

Pakistan: “The Taliban’s Godfather”?

Documents Detail Years of Pakistani Support for Taliban, Extremists

By [The National Security Archive](#)

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Global Research Editor’s Note

These newly declassified documents on Pakistani covert support to the Taliban and Kashmiri separatist groups confirms the historic role of Pakistani intelligence and its covert operations since the onslaught of the Soviet Afghan war.

What the declassified documents do not mention, however, is the role of US intelligence.

In carrying out these covert operations, Pakistani intelligence was acting “as a go between” on behalf of the CIA.

The Soviet-Afghan war was part of a CIA covert agenda initiated during the Carter administration, which consisted in actively supporting and financing the Islamic brigades, later known as Al Qaeda. The Pakistani military regime played from the outset in the late 1970s, a key role in US sponsored military and intelligence operations in Afghanistan. In the post-Cold war era, this central role of Pakistan in US intelligence operations was extended to the broader Central Asia- Middle East region. The proceeds of the Golden Crescent drug trade, which was protected by the CIA, were used to channel support to the Mujahideen.

America’s covert war in Afghanistan, using Pakistan as a launch pad, was in fact initiated during the Carter administration prior to the Soviet “invasion”. In the published memoirs of Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who held the position of deputy CIA Director at the height of the Soviet Afghan war, US intelligence was directly involved from the outset, prior to the Soviet invasion, in channeling aid to the Islamic brigades. This assertion of Robert Gates is also confirmed by [President Carter’s National Security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, \(Interview Nouvel Observateur, 15-21 January 1998\)](#)

With CIA backing and the funneling of massive amounts of U.S. military aid, the Pakistani ISI had developed into a “parallel structure wielding enormous power over all aspects of government”. (Dipankar Banerjee, “Possible Connection of ISI With Drug Industry”, India Abroad, 2 December 1994). The ISI had a staff composed of military and intelligence officers, bureaucrats, undercover agents and informers, estimated at 150,000. (Ibid)

Historically, Pakistan has played a central role in “war on terrorism”. Pakistan constitutes from Washington’s standpoint a geopolitical hub. It borders onto Afghanistan and Iran. It has played a crucial role in the conduct of US and allied military operations in Afghanistan as well as in the context of the Pentagon’s war plans in relation to Iran.

Pakistan remains a training ground for the US sponsored Islamic brigades in the Middle East,

Africa, Central Asia, South and South East Asia

President Pervez Musharraf, is described by the Western media as “a U.S. ally in its battle against terrorism” Realities are turned upside down. The Pakistani military regime has consistently, since the late 1970s, abetted and financed “Islamic terrorist organizations” on Washington’s behalf.

Pakistan’s ISI was always acting in close liaison with Washington. The Taliban would not have been able to accede to political power and form a government without US military aid, channeled through Pakistan.

In examining these documents, the subordinate role of Pakistani intelligence should be taken into careful consideration.

Michel Chossudovsky, August 31, 2008

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Covert Policy Linked Taliban, Kashmiri Militants, Pakistan’s Pashtun Troops

Aid Encouraged Pro-Taliban Sympathies in Troubled Border Region

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Washington D.C., August 14, 2007 – A collection of newly-declassified documents published today detail U.S. concern over Pakistan’s relationship with the Taliban during the seven-year period leading up to 9-11. This new release comes just days after Pakistan’s president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, acknowledged that, “There is no doubt Afghan militants are supported from Pakistan soil.” While Musharraf admitted the Taliban were being sheltered in the lawless frontier border regions, the declassified U.S. documents released today clearly illustrate that the Taliban was directly funded, armed and advised by Islamabad itself.

Obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by the National Security Archive at George Washington University, the documents reflect U.S. apprehension about Islamabad’s longstanding provision of direct aid and military support to the Taliban, including the use of Pakistani troops to train and fight alongside the Taliban inside Afghanistan. [Doc 17] The records released today represent the most complete and comprehensive collection of declassified documentation to date on Pakistan’s aid programs to the Taliban, illustrating Islamabad’s firm commitment to a Taliban victory in Afghanistan. [Doc 34].

These new documents also support and inform the findings of a recently-released [CIA](#)

[intelligence estimate](#) characterizing Pakistan's tribal areas as a safe haven for al-Qaeda terrorists, and provide new details about the close relationship between Islamabad and the Taliban in the years prior to the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Declassified State Department cables and U.S. intelligence reports describe the use of Taliban terrorist training areas in Afghanistan by Pakistani-supported militants in Kashmir, as well as Pakistan's covert effort to supply Pashtun troops from its tribal regions to the Taliban cause in Afghanistan—effectively forging and reinforcing Pashtun bonds across the border and consolidating the Taliban's severe form of Islam throughout Pakistan's frontier region.

Also published today are documents linking Harakat ul-Ansar, a militant Kashmiri group funded directly by the government of Pakistan, [[Doc 10](#)] to terrorist training camps shared by Osama bin Laden in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. [[Doc 16](#)]

Of particular concern was the potential for Islamabad-Taliban links to strengthen Taliban influence in Pakistan's tribal regions along the border. A January 1997 cable from the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan observed that “for Pakistan, a Taliban-based government in Kabul would be as good as it can get in Afghanistan,” adding that worries that the “Taliban brand of Islam...might infect Pakistan,” was “apparently a problem for another day.” [[Doc 20](#)] Now ten years later, Islamabad seems to be acknowledging the domestic complications that the Taliban movement has created within Pakistan. A report produced by Pakistan's Interior Ministry and obtained by the International Herald Tribune in June 2007 warned President Pervez Musharraf that Taliban-inspired Islamic militancy has spread throughout Pakistan's tribal regions and could potentially threaten the rest of the country. The document is “an accurate description of the dagger pointed at the country's heart,” according to one Pakistani official [quoted in the article](#). “It's tragic it's taken so long to recognize it.”

Islamabad denies that it ever provided military support to the Taliban, but the newly-released documents report that in the weeks following the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 1996, Pakistan's intelligence agency was “supplying the Taliban forces with munitions, fuel, and food.” Pakistan's Interservice Intelligence Directorate was “using a private sector transportation company to funnel supplies into Afghanistan and to the Taliban forces.” [[Doc 15](#)] Other documents also conclude that there has been an extensive and consistent history of “both military and financial assistance to the Taliban.” [[Doc 8](#)]

The newly-released documents also shed light on the complexity of U.S. diplomacy with Pakistan as the State Department has struggled to maintain the U.S.-Pakistan alliance amid concerns over the rise of the Taliban regime. In one August 1997 cable, U.S. Ambassador Thomas W. Simons advises, “Our good relations with Pakistan associate us willy-nilly, so we need to be extremely careful about Pakistani proposals that draw us even closer,” adding that, “Pakistan is a party rather than just a mediator [in Afghanistan].” [[Doc 24](#)] In another 1997 cable, the Embassy asserts that “the best policy for the U.S. is to steer clear of direct involvement in the disputes between the two countries [Pakistan and Iran], and to continue to work for peace in Afghanistan.” [[Doc 22](#)]

As to Pakistan's end-game in supporting the Taliban, several documents suggest that in the interest of its own security, Pakistan would try to moderate some of the Taliban's more extreme policies. [[Doc 8](#)] But the Taliban have a long history of resistance to external interests, and the actual extent of Pakistani influence over the Taliban during this period remains largely speculative. As the State Department commented in a cable from late-1995, “Although Pakistan has reportedly assured Tehran and Tashkent that it can control the Taliban, we remain unconvinced. Pakistan surely has some influence on the Taliban, but it

falls short of being able to call the shots.” [\[Doc 7\]](#)

Highlights

- August 1996: Pakistan Intelligence (ISID) “provides at least \$30,000 – and possibly as much as \$60,000 – per month” to the militant Kashmiri group Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA). Despite this aid, the group is reaching out to sponsors of international terrorism including Osama bin Laden for additional support, and may in the near future become a threat to Islamabad itself as well as U.S. interests. HUA contacts have hinted they “might undertake terrorist actions against civilian airliners.” [\[Doc 10\]](#)
- October 1996: A Canadian intelligence document released by the National Security Agency and originally classified Top Secret SI, Umbra comments on recent Taliban military successes noting that even Pakistan “must harbour some concern” regarding the Taliban’s impressive capture of Kabul, as such victory may diminish Pakistan’s influence over the movement and produce a Taliban regime in Kabul with strong links to Pakistan’s own Pashtuns. [\[Doc 14\]](#)
- October 1996: Although food supplies from Pakistan to the Taliban are conducted openly through Pakistan’s intelligence agency, the ISID, “the munitions convoys depart Pakistan late in the evening hours and are concealed to reveal their true contents.” [\[Doc 15\]](#)
- November 1996: Pakistan’s Pashtun-based “Frontier Corps elements are utilized in command and control; training; and when necessary – combat” alongside the Taliban in Afghanistan. [\[Doc 17\]](#)
- March 1998: Al-Qaeda and Pakistan government-funded Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA) have been sharing terrorist training camps in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan for years [\[Link Doc 16\]](#), and HUA has increasingly been moving ideologically closer to al-Qaeda. The U.S. Embassy in Islamabad is growing increasingly concerned as Fazlur Rahman Khalil, a leader in Pakistan’s Harakat ul-Ansar has signed Osama bin Laden’s most recent fatwa promoting terrorist activities against U.S. interests. [\[Doc 26\]](#)
- September 1998 [\[Doc 31\]](#) and March 1999 [\[Doc 33\]](#): The U.S. Department of State voices concern that Pakistan is not doing all it can to pressure the Taliban to surrender Osama bin Laden. “Pakistan has not been responsive to our requests that it use its full influence on the Taliban surrender of Bin Ladin.” [\[Doc 33\]](#)
- September 2000: A cable cited in *The 9/11 Commission Report* notes that Pakistan’s aid to the Taliban has reached “unprecedented” levels, including recent reports that Islamabad has possibly allowed the Taliban to use territory in Pakistan for military operations. Furthermore the U.S. has “seen reports that Pakistan is providing the Taliban with materiel, fuel, funding, technical assistance and military advisors.” [\[Doc 34\]](#)

Read the Documents

Note: The following documents are in PDF format.

You will need to download and install the free [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) to view.

[Document 1](#) - [Excised] to Ron McMullen (Afghanistan Desk), "Developments in Afghanistan," December 5, 1994, Unknown Classification, 1 p. [Excised]

Just as the Taliban are emerging as a major player in Afghanistan, a source [name excised] is troubled over Pakistan's deep involvement in Afghan politics and Pakistan's evident role in the Taliban's recent military successes. His concerns include, "that the GOP [Government of Pakistan] ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence] is deeply involved in the Taleban take over in Kandahar and Qalat," and that Pakistan's efforts to further its agenda in Afghanistan will sabotage U.N. peace efforts currently being led by Mahmoud Mesteri, Special Envoy for Afghanistan for the U.N. Secretary General.

[Document 2](#) - Islama 00975

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, "Northern Afghan Strongman General Dostam Meets Taliban Representatives" January 29, 1995, Confidential, 2 pp. [Excised]

Unnamed Pakistani officials meeting in Islamabad with General Abdul Rashid Dostum in December 1995 allegedly advise Dostum to "not worry about the Taliban, because Pakistan can take care of them." Dostum reportedly agrees to Pakistani requests of cooperation with the Taliban in opening trade routes in Afghanistan for Pakistan.

Dostum also meets with Taliban and Pakistani officials in Mazar-e-sharif in December. He is told by Taliban officials that they have "no territorial ambitions in the north and that Dostum should not oppose them." Despite these promises, in May 1997 the Taliban would seize control of Mazar-e-sharif, taking Dostum's properties and forcing him into exile.

[Document 3](#) - State 243042

U.S. Department of State, Cable, "A/S Raphel's October 4 Meeting with Assef All on Afghanistan," October 13, 1995, Confidential, 7 pp. [Excised]

Pakistan Foreign Minister Assef All tells U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin Raphel that "the main Pakistani message to the [Rabbani] opposition was to unite against the Kabul regime, but not to attack Kabul." Furthermore, "All did not deny that Pakistan had significant contact with and gave some support to the Taliban. However, he said that little outside material support was necessary as the Tall ban [sic] had widespread support throughout the Pashtun areas of Afghanistan."

[Document 4](#) - Islama 09675

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, "Pakistan Afghan Policy: Anyone but Rabbani/Massoud - Even the Taliban," October 18, 1995, Confidential, 6 pp. [Excised]

Pakistan's Ambassador to Afghanistan Qazi Humayun tells American officials in October that "Pakistan now finds itself in the uncomfortable position of backing the Taliban." Pakistan's

already hostile relations with the Kabul-based Rabbani government had recently grown dramatically worse as an angry mob destroyed Pakistan's embassy in Kabul in September, injuring Ambassador Humayun and killing one other Pakistani official. The Rabbani government in Kabul claimed the mob was holding Pakistan responsible for the Taliban take over of Herat. Humayun doubted such an angry and well-organized mob could form in Kabul, a city with weak ties to Herat, without being backed by the Rabbani government. In a separate document U.N. officials independently agreed with Humayun, claiming ["the loss of that city to the Taliban could not have provoked any spontaneous outbursts."](#)

Although admitting to supporting the Taliban, Ambassador Humayun "opined that in many ways a Taliban government in Kabul would be even worse than the present one. Adding that a state under such ultra-conservative religious leadership would not make a good neighbor."

[Document 5](#) - USUN N 004283

USMission USUN (New York), Cable, "Letter of GOP Permrep to SYG on Afghanistan," November 1, 1995, Unclassified, 3 pp.

A reproduction of an October 25, 1995 letter from Pakistan's U.N. representative to the U.N. Secretary General on Afghanistan, this cable is indicative of Pakistan's public statements regarding its policy on Afghanistan. "We would like to once again reaffirm the continued neutral stance maintained by Pakistan in the Intra-Afghan rivalries. We continue to support the ongoing efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference for peace and conciliation in Afghanistan." Pakistan maintains that it is neutral in Afghan politics.

[Document 6](#) - Islama 11049

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, "Afghanistan: Russian Embassy Official Claims Iran Interfering more than Pakistan," November 30, 1995, Confidential, 3 pp.

According to an unnamed official at the Russian Embassy in Pakistan, the Pakistani government continues to provide the Taliban with "modest financial assistance," logistics support, fuel, military training and chooses to ignore a "booming smuggling trade - mostly electronics," that creates huge profits for the Taliban. In spite of this support from Pakistan, the source claims the Taliban's funding mostly comes from Afghan traders and that aid from Pakistan to the Taliban is much more conservative than aid from Iran to the Rabbani government.

[Document 7](#) - State 291940

U.S. Department of State, Cable, "Discussing Afghan Policy with the Pakistanis," December 22, 1995, Confidential, 11 pp. [Excised]

State Department officials in Washington D.C. question the wisdom of Pakistan's Afghanistan policy of supporting any group opposed to the Kabul-based Rabbani government, including backing the Taliban, a group that remains "an unknown quantity to many of Afghanistan's neighbors and therefore much more frightening than the status quo." Providing astute advice to the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan, Washington advises "We see little

likelihood the Taliban would be willing to transfer power to a transitional body acceptable to other Afghan powers. If so, then an unrepresentative Tajik [Rabbani] regime in Kabul will have been traded for an unrepresentative Pashtun [Taliban] authority. Although Pakistan has reportedly assured Tehran and Tashkent that it can control the Taliban, we remain unconvinced. Pakistan surely has some influence on the Taliban, but it falls short of being able to call the shots.”

Although “Pakistan has followed a policy of supporting the Taliban and [is] attempting to forge a military and political alliance among the Kabul regime’s opponents,” the U.S. does not support a Taliban takeover and is seeking to remain a more neutral player. Unfortunately a strong U.S.-Pakistan relationship has led “Tehran, Moscow and New Delhi [to] assume incorrectly that the U.S. is party to Pakistan’s support for the Taliban and shares its antipathy for Rabbani and Masood.... Pakistani policy has undermined the credibility of our U.S. support of the U.N. special mission.”

[Document 8](#) - [Date and Title Unknown] Mori DocID: 800277
Secret, NoFORN [Excised - Released by U.S. Central Command]

Unnamed and undated, this U.S. intelligence document confirms that Pakistan is providing the Taliban with both financial and military assistance, but speculates that because “Pakistan fears a complete Taliban victory may incite irredentist aspirations within its own Pashtun population [Pakistan] will likely attempt to pressure the Taliban into moderating some of its policies.”

Additionally, the document claims that Russia “has pledged to use military force should the Taliban push into northern Afghanistan,” and that India continues to supply weapons to anti-Taliban forces.

[Document 9](#) - Islama 01403

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan: Taliban Official Says Divisions Within Movement Growing; Predicts “Fight with Iran,”” February 19, 1996, Confidential, 8 pp. [Excised]

A Taliban official [name excised] discusses the Taliban perspective regarding Pakistani aid to their cause. Claiming Pakistan has only given the Taliban ammunition once, “at the very beginning of the movement in 1994,” the official explains that due to recent military successes resulting in the seizure of materials, including fuel and ammunition, the Taliban does not need direct supplies from the Pakistanis. He provided one important insight however, commenting that Pakistan “used Afghan traders to channel money to the Taliban, avoiding wherever possible a direct link with the movement.” Pakistan has previously denied providing the Taliban with large sums of aid, instead asserting the movement remained primarily supported by Afghan traders. This Taliban official implies that Afghan traders supporting the Taliban may actually only be serving as a conduit for Pakistani government funding.

[Document 10](#) - DI TR 96-008

Central Intelligence Agency, "Harakat ul-Ansar: Increasing Threat to Western and Pakistani Interests," August 1996, Secret, 4 pp. [Excised]

Possibly in an effort to avoid being placed on the list of state sponsors of terrorism, Pakistan is withdrawing some of its monetary support to Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA), which the CIA describes as "as Islamic extremist organization that Pakistan supports in its proxy war against Indian forces in Kashmir." The CIA is concerned over HUA's recent increase in its use of terrorist tactics against western targets and civilians and its efforts to reach out to sponsors of international terrorism such as Osama bin Laden and Mu'ammar Qadhafi, who "may further encourage the group to attack US interests."

ISID (Pakistan's Inter-services Intelligence Directorate) "provides at least \$30,000 - and possibly as much as \$60,000 - per month to the HUA," but "antigovernment sentiment among HUA leaders is already strong and could grow further" if Islamabad further isolates the group by decreasing support. HUA's recent shift from its limited focus on India to include western targets may indicate the group will also start to aim at Islamabad as "a senior HUA leader has publicly advocated an Afghan-style change of government in Pakistan that would remove the political, bureaucratic, and military hierarchies."

One further interesting note in the document is that "HUA contacts of Embassy New Delhi have hinted that they might undertake terrorist actions against civilian airliners."

[Document 11](#) - NID 96-0229CX

National Intelligence Daily, Central Intelligence Agency, Monday, September 30, 1996, Top Secret, 5 pp. [Excised]

Four days after the Taliban takeover of Kabul, the CIA comments on the Taliban's mixed policies regarding terrorist organizations operating in Taliban-controlled territory, noting that the "Taliban has tolerated some terrorist groups while shutting down others." "Taliban has closed militant training camps associated with Prime Minister Hikmatyar, factional leader Sayyaf, and Pakistan's Jamaat-i-Islami. Taliban has not closed other camps associated with Usama bin Ladin, Hizbi Islami (Khalis), Pakistan's Jamiat-Ulema-i-Islam, and Harakat ul-Ansar, including the HUA's main training camp in Khowst."

[Document 12](#) - Peshaw 00916

U.S. Consulate (Peshawar), Cable, "Afghan-Pak Border Relations at Torkham Tense" October 2, 1996, Confidential, 6 pp. [Excised]

A "reliable contact of the consulate" [name excised] witnessed "30-35 sealed ISI trucks and 15-20 fuel tankers" waiting to cross the Afghanistan-Pakistan border at Torkham. "Between afternoon tea with the officers in charge of the 'ISI convoy' and recognizing the type of vehicle license plate numbers on the convoy vehicles, [name excised] was very certain of the convoy's affiliation." The cable does not specify what was contained in the ISI trucks or where after entering Afghanistan the convoy was heading.

[Document 13](#) - Islama 08637

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, "Afghanistan: Foreign Secretary Mulls over Afghanistan," October 10, 1996, Confidential, 2 pp.

Pakistan Foreign Secretary Najamuddin Shaikh insists that in spite of the rumors, Pakistani aid to the Taliban is not increasing and that Pakistan continues to push the Taliban to cooperate with other factions in Afghanistan rather than unilaterally conquer the country. U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Thomas W. Simons comments that the Foreign Secretary "went to great pains to reassure us that Pakistan is not throwing its chips in with the Taliban. In any case, [the U.S.] will continue to urge Pakistan to avoid the temptation of siding with the Taliban, but instead work to persuade the Taliban that a durable peace is possible only through genuine national reconciliation involving all Afghanistan's ethnic and religious groups."

[Document 14](#)

Privy Council Office (PCO) [Ottawa, Canada] [Released by the U.S. National Security Agency], "IAC Intelligence Assessment - IA 7/96," "Afghanistan: Taliban's Challenges, Regional Concerns, October 18, 1996," Top Secret - SI, Umbra, 12pp. [Excised]

A Canadian intelligence document released by the National Security Agency summarizes the situation in Afghanistan a month after the Taliban takeover of Kabul and accurately projects that the Taliban's recent acquisition of the capital "could now more starkly divide [Afghanistan] into two distinct parts - Pakistan-supported Pushtun/Taliban forces in control of Kabul and most of the country, and Tajik/Uzbek/Shia forces of Dostam, Masood, and the Hezb-i-Wahdat's Karim Khalili in the Panjshir Valley and north."

Pakistan is isolated in its support of the Taliban advance, as "there is clear signs that, aside from Pakistan, Afghanistan's near neighbors - Russia, Iran, India, and the Central Asian countries - harbour real concerns over the regional impact of the Taliban's accession to power." However, even Pakistan "must harbour some concern" regarding the Taliban's impressive capture of Kabul, as it may diminish Pakistan's influence over the movement and may over time produce a Taliban regime in Kabul with strong links to Pakistan's own Pashtuns, perhaps eventually calling "for creation of a 'greater Pushtun nation.'"

To India's dismay, Kashmiri militants will likely be encouraged by the Taliban's recent successes, as many "see their struggle as much in a religious as secessionist [sic] perspective."

The Top Secret SI, Umbra classification designates the information in the document originating from highly-sensitive communications intelligence. UMBRA is the highest-level compartment of Special Intelligence (SI). For more information see previous Archive posting, ["The National Security Agency Declassified"](#).

[Document 15](#)

From [Excised] to DIA Washington D.C. [Excised], Cable "[Excised]/Pakistan Interservice Intelligence/ Pakistan (PK) Directorate Supplying the Taliban Forces," October 22, 1996, Secret, 1 p. [Excised]

This U.S. Intelligence Information Report concludes that the ISI is much more involved with the Taliban than Pakistani officials have been telling U.S. diplomats. U.S. intelligence indicates that the ISI “is supplying the Taliban forces with munitions, fuel, and food. The Pakistan Interservice Intelligence Directorate is using a private sector transportation company to funnel supplies into Afghanistan and to the Taliban forces.” Although food supplies from Pakistan to the Taliban are conducted openly, “the munitions convoys depart Pakistan late in the evening hours and are concealed to reveal their true contents.” The document does not comment on whether Pakistani officials have been concealing this information from the U.S. or if the ISI, Pakistani intelligence, has been keeping its support of the Taliban hidden from other Pakistani government offices, in effect causing Pakistani diplomats to pass along false information to the U.S.

[Document 16](#) – Islama 001054

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Pakistan Counterterrorism: Ambassador’s Meeting with [Excised] on State Sponsor Designation,” February 6, 1997, Secret, 1 p. [Excised]

The U.S. Embassy confronts an unnamed Pakistani official on the unsettling triangle possibly developing between Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA), Osama bin Laden and the Taliban. Both bin Laden and the HUA have been granted sanctuary in Afghanistan and are linked with terrorist training camps in Khost, near Afghanistan’s border with Pakistan. The U.S. fears there could be “a linkup between HUA, an organization Pakistan supported and bin Laden; it could have very serious consequences.”

The Pakistani official replied that the “HUA had been under very strong scrutiny for “more than a year,” and there had been “positive progress” in monitoring and controlling its activities. The HUA, he maintained, was under “enough control” that its activities would not create problems for Pakistan. Similarly he continued, “we won’t allow our territory to be used by Osama bin Laden for such activities.”” According to the official, Islamabad is in control and the ISID (Inter-services Intelligence Directorate) does not operate in Afghanistan on a separate agenda that is independent of Islamabad’s policies.

[Document 17](#)

From [Excised] to DIA Washington D.C., “IIR [Excised] Pakistan Involvement in Afghanistan,” November 7, 1996, Confidential, 2 pp. [Excised]

Similar to the [October 22, 1996 Intelligence Information Report](#) (IIR), this IIR reiterates how “Pakistan’s ISI is heavily involved in Afghanistan,” but also details different roles various ISI officers play in Afghanistan. Stating that Pakistan uses sizable numbers of its Pashtun-based Frontier Corps in Taliban-run operations in Afghanistan, the document clarifies that, “these Frontier Corps elements are utilized in command and control; training; and when necessary – combat. Elements of Pakistan’s regular army force are not used because the army is predominantly Punjabi, who have different features as compared to the Pashtun and other Afghan tribes.”

According to the document, Pakistan’s Frontier Corps provide some of the combat training in Kandahar or Herat provided to Pakistani madrassa students that come to Afghanistan to fight with the Taliban. The parents of these students apparently know nothing regarding

their child's military involvement with the Taliban "until their bodies are brought back to Pakistan."

[Document 18](#) - Islama 09517

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad) Cable, "Afghanistan: Taliban Deny They Are Sheltering HUA Militants, Usama bin Laden," November 12, 1996, Confidential, 7pp.

U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Thomas W. Simons Jr. and the Taliban's "Acting Foreign Minister," Mullah Ghaus discuss the presence of Osama bin Laden and Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA), Kashmiri-based anti-India militants training in Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan. Responding to media reports that HUA militants are training in "two camps vacated by "Afghan Arab" militants in Afghanistan's Paktia (Khost) province near the Afghan-Pakistan border, and intelligence reports that bin Laden "is in or near the Taliban-controlled city of Jalalabad, in Nangarhar province," Ambassador Simons expresses strong concern that the Taliban seemingly are developing policies to shelter terrorists. Ghaus flatly denies that HUA militants or bin Laden are in Taliban territory, "There are no foreigners in Khost province - only Taliban," and "bin Laden was invited to Afghanistan by (Hezb-I-Islami Leader and ousted Prime Minister) Hekmatyar. Hekmatyar left Kabul when we took it over. Maybe bin Laden went with him," "I assure you that [bin Laden] is not in areas controlled by Taliban administration. This is an objective of our movement."

Ghaus insinuates that the Taliban would be more willing to do something about terrorist entities operating in Afghanistan if the U.S. provided them with funding.

According to [The 9/11 Commission Report](#) (pp. 63-65) when bin Laden first returned to Afghanistan in May 1996 he maintained ties to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar as well as other non-Taliban and anti-Taliban political entities. However by September 1996 when Jalalabad and Kabul had both fallen to the Taliban, bin Laden had solidified his ties to the Taliban and was operating in Taliban-controlled areas of Afghanistan. Furthermore the 9/11 Commission Report observes that, "it is unlikely that Bin Laden could have returned to Afghanistan had Pakistan disapproved. The Pakistani military intelligence service probably had advance knowledge of his coming, and its officers may have facilitated his travel... Pakistani intelligence officers reportedly introduced bin Laden to Taliban leaders in Kandahar, their main base of power, to aid his reassertion of control over camps near Khowst, out of an apparent hope that he would now expand the camps and make them available for training Kashmiri militants."

[Document 19](#) - Islama 009994

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad) Cable, "Afghanistan: British Journalist Visits Site of Training Camps; HUA Activity Alleged," November 26, 1996, Confidential, 4pp.

An unnamed British journalist reports to the U.S. Embassy that her visit to two terrorist training camps in Paktia province, near the Afghan-Pakistan border on November 14, 1996 revealed that both camps appear occupied, and her "Taliban sources" advise that "one of the camps is occupied by Harakat-ul-Ansar (HUA) militants," the Pakistan-based Kashmiri terrorist organization. Whether or not HUA's presence in training camps in Afghanistan is known or supported by Islamabad or Pakistani intelligence is not commented on in the

document. The reporter's sources inform her that the other camp is occupied by "assorted foreigners, including Chechens, Bosnian Muslims, as well as Sudanese and other Arabs."

[Document 20](#) - Islama 00436

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad) Cable, "Scenesetter for Your Visit to Islamabad: Afghan Angle," January 16, 1997, Confidential, 12pp. [Excised]

A background document for an upcoming visit of Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia Robin Raphel, the cable summarizes the political and military state of affairs in Afghanistan. Pages 7-9 address Afghan-Pakistan relations, concisely observing that "for Pakistan, a Taliban-based government in Kabul would be as good as it can get in Afghanistan." As Pashtuns opposed to India, the Taliban permit Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA) the Kashmir-based militant anti-Indian group to use Taliban-controlled military training camps in Khost near the Afghan-Pakistan border. The document observes that Islamabad probably understands that supporting the Taliban increases the strength of extremist Muslim political movements within Pakistan, but "probably believes the Taliban will eventually become more moderate," and considers the overall extremist issue "a problem for another day."

Regarding support, "Pakistani aid to the Taliban is more significant and probably less malign than most imagine." Military aid is probably moderate, "consistent with the Pakistani military's budget realities," and that military advice "may be there, but is probably not all that significant since the Taliban do quite well on their own." On the other hand, "Pakistani political and diplomatic support is certainly significant," as sources have informed the U.S. Embassy that Islamabad plays an "overbearing role in planning and even executing Taliban political and diplomatic initiatives." Pakistan also grants the "Taliban free access to the Pakistani market to buy whatever they want, including subsidized wheat flour. This is an enormous advantage over the other factions" fighting for political control in Afghanistan.

[Document 21](#) - Islama 01873

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad) Cable, "Official Informal for SA Assistant Secretary Robin Raphel and SA/PAB," March 10, 1997, Confidential, 13pp. [Excised]

Updating Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Robin Raphel on the situation in Afghanistan, the Embassy advises that fighting is more than likely to continue as Iran and Russia continue to supply Ahmed Shah Massoud in the north, while "Pakistan appears to be reviewing its Afghan policy, but important agencies, such as ISID [Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate], still appear committed to and even supportive of a Taliban victory.

The Taliban continue to protect Osama bin Laden, although "some high-level Taliban say they would send him to Saudi Arabia if it would accept him." Furthermore, the Taliban "appear to have worked out some sort of deal - perhaps brokered by the ISID - that allows Harakat-ul-Ansar, the Kashmiri militant group, to use camps in Khost, and they have not followed through on a promise to allow a U.S. team to visit these camps."

The Embassy recommends a policy of "limited engagement to try to "moderate and modernize" the Taliban." Full engagement would be against American interests as it would associate Washington with a "movement we find repugnant," however a failure to engage

the Taliban at all would further isolate Afghanistan.

[Document 22](#) – Islama 02001

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan and Sectarian Violence Contribute to a Souring of Pakistan’s Relations with Iran,” March 13, 1997, Confidential, 16 pp. [Excised]

Discussing the detrimental impact of Pakistan’s support for the Taliban movement in Afghanistan on Pakistan’s relationship with Iran, American officials conclude “the best policy for the U.S. is to steer clear of direct involvement in the disputes between the two countries [Pakistan and Iran], and to continue to work for peace in Afghanistan.” Providing a history of strained relations between the nations over Afghanistan, the document comments that “Pakistan has consistently denied that it is the Taliban’s godfather, although GOP [Government of Pakistan] officials in private sometimes acknowledge that they have close links and are providing them with foodstuffs and fuel.”

[Document 23](#) – Islama 06882

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan: Pakistanis to Regulate Wheat and Fuel Trade to Gain Leverage Over Taliban,” August 13, 1997, Confidential, 9 pp. [Excised]

Partially as an effort to gain more leverage over the Taliban, but also as a means to restrain drug trafficking and increase revenue, Pakistan has placed stricter regulations on wheat and fuel trade with Afghanistan and plan to demand hard currency in exchange for wheat instead of accepting “powder,” or drug payments. Although Pakistani officials claim that these new regulations are an effort to exert greater influence the Taliban, Pakistan continues to unilaterally back the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. U.S. officials inquiring into the selling of Pakistani wheat in areas of Afghanistan not controlled by the Taliban are told, “the GOP [Government of Pakistan] is only dealing with the Taliban,” and that Pakistan’s “objective is not political, but economic and narcotics-related.”

Note: the document refers to regulating wheat and POL trade. POL stands for Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants.

[Document 24](#) – Islama 007343

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan: [Excised] Briefs Ambassador on his Activities. Pleads for Greater Activism by U.N.” August 27, 1997, Confidential, 5 pp. [Excised]

(Previously released and included in previous Archive posting, [“The Taliban File Part III”](#), March 19, 2004.)

The source for this information remains excised throughout the document, but describes efforts to encourage multi-ethnic negotiations in Afghanistan that would work towards establishing a durable peace in the region. Pakistan urges the U.S. to back the “vacant seat policy,” regarding Afghan representation at the U.N., and Taliban representatives Mullah Hassan and Mullah Jalil promise the source that if U.N. Special Envoy Lakhdar Brahimi returns to Afghanistan, Mullah Omar will meet with him, but due to “the schedule” he was

not able to meet with Brahimi during his most recent trip.

According to the source, the Massoud-led anti-Taliban alliance is weak and “if the Taliban would simply cease all military activity, the alliance would fall apart.” He later adds that the Taliban will successfully take over the country, but “when faced with the challenge of governing the entire country, [the Taliban] will yield to technocrats.”

U.S. Ambassador Thomas W. Simons admits that “Pakistan has a ‘privileged association’ with the Taliban, but not control over them; Iran, and perhaps Uzbekistan and Russia have similar privileged associations with other parties to the conflict. But where does that lead us in terms of practical steps?” The Ambassador advises, “Our good relations with Pakistan associate us willy-nilly, so we need to be extremely careful about Pakistani proposals that draw us even closer. For, at the second level, Pakistan is a party rather than just a mediator.” Regarding Pakistani aid to the Taliban, the Ambassador shows little interest in discussing the accuracy of the 20 million rupee estimate given by the ISI, responding that such a figure “did not include access to Pak wheat and POL [Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants], or the trucks and busses full of adolescent mujahid crossing the frontier shouting ‘Allahu Akbar’ and going into the line with a day or two of training.”

[Document 25](#) - United Nations Outgoing Code Cable - Special Mission U.N.SMA (U.N. Special Mission to Afghanistan), “Present Pakistani Initiatives in Afghanistan” October 30, 1997, [Classification Unknown], 3 pp.

(Previously released and included in previous Archive posting, [“The Taliban File Part III”](#), March 19, 2004.)

Head of U.N. special mission to Afghanistan (U.N.SMA) Norbert Holl and Pakistan’s special envoy on Afghanistan, Iftikhar Murshid, discuss a meeting between Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Mullah Rabbani, a senior-ranking Taliban official. The Prime Minister gets Rabbani to agree to a collective meeting of the various warring factions in Afghanistan, and declares it a breakthrough as Rabbani didn’t insist on addressing the POW issue before meeting. Murshid is less optimistic, as “the POW issue had always come up in the final instance and that therefore omitting it at this time should not be overestimated.”

Pakistan is pressuring the U.S. and U.N. to vacate the anti-Taliban alliance from Afghanistan’s U.N. seat. Holl feels Pakistan would never agree to an oil embargo against Afghanistan, even though such an embargo is a proposed step intended to compel cooperation among the Afghan factions, something Pakistan claims to support. Although the Taliban’s supplies of POL, (Petroleum, Oil and Lubricant supplies) are subsidized by Saudi Arabia, Holl believes “Pakistan would never agree to impede the POL transit.” Rather than isolate the Taliban in order to endorse compromise, “GOP [Government of Pakistan] would sign a new contract with the Taliban today, 30 October, for the supply of 600,000 tons of wheat.”

[Document 26](#) - Islama 01805

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan: [Excised] Describes Pakistan’s Current Thinking” March 9, 1998, Confidential, 9 pp. [Excised]

(Previously released and included in previous Archive posting, [“The Taliban File Part III”](#), March 19, 2004.)

In a March 9, 1998 meeting between the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad’s Deputy Chief of Mission Alan Eastham and a source who appears to be Pakistan Foreign Ministry official Iftikhar Murshed, the officials review several Afghan-related issues including U.S. concerns over Osama bin Laden’s recent fatwa. The U.S. embassy is concerned over Pakistan’s connection to bin Laden’s statement, as the fatwa was signed by Fazlur Rahman Khalil, a leader in Pakistan’s Harakat ul-Ansar (HUA). The source claims Iran is a great influence in northern Afghanistan, while “downplaying the Pakistani leverage on the Taliban.” He maintained that the Taliban has “more than enough ammunition,” and “no arms and ammunition from the Pakistani government have gone over the border in the past three or four months.”

Even though the source claims “Pakistan has ‘little leverage over the Taliban,’” he provides the State Department with some of its first details on how “Pakistan was in the business of providing arms-related supplies to the Taliban... [and] could refuse to provide the Taliban fuel since the Taliban load up their planes in Pakistan.” Pakistan provides support to the Taliban, but has little, if any control over their actions. “If Pakistan held up wheat consignments to the Taliban, the Taliban would say ‘what the hell! We can smuggle enough wheat into Afghanistan to feed ourselves.’”

According to the source, Afghanistan’s border with Pakistan can be controlled by Pakistan if the Pakistani government chooses to do so, as “Pakistan, in the past, has shown that it can control this border. In fact, there are only just over 40 “jeepable” border crossing points. These points could be monitored if the Baluchistan and the North-West frontier provincial governments got serious about the issue of smuggling.”

[Document 27](#) – Islama 004546

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad) Cable, “Afghanistan: [Excised] Criticizes GOP’s Afghan Policy; Says It Is Letting Policy Drift,” June 16, 1998, Confidential, 2 pp

(Previously released and included in previous Archive posting, [“The Taliban File Part III”](#), March 19, 2004.)

A Pakistan government source who is “a longtime and bitter political opponent of [Pakistani Prime Minister] Nawaz Sharif” laments on the lack of a firm “sense of direction” in Pakistan’s Afghan policy and the failure of the Pakistani government to take serious efforts to control its border with Afghanistan. According to the source, who appears to be former Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar, “the Bhutto government’s efforts in regard to Afghanistan could be criticized on many fronts, but “at least the policy was coherent – we tried to build the Taliban up and then tried to push them to negotiations (in October 1996) after they captured Kabul.” Under the “Nawaz Sharif government, there has never been a sustained effort to bring the factions to the bargaining table.”

The source “personally supported the deployment of ISI officers operating out of the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul, and from Herat, Kandahar, and the Jalalabad consulates.” By operating out of these diplomatic posts, the government of Pakistan could better monitor the activities of the ISI in Afghanistan. He suggests that ties between Pakistani and Afghan

Pashtuns are strengthening, which may pose a threat to the continued sovereignty of Afghan government in Kabul.

Although the source is biased against Nawaz Sharif the document notes that his points nevertheless “reverberate because they have been underscored by more neutral observers who agree that the present government is letting its Afghanistan policy drift. The result is confusion as evidenced by the GOP’s [Government of Pakistan’s] declaratory policy, which is in favor of negotiations, and a countervailing policy of ISI support for the Taliban.”

[Document 28](#) - Islama 05010

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Bad News on Pak Afghan Policy: GOP Support for the Taliban Appears to be Getting Stronger” July 1, 1998, Confidential, 2 pp. [Excised]

(Previously released and included in previous Archive posting, [“The Taliban File Part III”](#), March 19, 2004.)

According to a variety of Pakistani officials and journalists, including Ahmed Rashid, Pakistan has “regressed to a point where it is as hard-line as ever in favor of the Taliban.” Pakistani government officials have given up “the pretense of supporting the U.N. effort,” and have become unabashedly pro-Taliban. The Pakistani government, including the Prime Minister, recently approved six million dollars in additional aid to the Taliban over the next six months. The U.S. considers the additional funding a regressive step as the “trend-line had generally been in a more positive direction.”

Rashid reports that he heard comments from Pakistani officials arguing that “the Taliban are capable of taking over all of Afghanistan; their regime is qualitatively (sic) better for the Afghan people than that of their opponents; [and] the outside world should try to understand the Taliban mind-set before condemning them on such issues as human rights etc..” Such opinions are echoed by another Pakistani source whose name is excised in the document, “If it were not for the war, the Taliban would be making progress on women’s issues. They would be making such progress now, but the U.N. has failed to help them, despite Taliban requests.” The same source also commends the Taliban for bringing stability to Afghanistan while explaining how “the Northern Alliance is totally unreliable. They refuse to keep their word.”

The cable speculates the spike in pro-Taliban Pakistani feeling can be attributed to the political fallout of recent nuclear testing and increased regional tension. These developments have increased Pakistan’s need for a pro-Pakistan, anti-India regime in Kabul.

[Document 29](#) - Islama 05535

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “In Bilateral Focussed (sic) on Afghanistan, GOP Reviews Pak/Iran Effort; A/S Inderfurth Expresses U.S. Concerns About the Taliban” July 23, 1998, Confidential, 16 pp. [Excised]

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl Inderfurth meeting with Pakistani Foreign Minister Shamshad Ahmed discusses joint Pakistan/Iran talks on the peace effort in Afghanistan and Pakistan’s role in Afghanistan. During the meeting, “Ahmed denied that the GOP [Government of Pakistan] is providing anything but “oil and wheat” to the

Taliban. In addition, he asserted that the type of assistance that was given by Pakistan to the Taliban was also provided [to] the northern factions.”

[Document 30](#) - Islama 005964

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan: Evidence Not There to Prove Assertions that Pak Troops Have Been Deployed to Assist Taliban in the North,” August 6, 1998, Confidential, 5 pp. [Excised]

There is no evidence to support claims that recent Taliban military victories are the result Pakistani troop participation in Taliban battles. Members of the Northern Alliance told the U.S. Embassy that it “was inconceivable that the Taliban could ‘do it all on their own,’” but U.S. efforts to substantiate these claims failed to produce supporting evidence. Although the participation of large numbers of Pakistani troops seems unlikely, it remains possible that Pakistani military advisors were involved in training Taliban fighters. Taliban ranks furthermore continue to be filled with Pakistani nationals (an estimated 20-40 percent of Taliban soldiers are Pakistani according to the document), which further solidifies Pakistan-Taliban relations, even though this does not indicate not outward or official Pakistani government support. Osama bin Laden is mentioned as supporting pro-Taliban Arab fighters from an office in Herat.

[Document 31](#) - Islama 07242

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan: Tensions Reportedly Mount Within Taliban as Ties With Saudi Arabia Deteriorate Over Bin Ladin,” September 28, 1998, Secret, 8 pp. [Excised]

Primarily discussing the Taliban’s firm opposition to surrender Osama bin Laden and Saudi Arabia’s recently failed attempts to negotiate bin Laden’s expulsion from Afghanistan, the document concludes with the following thoughts from U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan William Milam, “If Pakistan - the Taliban’s closest international supporter - throws in its weight behind Saudi Arabia on the bin Laden issue, the pressure on the Taliban may become unbearable. As of this time, Pakistan has not yet made its position clear.”

[Document 32](#) - Islama 01320

U.S. Embassy (Islamabad), Cable, “Afghanistan: Taliban Seem to Have Less Funds and Supplies This Year, But the Problem Does Not Appear to be that Acute,” February 17, 1999, Confidential, 2 pp. [Excised]

Suffering under sanctions imposed in response to nuclear weapons testing in May 1998, Pakistan has reduced aid to the Taliban, although sources indicate Pakistan “continued to write a check worth a million or so dollars every couple of months.” This decrease in support is not a political move by Pakistan, but appears to be a purely budgetary decision. Unlike certain other documents on Pakistan aid to the Taliban, this cable reports that there is little evidence of direct military aid from Pakistan to the Taliban, as Pakistan only admits to sending flour and fuel.

Additionally Saudi Arabia, concerned over the Taliban’s sheltering of Osama bin Laden, has

been successful in reducing private Saudi donations flowing into Afghanistan. However the Taliban, through their access to drug trafficking, income from transit taxes, and continued, although limited support from Pakistan as well as the “capture of a fair amount of equipment during their successful late 1998 military campaign,” does not seem to be in any immediate trouble from the recent decrease in funding from Pakistan. The cable also mentions that Osama “bin Ladin has also provided the Taliban with some money, but probably not enough to make a significant difference in their case balance.”

The Taliban’s main opponent, Ahmed Shah Masoud continues to be very well funded, from Iranian, Russian, Uzbek and Tajik sources and although the Taliban show no immediate sign of weakening from the drop in funding, U.S. Ambassador Milam notes that “slight variations in funding and supplies can mean the difference between victory and defeat” in such small-scale, low-tech conflicts such as the war between the Northern Alliance and the Taliban.

[Document 33](#)

Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Karl F. Inderfurth to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, “Pushing for Peace in Afghanistan,” March 25, 1999 [approx], Secret, 6pp.

Despite diplomatic approaches, continued fighting in Afghanistan is likely as Pakistan continues to provide aid to the Taliban in their quest for complete control of Afghanistan, while Iran and Russia support Ahmad Shah Massoud and the Northern Alliance. Pakistan’s alliance with the Taliban is stronger than Iran or Russia with Masoud as “Iran and Russia are more likely to end diplomatic and covert support to Masoud than Pakistan would be to end its support to the Taliban.”

The document portrays a slightly stronger Pakistan-Taliban alliance than previous declassified State Department materials. Pakistan not only provides aid to the Taliban, but “will continue to seek and support a Taliban military victory.” Pakistan is an isolated country in international dealings on Afghanistan. The UN’s informal “Six-Plus-Two” group overseeing efforts to diffuse the conflict in Afghanistan includes the six nations with borders along Afghanistan – China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – as well as the two mediating powers Russia and the U.S., but according to the document may as well be changed to an “Eight Minus One” (Pakistan) process, emphasizing the isolation of Pakistan.”

Furthermore, “Pakistan has not been responsive to [American] requests that it use its full influence on the Taliban surrender of Bin Ladin.” The Department believes “that Pakistan can do more, including cutting POL supplies that mostly flow into Afghanistan from Pakistan.” “Continued Pakistani resistance and/or duplicity” may lead the U.S. to push for U.N. Security Council involvement, or for the inclusion of India in the “Six-Plus-Two” negotiations.

Current U.S. policy towards Afghanistan consists of supporting diplomatic approaches such as “Six-Plus-Two,” and doing what is possible to moderate the behavior of the Taliban. “At the end of the day, we may have to consider the Taliban to be an intrinsic enemy of the U.S. and a new international pariah state. We are not there yet and we do not want to be there. We will continue our policy of trying to mitigate Taliban behavior where and when its ill advised policies cross our path.”

[Document 34](#) - State 185645

U.S. Department of State, Cable, "Pakistan Support for Taliban," Sept. 26, 2000, Secret, 4pp. [Excised]

Responding to reports that Islamabad may be allowing the Taliban to use territory in Pakistan for military operations, in September 2000 an alarmed U.S. Department of State observes that "while Pakistani support for the Taliban has been long-standing, the magnitude of recent support is unprecedented."

In response Washington orders the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad to immediately confront Pakistani officials on the issue and to advise Islamabad that the U.S. has "seen reports that Pakistan is providing the Taliban with materiel, fuel, funding, technical assistance and military advisors. [The Department] also understand[s] that large numbers of Pakistani nationals have recently moved into Afghanistan to fight for the Taliban, apparently with the tacit acquiescence of the Pakistani government." Additional reports indicate that direct Pakistani involvement in Taliban military operations has increased.

In an effort to promote a cease-fire and discourage Pakistan from continuing its efforts to support a military solution to the conflict in Afghanistan by arming the Taliban, Washington candidly states that the U.S. will not accept a Taliban military victory in Afghanistan, but clarifies that the U.S. is "not divorced from reality," recognizing that a solution must be found through a broad-based peace process which includes all relevant Afghan political factions, including the Taliban. The U.S. does not "believe that Masood is the answer."

Note: This document is cited in [The 9/11 Commission Report](#), Chapter 6, Footnote 68 as "DOS cable, State 185645, "Concern that Pakistan is Stepping up Support to Taliban's Military Campaign in Afghanistan," Sept. 26, 2000."

[Document 35](#)

Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research Carl W. Ford, Jr. to Secretary of State Colin Powell, "Pakistan - Poll Shows Strong and Growing Public Support for Taleban," November 7, 2001, Unclassified, 3pp [Excised]

A poll compiled by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research after September 11, 2001, but before the commencement of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, shows the Pakistani public has become more pro-Taliban than it was before the September 11 attacks. As the Musharraf government begins to implement policies distancing Pakistan from its longstanding alliance with the Taliban, the Pakistani public is becoming more sympathetic to the Taliban.

Note

1. See Human Rights Watch Report Afghanistan, [Crisis of Impunity: The Role of Pakistan, Russia, and Iran in Fueling the Civil War](#). July 2001. Vol. 13, No. 3 (C). See also ["Letter of GOP Permrep to SYG on Afghanistan,"](#) November 1, 1995.

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