keeping the region in crisis. Washington seemed to be saying publicly that the new U.S.-Indian relationship could not be counted on to provide absolute support under *all* circumstances, especially in a conflict with a state (Pakistan) that was still an important partner in the U.S. war against terrorism.⁴⁶

When Deputy Secretary Armitage returned to South Asia On July 7-9, he ratcheted up the pressure on both India and Pakistan. In Islamabad he extracted a commitment from General Musharraf to "permanently" stop cross-border infiltration, and in turn he committed the United States to a more proactive role in resolving the Kashmir

dispute. Armitage conveyed Musharraf's commitment to New Delhi and the Indians had, at the time of this writing, expressed their satisfaction with Pakistan's actions on the ground. New Delhi decided to allow Pakistani flights to use Indian airspace, the Indian navy began to move away from the Pakistan coast, and some army and air force units were removed from alert status. India has continued to threaten military action if Pakistan does not adhere to commitments made to U.S. officials.

The seriousness of Pakistan's pledges fell into question right after they were made, as Musharraf gave an interview to *Newsweek* that linked his commitment to a "permanent" halt to infiltration to Indian actions in Kashmir.⁴⁷ A hasty clarification was obtained from Musharraf, and the two countries each celebrated a victory of sorts: Pakistan boasting that its diplomacy had finally convinced the United States to pressure India on the Kashmir conflict, and India boasting that it had, through the United States, extracted a statement from Pakistan that it would cease support for cross-border terrorism.

Consequences

How did the crisis of 2002 affect the power balance in South Asia and the strategic futures of India and Pakistan? While we still have an incomplete picture of the dénouement it is possible that the outcome represented a gain for both India and Pakistan, although it was a victory that came at a steep price.

In Pakistan's case the crisis could represent a turning point in the country's internal debate about its own future—and it could indicate that Pakistan will devote more of its energies to domestic reform and less to developments in neighboring states. If the United States stays engaged and if India begins to accommodate legitimate Kashmiri concerns, then Musharraf can plausibly argue that the concessions he made on cross-border infiltration (he refuses to call the militants terrorists) will work to Pakistan's advantage. However, some political parties already accuse him of selling out the Kashmiris, and his own political future will depend greatly upon U.S. and Indian

willingness to address the Kashmir issue as well as to provide support for Pakistan's fragile economy and weak institutions.

India took a bold step and gambled that its high-stakes coercive diplomacy would pay off. The BJP-led coalition took such a step in 1998 when it tested nuclear weapons; this move resulted in less objective security for India but an enhanced reputation for boldness and a willingness to accept short-term economic losses (sanctions in 1998 and reduced investment in 2002) to achieve a strategic objective. The 2002 crisis will burnish India's reputation for the risky gambit, but, as in 1998, it will have to follow through to avoid looking foolish or mendacious. If there is no movement on Kashmir, another crisis is inevitable and U.S. support might not be so forthcoming. If India does follow through on Kashmir, then the 2002 crisis will be seen as the springboard to a statesmanlike handling of India's "Pakistan problem."

The India-Pakistan rivalry hurts both states, and the prognosis is that unless there is sustained and effective intervention by outside powers, including the United States, crises like 2002 will recur with unpredictable consequences. If this is the region's future then India and Pakistan will have dealt themselves out of a larger Asian strategic community; indeed, they will increasingly be seen as a threat to the peace and stability of the rest of Asia. The interest of outsiders in preventing a war will be balanced by their wariness in getting involved in what is seen as an intractable conflict and India and Pakistan will be even less attractive as potential allies or strategic partners.

American Policy: Old Problems, New Opportunities

From the perspective of official Washington, South Asia was for many years a strategic backwater where no vital U.S. interests were at risk. By 1989 non-proliferation had replaced the Cold War as the issue that framed U.S. regional policy. A broader approach was considered by the Clinton administration in 1996 but it was shouldered aside by the 1998 Indian tests. By 1999, however, Washington had decided that a long-term relationship with India was feasible, a policy enthusiastically endorsed by the new Bush

administration. However, neither administration thought that Kashmir deserved a special initiative, and neither responded strongly to India's complaints about Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. Afghanistan was regarded as a side-show, a failed state with a terrorist problem.

September 11 shifted U.S. priorities, and for most of 2002 U.S. policy has tried to harmonize a complex set of strategic, economic, and political interests with the new post September 11 focus on fighting terrorism. This reorganization has been a difficult process but three major trends have emerged. They include a new interest in the task of state-building in Afghanistan and Pakistan, moving the India-Pakistan relationship from one of recurring crises to one framed by a peace process, and protecting the pre-September 11 relationship with India.

State Building in Afghanistan and Pakistan

In this era of globalization, any place on earth can quickly become relevant to the United States. Friends and trading partners can be found anywhere, but so can terrorists who can also communicate by cell phone, email, and fax and travel to their targets via the airlines of their intended victims.

Previously dismissed as marginal, Afghanistan and Pakistan took center-stage in 2001–02, and their domestic politics suddenly became the stuff of headlines. The Bush administration is reassessing its opposition to nation-building in South Asia, although some of its officials remain more wary than others.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the increasing interdependence of the world will force the administration to address the “nation-building” problem more seriously, as one of the emerging threats to the United States is not from over-militarized and nuclear armed states, but from maldeveloped ones.

Afghanistan and Pakistan are states with acute domestic problems. Their problems are different—Afghanistan lacks the most basic state institutions, especially an army,⁴⁹ whereas Pakistan's state institutions are in gross imbalance and the army is excessively powerful.⁵⁰ There will have to be different remedies for each state, but there

can be no doubt that if their domestic political orders are ignored, then, as an American ambassador to Pakistan remarked, the cost will be measured in American lives.

The first phase of Washington's war on terrorism required Pakistan's military and political support to prosecute the war against the perpetrators of September 11. The next phase, rooting out terrorism's causes, must necessarily focus on Pakistan. The problem facing Pakistan is not one of total state failure, but shaping the kind of state-nation that Pakistan will become. Some of its alternative futures are frightening, others are more benign. Assuming the end goal is a liberal, modern state, functioning in the global system at peace with its neighbors, there is a very long road ahead, and no guarantee that Pakistanis are willing or able to traverse it.

Support for the reinstitutionalization of Pakistan is a worthy goal but Pakistan's progress must be carefully monitored over the next few years and all aid and developmental programs should have benchmarks and mechanisms that will immediately flag problems. The bulk of assistance and training programs should go to rebuilding many of Pakistan's enfeebled civilian institutions. Such support for Pakistan's "civil society" will be useless, however, unless attention is paid to the Pakistani army, likely to remain the most important political force in the country for years. Over a decade systematically excluding Pakistanis from U.S. training and educational facilities did not broaden the outlook of the army—it narrowed it. While the courts, the educational system, and the political parties all need help to bring them up to modern standards, the army must also come to understand how it can play a positive role in Pakistan's development. Officers of all grades need to be exposed to the West, especially the United States, and to developing states that have a balanced civil-military relationship. National security issues will remain the army's primary concern, but some officers understand that the army cannot be a parasite on the state and that domestic disorder and chaos may be the greatest security challenge facing Pakistan today. If the Bush administration or Congress calculates that there is any prospect of a "normal" Pakistan then they must expand greatly their support for the development and re-professionalization of Pakistan's crumbling civil and military institutions.

From Crisis to Process

For at least 15 years, several major private initiatives tried to bridge the gap between India and Pakistan. Most of these were private, funded by foundations and governments. There was a widespread belief that increased trade between India and Pakistan would promote peace (by giving important elites in each country a stake in good relations with the other); that cultural exchanges and people to people diplomacy would help (by showing each side that the other also wanted peace); or that various “confidence building measures” and arms control arrangements would make it easier for the governments to engage in reasoned dialogue over critical issues. One war and several crises later, it is evident that private diplomacy and good intentions are not enough. Unless there is a more weighty effort, India and Pakistan are likely to continue moving from crisis to crisis.

The attacks of September 11 have created a unique opportunity for U.S. statecraft to shift from intermittent attempts at crisis prevention to a more lasting effort to build a process that features political reconciliation. The Kashmir problem is not likely to be solved soon, but, like the Middle East, it is important that all sides see that politics rather than the gun (or suicidal terrorism) are the way to achieve success.

If its engagement in the India-Pakistan dispute is to deepen, Washington will have to address the Kashmir issue, even if a resolution to this conflict is not at hand. It was unwise for National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice to insist that the United States would not only decline the role of mediator but that it would not “facilitate” an India-Pakistan dialogue,⁵¹ but this studied disinterest was abandoned as the 2002 crisis reached its peak in June. In a post-crisis visit to South Asia Secretary of State Colin Powell noted that progress on Kashmir was “on the international agenda,” and that America would “lend a helping hand to all sides.”⁵² Powell and other officials stressed the importance of forthcoming elections in both India and Pakistan as a first step in a “broader process” that begins to address Kashmiri grievances and leads India and Pakistan back to dialogue. While these remarks were welcomed in Islamabad—which is desperate for any international attention on the Kashmir issue—New Delhi remains utterly hostile to any third party role and particularly skeptical of the motives of America and Britain.⁵³ So far, the Indian government shows little inclination to ease the task of American diplomacy by

making any new gestures in Kashmir, or allowing international observers to view the forthcoming election.

While some informed Indian observers indicate that the resolution of the 2002 crisis gives Prime Minister Vajpayee a third opportunity to engage Pakistan in a substantive dialogue,⁵⁴ there is no indication that the Indian foreign policy bureaucracy, the hard-line BJP leadership, or the BJP's coalition partners are in any rush to renew the dialogue with Musharraf; all prefer to let Washington put pressure on Islamabad and wait until domestic changes in Pakistan throw up a new and perhaps more pliable leadership.

Thus, the new American attempt to promote an India-Pakistan dialogue on Kashmir and other issues may not bring quick results. There are three things that the United States could do to ensure that this opportunity for creative diplomacy is not lost.

First, the Administration could adopt a policy taken in 1999 by the Clinton administration: that the Line of Control was inviolable. Reiterating this position, which Delhi warmly applauded, would begin the process of the United States defining for itself what it thinks a suitable final arrangement for Kashmir might look like.

Second, Washington needs to consult more widely with close allies and key countries in developing a coordinated policy on India-Pakistan normalization. While the British government is closely linked to current American diplomatic initiatives, nothing has been done to associate such states as France, Japan, and other major allies with a concerted attempt to promote dialogue. Beyond this, it is also important (as experience in the Middle East shows), to share ideas with such powers as China and Russia, both of which have considerable influence in South Asia.

Third, distrust of the United States still runs very deep in New Delhi. Pakistan may be vulnerable to outside pressure because of its economic and political weakness, but India can afford to do nothing, which ensures that nothing will be done. If the Administration believes that the risk of nuclear war is as great as its spokesmen have stated, then clearly more needs to be done to persuade New Delhi that an American-led initiative to kick-start a peace process in South Asia will ultimately work to India's advantage. Washington needs to demonstrate that it does not "equate" India and Pakistan, except in the sense that both are important, and now nuclear-armed states; America's

interests in each are quite different, although there is a powerful international interest in ensuring that the two states do not go to war or launch nuclear weapons against each other. This argument will be effective among Indians who believe that it is in New Delhi's interest to have a moderate, stable Pakistan as a neighbor, it will not be persuasive among those Indians who deny Pakistan's right to exist or who still view Washington as a strategic threat to a rising India.

While it is important that Washington pursue the idea of a regional "dialogue" it should be aware that making U.S. engagement in South Asia contingent upon India-Pakistan cooperation is a formula for failure. If a peace process or a strategic dialogue cannot be initiated and nurtured, then the framework of U.S. policy should take the form of parallel bilateralism, working with each country in such a way that specific American interests are advanced. These interests include non-use of nuclear weapons, the containment of terrorism, avoidance of another India-Pakistan war, and some degree of military or strategic cooperation with India or Pakistan. At the same time, Washington should be prepared to deal with another, and perhaps more serious crisis between India and Pakistan in the next few years.

Expanding Relations with India

U.S. policy on the eve of September 11 had the long-term objective of developing a closer relationship with India. Its high technology, its professional military, its shrewd, realistic political leadership, and its rapid economic growth suggested that India could be an important, if long-overlooked, partner. Additionally, its democratic government and the large Indian-American community provided an incentive for close ties with New Delhi. This new policy downplayed Pakistan, a state that was seen as unhelpful at best and a failure at worst, and saw India as a possible balancer of a rising China.

For their part, Indian strategists no longer question America's global military and economic dominance and appear to have abandoned the idea of joining with other states in some kind of grand coalition to counter Washington. India is still struggling with its

own internal economic, social and political revolutions, and the bloodbath of Gujarat was a reminder of the fragility of Indian democracy (and its strength—since the communal riots did not spread beyond the state). In short, from the Indian perspective Washington is an attractive strategic partner, and Indian officials see a close relationship with America as enabling India to “carve out a space for itself in a unipolar world.”⁵⁵ India seeks to work closely with America in areas of common interest, and resist American pressure to change fundamental Indian policies on key issues (such as Kashmir, or the nuclear deterrent). This means that the prospects for U.S.-Indian cooperation in Strategic Asia will be limited, but will still be of a magnitude unimaginable five or ten years ago.

The last two years saw a dramatic increase in joint U.S.-Indian activities, although they do not add up to an alliance. The two countries are still in the learning phase as they discover that cooperation, including intelligence sharing, is possible in counter-terrorism, developments in the Indian Ocean, environmental problems, energy research (so far, other than nuclear power), space, countering piracy in the Indian Ocean region, and consultation on various regional security issues. This is a spectacular achievement given the previous inability of the two countries to talk to each other in a civil fashion. Various administrative mechanisms designed to further these contacts were put in place by the Clinton administration, and the Bush administration has expanded them. Still, it should be remembered that the practical implementation of a policy of cooperation is hampered by resistance in the bureaucracies of both states, with the United States dragging its feet on the release of dual-use and high-technology items and Indians still suspicious of U.S. motives and the penetration into India of American cultural, economic and political influence.

Other areas of cooperation could include nuclear weapons and proliferation. Having destroyed America’s unrealistic anti-proliferation policy by its 1998 tests, India now tries to project itself as a responsible nuclear weapons state. Additional proliferation would only devalue its nuclear currency and Delhi does not want to see a world of twenty nuclear weapons states. India might agree to limits on its own program in exchange for assistance in the civilian power sector and symbolic membership in the club of major nuclear powers if it can be assured that this does not represent the American camel’s nose

in the Indian nuclear tent. One way the United States might address Indian anxiety would be to remove New Delhi from the “sensitive technology” control list. This would be a signal to the Indian strategic and scientific elite that Washington does not fear a democratic nuclear India—even if it disagrees from time to time with the policies New Delhi pursues.

Beyond its immediate neighborhood, India can be expected to play a more important role in what once were the outer reaches of the British Raj’s sphere of influence. This is of special importance to the United States, and Indian power and American interests match up well in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia. Here is where a balanced middle power such as India might make a difference, and it would be wise to consult closely with India about these regions. However, it is unlikely that New Delhi would antagonize states that still provide it with vital oil and gas, and a future Congress government, probably allied with one or more “left” parties, might be more cautious about supporting a U.S. military action against Iraq.

As for India’s strategic rivalry with China, it would be unwise for Washington to assume that India will be part of a military coalition that will contain a rising China. India’s relevant power here is the power of an idea, democracy, which may be a greater strategic weapon in an era when nuclear war inhibits the use of force.

The most serious mistake that Washington can make is to under- or over-estimate India’s identity as a piece on Asia’s strategic chessboard. India is not a pawn, but it is not quite yet in China’s league, and it is a great distance from becoming a major economic power. India wishes to play an independent role in Asia; and one of its role models is France, a formal American ally that has not hesitated to criticize Washington while often pursuing an independent line simply to emphasize its independence. Both American and Indian officials have used the term “natural alliance” to describe the new relationship between these two countries, but the vagueness of the concept is self-evident. India can shoulder part of the burden of the war on terrorism and join the larger project of stabilizing parts of the world that are ungovernable. It can also be a responsible nuclear weapons state, and find a way to accommodate its impossibly persistent rival, Pakistan.

Such an India will have moved very far toward acquiring the status of a great power that its leaders (and its well-wishers) hope for it.

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¹ For two studies that took note of India's strategic emergence, see Ashley J. Tellis, "South Asia," in Richard J. Ellings and Aaron L. Friedberg, *Strategic Asia: Power and Purpose, 2001-02*, (Seattle: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2001) and Stephen Philip Cohen, *India: Emerging Power*, (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2001) which also discusses Pakistan's weaknesses.

² C. Raja Mohan, "The Enigma of India's Arrival," *The Hindu*, September 2, 2001.

³ Exact figures are unavailable because much trade goes through third countries, but figures from India's Commerce Ministry and various trade organizations indicate a 20 percent surge in Indian exports to Pakistan and a substantial increase (8 percent) of Indian imports from Pakistan between 2000 and 2001. George Iype, "Indo-Pak trade Surges Despite Border Tension," *India Abroad*, March 29, 2002.

⁴ Before the war began in Afghanistan India displayed the corpses of dead Uighur fighters that it encountered in Kashmir, and Chinese officials have been reported as claiming that over three hundred Uighur Muslims from Xinjiang were captured in Afghanistan fighting with Taliban and al Qaeda forces. Eric Eckholm, "China: Muslims in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, May 28, 2002.

⁵ By early May 10, 2002, British and American commanders had announced that large scale combat was virtually ended in Afghanistan. *Financial Times*, May 9, 2002.

⁶ Dexter Filkins, "Border Operations," *New York Times*, April 28, 2002. There have been doubts, however, about Pakistan's enthusiasm for the war and whether General Musharraf will take a softer line toward Islamic extremists than either India or the United States would like. Edward Luce and Farhan Bokhari, "An Undemocratic Friend," *Financial Times*, April 20, 2002.

⁷ Anatol Lieven, "Finish the War in Afghanistan First," *Financial Times*, March 25, 2002; Elie Krakowski, "How to Win the Peace in Afghanistan," *The Weekly Standard*, July 1, 2002.

⁸ India has agreed to train the Afghan military, a move that is certain to accelerate Pakistani concern. *Indian Express*, May 5, 2002.

⁹ *Washington Post*, January 29, 2002.

¹⁰ These concessions will require a fresh congressional waiver in September 2002, a month before the scheduled elections that will presumably restore civilian government to Pakistan.

¹¹ This is the view of a recent study by the International Crisis Group, "Pakistan: The Dangers of Conventional Wisdom," <www.intl-crisis-group.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=578>.

¹² For an authorized English translation see President General Pervez Musharaf's Address to the Nation, January 12, 2002 <www.pak.gov.pk/public/President_address.htm>.

¹³ For a comprehensive discussion of the move of militancy to Pakistan, and the links to ISI, see Bob Drogin, Josh Meyer, and Eric Lichtblau, "Al Qaeda Gathering Strength in Pakistan," *Los Angeles Times*, June 26, 2002.

¹⁴ For surveys of the idea of Pakistan see Akbar S. Ahmed, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity: The Search for Saladin*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997.

¹⁵ See Stephen Philip Cohen, "The Nation and the State of Pakistan," *Washington Quarterly*, vol. 25 no. 3. (Summer 2002), pp. 109–122.

¹⁶ The government has banned several of the groups that it originally covertly sponsored, including Lashkar-e-Toiba and Jaish-e-Mohammad, but past experience indicates that these groups may reform under another name, or that their members may simply join other radical outfits, with or without the approval of the Pakistan army.

¹⁷ Islamic religious schools

¹⁸ For an informed but hardline anti-Indian position on Kashmir see many of the publications of Pakistan's "FRIENDS Foundation," for example General Aslam Beg, "Kashmir: The Latent Dimensions," at <[www.friends.org.pk.Kashmir%20/tge%katebt%Dimensions.htm](http://www.friends.org.pk/Kashmir%20/tge%katebt%Dimensions.htm)>, published in June 2002.

¹⁹ For an informative discussion of Pakistan's ruling political elite, see Mushahid Sayed Hussain, "Whither Pakistan's Establishment," *The Nation* (Lahore), June 18, 2002.

²⁰ One such attempt, led by a mid-level officer of the paramilitary Rangers, apparently went awry.

²¹ Stephen Philip Cohen, “The Nation and the State of Pakistan,” pp. 109–122.

²² For an overview see Dennis Kux, “India’s Fine Balance,” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2002. For an excellent survey of Indian-U.S. relations see Kux, *Estranged Democracies*, Washington: National Defense University Press, 1996.

²³ Shyam Bhatia and Desikan Thrunarayanapuram, “Military to Train with U.S. Forces in Alaska,” *Washington Times*, April 19, 2002. This training, the first-ever Indian operations in North America, would be of special relevance to the Indian army, which faces both Pakistan and China across formidable mountain ranges.

²⁴ T.V. Parasuram, “No U.S. mediation or facilitation on Kashmir,” *Press Trust of India*, February 15, 2002. Condoleezza Rice, President Bush’s National Security Advisor, also sided with India’s view that the attack on the Indian Parliament was carried out by “terrorists,” contradicting Musharraf’s public statements.

²⁵ For an overview, see Stephen Philip Cohen, *India: Emerging Power*, and for a recent comprehensive statement of the Indian “realist” perspective see Bharat Karnad, *Nuclear Weapons and Indian Security*, New Delhi: Macmillan India, 2002.

²⁶ Brasstacks was a series of provocative military exercises that nearly started an Indo-Pakistani war in 1987. For an overview of the conflict see Kanti Bajpai, P. R. Chari, Pervez Cheema, and Sumit Ganguly, *Brasstacks and Beyond: Crisis Perception and Management in South Asia*, New Delhi: Manohar, 1995.

²⁷ See Edward Luce, “India seeks new life in ‘second generation’ plan,” *Financial Times*, Feb. 25, 2002. Various economists argue that India faces very high capital costs that leave Indian firms uncompetitive even within the country, making them fearful of a more open investment regime; Indian firms are also badly supported by the country’s creaky infrastructure: only a few companies can afford their own power generation, telecommunication systems, and port facilities. Additionally, India’s labor laws—now being changed—have made it very difficult for companies, private or public, to restructure redundant or inefficient facilities. American officials bluntly and publicly shared their alarm about stagnation in the Indian economy, and the consequences for U.S.-India trade relations. See the addresses on “U.S.-India Economic Relations” by Ambassador Robert D. Blackwill, New Delhi, January 28, 2002; and “Unleashing India’s Vast Growth Potential,” remarks by Deputy U.S. Treasury Secretary, February 7, 2002. The view is substantially shared by India’s most adventurous business association, the Confederation of Indian Industries. See its series, “State of the Economy,” and “India Economic Policy Update (monthly),” available at <www.ciionline.org>.

²⁸ Growth in the coming decade depends primarily in the government's ability to deregulate further sectors of the economy, but especially agriculture, which still employs the majority of India's labor force and holds the key to rural prosperity, the selling point for the reforms. The other critical policy measure has to occur in the privatization program, which has been extremely slow and unrewarding in helping bring down the fiscal deficits. The "sexy" growth sectors such as software, telecommunications, entertainment, back-office services for foreign firms, but also education and healthcare-related fields, will provide the excitement for globalization and more economic reforms. "View from the Silk Road: Comparing Reform in China and India," *Standard and Poor's CreditWeek*, February 2, 2002. Analytical contact: Joydeep Mukherjee.

²⁹ European reports indicate that at least 2000 Muslims were killed, others put the figure at under 1000. For one account see Celia W. Dugger, "Religious Riots Loom over Indian Politics," *New York Times*, July 27, 2002.

³⁰ See P.R. Chari, Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, and Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Compound Crisis of 1990*, Routledge, forthcoming 2002.

³¹ Leh is the central army garrison for the defense of the contested India-China border. The LOC is the name used after 1971 for the earlier cease-fire line; it is not a formally recognized boundary, but represents the positions held by the two armies after their various conflicts; it regularly undergoes minor adjustment as one side or the other presses forward and seizes posts—or loses them in subsequent counterattacks.

³² This treaty has never been challenged by either side. Any manipulation of the flow of water would be devastating for Pakistan, and government officials in Islamabad have declared that such a cut-off would be regarded as an act of war.

³³ Brahma Chellaney, "An Act of War," *Hindustan Times*, December 18, 2001.

³⁴ For example see Farhan Bokhari, "Tests Underline Pakistan's Conventional Arms Weakness," *Financial Times*, May 27, 2002.

³⁵ For an American assessment, based on unclassified sources, see Andrew Winner and Yoshi Toshihara, "Nuclear Stability in South Asia," Institute of Foreign Policy Analysis, 2002. Available at <http://www.ifpa.org/textonly/new/nuk-stab.htm>

³⁶ See Bruce Riedel, *American Diplomacy and the 1999 Kargil Summit at Blair House*, Philadelphia: Center for the Advanced Study of India, Policy Paper Series, 2002.

³⁷ Testimony of CIA director George Tenet before the Senate Armed Services Committee, March 18, 2002. See *Washington Times*, March 19, 2002.

³⁸ For an early discussion of Pakistan army views see Stephen P. Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

³⁹ Indira Gandhi once called the idea of deterrence “immoral.”

⁴⁰ For an overview of Indian strategic nuclear thinking see Ashley W. Tellis, “India’s Nuclear Doctrine,” *NBR Analysis*, vol. 12, no. 2 (May 2001).

⁴¹ Abbas Rashid, “Raising the Specter of Last Resort,” *Daily Times* (Pakistan), April 15, 2002, <www.dailytimes.com.pk>.

⁴² The larger figure is the estimate of official western observers, and representatives from the European Union termed the killings as “genocide.” Edna Fernandes, “Diplomats Say Killings in Gujarat State are Genocide,” *Financial Times*, April 25–26, 2002.

⁴³ Jairam Ramesh, “Kautilya: viewpoint,” *India Today*, December 24, 2001.

⁴⁴ At one time or another Japan, Denmark, Canada, Iran, and several other states, notably China and Russia, offered their services as intermediaries in the crisis. Russia even invited Musharraf and Vajpayee to Moscow for further talks after a summit meeting in Almaty. The Indians declined the invitation, waiting for U.S. emissaries to bring the crisis to an end.

⁴⁵ For an U.S. version of what transpired during Armitage’s visit, and the subsequent visit by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, see Glenn Kessler, “A Defining Moment in Islamabad—U.S. Brokered ‘Yes’ Pulled India, Pakistan from Brink of War,” *Washington Post*, June 22, 2002.

⁴⁶ The United States, unlike Britain and the European Union, had said nothing about the Gujarat killings, and may yet benefit financially in terms of Indian purchases of civilian and military aircraft. Jyoti Malhotra, “Friendly nations to get our shopping list,” *Indian Express*, June 25, 2002.

⁴⁷ Lally Weymouth, “Voices from a Hot Zone,” *Newsweek*, July 1, 2002. See also Armitage’s discussion of Indian and Pakistani positions in the transcript of an interview with the *Financial Times*, June 23, 2002 at www.ft.com.

⁴⁸ For an explication of the Pentagon’s views, as expressed by Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, see Fred Hiatt, “Underachieving Afghanistan,” *Washington Post*, May 20, 2002. For a statement of senatorial concern about Kabul’s security problem see James Dao, “Top Lawmakers Urge Bush to Expand Afghan Force Beyond Kabul,” *New York Times*, June 29, 2002.

⁴⁹ For several informed perspectives on Afghanistan's prospects as the center of a new regional order in Central Asia and as a viable state, see the contributions of S. Frederick Starr and Marvin G. Weinbaum, respectively, in The Asia Society, Asian Update Series, *Afghanistan's Reform Agenda: Four Perspectives*, New York: The Asia Society Issues Program, March 2002.

⁵⁰ Cohen, "Nation and State of Pakistan."

⁵¹ After the 2002 crisis was resolved Prime Minister Vajpayee used the term approvingly in describing a suitable U.S. role in Kashmir. See Lally Weymouth, "Voices from a Hot Zone."

⁵² Press Briefing by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, July 28, New Delhi, Department of State.

⁵³ For a blunt statement of India's increasing resistance to American engagement on Kashmir—except to pressure Pakistan—see the address of the newly-appointed Foreign Secretary, Kanwal Sibal, to the Indian business organization, the Confederation of Indian Industries, on July 10, 2002 at <http://cgi.Rediff.com/cgi-programs/print/printpage.cgi>

⁵⁴ See C. Raja Mohan, "Vajpayee: Third time Lucky?," *The Hindu*, June 20, 2002.

⁵⁵ Kanwal Sibal.