CHAPTER ONE

Understanding Pakistan

We were aboard Air Force One en route to California when I began briefing President Barack Obama on the strategic review of American policy toward Afghanistan and Pakistan he had asked me to do. Seated behind his wood desk in the president's cabin, Obama listened closely, asking many questions. I first summarized the threat assessment.

A syndicate of terrorists now embedded in Pakistan and Afghanistan was planning further attacks on American interests at home and abroad. A prominent member was al Qaeda, the group that changed world history with its attack on New York and Virginia on September 11, 2001. The syndicate also included the Afghan Taliban, which hosted al Qaeda back in 2001; the new Pakistani Taliban, which helped al Qaeda murder former Pakistani prime minister Benazir Bhutto; Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, the group that attacked Mumbai in November 2008, only three months before our flight; and a host of other terrorists.

By the time we landed, I had walked the president through the review's 20 recommendations and some of its 180 proposals for specific actions. The report's chief architects were the two cochairs, Under Secretary of Defense Michelle Flournoy and Special Representative Ambassador Richard Holbrooke, and myself, along with the head of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), General David Petraeus, and field commanders in Kabul. It had taken six weeks to shepherd the review through the interagency process and to get input from Pakistanis and Afghans, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, other nations with soldiers in Afghanistan, and key geopolitical players such as India and Saudi Arabia. National Security Council principals—including Vice President Joe

Biden, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, National Security Adviser Jim Jones, and others—had also examined it carefully.

As we walked from Air Force One to a waiting Marine helicopter, I drew the president's attention to the review's central conclusion: Pakistan, the birthplace of global Islamic jihad and now its epicenter, had become a crucible of terror and was the most dangerous country in the world. Clearly, it held the key to destroying both al Qaeda and the larger syndicate.

The president's busy schedule in California included an interview on television's *Tonight Show with Jay Leno* in which he talked about getting a dog for his two daughters. Oddly enough, my Blenheim puppy, Nelson, had been sitting on my lap when the president's call came through at my weekend home in Maryland, inviting me to lead the review. It was just five days after he had been sworn in on the Capitol steps, but he was already engaged in what he called the most important national security issue facing the nation.

I had first met Barack Hussein Obama in 2007, when I joined his campaign as a volunteer expert providing advice on South Asian issues and counterterrorism. In July 2008 I accompanied him to the Willard Hotel in Washington, where he had his first substantive encounter with the new Pakistani administration replacing the dictatorship of Pervez Musharraf, represented by Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani. Throughout his conversation with Gillani, I was impressed by Obama's command of the issues and effective style of communication.

Though thrilled at Obama's victory in November 2008, by then I had been retired for two years and was eager to stay out of government. I had joined Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy in Washington, and after almost thirty years with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), I was enjoying the freedom of continuing work in my area of expertise—the Middle East and South Asia—but now as a scholar and teacher. The president urged me to return to government for two months to help reassess American policy on the crisis in South Asia, which was badly in need of attention.

I could not have agreed more. The conflict President Obama had inherited in Afghanistan had turned into the "forgotten war" of the twenty-first century. After a brilliant start in 2001, when the United States and

a handful of coalition allies helped the Northern Alliance topple the Taliban's Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in less than a hundred days, Washington's attention shifted from Afghanistan to Iraq. As a result, it squandered an easy military victory, permitting the foe to recover and make a comeback.

By 2009 the Taliban and its al Qaeda ally had established a secure safe haven across the border in Pakistan and were threatening the stability of the southern and eastern half of Afghanistan. A war that should have ended in 2002 had been rekindled—and was soon being lost. Worse still, the militants were now headquartered in Pakistan, a country facing a severe political crisis that was pushing the state to the brink of failure. Having the fastest-growing nuclear arsenal in the world and being its second largest Muslim country with a population of 180 million, Pakistan seemed poised to become a jihadist enclave.

This was not the first time America had taken its eye off the ball in South Asia. In the 1980s, with the help of Pakistan, the United States had inflicted a crushing defeat on the Soviet Fortieth Red Army in Afghanistan, which was followed by the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the cold war. But it then focused its attention elsewhere (ironically, much of it on Iraq), leaving Afghanistan to become transformed, not into a stable and friendly nation, but a hostile and fanatic foe eager to host al Qaeda and act as the base for the deadliest attack ever on U.S. soil.

During my thirty years of service at the CIA, Pentagon, and White House, I have had the privilege of advising four presidents on South Asian affairs. This experience has taught me, often the hard way, that the politics of the region are both unpredictable and often inscrutable to an outsider. But America's policies toward Pakistan and Afghanistan must often appear just as inscrutable to South Asians, especially when, for complex reasons, its strategies have aided the foes of democracy and the very enemies Americans are now fighting against there.

My goal in the following pages is to explain this paradox—specifically, to determine why successive U.S. administrations have undermined civil government in Pakistan, aided military dictators, and encouraged the rise of extremist Islamic movements that now threaten the United States at home and abroad. A first step to this end is to recognize that Pakistan, past and present, remains shrouded in mystery, with key events in its development related to conspiracy and unsolved assassinations. A

second step is to examine U.S. relations with Pakistan during the first two and a half decades of its independence, bearing in mind that it was the first nation ever created solely for Islam.

Jinnah, Partition, and Civil War

The idea of Pakistan was born on the banks of the River Cam in East Anglia in the 1930s. A student at Cambridge University, Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, envisioned a Muslim state created from the union of several British-controlled territories and princely states in the northwestern part of the subcontinent. He referred to this new state as "Pakistan" in a pamphlet he wrote in 1933 titled *Now or Never, Are We to Live or Perish Forever?* The name *Pakistan* is basically an acronym compiled from the names of the areas of Punjab, Afghania, Kashmir, Sindh, and Baluchistan.[1] In Persian and Urdu, *Pakistan* also translates as "the land of the pure." Notably absent from Ali's vision was the eastern province of Bengal, which in those years was home to more Muslims than any other province of the British Raj. Its omission would be a signal of much trouble to come.

Although Ali was a strong force in the Pakistan movement in the United Kingdom, the prime mover back in South Asia was Muhammad Ali Jinnah, also known as Baba-e-Quam (the father of the country) or Quaid-e-Azam (the great leader). Jinnah and his Muslim League Party spearheaded the drive to independence. Indeed, it is fair to say that Jinnah changed the map of South Asia and that without him there would be no Pakistan. Not surprisingly, a portrait of this towering figure can be seen in every government office in the country.

Unfortunately, the partition of South Asia in 1947 led to the deaths of at least 1 million people and one of the largest refugee transfers in human history as millions of Hindus and Sikhs struggled to find new homes on the subcontinent.[2] The region and the world are still reeling from the aftershocks of that division.

In many ways, Jinnah seemed an odd candidate for the role he played in the creation of the world's first state intended for Muslims. He was not a practicing Muslim, he drank alcohol, smoked fifty cigarettes a day, and dressed like the English-educated lawyer that he was. According to his preeminent biographer, Stanley Wolpert, Jinnah never wore the same silk tie twice, which he would have ordered from an expensive tailor

in London to go with his more than 200 Savile Row suits.[3] He was, reported the *New York Times,* one of 1946's best-dressed men in the British Empire. At one point, he owned seven flats in London's posh district of Mayfair. In 1930 Jinnah sought to win a seat in Britain's Parliament but was unable to break the race barrier in English politics. Had the British accepted Jinnah as an equal, he might well have lived out the rest of his life in London. As his Indian biographer, Jaswant Singh, put it: "Jinnah was committed to his three-piece suits, his lorgnette, his cigarette holder and the King's English."[4]

Clearly, Jinnah's vision of Pakistan was not rooted in religious piety. Although he was a Shia Muslim—a minority sect of Islam (almost 90 percent of Muslims are Sunni, including most of those living in Pakistan today)—he apparently spent little time in mosques or in studying the Quran. Extremism had no place in his views either. The subcontinent did have an established jihadist tradition, dating back to the so-called Indian mutiny of 1857 (increasingly referred to in India as the first war for independence) and the subsequent founding of the jihad-espousing Deobandi movement. Though sparked by a military revolt, the mutiny attracted large numbers of jihadists fighting to reestablish Muslim rule in the Indian subcontinent. When the British resumed control, some of these militants created a madrassa near the town of Deoband to advocate Islamic fundamental views. Jinnah was never a Deobandi.[5]

Rather, Jinnah's great concern was that a united India would treat its Muslims as second-class citizens, persecuted by the Hindu majority. Muslims, he once remarked in 1937, "do not want to be reduced to the position of the Negroes of America."[6] He saw a separate Pakistan as a haven where they could practice their religion to whatever degree of piety they desired. Founded for Muslims, it would not be a secular state but would in many ways act like one in advocating tolerance and diversity.

Despite a substantial following, Jinnah met with some strong opposition in the Islamic camp. Mawlana Sayyid Abu A'ala Mawdudi and the political party he founded in 1941 to represent South Asia's Muslims were unenthusiastic about the Pakistan idea at first, preferring to keep the entire subcontinent united, but under Muslim domination in a form reminiscent of the Mughal Empire. Ironically, noted one observer, "the pious among the Muslims of the subcontinent did not create Pakistan."[7] Indeed, Mawdudi was deeply distrustful of Jinnah because of both his

political ambitions and lack of religious piety. Even Jinnah's Muslim League was not Muslim enough. However, Mawdudi's Jamaat-i-Islam Party was unable to garner mass support in the new Pakistan, although it did become the flag bearer for those wanting a more Islamic Pakistan and succeeded in developing independent but related branches in the rest of South Asia.[8]

One of the many tragedies of Pakistan's history is that after helping Pakistan gain independence, Jinnah did not live long enough to make his vision of the state a reality. A victim of tuberculosis and lung cancer, he died on September 11, 1948, little more than a year after Pakistan's birth. He had so dominated the independence movement that he left no potential leaders in the wings with the stature to take on the difficult job of shaping the kind of state he had in mind.

To add to the nation's distress, Jinnah's chief lieutenant and successor, Liaquat Ali Khan, was assassinated in 1951, in the first in a series of violent deaths that have scarred Pakistan's history and continue today. With the loss of its founding fathers, the new nation seemed destined for turmoil. One can easily imagine what would have happened in America if Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Madison had not lived long enough to become president.

During Pakistan's first quarter century, the legacy of partition, with its division of the country into East and West Pakistan, only confounded the region's politics. At the time, the majority (56 percent) of Pakistanis lived in East Pakistan, in a part of the divided province of Bengal, the first headquarters of the British Raj in South Asia. As already mentioned, Bengal had been overlooked in the naming of Pakistan, reflecting its secondary importance from the beginning, although Rahmat Ali had dreamed of a united Bengal dominated by its Muslim population and expanded to include Azzam and the rest of northeast India as a separate state called Bang-i-Islam.[9]

Jinnah saw Bengal in somewhat the same light, as a separate state with Muslims and Hindus united, one that could thus further weaken India. The British and Indians refused to consider that option and instead divided Bengal along religious lines. The predominantly Muslim part became East Pakistan, which in the process was cut off from its traditional political, intellectual, and economic capital, Calcutta.

From the beginning, West Pakistan was dominated by the province of Punjab, which was better endowed than Sindh, Baluchistan, the North-West Frontier Province, and the rump of Kashmir that had joined Pakistan. Punjab not only had the largest population and the richest farmland, but it also provided the overwhelming majority of the officer corps for the Pakistani army. Many Punjabis, especially members of that corps, believed Pakistan was created to serve their interests first and foremost; many also regarded Bengalis as second-class citizens, even as inferior humans lacking the alleged martial skills of Punjabis.

This issue boiled up immediately after partition and independence in relation to language. Should Bengali be an official language of the new Pakistan? West Pakistan's establishment, including Jinnah, said no, opting solely for Urdu. Within a few months of independence, demonstrations broke out in Dhaka protesting the lack of Bengali on official papers of the new Pakistani state. Despite his failing health, Jinnah was forced to come to Dhaka in 1948 to try to calm the situation.

But Jinnah only intensified the discontent by insisting "the state language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language. Any one who tries to mislead you is an enemy of Pakistan."[10] Though Bengalis were allowed to speak and write in their language in East Pakistan, they were shocked to hear Jinnah imply they were not only inferior citizens but could even be considered enemies of Pakistan because they wished to retain a mark of their culture.

When Pakistan eventually drew up its first constitution in 1956, it recognized Bengali as a national language but still gave primacy to Urdu. By then, however, language was but one of many issues dividing East and West Pakistan. The country's Punjabi-dominated government in Karachi (the capital until 1958) emphasized development in the West; the army and bureaucracy were overrun by West Pakistanis, especially Punjabis; and the East was treated almost like a colony separated from its motherland by India.

The contradictions between Pakistan's majority population in the East and the ruling establishment in the West proved fatal for Pakistani democracy—which was already facing monumental challenges. Pakistan's economy was still very weak, it had little experience with democratic institutions, its tribal regions along the Afghan border were a bed

of chaos, and the conflict with India had not let up. With the East and West so divided, it became almost impossible to sustain a democratic form of government.

In October 1958 Pakistan's government was toppled in its first military coup, with the chief of army staff, Major General Ayub Khan, at the helm abrogating the constitution, banning political parties, and naming himself president. Ayub Khan had been army chief for eight years, succeeding a British officer from the Raj. He was a graduate of Sandhurst Royal Military Academy, Britain's prestigious officer training school, and had fought in World War II with the British Indian army in Burma. Like Jinnah, he was almost as much English as Pakistani. Among the several reasons for his coup, a primary one was the fear that a truly democratic election would tilt the balance of power toward East Pakistan at the expense of the army-dominated West.

In preparation for the construction of a new capital in Islamabad, Khan moved the government from Karachi to Rawalpindi. Under his rule, the Pakistani intelligence services, especially the army's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) grew in size and importance. Founded by British Major General William Cawthorne at independence to conduct military intelligence, the ISI now took on the role of spying on Ayub's enemies inside Pakistan.[11] It would be the beginning of the ISI's rise to power.[12]

Khan also staged the first of Pakistan's many rigged elections. In 1965 he was officially elected president by the country's electoral college but was suspected of using patronage and intimidation to influence the vote. His opponent in this election was Jinnah's sister Fatima, who ran on a platform for restoring civilian government. This suppression of democracy further alienated the East.

Khan had an ambitious plan to oust India from the disputed territory of Kashmir and gain control of the entire province for Pakistan. Kashmir was the only Muslim-majority province of India that was not awarded to Pakistan at partition. In 1947 it was a princely state under the rule of a Hindu maharaja who dithered over which country to join, hoping Kashmir could actually become independent. Jinnah ordered a tribal army to invade the province and join it to Pakistan; India responded by sending in its army. India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, did not want to see his favorite territory wrenched from India. This clash of 1947 was the First Indo-Pakistani War.

The war ended with the partition of Kashmir. India took the bulk of the province, including the capital Srinagar and the surrounding Vale of Kashmir. Pakistan held on to a smaller part, which it named Azad Kashmir, meaning "free Kashmir." Determined to get it all for Pakistan, Khan devised a plot code-named Operation Gibraltar to infiltrate Indian-held Kashmir with teams of Pakistanis who would foment an uprising that would then require Pakistani intervention. In a second maneuver, Operation Grand Slam, a Pakistani-armored column would strike into India to cut off Kashmir and win the war. This plan was closely guarded within a small circle around Khan so was never properly vetted for its possible weaknesses—a pattern common throughout future Pakistani army operations. The plan misfired completely. There was no insurgency but a Second Indo-Pakistani War. In 1965 India and Pakistan fought an enormous tank battle on the Punjabi plain outside of Lahore.

This war ended in a stalemate but made clear that East Pakistan was very vulnerable to an Indian attack. Surrounded on three sides by India, it was virtually indefensible. Ayub Khan said as much both during and after the war, much to the chagrin of Bengalis, awakened to the fact that their leader was prepared to lose their country in order to gain Kashmir.

Thus an unintended side effect of the second war was the East's further estrangement from the West. Feeling more and more like an occupied territory and a reluctant partner in the nation of Pakistan, citizens in the East launched a Bangladeshi independence movement. Initially focused on obtaining redress of grievances and greater autonomy, its mission gradually evolved into demands for de facto independence.

By 1968 Ayub Khan's popularity was waning as the public had grown discontented with the corruption in government. Many complained that Ayub's family had enriched itself during his rule, allegedly having stolen as much as $20 million from the state.[13] Faced with growing unrest, in 1969 Ayub Khan relinquished power to General Yahya Khan, another product of the British Indian army. He, too, had fought in World War II, serving in North Africa and Italy with the British Eighth Army. The Pakistan he inherited from Ayub was dissatisfied with army rule, especially in the East. Less skilled in politics than Ayub, Yahya proved a disaster for Pakistan.

At the outset, Yahya tried to appease Bengali anger by promising to bring more Bengalis into the army and the bureaucracy. In 1970 there

were only 300 Bengalis in the army's 6,000-man officer corps.[14] Yahya also agreed to hold free elections, but when voters came out in December 1970, the Awami League, the independence-leaning Bengali party, swept the East, winning 160 of the 162 seats there and thus gained a majority of seats in Pakistan's National Assembly. Punjabi concerns about Bengali domination pushed the country into civil war. Yahya Khan dissolved his cabinet and postponed indefinitely a meeting of the National Assembly, whereupon East Pakistan broke out in strikes, demonstrations, and open revolt.

In response, in late March 1971 Yahya Khan ordered a brutal crackdown on the East that virtually guaranteed the end of the union with the West. His next move, Operation Searchlight, was a deliberate attempt to decapitate the intellectual elite of East Pakistan. Close to 3 million people were reputedly killed and 400,000 Bangladeshi women raped by the Pakistani army. Even at half that number of deaths, it would have been an appalling slaughter, bordering on genocide.[15]

Faced with massive refugee flows into Calcutta and elsewhere, India intervened in the fighting in support of Bangladeshi resistance. Sensing that a full-scale invasion was coming, Yahya ordered a preemptive strike on India, dubbed Operation Genghis Khan, bringing into full swing the Third Indo-Pakistani War. Summarily routed in the East, 90,000 Pakistani soldiers surrendered to India on December 16, 1971, one of the darkest days in Pakistan's history.

Yahya was not only a poor leader but also one who enjoyed his liquor. The day after the war began, his aides found him "sloshed."[16] His behavior during the crisis was erratic, leaving his commanders in the East humiliated and defeated.

In the wake of the debacle, the army was disgraced, and violent demonstrations broke out against the military government. Yahya had little alternative but to turn power over to the civilians. The new head of state, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was a former foreign minister and leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party, a left-of-center party that he had founded and that has remained under the direction of a Bhutto family member ever since.

In less than a quarter century, the idea of a single state for all the Muslims of South Asia had died. Pakistan's identity crisis, perhaps not unusual for a new state emerging from a colonial past, only deepened. It could no longer claim to be the home of the subcontinent's Muslims. It

could no longer claim to be their defender, especially after its army had killed hundreds of thousands of its countrymen in a horrific repression.

Ironically, the original vision of Pakistan formulated on the banks of the Cam in England had pertained to only one part of Muslim South Asia. Under Bhutto, the new nation would briefly flirt with democracy again, but the seeds of military dictatorship had been planted deeply and would germinate again and again in the soil of Pakistan's politics.

Washington and Pakistan's Early Years

During World War II, the British-controlled territories of the subcontinent found a strong advocate of independence in President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He pressed Prime Minister Winston Churchill to promise them postwar independence, both because it was consistent with American belief in self-determination and because it would ensure greater Indian support for the war effort. By the end of the war, the Indian army had more than two and a half million men engaged in fighting Germany and Japan.[17]

No other issue at the time so divided FDR and Churchill; it even drove the prime minister to seriously consider resigning from office.[18] In the end FDR backed down since Churchill was adamantly opposed to the idea of Indian independence, a position he persisted in for the rest of his life. Had Churchill not been defeated in the 1945 elections, India would have faced a much harder time securing its freedom. As it was, he worked quietly behind the scenes to promote partition and thereby help Pakistan and Jinnah, hoping to at least humiliate Mahatma Gandhi and his new state. His backroom support in this regard was so important, writes one historian, that "if Jinnah is regarded as the father of Pakistan, Churchill must qualify as its uncle; and, therefore, as a pivotal figure in the resurgence of political Islam."[19]

Churchill's Labor Party successors, on the other hand, were eager to get out of India so as to better focus on Britain's enormous domestic problems in the aftermath of the war. They would see partition as the means to quit.

After FDR, President Harry Truman had less to do with securing the freedom of the subcontinent, being more tied up in issues such as the emerging cold war with the Soviet Union. Although most Americans

favored a unified India and were sympathetic to Gandhi, they did not feel strongly about Pakistan one way or the other. Truman recognized the new state at its birth but offered it no significant American assistance. Given its enormous challenges after independence, Pakistan was eager for American help, hoping in particular to secure a half billion dollars' worth of arms aid. But Washington had its hands full elsewhere and turned these requests aside, even when Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan made a point of visiting Washington in May 1950, the first senior Pakistani official to do so.

With the onset of the Korean War, however, the Truman administration began showing more interest in helping Pakistan, thinking it might be willing to send troops to fight with the United Nations forces in Korea. Pakistan declined.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, Truman's Republican successor, believed an arms relationship with Pakistan—even an alliance—would be beneficial. In its eight years, the Eisenhower administration focused on making Pakistan a bulwark against communism in South Asia. Ike decided to move forward with arms aid and established a relationship between Pakistan and the CIA that endures even today.

Eisenhower's secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, had a connection with South Asia. His grandfather, John Welsh Dulles, had been a Presbyterian missionary in British India and had written a book titled *Life in India* that praised the Raj for its colonial rule. But it was John Foster Dulles's fierce anti-communism that drew a cold reception on a visit in May 1953, the first to South Asia by a U.S. secretary of state. New Delhi was also opposed to his ideas for setting up regional alliances in the Middle East and South Asia akin to NATO, to contain Russia and China.

By contrast, Karachi welcomed Dulles with enthusiasm, eager for American military aid and for an alliance that would strengthen its hand against India. Pakistan was quite happy to join the anti-communist chorus—as an Islamic state, it was opposed to atheistic Marxism anyway—but its eyes were mainly on its own agenda. India, not China or Russia, was its strategic concern. The Eisenhower team was prepared to overlook Pakistan's agenda if it would play ball on the U.S. side in the cold war. Thus was born an alliance.

Dulles returned to Washington praising the Pakistanis and criticizing India. He told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that Pakistan

would fight communists with its "bare hands"—that its "lancers were 6 feet 2 inches" tall and sat on "great big horses and were out of this world."[20] Of course, what Pakistan wanted was to equip its antiquated lancers with American tanks.

In the fall of 1953 Chief of Army Staff Ayub Khan arrived in Washington with a shopping list and an engaging personality. The Eisenhower team became enraptured with the Sandhurst-trained general. After his visit to South Asia in December 1953, Vice President Richard Nixon came back a convert, a true believer in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. As he informed the National Security Council, "Pakistan is a country I would like to do everything for. The people have less complexes than the Indians."[21] Arms aid began in 1954. The Pakistanis consistently pressed for more than the Pentagon was prepared to sell or give, but the White House, especially the Office of the Vice President, pushed to give more.

In 1955 Pakistan joined two of the U.S. administration's new alliance systems: the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). With its membership in these organizations, Pakistan officially became America's "most allied ally" and its full partner in waging the global cold war.

Thereafter intelligence cooperation expanded rapidly. Dulles's brother, CIA director Allen Dulles, worked to develop a strong liaison with the ISI. The CIA even helped Karachi draft a constitution, sending over American expert Charles Burton Marshall as an adviser.[22]

The centerpiece of the new clandestine intelligence relationship was an airbase outside of Peshawar, constructed in 1958. This top-secret base housed U.S. Air Force 6937 Communications Group, which included two important facilities: a listening post for the National Security Agency to monitor communications in the Soviet Union and China, and a base for the secret photo reconnaissance aircraft, the U2, to be flown over Russia. Both facilities were crucial to collecting intelligence on communism in the late 1950s and early 1960s and put Pakistan on the front line of the cold war. The United States was indebted to Pakistan for the use of these facilities.[23]

When a U2 was shot down by Soviet observers in May 1960, the secret airbase was exposed to the world. Nonetheless it remained in operation until 1968 and would be far from the last manifestation of the intelligence relationship between Pakistan and the United States.

That relationship had the support of Ayub Khan, who had seized power in the coup of October 1958. Ayub Khan was not only well known and liked in Washington but helped offset the recent loss of another critical partner in America's alliance systems when Iraq's Hashemite government was toppled by a leftist coup in July 1958. Eisenhower's America was happy to have a strongman in Pakistan to ensure the alliance lasted and in December 1959 sent Ike on a first-ever presidential visit to the subcontinent, with stops in India and Afghanistan, as well as Pakistan, which gave him a warm welcome. (The trip was also the maiden voyage for Air Force One, the president's special executive airplane.)

Following the coup, however, parts of the American intelligence community forecast—accurately, as it turned out—that a military dictatorship would only further exacerbate Pakistan's underlying weaknesses, especially the East-West division. The State Department's Bureau of Intelligence Research believed that a prolonged period of military rule would increase "discontent in East Pakistan and jeopardize the unity of the two wings of the country."[24]

Strong ties with Pakistan continued into the new Democratic administration of John F. Kennedy, which sought better relations with both Pakistan and India. JFK welcomed Ayub Khan to the White House in July 1961, hosted a state dinner for him at Mount Vernon—the only such event ever held at the home of the nation's first president—and welcomed him back to Washington in September 1962, with side visits to Kennedy's farm in Middlesex, Virginia, and the summer White House in Newport, Rhode Island.

The relationship survived despite growing U.S. ties with India, particularly after the brief Indo-Chinese border war in late 1962. Pakistan was nervous about U.S. arms aid to India but was assured by Kennedy that no harm would come to U.S.-Pakistani relations.

In 1965, however, the tide turned when India and Pakistan went to war. Kennedy's successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, cut off aid to both countries in a bid to put a quick stop to the fighting. This came as a great blow to Pakistan, which had a longer and deeper arms relationship with the United States than India did. Pakistanis felt betrayed. After all, they were a treaty ally of America and hosted the U2 base, while India was a nonaligned nation that often tilted toward Moscow.

One consequence of the rift was that Pakistan now approached India's nemesis of 1962, China, for help. In just a few years, it built a strong relationship with Beijing and moved from a putatively arch anti-communist ally, a SEATO and CENTO member, to one of China's closest partners. China would supplant the United States as Pakistan's chief source of arms and in time would become its nuclear partner as well.

The rift with Washington was short lived, however, and arms ties resumed with the election of Richard Nixon in 1968. Nixon was now an even more enthusiastic Pakistan supporter than he had been as vice president. Pakistan became the key to Nixon's secret diplomacy as president, the means to opening the door to Beijing. During a visit to South Asia in August 1969, Nixon approached Yahya Khan with the idea of Pakistan serving as an intermediary to establish direct American-Chinese contacts. For the next two years, Pakistan passed messages back and forth between Nixon and Mao.

On July 9, 1971, Nixon's national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, visited Pakistan. After a day of talks, the press was told Kissinger had become ill and would rest for a short time in the hills outside Islamabad. In fact, he secretly flew to Beijing to consummate the budding rapprochement with China. On July 15, 1971, Nixon divulged the secret talks to the nation and the world, announcing that he would fly to China himself.

Nixon felt indebted to Yahya Khan for brokering the most important diplomatic achievement of his presidency. So it was no surprise that he "tilted" toward Pakistan in the crisis over Bangladeshi independence later that year. Nixon ordered the CIA to tell Jordan and Iran it was their duty to send arms to help Pakistan, including American arms, even though this violated the arms ban still in place from the 1965 war. Despite the horrific brutality of Khan's Operation Searchlight and protests within the State Department about supporting it, Pakistan was not condemned by Washington and, when the Indo-Pakistani war began, Nixon sent an American carrier battle group into the Bay of Bengal to try to intimidate India's prime minister, Indira Gandhi, whom Nixon loathed. But she was not in the least frightened by American gunboat diplomacy.

Pakistan's defeat in the 1971 conflict proved to be another setback for American-Pakistani relations. As in 1965, Pakistanis felt the United States had let them down. What was the purpose of a strong military

and intelligence connection with Washington if it abandoned them in a conflict with their greatest enemy, India? The triangle Washington had entered with New Delhi and Islamabad now seemed heavily tilted toward India. Pakistan's generals had governed their country badly and grossly misread their American friends. Their relations with the United States had become enveloped in distrust. Witnessing his country's defeat on television, a young Pakistani student at the University of Louvain in Belgium, A. Q. Khan, summed up the nation's mood: "I was in Belgium in 1971, when the Pakistani army surrendered in the then East Pakistan and faced utmost humiliation. Hindus and Sikhs were beating them with shoes, and their heads were being shaved in the concentration camps. I saw those scenes with horror."[25]