New America Foundation

National Security Studies Program Policy Paper

The 80 Percent Solution

The Strategic Defeat of bin Laden's al-Qaeda and Implications for South Asian Security

Thomas F. Lynch III, February 2012

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Executive Summary

With the death of Osama bin Laden in May 2011, the United States and Western governments scored a major but still underappreciated victory in the nearly decade-and-a-half-old war against al-Qaeda. Bin Laden's death did not eliminate all of the features of al-Qaeda that make it dangerous as a factor in terrorism internationally. Its role in assisting regional jihadist groups in strikes against local governments and by inspiring "lone wolf" would-be martyrs in acts of violence will remain with us for many years. Yet the manner in which U.S. intelligence and military operatives found and eliminated bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan, was devastating to three of the five most critical features of al-Qaeda:

- Its legitimacy as a core organization capable of choreographing catastrophic global terrorist events;
- Its brand name rights as the ultimate victor should any of its loosely affiliated Salafi jihadist regional movements ever achieve success in a local insurgency;
- Its ability to claim that it was the base for certain victory – much one able to less reestablish a credible unfettered training area for global jihad – in the area most critical to its own mystical lore: Afghanistan and western Pakistan;

Bin Laden's demise also degraded by half – but did not eliminate – the fourth and fifth elements of al-Qaeda's essence: its role as a "vanguard" of a wider network of Sunni Salafi groups and its ability to serve as a key point of inspiration for "lone wolf" terrorists around the globe. As a consequence, the death of Osama bin Laden has produced an 80 percent solution to the problems that this unique terrorist organization poses for Western policymakers.

Dr. Thomas F. Lynch III is Distinguished Research Fellow for South Asia and the Near East at the Center for Strategic Research, part of the National Defense University's Institute for National Strategic Studies (NDU-INSS). *The views expressed here are his own and do not reflect the official policy or position of the National Defense University, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.* *Portions of this research paper were first presented at the National Defense University – Conflict Records Research Center (NDU-CRRC) and the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) – Center for Advanced Governmental Studies co-sponsored Conference, "Ten Years Later: Insights on al-Qaeda's Past and Future through Captured Records," held on September 13-14, 2011 at National Defense University. Dr. Lynch thanks NDU-CRRC and JHU for permission to use some of that material in this paper.*

This 80 percent solution has multiple, important implications. Globally, it means that al-Qaeda's growing isolation from alternative, nonviolent approaches to political change in the Muslim world must be reinforced – and is best reinforced – with a deliberate and visible reduction in the U.S. military footprint in Islamic countries worldwide. Washington can best isolate al-Qaeda and limit its ability to reclaim relevance in the struggle for reform in the Islamic world by quietly enabling security forces in Muslim states to counter al-Qaeda affiliates while simultaneously providing judicious and enduring support for Muslim voices for nonviolent political change.

Yet the most immediate implications of the historic development of May 2, 2011, matter to the trajectory of U.S. policy in South Asia. Bin Laden's demise fundamentally alters the current framework of U.S. and coalition strategy in Afghanistan, and challenges the underpinnings of U.S. policy toward Pakistan. Bin Laden's unique and pivotal role in grafting al-Qaeda's aspirations onto the regional and local aims of the Afghan Taliban and extremist groups in Pakistan means that the U.S. understanding of the major security risks in South Asia must change in the wake of his death. Absent bin Laden, the risks of al-Qaeda's return to unfettered sanctuary in Afghanistan or western Pakistan have dropped dramatically, while the risks of a devastating proxy war between India and Pakistan over their relative positions in Afghanistan continue to grow. The United States and its Afghan coalition partners must better appreciate this altered risk calculus, and reframe diplomatic, military, and economic plans accordingly. The United States must reduce its present focus on killing off every last al-Qaeda affiliated leader or mid-level Haqqani Network operative[1] in Pakistan and pay far more attention to the factors necessary to inhibit proxy war in Afghanistan: an enduring relationship with Pakistan and diplomatic engagement with Pakistan and India on an acceptable political and security framework for Afghanistan into the next decade.

Part 1: Defeating al-Qaeda

October 2011 was the 10-year anniversary of U.S. military action against al-Qaeda and its Taliban allies in Afghanistan. Yet there remains much popular confusion and too little consensus on the appropriate definition of al-Qaeda. This confusion is unwarranted. Al-Qaeda is best understood in the manner most serious scholars of the group have defined it for almost a decade – along five critical dimensions:

- A core organization dedicated to planning, recruiting and training for, and organizing catastrophic global terrorist events against "American, Western, and Zionist crusader" targets, especially in their homelands;
- A vanguard for organizing and coordinating regionally focused jihadist groups toward acts of violence against "American and Zionist crusaders" in the Muslim lands where their presence is believed to defile Islam and in their homelands;
- An inspiration to disaffected individual "lone wolf" Muslims worldwide to act on their frustrations through violence against the symbols of perceived oppression of Islam;
- A brand name representing the ideology of successful violence against so-called crusader governments and officials, in which the most senior leaders of the jihad remain free from serious punishment, penalty, or harm from their acts of terrorism;
- The base for certain conquest of Afghanistan (and western Pakistan) in the name of global jihad;

These five dimensions stand out in the substantive analytical writings about al-Qaeda since at least 2002.[2]

First, it is a small core organization wedded to the pursuit of spectacular, catastrophic attacks against Western targets. This is the al-Qaeda dimension conceived by bin Laden and focused in the mid-1990s by bin Laden and his deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, on the primary mission of cataclysmic attacks against America and Western states. The goal: to

drive them from Muslim lands, much as the mujahedeen had driven the Soviet Union from Afghanistan.[3] It is also the feature of al-Qaeda that motivated the post-9/11 U.S. policy responses in Afghanistan and subsequently in Iraq and Pakistan.[4] Second, al-Qaeda is the vanguard of a wider network of affiliated Sunni Salafi jihadist[5] groups with origins and deep roots in local and regional struggles to topple standing governments perceived as insufficiently Muslim. These are groups that al-Qaeda's core leaders have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to co-opt into its agenda of catastrophic global terrorism.[6] Third, al-Qaeda is the inspiration for a broad variety of Sunni Muslim malcontents around the world who harbor personal or religiously generated resentment against their specific governments. These individuals might be inspired to act independently and violently on their frustrations through Internet or social media contact with al-Qaeda's core or, more recently, some of its loosely affiliated jihadist groups.[7]

Fourth, since September 11, 2001, al-Qaeda has evolved into a global brand, as observed by al-Qaeda chronicler and author Steve Coll during his January 2010 testimony before the U.S. House Armed Services Committee.[8]

Al-Qaeda's spectacular success that day, with its attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, allowed it to ride a wave of popular support across the wider Islamic world for several years. Its popularity in opinion polls among Muslims waned only after 2005, when its ever-widening affiliation with violence against Muslims – from Saudi Arabia to Indonesia – began to wear poorly. Despite this decline, al-Qaeda's relevance as the premier jihadist "brand" lived on in the personas of bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri. Both remained folk heroes due to their ability to survive for years beyond the reach of vigorous efforts by the United States and other Western governments to capture or kill them. The al-Qaeda brand also retained value through the dissemination of prolific video, audio, and Internet messages – the former through the group's modern media production arm, known as *As Sahab* (translated from Arabic as The Cloud), and the latter in a more recent Internet media center known as *Al Fajr* (translated from Arabic as The Dawn). These public outreach efforts were also propelled by other affiliated or sympathetic media outlets. Abetted by other spokesmen in recent years, bin Laden and Zawahiri led a personality-driven media and Internet campaign aimed at inspiring violent activity and taking credit for even the most loosely affiliated acts of global terrorism, so long as the violence might be seen as part of the jihadist struggle against outside anti-Islam forces.

Taken together, the core, vanguard, and brand name elements of al-Qaeda made it unique and exceptional within the Salafi jihadist movement. Bin Laden and Zawahiri consciously organized al-Qaeda as an anchor point for their radical ideology. They channeled a minority, reactionary viewpoint into an often acrimonious debate among Muslims about how to harness the frustration unleashed across the Islamic world by modernization and globalization into a movement to violently remake the world order.[9] The individual leadership talents and unique personalities of bin Laden and Zawahiri mattered greatly to the exceptional characteristics of al-Qaeda. Men of vision, organization, and action, they became to Salafi jihadism's world relevance what Lenin and Trotsky became to what was a diffuse and faltering communist cause in the early 1900s.[10] A proper accounting of the lethality and trajectory of al-Qaeda must acknowledge the historically rare and exceedingly important role that bin Laden and Zawahiri played within a movement that saw itself as "the base" of a global revolution and the organizational cadre for that violent revolt.

A fifth and final critical aspect of al-Qaeda has been its mystical affiliation with Afghanistan and western Pakistan. As global terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna wrote in 2002, al-Qaeda's earliest conception of itself – developed in the late 1980s – included the bedrock function of serving as the base for continuing guerrilla warfare in Afghanistan.[11] Its largely Arab and Egyptian core leadership shared a bond forged in the fight against the Soviet Union and felt the

victory over the Soviets in Afghanistan to be of Allah's will and making. Though veterans from that victory tried and failed during the early 1990s to topple what they saw as insufficiently Islamic regimes in Algeria, Azerbaijan, Egypt, Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia, it was in Afghanistan that groups with mujahedeen origins – relying on critical support from Pakistan's intelligence services – succeeded in establishing a fundamentalist Salafi Sunni state. Claiming this singular jihadist success as their own, al-Qaeda's senior leaders returned from Sudan first to Peshawar, Pakistan, and then to south and southeastern Afghanistan in the late 1990s, making this their base for planning, recruiting, and training international cadres for global catastrophic terrorism. Bin Laden extended his close mujahedeen-based personal ties with Afghan Taliban cabinet-level leaders Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Younis Khalis, and Jalaluddin Haqqani in the form of a personal oath (or *bay'a)* to the Taliban leader of Afghanistan, Mullah Omar.[12] A growing body of literature now demonstrates that al-Qaeda's relationship with Afghanistan's Taliban leadership was punctuated by tensions and misapprehensions, that bin Laden frequently worked around Mullah Omar when making some of his most important decisions and declarations about global jihad, and that bin Laden relied on personal connections in the Afghan mujahedeen alumni (unparalleled among his fellow Arabs) to overcome the reluctance of Omar and the wider Afghan Taliban to support his extra-regional, global jihadist agenda.[13] It is important to understand the historical importance of Afghanistan and western Pakistan in terms of the legacy of the mujahedeen fight, and in the context of the personal relationships among bin Laden, Mullah Omar, and a select number of other Afghan Taliban veterans of the war against the Soviets.

While bin Laden's death affects each of al-Qaeda's five essential features, his passing is most damaging to al-Qaeda's core, brand name, and base for certain Afghanistan conquest, collapsing al-Qaeda's long-standing dominance in these dimensions. Coupled with the reduction in al-Qaeda's effectiveness as a vanguard and inspiration to Salafi jihadist groups and individuals, the death of bin Laden has produced an 80 percent solution to the more than decade-old U.S. quest to defeat al-Qaeda. These underappreciated achievements require a comprehensive reconsideration of U.S. counterinsurgency and counterterrorism strategy for South Asia.

Al-Qaeda's Diminished Vanguard Role

Although bin Laden's death will certainly continue the decline in al-Qaeda's relevance to the constellation of Salafi jihadist groups across the Muslim world, it is unlikely to have an immediate discernible impact on the activity of these groups. Since 2002, a few have retained – or regained – their formal affiliation with al-Qaeda's core organization, but most of these have been in decline since shortly after 9/11. So too has the capability of peripheral groups to participate regularly or relevantly in al-Qaeda's catastrophic global terrorism aims. In the past decade, al-Qaeda affiliates from Indonesia to the Philippines and Saudi Arabia have lost their leadership and seen an end to unfettered access to al-Qaeda's once-unparalleled training camps that formerly infested eastern Afghanistan and western Pakistan. Gone are the days of the late 1990s and early 2000s when a host of al-Qaeda affiliates were carrying out sophisticated international terrorist attacks. The affiliate group in Yemen (al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, or AQAP) appears to be the exception; it is still capable of preparing attacks with global import, but not sophisticated or even successful ones.[14]

The cases of Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in Indonesia and the Abu Sayyaf group in the Philippines stand as prime examples of al-Qaeda's withered reach as an international terrorist vanguard well before bin Laden's death.[15] From the mid-1990s, JI and Abu Sayyaf collaborated closely on national and international terrorist objectives. In 1994 and 1995, JI and Abu Sayyaf facilitated the movement of key al-Qaeda operational leader Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM) as he tested bombs that killed passengers and narrowly missed bringing down a commercial airliner originating

from Manila.[16] JI members who ran camps in the Philippines built bombs in 2002 that blew apart Bali, Indonesia, nightclubs and killed more than 200 people, including many Australian tourists. JI and Abu Sayyaf jointly operated terrorist training camps in Mindanao, a southern Philippines province with islands near Malaysia and Indonesia.

Since 2002, counterterrorism operations carried out by the governments in Jakarta and Manila, along with American, Australian, and other international partners, captured or killed the major leaders of these jihadist groups – terminating long-standing relationships between their senior leaders and those in al-Qaeda's core organization. JI has not been eradicated in Indonesia, but its threat to the Indonesian government is minor and its external operations are believed to be nonexistent. JI's latest leader, an American-educated Malaysian engineer known as Marwan, is the most wanted terrorist in the Philippines. Abu Sayyaf, however, still poses some threat to the government of the Philippines and its military. In July 2011, Abu Sayyaf killed seven and wounded 23 Philippine marines in an ambush, and the group's leader, Radullan Sahiron, is believed to have participated in the attack and escaped. Interviewed in the fall of 2011, Rohan Gunaratna, head of the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research in Singapore, said:

> What is crucial for us to understand is the security situation has vastly improved in the southern Philippines, and that improvement is largely from the collaboration between the U.S. and the Armed Forces of the Philippines.[17]

Jemaah Islamiyah is still interested in international terrorism and could regroup, but its major operatives are on the run. Indeed, Umar Patek, a member of JI and alleged mastermind of the 2002 Bali nightclub bombings, was arrested with his Filipino wife in January in Abbottabad, Pakistan, just months before bin Laden was killed there.

Other groups still generate their own pull, some using western Pakistan as a mixing bowl for interaction with would-be jihadists from non-Muslim countries. The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) poses a conspicuous example in its relationships with disaffected Muslims from Germany. A prominent case of this was documented in 2010 after the capture German-Afghan Ahmad Wali Siddiqui and his accomplices by NATO-ISAF forces in Afghanistan.[18] The details in this case also reveal that the Pakistani intelligence services are acutely concerned with monitoring and disrupting foreign national activities that might lead to major international terrorism events.

Some of what has been made available in the public domain from the haul of information found in bin Laden's Abbottabad compound seems to underscore the difficulty experienced by al-Qaeda's core leadership in performing its vanguard role in recent years. Information shared by U.S. counterterrorism officials in the open press shows bin Laden himself to have been heavily focused in recent years on corralling and redirecting fragile relationships with regional and national Salafi jihadist groups more oriented toward their own local agendas than that most important to al-Qaeda.[19]

Despite this ongoing struggle to remain the prominent revolutionary vanguard, al-Qaeda's greatest prospect for successful terrorism today – and into the foreseeable future – rests with the violence promulgated by those in Salafi jihadist regional and national-level networks. British terrorism expert Paul Cruickshank's early 2010 review of the 21 most serious terrorism plots against the West from 2004 to 2009 revealed that only six received operational direction and tactical training from al-Qaeda operatives in Pakistan. The 15 other cases, including the one plotted by al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) involving an underwear bomb device targeting a Detroit-bound U.S. airliner in December 2009, were either homegrown or developed by autonomous Salafi jihadist groups in Muslim states.[20] A subsequent study of major international

terrorism plots in 2010 revealed that three of the 20 plots recorded against Western nations and two of the six planned against the United States originated from regional "franchise" groups.[21] Compared to the aspirations of core al-Qaeda's plots in earlier years, the regionally and locally developed plots of 2009 and 2010 paled in ambition and potential consequence – an underwear bomber in a single airplane and two bombs placed in ink cartridges in a cargo aircraft versus a half-dozen simultaneous airliner explosions or a massive bomb blast geared to collapse a major bridge or tunnel during an urban center rush hour.

In addition, these regional networks may be al-Qaeda inspired or ideologically aligned, but few have been directly linked to al-Qaeda in terms of interactive planning or operational direction. Those with like-minded ideologies are most concentrated today in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, Yemen, and Somalia. This is a far cry from the extensive networking in 2000-01 among groups with both regional and global terror aspirations that had critical nodes in locations stretching from the Philippines to Indonesia, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Sudan.

The formal linkages among these groups waned long before bin Laden's death, and from its inception al-Qaeda has struggled to orchestrate, much less control, the activities of affiliated Salafi jihadist movements.[22] Yet without direct interaction with al-Qaeda's long-standing hierarchy, none have focused on catastrophic terrorist actions against Western targets as a first priority.[23]

There is evidence that the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), or Pakistani Taliban, promised to attack American targets as revenge for U.S. targeting of its leadership, notably Baitullah Mehsud, who was killed in a 2009 U.S. drone strike in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA).[24]

There is also evidence that the peculiar combination in AQAP of original al-Qaeda leaders who had been confined at Guantánamo Bay and American-born militant Anwar al-Awlaki undertook amateurish, failed, and relatively small-scale efforts to down single Western airliners, and that Awlaki, who was killed in a September 2011 drone attack, interacted with American servicemen already inclined to act out violently against U.S. military targets. In addition, there is some evidence that al-Shabaab operatives in Somalia have worked with American expatriates in an effort that they might repatriate to the United States and conduct terrorism here.

Al-Qaeda's Inspirational Role

Long before the death of bin Laden, al-Qaeda and other jihadist groups worked to inspire "grass-roots" operatives or lone wolves like U.S. Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan, the Fort Hood shooter. This trend has been increasing and is likely to continue without bin Laden. His persona was generally supportive of but never a direct catalyst for Salafi jihadist radicalization of individuals or small groups toward violence in non-Muslim countries.

In 2010, this type of Salafi jihadist-incited grass-roots terrorism accounted for 15 of the 20 major events or plots recorded.[25] Al-Qaeda's role in encouraging this kind of plotting has a long history, but the organization was not directly involved in these specific plots. The growing prevalence of Salafi jihadist social media and Internet sites inciting "lone wolf" or "grass-roots" terrorism is both bad news and good news. The bad news is that grass-roots operatives can be hard to identify, especially if they operate alone. The good news is twofold. First, their activities tend to be sporadic, as Dennis Blair, then-U.S. director of national intelligence, observed in early 2010 in congressional testimony:

> Thus far, however, US Intelligence Community and law enforcement agencies with a domestic mandate assess that violence from homegrown jihadists probably will persist, but will be sporadic. A handful of individuals and small, discrete cells will seek to mount attacks each year, with only a

> small portion of that activity materializing into violence against the Homeland.[26]

Second, these small groups and individuals tend to be far less capable than well-trained, more "professional" terrorist operatives. And this means they are more likely to make critical mistakes that will allow their attacks to be detected and thwarted. Phrased in a slightly different manner, by analysts Daniel Byman and Christine Fair in summer 2010:

> The difference between a sophisticated killer like Mohamed Atta and so many of his hapless successors lies in training and inherent aptitude. Atta spent months learning his trade in Afghanistan and had the help of al-Qaeda's senior leadership – a fact that underscores the importance of rooting out al-Qaeda havens in Pakistan.[27]

The ascendance of "grass-roots" terrorism posed a threat before bin Laden's death, but it is more evident now. The challenge is that some terrorist attacks must eventually succeed. Terrorism is a tactic; as long as the jihadist ideology – with its emphasis on acting out in violence – survives, its adherents will pose a terrorist threat. But when these plots devolve into relatively simple ones, rather than those of a far more complex and spectacular 9/11-style operation, do they constitute a casus belli for expansive bureaucracies, extended encroachment on civil liberties, and lavish expense? If the public recognizes that terrorist attacks are part of the human condition like cancer or hurricanes, it can take steps to deny the practitioners of terrorism the ability to terrorize.[28]

Al-Qaeda's Reduced Core

The enormous influence of bin Laden and Zawahiri on al-Qaeda's core function amplifies the impact of bin Laden's death on this dimension of al-Qaeda, especially when compared to its function as a vanguard or an inspiration.

The reorientation of al-Qaeda's 1998 core organization for the practice of serious and credible international terrorism owed entirely to the mid-1990s combination of bin Laden's charisma and financial connections with Zawahiri's cadre of well-practiced and capable Egyptian and Libyan refugee terror practitioners from the Salafi jihadist group known as Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ).

This combination led to al-Qaeda's rapid ascent as an organization uniquely capable of planning, funding, training for and launching truly catastrophic global terrorist events. While it remains relevant in promulgating Salafi jihadist ideology and inspiring groups and individuals already keen on using terrorism against what they see as insufficiently Muslim governments and agencies, al-Qaeda's core has been marginalized on the physical battlefield for a couple of years. Bin Laden's critical role in hatching plots, attaining financial support, and attempting to incite catastrophic global terrorist activities wasn't easy to detect during recent years. Early insights from the material taken by U.S. forces from his compound in Abbottabad indicate that bin Laden was vital in this role until the very end – albeit with very limited payoff.[29]

Bin Laden's death puts al-Qaeda's core group firmly on the ropes. His demise pushes its central organization past the "tipping point" described by many U.S. government intelligence figures in recent years and cogently summarized by then-Director of National Intelligence Blair in early 2010:

> Counterterrorism efforts against al-Qa'ida have put the organization in one of its most difficult positions since the early days of Operation Enduring Freedom in late 2001. However, while these efforts have slowed the pace of anti-US planning and hindered progress on new external operations, they have not been sufficient to stop them.... We assess that at least until Usama Bin Ladin and Ayman al-Zawahiri are dead or captured, al-Qa'ida will retain its resolute intent to

> strike the Homeland. We assess that until counterterrorism pressure on al-Qa'ida's place of refuge, key lieutenants, and operative cadre outpaces the group's ability to recover, al-Qa'ida will retain its capability to mount an attack.[30]

Proof of this trend – even before the death of bin Laden – was evident throughout the year that began with Blair's testimony. Only one of the 20 major terrorist plots against American and Western targets in 2010 could be traced back to al-Qaeda's core leadership in western Pakistan.[31] We should expect this trend to hold true in the final statistics compiled for 2011 and for the global terrorism patterns to come in 2012. Save for Ayman al-Zawahiri – the lone remaining *essential* core al-Qaeda leader – none of the central group's remaining leaders poses a credible threat to reorganize the core mission. **(See Appendix A)** Then again, as CIA Director David Petraeus testified on September 13, 2011, even Zawahiri is no bin Laden:

> Bin Laden's longtime deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri, succeeded him in June, but much of al-Qa'ida's support base finds Zawahiri less compelling as a leader. We thus assess that he will have more difficulty than did Usama Bin Ladin in maintaining the group's cohesion and its collective motivation in the face of continued pressure.[32]

What's left of the core group simply does not have the operational capability to travel abroad and transfer money that it had prior to 9/11. Al-Qaeda has been doing its utmost to attack the United States and has not pulled any punches. But it largely failed before bin Laden's death, and it should be expected to fail consistently now that he is dead.[33] Thus, even as al-Qaeda's leadership continues to project an image of being in control, its operatives in Pakistan resemble a driver holding a steering wheel that is no longer attached to the car.[34]

Al-Qaeda's Brand Name Resonance

Al-Qaeda's brand name resonance since 9/11 has emanated from two critical factors – both of which have withered in recent years.

First, al-Qaeda's ability to plan and execute a spectacular strike against prominent American targets on U.S. soil gave its core leadership iconic status. While a majority of Muslims around the world were appalled by the orgy of violence represented by al-Qaeda's attacks in September 2001, many of those who felt disempowered or repressed by domestic or regional leadership –which they long suspected was somehow benefiting from American policy support – suddenly felt empowered. The scope of the 9/11 strike set al-Qaeda's core apart from the many regionally based and focused Sunni jihadist organizations. From 2002 to 2005, al-Qaeda operatives planned, executed, or claimed credit for spectacular strikes against Western targets in Bali, Madrid, and London. Yet al-Qaeda's run of truly dramatic successes against the "far enemy" subsequently stagnated. Foiled strikes against airliners flying out of Britain's Heathrow airport in 2006, U.S. military bases in Germany in 2007, New York bridges in 2009, and Danish newspaper office in 2010 – each of which originated with al-Qaeda's central cell in western Pakistan[35] – diminished al-Qaeda's predominance in executing its chief calling card. Subsequent international media attention to planned (and often failed) acts of international terrorism sponsored by regional Salafi jihadist groups from Yemen and Somalia further eroded the exclusivity of al-Qaeda's branding on spectacular attacks (the kind that pose a true strategic threat).

Al-Qaeda's brand remained strong despite this declining capacity for large-scale strikes against the United States and other Western nations due to the survivability of bin Laden (and to a lesser extent Zawahiri) in the face of an intense global manhunt. The two leaders remained beyond the reach of powerful American and Western forces seeking their demise – adding an aura of impunity to the al-Qaeda

brand. This came to a crashing end on May 2, 2011. The swiftness and finality of bin Laden's demise reverberated sharply across the Muslim world. Denials and conspiracy theories remain – and will likely endure – but for most of his longtime admirers, bin Laden's dramatic end exploded this myth of invincibility and impunity.

Al-Qaeda's Afghan Fascination

Despite the fact that al-Qaeda's antecedents lie in the Islamist extremist movements that formed to fight against the autocratic, oppressive regimes of Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Algeria,[36] Afghanistan has held a special fascination. This fascination is derivative of al-Qaeda's peculiar history and its unique aspirations. Al-Qaeda was founded in eastern Afghanistan by bin Laden's longtime Palestinian mentor, Abdullah Azzam, and set up shop in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1988. Before his 1989 assassination, Azzam, with the assistance of bin Laden and other Arab members of the mujahedeen, assured that al-Qaeda's organizing cadre of mujahedeen received more than its fair share of credit across the Muslim world for the defeat of the Soviet empire in Afghanistan and tied this victory into a narrative asserting the power of violent jihad to fully remake the Islamic world. The mujahedeen database originally created by bin Laden for tracking the martyred and the missing in the anti-Soviet jihad provided the springboard for global al-Qaeda recruiting. When bin Laden and Zawahiri were forced from Sudan in the mid-1990s, their return to refuge in Taliban-led Afghanistan allowed al-Qaeda to develop the planning, training, and management capabilities to become the general headquarters for international Islamist terrorism. Since late 2001, al-Qaeda has shared with the Afghan Taliban a view that Pakistan is the natural location for vital efforts to free Afghanistan from foreign rule – to validate the victory over the Soviet Union in Afghanistan by another successful guerrilla war.[37] Born, inspired, reborn, and steeled in Afghanistan for global jihad, al-Qaeda sees success there as an unparalleled bellwether.

At the same time, the Afghan Taliban and al-Qaeda's core leadership diverge in many goals and aspirations. The divergence has been present since the relationship between the two groups began to evolve in the late 1990s. First, the Taliban remains a provincially oriented movement. Its focus has been to control Afghanistan as an Islamic emirate. Al-Qaeda has been a globally oriented, anti-imperialist movement. Many Taliban leaders, including Mullah Omar, have expressed frustration with al-Qaeda's expansive aspirations, seeing them as recklessly risking consolidation of the Taliban's more limited goals in Afghanistan. Second, al-Qaeda's core leadership is largely bereft of ethnic Afghans and South Asian Pashtuns. Long-standing leaders of the Afghan Taliban have associations with al-Qaeda leaders going back to the anti-Soviet jihad, but none are among the key cadre of core al-Qaeda leaders.[38] Related to both points is the curious divergence in how each group describes Afghanistan. The Afghan Taliban calls it the "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" and believes it is a unique, distinct entity with a government in exile awaiting return to Kabul under the rightful leadership of Mullah Omar. Al-Qaeda's core leadership refers to Afghanistan as but a part of the "Islamic Emirate of Khorasan (or Khoristan)," a territory including Afghanistan, eastern Iran, and western Pakistan, without reference to Mullah Omar as the rightful emir. Al-Qaeda has even appointed its own Arab and North African born leaders of this Emirate of Khorasan since 2007.[39] The fact that it has appointed no such parallel emir for Iraq, North Africa, or the Arabian Peninsula appears to be at least circumstantial evidence of important ideological and philosophical differences.

These differences were papered over by the personal history between bin Laden and key Afghan Taliban figures and the mystical history attached by bin Laden to Afghanistan as the cradle for an Islamic emirate and caliphate.[40] Two critical factors discussed by regional experts, including bin Laden's Pakistani biographer Hamid Mir,[41] diminished the policy relevance of these fissures. First, deposed emir Mullah Omar steadfastly refused to renounce ties to bin

Laden or the al-Qaeda core vision of global jihad, despite the fact that his September 2001 refusal to hand over bin Laden to the United States led to precisely what a majority of his fellow Afghan Taliban leaders feared, the toppling of the Taliban emirate in Afghanistan by a U.S.-led invasion.

Second, bin Laden remained at large, with a hyperinflated aura of invincibility and an intact personal *bay'a* to Mullah Omar. For these reasons, bin Laden alone was uniquely critical to aligning an Afghan Taliban movement most focused on its nationalist agenda with his al-Qaeda movement focused on a globally-oriented jihad.

With bin Laden's death, the glue that papered over these fissures is gone. His *bay'a* to Mullah Omar has no analog with Zawahiri or the cohort of Egyptians and Libyans at the helm of al-Qaeda's remaining core elements in Pakistan. It has absolutely no relevance to al-Qaeda's major leaders elsewhere around the globe. Bin Laden's longstanding ties to the late Younis Khalis and Jalaluddin Haqqani, cut with the death of Khalis in 2006, are now totally severed in the aftermath of the Abbottabad raid.[42] The Haqqani Network has been recognized recently as the successor to Hezb-e-Islami-Khalis in facilitating al-Qaeda's global propaganda, which has clashed with Mullah Omar's Afghanistan-focused jihad. But that role can best be understood as fundamentally altered since May 2, 2011. With bin Laden and his closest Pakistani couriers gone, the Haqqanis now, more than ever, need to adhere to the wishes of the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI). And the ISI's wishes – since at least late 2008 – are that its Islamic proxy militias not be engaged in activities construed as extra-regional global jihad.[43]

Al-Qaeda may continue to drape itself in the Taliban flag and proclaim allegiance to Mullah Omar (although this remains to be seen), but with bin Laden's death the Afghan Taliban faces one stark certainty. While it shares a loose but important Salafi jihadist credo with al-Qaeda, it remains dependent on all manner of support for its insurgency from elements within and beholden to the Pakistani security services. Mullah Omar, Haqqani, and even Gulbuddin Hekmatyar must calculate their futures based upon this dominant reality. As they do, al-Qaeda's ability to repeat its propaganda performance following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan – taking credit for any (unlikely) defeat of the United States or any important role in the (more likely) successes the Taliban may have in carving out political space in the country – will wither rapidly. More important, there will be less risk that al-Qaeda will find a serious safe haven in Afghanistan in the near to mid-term future for plotting and conducting training for catastrophic global terrorism.[44] Absent the onset of a stark proxy war between Afghanistan and Pakistan in Afghanistan, Pakistan's military and intelligence leadership will have very little interest in seeing al-Qaeda again set up shop from which to wage a bloody campaign of international terrorism and will utilize the tools at their disposal to constrain this possibility.[45]

Part 2: The Current Political Landscape in South Asia

The present circumstances are fundamentally different from those at the middle of the last decade – a time when, as critics rightly point out, far too many officials in the U.S. government prematurely declared that al-Qaeda was either dead or terminally on the run.[46] Then, America's distractions in Iraq clouded proper judgment about the degree to which al-Qaeda remained a vibrant and evolving organization in western Pakistan, obfuscated the critical manner in which bin Laden was able to bring together disparate local jihadist groups, and generated intemperate claims of victory. The three elements of al-Qaeda most affected by Laden's death were all alive and well at that time.[47]

In 2005-08, al-Qaeda's planning for large-scale terrorist attacks – its core function – was on the rebound. The core had unfettered sanctuary in Pakistan's western frontier, where a critical mass of its main surviving pre-9/11 alumni had gathered and were actively plotting, training operatives,

and sending them off for spectacular, but ultimately unsuccessful, attacks in Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[48] Bin Laden's reputation as the greatest escape artist since Harry Houdini remained intact.

Moreover, bin Laden's personal pledge, or *bay'a*, to Mullah Omar left al-Qaeda well poised to capitalize on an apparent rising torrent of Afghan Taliban and Haqqani Network insurgency successes against an under-resourced NATO military operation and an inept and corrupt Karzai government in Kabul.

It took the focused attention of significant U.S. military and intelligence activities from late 2008 through 2011 to arrest these negative trends and establish a serious network of agents and operatives necessary to severely erode al-Qaeda's key core elements in western Pakistan and kill bin Laden, thus eliminating his irreplaceable import in three of al-Qaeda's five critical elements and his important role in the two others.

This critical American counterterrorism achievement cannot be overstated. However, it can be misappreciated and fumbled if not put in proper context of the long-standing – and now unambiguously more dominant – challenges inherent in South Asian security. Bin Laden's demise represents a substantial solution to Western challenges from global terrorism and is the critical element in disentangling core al-Qaeda's aims from those of the Afghan Taliban insurgency. The regional dynamics of the Afghan Taliban insurgency and metastasizing Islamist radicalism in Pakistan – some of it under the control of Pakistan's intelligence agencies and some of it not – remain at work, and are now more important than ever.

The Danger of Proxy War in South Asia

The war in Afghanistan has long been viewed by American leaders as a struggle to empower a government in Kabul that could resist any return of al-Qaeda's core group of global jihadists. In the aftermath of bin Laden's death, the war is best reconsidered as it has always been viewed in Afghan, Pakistani, and Indian circles. That is, as a Pakistani-supported Pashtun rebellion against a Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara-dominated Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan with links to New Delhi and Tehran, and only a fig leaf of Pashtun representation in the form of President Hamid Karzai, who is completely mistrusted in Pakistan as too cozy with India. Bin Laden's demise should encourage a more sober American and coalition revisiting of the narrative that matters most in the region: one in which Western forces are seen as having taken sides since 2001 in a regional proxy war between India and Pakistan. The United States has placed itself in the middle of a conflict that began long before the Afghan war, with the collapse of the Najibullah regime in 1992, by favoring northern Afghans with Indian ties in opposition to southern Afghan Pashtuns viewed in Islamabad as a buffer against Hindu encroachment. Furthermore, the United States has failed to provide sufficient political or military guarantees in Afghanistan that those conservative, largely rural Pashtuns were not discriminated against by a political construct that allowed for too little regional representation and too much Indian encroachment.

As they have for over 30 years, Pakistan's intelligence services retain the critical, even if far from omnipotent, role in guiding the multiple factions of the Pashtun-dominated Afghan Taliban insurgency. Pakistan's aims in sponsoring the Afghan Taliban do not align – and have never aligned – completely with those of the Taliban itself. First and foremost, Pakistan aims to neuter Indian influence in Afghanistan and prevent what Islamabad fears would be hegemonic encirclement by New Delhi in league with the government in Kabul. Pakistani military and intelligence services view the Afghan Taliban as the most effective agent to secure this objective, with certain martial groups like the Haqqani Network possessing conspicuous talent in perpetrating acts of targeted violence. Pakistan also supports the constellation of Afghan Taliban groups as it seeks to effectively manage the dangerous undertones present in Pashtun nationalism – trying to ensure that

militant Pashtun groups do not coalesce around any vision for a "Greater Pashtunistan" that would threaten a move toward autonomy in the almost 50 percent of Pakistani territory where Pashtuns constitute the majority ethnic group.[49]

With bin Laden dead and the critical mass of the al-Qaeda core in western Pakistan eliminated or severely compromised, the essential dynamics of the Afghanistan war are those with regional, rather than international, import. Fundamentally, the war in Afghanistan is an Indo-Pakistan proxy war – between nations that have fought three shooting wars and indulged in several other martial crises since 1947 – layered atop the ethnic cleavages unique to Afghanistan. In this proxy war, NATO counterinsurgency forces are bit players, and America's counterterrorism activities are perceived as tilting in favor of northern Afghan ethnic groups and Indian long-term interests. America's ability to help wind down the violence will amount to little without a sober evaluation of how its enhanced diplomatic presence and a steady but well-managed reduction in Western military forces must be used to dampen prospects for a rapidly accelerating proxy war between these historical South Asian antagonists.

Islamabad believes that India has established increasingly effective political and economic influence in Afghanistan by leveraging American naiveté, the long-standing hatred of Pakistan among non-Pashtuns in northern Afghanistan,[50] and economic assistance amounting to some $1.4 billion, with another $500 million promised.[51] Pakistan's perceptions persist – and are growing – despite the fact that Indian sources report, and many outside observers confirm, that fewer than 3,600 Indians live or work in Afghanistan, and almost all of them are businessmen or contract workers. Also, there are only four Indian consulates in Afghanistan in addition to its Kabul embassy, precisely the same number that Pakistan maintains.[52] Yet the fear of being squeezed in an Indian nutcracker has led Pakistan's intelligence services to keep the Afghan Taliban in play and its leadership under the ISI's watch and patronage at various locations across western Pakistan.[53]

The high degree of ISI influence over these groups has long been suspected, but it became clear in the past couple of years as outside civilian researchers and Western intelligence services gained access to corroborating information. Important 2010 reports by Matt Waldman at the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at Harvard, Anand Gopal, Mansur Khan Mahsud, and Brian Fishman at the New America Foundation (NAF), and Jeffrey Dressler at the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) chronicled these intimate relationships in some detail.[54] Waldman's work, based on his interviews with 10 mid-level Afghan Taliban commanders from south and east Afghanistan, established that they all understood the role of Pakistan's ISI as indispensible to their insurgency, a role termed "as clear as the sun in the sky."[55] One of the commanders explained why this pervasive role was not more widely appreciated by outsiders for such a long time:

> Every commander knows about the involvement of the ISI in the leadership but we do not discuss it because we do not trust each other, and they are much stronger than us. They are afraid that if they say anything against the Taliban or ISI it would be reported to the higher ranks – and they may be removed or assassinated....[56]

These commanders also told Waldman that the leadership of the ISI is in the hands of the Taliban or the Taliban would not be able to receive the medical, munitions or family support they receive consistently in Pakistan.[57]

The NAF work by Gopal and co-authors, along with that by ISW's Dressler, established the especially important role of the Haqqani Network in advancing Pakistani interests against Indian "agents and provocateurs" in Afghanistan, making the Haqqani Network one of Pakistan's favored Afghan insurgent groups.[58]

This is not to suggest that Afghan Taliban leaders don't resent ISI manipulation. Waldman's interviews confirm reports by Michael Semple and others with contacts in the Afghan Taliban that its leadership deeply resents ISI pressure. This is largely because Pakistan's second critical security aim in managing Afghan insurgent groups is to constrain Taliban abilities to effect any independent "Greater Pashtunistan" or "Greater Afghanistan" that could usurp Pakistani territory west of the Indus River – endangering the very construct of Pakistan since 1971.

Here, Pakistani management techniques exploit Taliban fissures and favor those Pashtun sub-groups deemed less likely to pursue agendas contrary to Pakistani security interests.[59]

Waldman's interviews with Haqqani Network leaders apprehended in Afghanistan during 2009 indicated that they had been trained by the ISI, with one of his subjects claiming, "The ISI is hard to recognise; we could tell, but we kept it secret."[60] An increasing body of evidence confirms that while the ISI remains active with a constellation of Pashtun militants and Afghan Taliban groups astride eastern and northeastern Afghanistan, it has designated the Haqqani Network as a preferred "strategic asset," affording its operatives discreet but special assistance.[61] The network has moved beyond its reputation for local anti-government operations in the Paktia, Paktika, and Khowst provinces of eastern Afghanistan to successful high-profile strikes like the July 2008 and October 2009 attacks on the Indian Embassy compound in Kabul, coordination of the September 2011 suicide truck bombing in Wardak province that killed five Afghan civilians and injured 77 U.S. troops, another strike that month in Kabul that included a 20-hour commando-style attack on International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) headquarters and the U.S. Embassy, and a suicide car bombing in the capital in October that killed 13 U.S. personnel.[62] The increasing pace and audacity of Haqqani Network operations reveals the extent to which Afghan militants play a key role in Pakistan's security strategy for Afghanistan, as well as how the ISI and parts of the Pakistani military play an essential role in sustaining the viability and relative fortunes of Afghan Taliban groups.

These groups serve as Pakistan's proxy against Indian agents and influence in Afghanistan, but also against those viewed as too cozy with Indian interests – including the Karzai government and the NATO/ISAF military forces and Western governments supporting it. As NATO/ISAF military operations since 2009 in southern Afghanistan have eroded Mullah Omar's Afghan Taliban as a prominent proxy for Pakistani interests, Pakistan's intelligence and military activities have helped offset these losses, enabling the Haqqani Network to make a wide and growing reach into Afghanistan.[63] Properly understood, this disturbing certainty makes it clear that real progress against the Afghan insurgency, or toward political engagement with it, requires Pakistani support.

Part 3: Policy Options for the Future

Washington's conflict resolution strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan is much overdue for a rethinking. A sober approach to future policy must look beyond Afghanistan and even Afghanistan-Pakistan to focus on the core dynamics of the South Asian security dilemma.

The Afghanistan Context

With its links to al-Qaeda largely broken by the death of bin Laden, the Afghan Taliban must be reconsidered for what it is in terms of a dangerous proxy war in Afghanistan: a repugnant but resilient insurgent constellation with unwavering Pakistani support, but also in many ways an authentic voice for conservative rural Pashtuns who remain severely disenfranchised from the Kabul government along social, economic, justice, and political lines.[64] In this light, a critical mass of the Afghan Taliban must be better integrated into Afghanistan's fledgling polity in a manner that overcomes its present political isolation without accelerating a decline toward proxy-funded civil war.

American diplomats need to sponsor quiet but serious talks between Pakistani and Indian representatives to craft a set of mutually acceptable rules for enfranchisement of the Taliban, bringing it into an Afghan polity. India is unlikely to ever accept a prominent role at the national level of Afghan governance for the senior Taliban leaders who led the country from 1996 to 2001. Pakistan will certainly want a prominent role for conservative Afghan Pashtuns along its immediate border region even if those provincial leaders are not the same ones who led Afghanistan in the late 1990s. Within this broad construct, there appears room for painstaking but essential negotiations between the two antagonists most likely to nudge Afghanistan toward a more federal governance structure, in which Islamabad and New Delhi realize their minimal security needs, not their ultimate security wants. American and NATO force planners must devise processes to draw down to the residual U.S./coalition forces and/or U.N. military stabilization forces necessary to stay on for the rest of the decade, enforce this essential Indo-Pakistani framework agreement, and serve as a buttress against points of friction or violence that could descend into the chaos of a new conflict.

On June 17, 2011, in a major step forward, the U.N. Security Council accepted a U.S. request to treat al-Qaeda and the Taliban separately, dividing their members into two lists from a single list of global terrorists the United Nations has maintained since 1998.[65] Despite its understandable reservations, India acquiesced to this change. With the two separate lists, U.N. sanctions on core al-Qaeda members will not necessarily apply to the Afghan Taliban. As Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid noted shortly after the change, this will be a major boost for the Afghan political reconciliation process.[66] However, more work must be done to craft a durable political reconciliation process that militates against the most critical risk of future proxy war in Afghanistan. The Bonn II discussions of December 2011 failed in this regard. Bonn II began before proper preconditions were set for a more federal system of governance in Afghanistan, and the last-minute Pakistani boycott negated serious discussion of the critical conditions to be met by the most critical actor outside of Afghanistan.

The eventual establishment of a Taliban political office in Doha, Qatar is another necessary positive step, but one that will take time to mature. [67] It must become a complement with – for it will never be a substitute for -- necessary discussions between Pakistan's military-intelligence establishment, the Indian government and Afghanistan coalition partners on the future shape of an Afghanistan that is more stable and less violent.

Led by the United States, the coalition in Afghanistan must now shepherd reconciliation talks among the Afghan government, the Taliban, and representatives from Pakistan's military and intelligence services to show how a more federal system in Afghanistan can meet Pakistani and Taliban aims while preserving the basic framework of an Afghan republic. Most important, the United States must quietly encourage talks between Pakistan and India that lead to a framework for national governance and security in Afghanistan that each can live with and that outside parties can help enforce. The requirement for such talks is certain and the need to get them started is vital. Without an Indo-Pakistani framework for the future in Afghanistan, Pakistan's military-intelligence leadership will continue to hedge on the certainty of a U.S. troop departure, worry that India will be the main benefactor from the future orientation of Afghan National Security Forces, and continue to interfere with the security situation in Afghanistan as a result.

The Pakistani Context

Much as bin Laden's demise opened the door to better American understanding of the fundamental South Asian security situation that U.S. policy must address, it also requires a revisiting of the issue most critical to U.S.-Pakistan relations. Pakistan's failure to seriously pursue bin Laden within its borders for most of a decade brought it

well-deserved scrutiny in the wake of the Abbottabad raid. This raid complemented – indeed capped off – the necessary and highly successful American-dominated efforts since late 2008 to kill al-Qaeda core leaders and disrupt al-Qaeda operations across Pakistan.

Since the May 2011 raid, American policy toward Pakistan has featured a single-minded focus on unilateral counterterrorist actions geared to "break the back" of al-Qaeda's core leadership in that country.[68] Despite a late-2011 halt on counterterrorism drone strikes in Pakistan after the November 26th cross-border incident that killed 24 Pakistani soldiers, This U.S. policy emphasis remains dominant, even though two factors that suggest it lacks proper focus or reasonable prospect for success. First, the remaining al-Qaeda leaders in Pakistan – with the exception of Ayman al-Zawahiri – appear ill-suited for consideration as credible core leaders for al-Qaeda's future.[69] Despite his reputation for divisiveness, Zawahiri's qualifications as a proven thinker, organizer, and catalyst of international terrorist activities dwarf those of anyone else believed to be in Pakistan. Among those left there, only Abu Yahya al-Libi and Sulaiman Abu Ghaith have résumés with anything resembling the kind of vision, organizational skill, and leadership quality necessary to resuscitate a badly shattered al-Qaeda core program driving global catastrophic terrorism. **(See Appendix A)** Second, the documented success of the American-driven drone program in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) makes it unlikely that Zawahiri would risk staying there. He is far more likely to be in and out of asylum near urban areas in Pakistan where drone strikes pose an unacceptable risk of collateral damage to a large number of innocent civilians, and where his apprehension or elimination would require an important level of Pakistani cooperation.

Thus, it appears a quixotic venture to continue a single-minded, unilateral U.S. counterterrorism tactic in Pakistan led by unending drone strikes that are unlikely to eliminate the prime al-Qaeda target and that have become the universal symbol in Pakistan of American disrespect for Pakistani sovereignty and disregard for innocent Pakistani life.[70] The aggressive drone strikes from the May 2011 death of bin Laden to the November 2011 cross-border U.S./NATO-on-Pakistani-military firing incident played directly into a Pakistani narrative of American hubris and unworthiness as a moral arbiter as much as they appear to be a self-defeating tactic. Each additional strike stirred up an ever-more critical mass of animosity toward America across Pakistani society in a fashion now encouraging what David Kilcullen described as "accidental guerrillas."[71] More young Pakistani males, ordinarily content to remain detached from violence, are becoming charged with participatory zeal to join a fight in Afghanistan that they believe is a righteous jihad to avenge innocent Muslim victims of drone strikes.[72]

Pakistani animus toward unilateral U.S. action has huge implications for America's counterterrorism aspirations in the country, and for the many other security challenges active in Pakistan. First, Ayman al-Zawahiri's death or apprehension will likely require Pakistani cooperation. It would be both prudent and necessary for the United States to pressure Pakistan to focus on the hunt for the most dangerous residual al-Qaeda figure. Second, Pakistan's reported August 2011 dressing-down by Beijing, which alleged links between a Muslim terrorist attack in the western Chinese province of Xinjiang and terrorist organizations in western Pakistan, provides the United States with an opportunity to parallel the Chinese pressure with more of its own.[73] Third, Pakistan's internal challenges from Islamist militants, including the growing incidence of militant-inspired violence against mosques and government facilities,[74] while not threatening an imminent takeover, will continue for some time and will require Pakistan's military and intelligence services to seek outside assistance to make up for their obvious deficiencies. Finally, Pakistan's growing nuclear arsenal – much of this growth focusing on smaller, more accurate, and shorter-range weapons – may eventually play into a crisis between Pakistan and nuclear-armed India that will require U.S. diplomatic or even military intervention.[75]

Indeed, the potential for India-focused Islamic militant groups in Pakistan, with or without clandestine collaboration by Pakistani security forces, to carry out a strike in India that exceeds the November 2008 Mumbai attack is one of the most serious and growing threats to U.S. interests in South Asia.[76] All four of these critical security scenarios require more, not less, open lines of communication and coordination between Islamabad and Washington. Single-minded American pursuit of technologically driven strikes against lesser al-Qaeda figures and middling Afghan Taliban insurgents puts these frustrating, but essential, American-Pakistani lines of communication at risk, setting up an undesirable long-term future of isolation and miscommunication. A multifaceted, forward-looking American policy toward Pakistan must assess the risk-reward outcomes from a failure to think beyond the anti-al-Qaeda, anti-Afghan Taliban framework that has come to largely overwhelm the other critical security dynamics in this suffocate this critical bilateral relationship.

Conclusion

In a strategic or global sense, one can make the case – as many senior U.S. leaders began to do in the summer of 2011 – that al-Qaeda seems well along in a process of defeating itself. Its accelerating political isolation in the Muslim world during the mid-2000s was accompanied by a successful post-2007 effort by the United States and allied governments to largely destroy central al-Qaeda's leadership along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The May 2011 death of Osama bin Laden has drawn an end to the destabilizing pattern of hunt-and-escape that elevated the terrorist leader's reputation (and to a lesser extent, that of Ayman al-Zawahiri) to living legend status for so long. Indeed, bin Laden's demise has provided a substantial – 80 percent – solution to the most critical international security challenges posed by al-Qaeda.

Now, it is important to allow al-Qaeda's increasing self-isolation from alternative, nonviolent Muslim approaches toward political change in the Islamic world to better inform the framework for U.S. counterterrorism policy in general and America's policy approach to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and South Asia in particular.

To prevail in Afghanistan on the timetable announced by the Obama administration and minimize the more serious risk of a larger conflict breaking out, American policy much change tack in the wake of bin Laden's death. We need to understand that the risks of devastating proxy war between India and Pakistan now dwarf the risks of al-Qaeda's return to unfettered sanctuary and recalibrate our diplomatic energies and military priorities accordingly. This will require earnest and difficult negotiations with the Pakistanis, Indians, Afghan Taliban, and northern ethnic groups in Afghanistan.

In Pakistan, we must eschew the intemperate approach of unilaterally attacking al-Qaeda's remaining core leaders or mid-level Afghan Taliban figures to their last breath. Instead, we must work to recalibrate the always difficult but supremely important relationship with Pakistan so that Islamabad will do more in a bilateral effort to eliminate the international terrorist presence from the country. In addition, we must help Pakistan work quietly with India to find the necessary accommodation in Afghanistan that will inhibit the possibility of a reckless proxy war between two nuclear-armed states that could seriously threaten a calamity of global import.

APPENDIX A

Major al-Qaeda Core Terrorist Figures Status 2007-11

(This list was compiled using information from the following sources: U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning al-Qaeda and associated individuals and entities, available at http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/aq_sanctions_list.shtml; the 2009 compilation on the Long War Journal website found at http://www.longwarjournal.org/al-qaeda-leaders.php#ixzz1WlmckeWX; the Global Security website page of al-Qaeda senior leader lists, found at http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/generate_members.php?name=Al-Qaeda and at http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/profiles/al-qaeda_leadership_losses.htm; and Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), pp. 56-58.)

Core leaders believed to be in Pakistan/Afghanistan:

(Estimated 16 out of 32 at large – One ***ESSENTIAL**** and two **KEY*** figures remain alive. **BOLD** denotes a leader who has been captured or killed.)

- Abu Faraj al-Yemeni
- **Abu Haris – Killed in Pakistan, September 2008 (former Pakistani Jaish-e-Mohammad head)**
- **Abu Ihklas al-Masri – Captured in Kunar, Afghanistan, April 2011**
- Abu Kasha al-Iraqi
- **Abu Khabab al-Masri* – Killed in Pakistan, July 2008**
- **Abu Obaidah al-Masri – Deceased in Pakistan, Spring 2008**
- **Abu Turab al-Urduni* [Jordanian] – Son in law of Zawahiri, multiple reports say killed in 2001 or 2010**
- Abu Yahya al-Libi*– Reported killed in Pakistan, December 2009 – later rescinded
- Adam Gadahn (ne: Adam Pearlman) [U.S.]
- **Atiyah Abd al-Rahman – Killed in Pakistan, August 2011**
- Ayman al-Zawahiri** [Egyptian]
- Dr. Amin al-Haq [Afghan] – Osama bin Laden's security coordinator, captured/released by Pakistanis in January 2008
- Hamza bin Laden [Saudi]
- **Ilyas Kashmiri* – Reported killed (for a second time) in Pakistan, June 2011 – awaiting firm confirmation**
- **Marwan al-Suri [Syrian] – Reported killed in gun battle with Pakistani authorities, April 2006 – later doubts**
- Matiur Rehman [Pakistani]
- Mohamed Abul Khair [Saudi] – bin Laden bodyguard
- **Mohamad Usman – Killed in Pakistan, Fall 2010**
- **Mustafa al-Jaziri – Killed in Pakistan, May 2010**
- **Osama al-Kini – Killed in Pakistan, January 2009**
- **Qari Mohammad Zafar – Former head of Pakistan's Lahskar-e-Jhangvi, reported killed in Pakistan, March 2010**
- Qari Saifullah Akhtar [Pakistani – HUJI] – Reportedly wounded in Pakistan, August 2010
- **Qari Zia Rahman [Pakistani] – Reported killed by Pakistani forces, April 2010 – later doubts**
- Rashid Rauf [U.K. of Pakistani origin] – Reported killed in Pakistan, November 2008 – later retracted
- Saad al-Sharif [Saudi]
- **Sa'ad bin Laden* – Killed in Afghanistan/Pakistan, Spring 2009**
- **Saleh al-Somali – Killed in Pakistan, winter 2009**
- **Sheikh Sa'id al-Masri (aka: Mustafa Abu Yazid)* – Killed in Pakistan, May 2010**
- Sulaiman Abu Ghaith* [Kuwaiti] – Reportedly released by Iran in prisoner exchange, September 2010
- Thirwat Saleh Shihata [Egyptian]
- Younis al-Mauritani* – Reported detained in Pakistan, September 2011

Core leaders believed to be in Yemen:

(Estimated 6/10 at large, 1 **KEY*** figure remains alive. **BOLD** denotes a leader who has been captured or killed.)

- **Anwar al-Awlaki [Dual U.S.-Yemeni] – killed in Yemen, September 2011**

- Fahd al-Quso [Yemeni] – USS Cole conspirator, falsely reported killed, October 2009
- **Hamza Ali Saleh al-Dhayani [Yemeni] – Surrendered to Yemeni authorities, June 2010**
- Ibrahim Hassan al-Asiri [Saudi] – Known as key bomb-maker
- Ibrahim Suleiman al-Rubaish [Saudi] - 2006 GTMO release and failed Saudi rehabilitation program
- **Mohammed al-Awfi [Saudi] – 2007 GTMO release, failed Saudi reprogramming, AQAP co-founder, surrendered to Saudi Arabia, 2010**
- Nasser al-Wuhayshi* [Yemeni] – bin Laden bodyguard, 2006 Sanaa jailbreak, and AQAP co-founder
- Othman al-Ghamdi [Saudi] – 2006 GTMO release and failed Saudi rehabilitation program
- Said Ali al-Shihri [Saudi] – released to Saudi Arabia from Guantánamo Bay in 2007
- **Youssef al-Shihri [Saudi] – 2006 GTMO release, failed reprogramming – killed in Saudi Arabia, October 2009**

[NOTE: With 11 former Guantanamo Bay (GTMO) terrorism detainees. The relationship between AQAP figures such as al-Wuhayshi and al-Rubaish and bin Laden helps explain why AQAP has been the franchise jihadist group that is the closest ideologically to the al-Qaeda core and its global terror aspirations if not in its capability to achieve catastrophic terrorism]

Core Leaders believed to be in Iran:

(Estimated 7 at-large core figures, 1 **KEY***figure. None have been captured or killed. In addition, Saudi Arabia claims 40 of its most wanted are there)

- Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah [Egyptian]
- Abdullah al-Qarawi [Saudi] – May have joined AQAP in Yemen during 2010
- Ali Sayyid Muhamed Mustafa al-Bakri (aka: Abd al Aziz al-Masri) [Egyptian]
- Ali Saleh Husain [Yemeni]
- Muhammad Rab'a al Sayid al-Bahtiti [Egyptian]
- Mustafa Hamid [Egyptian]
- Saif al-Adel* [Egyptian]

Core Leaders whereabouts Unknown/Uncertain

(Estimated 5/7 at large, 2 **KEY*** figures. **BOLD** denotes a leader who has been captured or killed.)

- **Abu Khalaf – killed in Mosul, Iraq, January 2010**
- **Abu Ayyub al-Masri – al-Qaeda emir in Iraq, killed there, April 2010**
- Abu Mus'ab al-Suri* [Syrian] – Believed in Syria since 2006
- Adnan G. el Shukrijumah* [U.S. of Saudi ancestry] – May be in Pakistan or North Africa
- **Fazul Abdullah Mohammed – Killed in Somalia, Summer 2011**
- Mafouz Ould Walid (also known as Abu Hafs al-Mauritani) – In Iran or North Africa
- Sheikh Issa al-Masri (Abu `Amr `Abd al-Hakim) [Syrian] – Suspected in Syria since 2009

Core Leaders believed held at Guantanamo Bay:

(6 **KEY*** figures of 171 remaining detainees. All **BOLDED** because captured and in detention)

- **Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri* [Saudi] – Apprehended in UAE, 2002**
- **Abu Faraj al-Libi* – Arrested in Pakistan 2005, to GTMO in 2006 – Pearl killing, suspect in Musharraf assassination plots and 2006 airliner plot**
- **Abu Zubaydah* [Saudi] – Arrested in Pakistan, 2002**
- **Hambali* [Indonesian] – Arrested in Thailand, 2003**
- **Khalid Sheikh Mohammed* [Pakistani] – Arrested in Pakistan, 2003**
- **Walid bin Attash* [Yemeni] – Arrested in Pakistan, 2003**

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[1] This is not to say that al-Qaeda and the Haqqani Network are the same entity. American policy treats them as different entities and targets each for different reasons. However, I will assert in this monograph that the intense American policy focus from mid-2011 on attacking these terrorists and radicals in Pakistan harms far more important, long-term policy interests in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

[2] Among the early works best defining the true nature of al-Qaeda and the policy implications is *Defeating the Jihadis: A Blueprint for Action,* The Century Foundation, 2004. The Century Foundation task force responsible for this report referred to al-Qaeda's three critical elements in a construct of nested concentric circles. The small, interior "core" circle is the core organization of al-Qaeda's vanguard with some 400 to 2,000 people; in the next circle, affiliated Salafi jihadist movements, includes an estimated 50,000 to 200,000 people; and the third ring features Muslim sympathizers to the al-Qaeda message of jihad against those perceived as oppressing Muslims, perhaps some 200 million to 500 million people, all nested in the wider world of 1.5 billion Muslims. See especially pp. 14-20. For a similar construct, see Special Report: *Jihadism in 2011: A Persistent Grassroots Threat*, STRATFOR, January 24, 2011, especially pp. 2-4, and available at http://web.stratfor.com/images/writers/JIHADISM2011.pdf . For most of the past half-decade, analyses of al-Qaeda by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) have utilized a similar trilateral taxonomy featuring references to an al-Qaeda core, global jihadist affiliates, and unaffiliated adherents. For a recent example, see John Rollins, *Osama bin Laden's Death: Implications and Considerations*, Congressional Research Service Report 7-5700, May 5, 2011.

[3] For a review of the genesis of this crucial dimension of al-Qaeda, see Steve Coll's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden, from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2004). For a detailed discussion of this aspect of al-Qaeda as its central, most critical dimension, see Bruce Hoffman, "The Myth of Grassroots Terrorism: Why bin Laden Still Matters," *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008, pp. 133-38.

[4] This holistic response, codified formally in early 2003, featured an approach anchored in four counterterrorism principles aimed at taking the fight to the core of al-Qaeda: "Defeat, Deny, Diminish, Defend." In this sense, it was the offensive policy to complement the defensive National Strategy for Homeland Security published in July 2002. See *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office (GPO), February 2003 and a comparative analysis of it found in *Combating Terrorism: Observations on National Strategies Related to Terrorism; Statement of GAO Defense Capabilities and Management Director, Raymond J. Decker*, GAO Publication released on March 3, 2003, and accessed at http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03519t.pdf, especially pp. 6-12.

[5] The term Salafi is used to describe a particular type of fundamentalist thought in Sunni Islam. In Arabic, the word Salafi is a reference to the first three generations of Muslims venerated as "the forefathers" and best generations in the history of Islam. Contemporary Sunni Muslim groups that are Salafi in orientation believe that imitation of the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad and his closest followers and descendants should be the basis of modern social order. Wahhabi Islam, practiced predominantly in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, is a variant of Salafism, but not its sole manifestation. Many Salafis are zealous in their beliefs, but few pursue violence as the principal means to achieve their aims. Salafi jihadists are a small minority of Salafis who believe that violence and terrorism are essential to purge the Muslim world of non-believing westerners and correct those of the Muslim faith who insufficiently practice fundamentalist Islam in their daily lives or in the management of Islamic communities. Al-Qaeda is the most notorious of the many small but deadly Salafi jihadist groups in the Muslim world. For a more detailed discussion of Salafism and Salafi jihadists, see Quintan Wiktorowicz, "A Genealogy of Radical Islam," in Russell D. Howard, Reid L. Sawyer and Natasha E.

Bajema Eds. *Terrorism and CounterTerrorsm: Understanding the New Security Environment – 3rd Edition* (New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2009), pp, 225-44.

[6] Also see Michael Scott Doran, "Somebody Else's Civil War." *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2002, accessed at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/57618/michael-scott-doran/somebody-elses-civil-war.

[7] This is the aspect of al-Qaeda advanced most vigorously by Marc Sageman in *Leaderless Jihad: Terror Networks in the Twenty-First Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008) and defended by Sageman in his debate with Bruce Hoffman in "Does Osama Still Call the Shots: Debating the Containment of al-Qaeda's Leadership," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2008, pp. 163-68.

[8] In this testimony, Coll argued that al-Qaeda was several things at once: an organization, a network, an ideological movement, and a brand name. See Steve Coll, House Testimony: The Paradoxes of al-Qaeda, posted on "Think Tank," in *The New Yorker* and accessed at http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/stevecoll/steve-coll/2010/01.

[9] For a more detailed discussion of the ways in which al-Qaeda corralled the disparate focus of Salafi jihadist ideology into a historically rare – and exceptionally dangerous – radical global ideology, see Mark Stout, T.X. Hammes, and Thomas Lynch in "Chapter 6: Transnational Movements and Terrorism," *Global Strategic Assessment 2009: America's Security Role in a Changing World*; International Institute for Strategic Studies, National Defense University [NDU-INSS] (Washington, D.C.: NDU Press, Spring 2009), pp. 119-32.

[10] For a more detailed explanation of radical ideologies and the role of critical personalities in launching these violent movements into serious global threats, see Thomas F. Lynch, "Foundations of Radicalism," in *Understanding International Relations* 2nd ed., Eds. Daniel J. Kaufman et. al. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1993), pp. 884-900.

[11] Gunaratna wrote that al-Qaeda's founding charter was anchored in four elements: a "core group" to facilitate strategic and tactical terror direction; action by that group as a "vanguard" to inspire an ever-widening global terrorist network; activity to loosely coordinate transnational Sunni terrorist groups; and serving as a base for continuing guerrilla warfare in Afghanistan. See Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 57. Also, see Peter L. Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know* (2006), pp. 73-76 and 82-85; Coll, *Ghost Wars* (2004), p. 204; and Bruce Reidel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda: Its Leadership, Ideology and Future* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2008), pp. 45 and 122-24. For a more recent discussion of both the importance of Afghanistan and the long-exaggerated role of "Afghan Arabs" in the defeat of the Soviet Union there, see Michael Semple, "Osama bin Laden's death gives peace a chance in Afghanistan," *The Guardian (UK)*, May 7, 2011, accessed at http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/may/07/osama-bin-laden-death-peace-afghanistan.

[12] For a review of bin Laden's personal relationships with Hekmatyar, Khalis, and Haqqani and the oath taken with Omar, see Coll, *Ghost Wars* (2004), pp. 327-28; and Reidel, *The Search for Al-Qaeda* (2009), pp. 42-46. For a more detailed discussion of the *bay'a* between bin Laden and Mullah Omar and some of the controversy associated with the precise nature of that oath, see Vahid Brown, "The Façade of Allegiance: Bin Laden's Dubious Pledge to bin Laden," *The Sentinel* (West Point, New York: Combating Terrorism Center, January 13, 2010), p. 1, accessed at http://www.ctc.usma.edu/posts/the-facade-of-allegiance-bin-ladin%E2%80%99s-dubious-pledge-to-mullah-omar.

[13] See Vahid Brown and Don Rassler, *The Haqqani Nexus and the Evolution of al-Qa'ida* (West Point, New York: Combating Terrorism Center – Harmony Program, July 14, 2011); Michael Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute of Peace, September 2009); and Henry McDonald, "We can persuade Taliban to be peaceful – expelled EU man," *The Guardian [UK]*,

February 16, 2008. As I will discuss later, while I find the Brown-Rassler scholarship to provide an important understanding of the tensions between bin Laden, Mullah Omar, and many of the Afghan Taliban senior leaders during the period 1996-2001, with the death of bin Laden, I now align more with Michael Semple in arguing against their conclusions of intimate coupling between the Haqqani Network and al-Qaeda beyond bin Laden. As a consequence, I reject their conclusion that U.S. policy should treat the Haqqanis as an extension of al-Qaeda's global agenda, believing it based upon incomplete analysis of the Younis Khalis-bin Laden relationship and the Haqqani-Pakistani ISI relationship and an incomplete assessment of the relative importance of Pakistani military-intelligence manipulation to the choices made by the Afghan Taliban. For a discussion of the weak connection of Ayman al-Zawahiri and his Egyptian followers with the Afghan Taliban leadership, including their refusal to consider a *bay'a* (oath) to Mullah Omar during discussions between al-Qaeda leaders on this topic, see Brown, "The Façade of Allegiance" (2010), page 1.

[14] For an insightful characterization of the failed underwear bomber (or jihadist jockstrap) plot generated by al-Qaeda of the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), in which Nigerian Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab was to destroy a Detroit-bound airliner in December 2009, see Daniel Byman and Christine Fair, "The Case for Calling them Nitwits," *The Atlantic* (July/August 2010), accessed at http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/07/the-case-for-calling-them-nitwits/8130/.

[15] New CIA Director David Petraeus specifically referenced the decline of JI as a force for regional, much less global, terrorism in his September 13, 2011, testimony before Congress on the topic of the terrorist threat 10 years after 9/11. See *Statement by the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency David H. Petraeus to Congress on the Terrorist Threat Ten Years After 9/11* at https://www.cia.gov/news-information/speeches-testimony/speeches-testimony-archive-2011/statement-on-the-terrorist-threat-after-9-11.html.

[16] Although KSM's bombs didn't down the commercial airliner targeted in the operation, the rigorous study of lessons learned from the mission allowed al-Qaeda to improve its planning and execution of subsequent commercial airliner attacks. See Anonymous (ne: Michael Scheuer), *Through Our Enemy's Eyes: Osama bin Laden, Radical Islam, and the Future of America* (Dulles, Virginia: Brasseys, 2004), pp. 24-29.

[17] Travis J. Tritten, "Are We Finished in the Philippines? Fight against terrorism threat in country deemed a success, but the way out is unclear," *Stars and Stripes*, September 3, 2011.

[18] See Ali K. Chishti, "EU Plot, German Jihadis and the Waziristan Connection," *The Daily Times [Pakistan]*, October 5, 2010, accessed at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2010%5C10%5C05%5Cstory_5-10-2010_pg7_34. Also see "German-Afghan Charged Over Qaeda Links," *The Daily Times [Pakistan]*, November 11, 2011, accessed at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2011%5C11%5C11%5Cstory_11-11-2011_pg7_6.

[19] See Mark Mazzetti and Scott Shane, "Data Show Bin Laden Plots; C.I.A. Hid Near Raided House," *The New York Times*, May 5, 2011, as at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/06/world/asia/06intel.html, and "Secrets of the squalid lair: Bin Laden WAS still directing Al Qaeda terror attacks up until his death, claims U.S.," *Mail Online [UK]*, May 8, 2011, as found at http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1384596/Osama-bin-Laden-directing-al-Qaeda-operations-right-death.html. Also see reference to bin Laden's critical role in directing al-Qaeda's international operations and strategy in *Statement by the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency David H. Petraeus to Congress on the Terrorist Threat Ten Years After 9/11*.

[20] See the table and analysis from pp. 3-7 in Paul Cruickshank, "The Militant Pipeline: Between the Afghanistan-Pakistan Border Region and the West," *Counterterrorism Strategy Initiative Policy Paper – New America Foundation*, February 2010, as found at

http://counterterrorism.newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/cruickshank.pdf .

[21] See "Annual Jihadism Review: 2011," STRATFOR Global Intelligence, January 24, 2011, accessed at http://www.stratfor.com/memberships/180818/analysis/20110120-jihadism-2011-persistent-grassroots-threat?ip_auth_redirect=1.

[22] For a discussion of the long-standing and often vexing challenges presented to al-Qaeda's efforts to co-opt "classic" (or local) jihadist groups into its version of global jihad, see Vahid Brown, "Classical and Global Jihad: Al Qa'ida Franchising Frustrations," in *Fault Lines in Global Jihad: Organizational, Strategic, and Ideological Fissures*, Assaf Moghadam and Brian Fishman, eds. (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 88-116.

[23] For a conspicuous example of the local aims of even those al-Qaeda affiliates most recently tied to international terrorism plots, see the detailed discussion of the names and the primarily anti-Saudi, not anti-Western, motives of key members of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) in Christopher Boucek, *Carnegie Guide to the Saudi Eleven*, accessed at http://carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/07/carnegie-guide-to-saudi-eleven/519s.

[24] It is now understood that this revenge motive inspired the documented interaction between failed May 2010 Times Square bomber Faisal Shahzad and some members of TTP near Peshawar in western Pakistan sometime in late 2009. For evidence of the revenge threat made by TTP after Baitullah's 2009 death, see Lehaz Ali, "Pakistan Taliban chief Baitullah Mehsud dead: militants," Agence France-Presse, August 25, 2009, accessed at http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hslzq5SB_vZ392DU2-n7M8WW05cw; and, for the Faisal Shahzad links to this motivation, see Sami Yousafzai and Ron Moreau, "Pakistan Taliban Source: Times Square Bombing Attempt was 'Revenge Against America,'" *Newsweek*, May 6, 2010, as at http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/blogs/declassified/2010/05/06/pakistan-taliban-source-times-square-bombing-attempt-was-revenge-against-america.html. Shahzad's truncated time in the FATA and his limited training there were not enough to get him beyond construction of a crude bomb and a quickly fizzled plot. For a discussion of the symptom of under-training, see Byman and Fair, "The Case for Calling Them Nitwits," *The Atlantic Monthly* (July/August 2010), found at http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/07/the-case-for-calling-them-nitwits/8130/. TTP's most recent threats against U.S. targets outside of Pakistan also feature a motive of revenge for American military action taken within Pakistan – this time against bin Laden. See "Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan vow to attack American targets," translation of a statement by Mohmand agency TTP commander Omar Khalid Khorasani in the Pakistani *Express Tribune*, June 6, 2011, accessed at http://tribune.com.pk/story/183467/tehrik-e-taliban-pakistan-vow-to-attack-american-targets.

[25] See "Annual Jihadism Review: 2011," STRATFOR Global Intelligence, January 24, 2011, accessed at http://www.stratfor.com/memberships/180818/analysis/20110120-jihadism-2011-persistent-grassroots-threat?ip_auth_redirect=1.

[26] Dennis C. Blair, *Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community, Testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, February 2, 2010, p. 12, accessed at http://www.dni.gov/testimonies/20100202_testimony.pdf.

[27] See Byman and Fair, "The Case for Calling Them Nitwits" (2010).

[28] For a similar argument, see Scott Stewart, "Why al-Qaeda is Unlikely to Execute Another 9/11," STRATFOR, September 1, 2011, accessed at http://www.stratfor.com/weekly/20110831-why-al-qaeda-unlikely-execute-another-911?ip_auth_redirect=1.

[29] For discussion of this emerging evidence, see "Secrets of the squalid lair: Bin Laden WAS still directing Al Qaeda terror attacks up until his death, claims U.S.," *Mail Online [UK]*, May 8, 2011, as found at http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1384596/Osama-

bin-Laden-directing-al-Qaeda-operations-right-death.html, and "7/7 London bombings 'were Osama bin Laden's last successful operation,'" *The Guardian [UK]*, July 13, 2011, accessed at http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/jul/13/7-july-bin-laden-last-operation.

[30] Dennis C. Blair, *Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community, Testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence*, (2010) p. 9.

[31] See "Annual Jihadism Review: 2011," STRATFOR Global Intelligence, January 24, 2011, accessed at http://www.stratfor.com/memberships/180818/analysis/20110120-jihadism-2011-persistent-grassroots-threat?ip_auth_redirect=1.

[32] See *Statement by the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency David H. Petraeus to Congress on the Terrorist Threat Ten Years After 9/11*, September 13, 2011.

[33] For this reason, I think it justifiable to agree with the thrust of the mid-summer 2011 assertion by Defense Undersecretary for Intelligence Michael Vickers that there are perhaps four important al-Qaeda leaders left in Pakistan, and 10 to 20 leaders overall in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, while simultaneously questioning as a bit overly cautious his conclusion that even if the United States kills them all in drone strikes, "You still have al-Qaeda, the idea. … You're never going to eradicate that, but you want to take away their ability to be this global threat. … So yes, it is possible. It will take time." Vickers as quoted in Elisabeth Bumiller, "Soldier, Thinker, Hunter, Spy: Drawing a Bead on Al Qaeda, *The New York Times*, September 3, 2011, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/04/world/04vickers.html?_r=1&ref=elisabethbumiller.

[34] This image drawn from Mark Mazzetti, "Al-Qaeda Affiliates Growing Independent," *The New York Times*, August 29, 2011, accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/30/world/asia/30qaeda.html?_r=1&ref=osamabinladen.

[35] Refer again to Paul Cruickshank, "The Militant Pipeline: Between the Afghanistan-Pakistan Border Region and the West," pp. 3-7.

[36] For a similar assessment, see Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Berkley Books, 2003), pp. 72-76.

[37] Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda* (2003), especially pp. 287-91.

[38] For a discussion of these prominent differences, see Barnett Rubin and Ahmed Rashid, "From Great Game to Grand Bargain: Ending Chaos in Afghanistan and Pakistan," *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2008). Also see Ron Synovitz, "Taliban and Al-Qaeda – Provincial vs. Global," Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, August 25, 2004, accessed at http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1054493.html.

[39] See Mark E. Stout, Thomas F. Lynch III, and T.X. Hammes, "Transnational Movements and Terrorism," *Joint Forces Quarterly*, April 2009. Also see the reference to al-Qaeda's affiliation with Lashkar-e-Khorasan as a entity separate from the Afghan Taliban in Hamza Ameer, "New Leader Plans Attacks on Pakistan," *Asia Times Online*, August 31, 2011, accessed at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/south_asia/mh31df01.html.

[40] See Michael Semple, "Osama bin Laden's death gives peace a chance in Afghanistan," (May 2011) at http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/may/07/osama-bin-laden-death-peace-afghanistan.

[41] See Peter Bergen's account of Hamid Mir on the tense relations between many in the Afghan Taliban and bin Laden. Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know* (New York: Free Press, 2006), p. 236.

[42] For a discussion of Younis Khalis, leader of the Hezb-e-Islami-Khalis, his patriarchal control of mujahedeen and Taliban factions in North Waziristan, Paktia, Paktika, and Khowst provinces from the early 1980s to his death in 2006, his mentor role with Mullah Omar during the anti-Soviet mujahedeen fight, and his featured role in facilitating bin Laden's return to Afghanistan in 1996 and enabling many of bin Laden's major moments in pre-9/11 global jihad, see Bergen, *The Osama bin Laden I Know* (2006), pp. 105 and 158-59; Coll, *Ghost Wars* (2004), p. 288; and Brown and Rassler, *The Haqqani Nexus* (2011), pp. 14-17. For Khalis's important personal role in calling for

jihad against U.S.-led foreign forces in Afghanistan in October 2003, see Anonymous (ne: Michael Scheuer), *Imperial Hubris: Why the West Is Losing the War on Terror* (Dulles, Virginia: Brasseys: 2004), p. 45. The reader will note that I take issue with Brown and Rassler's conclusion about the dangers of the Haqqani Network's role in present and future global jihad. While their paper makes a strong case for the relative importance of Younis Khalis and Jalaluddin Haqqani in facilitating bin Laden's global terrorism agenda when compared to the role of Mullah Omar or Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, it doesn't account for three important factors that matter to Western policy moving forward: (1) Neither Khalis nor Haqqani ever personally endorsed bin Laden's "far enemy" priorities for jihad; (2) Khalis's death cut the most personal ties with bin Laden and bin Laden's death severs the ties with Jalaluddin Haqqani; and most important (3) the Haqqani Network's parallel but increasing position as a favorite irregular militia group for use by the Pakistani ISI against Indian interests in Afghanistan is of crucial and rising importance to the resilience and capability of the Haqqanis; at the same time, it critically constrains the degree to which the Haqqani leadership can or would actively support, much less assertively practice, acts of international terrorism that would be of grave concern to their Pakistani handlers.

[43] For a good general overview of the close linkage between Pakistan's ISI S Wing (the "S" roughly translates to special actions) and the Afghan Taliban, see Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt, "Afghan Strikes by Taliban Get Pakistan Help, U.S. Aides Say," *The New York Times*, March 25, 2009. For reference to the intense U.S. pressure on the ISI (and Pakistan's government) to contain if not eliminate plots for jihad emanating from militant groups operating in its territory, see "[Ambassador] Haqqani rejects reports of U.S. pressure," *Express Tribune*, May 27, 2010, accessed at http://tribune.com.pk/story/16587/haqqani-rejects-reports-of-us-pressure/.

[44] In the aftermath of bin Laden's death, I believe it is now objectively viable to share this assessment as made by Vahid Brown in a piece he wrote a year before the Abbottabad raid. See Brown, "The Façade of Allegiance" (2010), p. 1.

[45] Pakistan continues selective cooperation with the intelligence and law enforcement agencies of the United States and other Western countries against al-Qaeda operatives within its borders. There are many examples of this cooperation, including during the darkest moments of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship in 2011. Among them, the early September 2011 collaborative effort that led to the capture in Quetta of Younis al-Mauritani, the newly named al-Qaeda external operations chief, stands out as a prime example. Armed with American intelligence that Mauritani was in Baluchistan and keen not to be seen as harboring an al-Qaeda leader who might be responsible for 9/11 anniversary attacks against Western targets, Pakistan's ISI and Frontier Corps paramilitary forces rounded up Mauritani and provided U.S. officials access to key information on potential threats connected to the anniversary. See Baqir Sajjad Syed, "Al Qaeda's 'Foreign Minister' Captured," *Dawn.com* (September 6, 2011), accessed at http://www.dawn.com/2011/09/06/al-qaedas-foreign-minister-captured.html; and Eli Lake, "America's Shadow State in Pakistan," *The Daily Beast* (December 5, 2011), accessed at http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/12/05/america-s-shadow-state-in-pakistan.html.

[46] See the relevant cautions thrown out in early 2008 by Daveed Gartenstein-Ross and Kyle Dabruzzi in "Is Al-Qaeda's Central Leadership Still Relevant?" *Middle East Quarterly,* Spring 2008, pp. 27-36, accessed at http://www.meforum.org/1875/is-al-qaedas-central-leadership-still-relevant. Also, the degree to which more focused, publicly unavailable intelligence was exploding the myth of al-Qaeda core irrelevance based upon its ongoing activities in western Pakistan became well known after U.S. intelligence officials like Mike McConnell (DNI) and Michael V. Hayden (CIA Director) began to render public accounts of al-Qaeda's rebound there during congressional testimony in early 2008, see Mark Mazzetti, "Intelligence Chief Cites Qaeda Threat to U.S.," *The New*

York Times, February 6, 2008, as found at http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/06/washington/06intel.html?n=Top/Reference/Times%20Topics/People/M/McConnell,%20John%20Michael?ref=johnmichaelmcconnell.

[47] These three elements are: al-Qaeda's core organization, its unique brand name, and its role as a base for certain conquest in Afghanistan. They are addressed in the following paragraph.

[48] For a short overview of the degree to which al-Qaeda was regrouped in western Pakistan by 2007, see Stout, Lynch, and Hammes, "Transnational Movements and Terrorism," *Joint Forces Quarterly* (2009). For a summary of these plots and a reminder of the degree to which U.S. hyperbole about the imminent demise of al-Qaeda's core was exposed as false by this confluence, see Daveed Gartenstein-Ross. "Al-Qaeda on the Brink: The Intelligence Assessments Have Been Wrong Before," *National Review Online*, July 28, 2011, accessed at http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/272920/al-Qaeda-brink-daveed-gartenstein-ross.

[49] For evidence of the historical ISI role in aligning against Pashtun groups oriented toward a "Greater Pashtunistan" or "Greater Afghanistan," see Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), pp. 172-75. Also reference the text "...But ISI also has another vital mission. Preventing Pakistan's Pashtun, 15-20% of the population of 165 million, from rekindling the old 'Greater Pashtunistan' movement calling for union of the Pashtun tribes of Pakistan and Afghanistan into a new Pashtun nation. The Pashtun have never recognized the Durand Line (today's Pakistan-Afghan border) drawn by British imperialists to sunder the world's largest tribal people. Greater Pashtunistan would tear apart Pakistan and invite Indian military intervention," as found in the article entitled "Pakistan's ISI" at the PashtunFoundation Organization website accessed at http://en.pashtunfoundation.org/bodytext.php?request=724.

[50] Many Afghan Pashtuns also express hatred for Pakistan. Indeed, the Taliban commanders interviewed by Matt Waldman in 2009 told him that the only people they hated more than American occupiers in Afghanistan were Pakistan ISI agents. See Waldman, *The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship Between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan Insurgents*, Crisis States Research Centre Discussion Papers – London School of Economics, June 2010, pp. 4-6. Nonetheless, Pakistan's military-intelligence apparatus has a history of defining this as mainly misguided thinking and not as threatening as the enmity found in the non-Pashtun tribes of Afghanistan.

[51] See "$500m Indian Aid to Afghanistan," *Khaama Press*, May 13, 2011, as found at http://www.khaama.com/500m-indian-aid-to-afghanistan.

[52] The deep historical ties between Afghans and Indians, along with the extensive travel by Afghans to India, strikes many observers as fair explanation for the number of consulates that India maintains in Afghanistan. By way of comparison: Pakistan maintains four consulates and an embassy in Afghanistan and the United States maintains two consulates and three forward-based consular agents along with its Kabul embassy. The Iranians, Swedes, Spanish, and Italians each have one consulate and an embassy in Afghanistan. See http://pakistan.visahq.com/embassy/Afghanistan/, http://www.dawatfreemedia.org/english/index.php?mod=article&cat=News&article=34, http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-in/afghanistan#, and http://iranianvisa.com/emb1.htm.

[53] See Blair, *Annual Threat Assessment of the US Intelligence Community, Testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence* (2010), p. 19; and William Dalrymple, "Why the Taliban are winning in Afghanistan," *The New Statesman [UK]*, June 22, 2010, accessed at http://www.newstatesman.com/international-politics/2010/06/british-afghanistan-government.

[54] See Matthew Waldman, *The Sun in the Sky: The Relationship Between Pakistan's ISI and Afghan Insurgents*, Crisis States Research Centre Discussion

Papers – London School of Economics, June 2010; Anand Gopal, Mansur Khan Mahsud, and Brian Fishman, *The Battle for Pakistan: Militancy and Conflict in North Waziristan* (Washington, D.C.: New American Foundation, April 2010); and Jeffrey Dressler, *The Haqqani Network: From Pakistan to Afghanistan* - Afghanistan Report 6 (Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Study of War, 2010).

[55] Waldman, *The Sun in the Sky* (2010), p. 4.

[56] Waldman, *The Sun in the Sky* (2010), p. 6.

[57] Waldman, *The Sun in the Sky* (2010), pp. 6, 13-16.

[58] See Gopal et al., *Militancy and Conflict in North Waziristan*, (2010), pp. 12-13; and Dressler, *The Haqqani Network*, pp. 33-35.

[59] ISI managers have a record of bias against Afghanistan's southern Popalzai Durrani sub-tribes due to the Popalzai history of support for the idea of "Greater Pashtunistan," as well as the fact that President Karzai is a Popalzai. Mullah Baradar, a Popalzai and longtime member of the Afghan Taliban Quetta Shura, or governing council, was rounded up by Pakistani security services in early 2010 when rumors of his possible outreach to Karzai began to circulate. Baradar remains under house arrest. Conversely, a competitor Pashtun tribe, the Panjpai Durrani, seemingly has benefited from ISI preferences. Its sub-tribe, the Alizai, has been favored with two Quetta Shura Taliban members of rising stature, Mullah Zakir and Mullah Raof, even as Mullah Baradar's long-standing role in that Taliban hierarchy has been severely constrained. Increasing Panjpai Durrani representation on the Quetta Shura helps to strengthen the authority of the movement, given Afghanistan's long tradition of Durrani rulers, and gives Pakistan more leverage in any possible Afghanistan peace negotiations. See Waldman, *The Sun in the Sky* (2010), p. 10. For additional evidence of Pakistani ISI mistrust of the Durrani Pashtuns of Afghanistan, see the discussion of ISI preferences in the 1990s found in Coll, *Ghost Wars* (2004), pp. 280-82.

[60] Waldman, *The Sun in the Sky* (2010), p.10. Again, Waldman's interviews corroborated long-standing Pakistani ISI Pashtun sub-tribal preferences dating back decades. For a discussion of Pakistani military and intelligence special care and feeding of the *madrassa Haqqania* that began during the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan and got another boost during the mid-1990s, see Coll, *Ghost Wars* (2004), pp. 284-85. It is important to note that Waldman's interviews with Haqqani commanders suggested that their trainers were all Pakistan ISI. The training was in military tactics: attacks, ambushes, and improvised explosive devices, but not suicide bombings. They reported that this suicide training was separate, very specialized, and under the tutelage of outside groups like Arabs and Chechens apparently preying on uneducated boys 13 to 15 years old. Also see Anthony Loyd, "Terror link alleged as Saudi millions flow into Afghanistan war zone," *The Times [UK]*, May 31, 2010.

[61] For a discussion of then-Pakistani President Musharraf's reference to Jalaluddin Haqqani as a "strategic asset," see Catherine Philp, "Pervez Musharraf was Playing 'Double Game' with U.S.," *The Times [UK]*, February 17, 2009.

[62] For a review of these Haqqani Network attacks, see Bill Roggio, "Suicide Attack Kills 17 Outside Indian Embassy in Kabul," The Long War Journal (October 8, 2009), accessed at http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/10/suicide_attack_kills_2.php; David Alexander, "Haqqani Network behind Afghan truck blast: Pentagon," Reuters (September 12, 2011), accessed at http://en.infoanda.com/link.php?lh=BlkGVF9TA1BW; "U.S. Blames Haqqani Network for Kabul Attacks," Al Jazeera English Online (September 14, 2011), accessed at http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2011/09/201191418433383511.html; and Sami Yousafzai and Ron Moreau, "Taliban Boast of Kabul Embassy Attack," *The Daily Beast* (September 14, 2011) accessed at http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/09/14/taliban-embassy-attack-in-kabul-afghan-insurgents-tell-of-secret-war-room-haqqani-alliance.html.

[63] See Jeffrey Dressler, "Pakistan's Kurram Offensive – Implications for Afghanistan," *Institute for the Study of War: Backgrounder* (August 18, 2011), accessed at

http://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/pakistans-kurram-offensive-implications-afghanistan; and Jeffrey Dressler, "The Haqqani Network and the Threat to Afghanistan: Why the Terrorist Syndicate is the Biggest Threat to South Asia," *Foreign Affairs Online* (November 11, 2011), accessed at http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/136661/jeffrey-dressler/the-haqqani-network-and-the-threat-to-afghanistan. While I agree with Dressler's evidence and argument that the Haqqani Network has become the favored proxy for Pakistan's ISI over the past two to three years, I disagree with his extension of this argument to suggest that this bodes well for al-Qaeda's aspirations in the region, much less globally. As I argue throughout this paper, the death of bin Laden makes it ever more certain that all Afghan Taliban elements must dance to the tune of the Pakistani ISI, not that of al-Qaeda international, and Pakistan's tune is not one of global Salafi jihad. Also see Anindya Batabyal, "Pakistan and the Haqqani Network," Article #3482, *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies – India* (November 2, 2011), accessed at http://www.ipcs.org/article/india/pakistan-and-the-haqqani-network-3482.html.

[64] Dalrymple, "Why the Taliban are winning in Afghanistan," *The New Statesman [UK]* (2010), and Semple, *Reconciliation in Afghanistan* (2009).

[65] See U.N. Security Council press release of July 7, 2011, announcing the split of UNSCR 1267 (1999) al-Qaeda listing into UNSCR 1988 (2011), an Afghan Taliban listing, and UNSCR 1989 (2011), an al-Qaeda listing, found at http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2011/sc10312.doc.htm. Then see UNSCR 1989, reissued on July 1, 2011, at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1989 (2011), and UNSCR 1988 (2011) at http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N11/379/01/PDF/N1137901.pdf?OpenElement.

[66] Ahmed Rashid, "The truth behind America's Taliban talks," *Financial Times Online*, June 29, 2011.

[67] See Ron Moreau, Sami Yousafzai and Tara McKelvey, "U.S. Officials Holding Secret Talks with the Taliban in Qatar," *The Daily Beast*, December 31, 2011, accessed at http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/12/31/u-s-officials-holding-secret-talks-with-the-taliban-in-qatar.html.

[68] This view that United States is "within reach" of defeating al-Qaeda and is targeting 10 to 20 leaders who are key to the terrorist network's survival is derived from statements by Defense Secretary (and former CIA director) Leon Panetta and Gen. David Petraeus, now CIA director, in July 2011 and later Undersecretary of Defense Michael Vickers. See Craig Whitlock, "Panetta: U.S. 'within reach' of defeating al-Qaeda," *Washington Post*, July 9, 2011, accessed at http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/panetta-us-within-reach-of-defeating-al-qaeda/2011/07/09/gIQAvPpG5H_story.html; and Bumiller, "Soldier, Thinker, Hunter, Spy," (September 3, 2011).

[69] Indeed, new CIA Director Petraeus has properly made this point in his early public appearances. See especially, *Statement by the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency David H. Petraeus to Congress on the Terrorist Threat Ten Years After 9/11*, September 13, 2011.

[70] This assessment is in marked contrast to the interview comments made by White House counterterrorism director John Brennan in Kimberly Dozier, "U.S. Counterterror Chief: Al Qaida Now on the Ropes," Associated Press (September 1, 2011), accessed at http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/44348909/ns/politics/#.Tl8VnztGsaB.

[71] The universality of Pakistani disdain for America's drone strike policy was confirmed in author interviews with Pakistani political, military, media, and religious figures in Islamabad during July 2011. Pakistani public approval of drone strikes fell sharply from 2009 to 2010, remaining negative in 2011. This change paralleled a statistically significant increase in favorable Pakistani views of the Afghan Taliban and popular support for suicide strikes against coalition forces in Afghanistan as part of defensive jihad. See *Pakistani Public Opinion: Growing Concerns About Extremism, Continuing Discontent with U.S.,* The Pew Global Attitudes Project, August 13, 2009; *America's*

Image Remains Poor: Concern About Extremist Threat Slips in Pakistan, The Pew Global Attitudes Project, July 29, 2010; and S*upport for Campaign Against Extremists Wanes: U.S. Image in Pakistan Falls No Further Following bin Laden Killing*, Pew Global Attitudes Project, June 21, 2011. All accessed at http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/06/21/u-s-image-in-pakistan-falls-no-further-following-bin-laden-killing/. These general trends for all of Pakistan are refined for localized belief in the FATA in the mid-2010 New America Foundation (NAF) survey of the seven tribal agencies there; see http://pakistansurvey.org/. For an articulation of the construct whereby otherwise nonviolent, ideologically disinclined individuals turn to violence to avenge perceived violent wrongs done onto them or their primary association group, see David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One* (London: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[72] The omnipresence of Pakistani press reporting of civilian casualties caused by "unilateral, sovereignty violating" U.S. drone strikes in the FATA and the growing outrage this generates in young Pakistani males contemplating jihad was conveyed to the author in multiple interviews with press reporters and Pakistani think tank officials during a trip to Islamabad during July 2011. These interviews confirmed the early 2011 assessment of Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann of the New America Foundation about the counterproductive impact of drone strikes resulting in a recruiting tool for extremist groups across Pakistan. See Peter Bergen and Katherine Tiedemann, "Washington's Phantom War: The Effects of the U.S. Drone Program in Pakistan," *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2011). For other recent independent reporting on the manner in which popular Pakistani outrage with U.S. drone activity assists Taliban and Islamic militant recruiting across Pakistan, see Shuja Nawaz, "Drone Attacks Inside Pakistan: Wayang or Willing Suspension of Disbelief," *Conflict and Security* (Summer/Fall 2011), pp. 82-83, and Kathy Gannon, "Pakistani Taliban splintering into factions," Associated Press (December 3, 2011), accessed at http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gcjo2qeqHb9nHMqmf6XxjkqkN4mQ?docId=ee3f71f25cd9416d9be1486ocdb669de.

[73] On China's growing frustration with Pakistan's inability to control Islamic extremists training there for attacks in China's western regions, see "Xinjiang attack masterminded by terrorists trained in Pakistan," *Dawn [Pakistan]* (August 1, 2011), accessed at http://www.dawn.com/2011/08/01/xinjiang-attack-masterminded-by-terrorists-trained-in-pakistan-china.html. One must be careful to recognize that this frustration doesn't mean Beijing will exert clear and consistent pressure on Pakistan to halt relationships with Islamic militant groups, much less collaborate with Washington or other international actors to goad Pakistan in this direction. China's concerns about militants remain dwarfed by the common Chinese-Pakistani strategic cause against India and China's more pressing security issues with nations like the United States, Russia and India. This unique approach toward policy with Pakistan greatly constrains Beijing's willingness to partner with regional or international efforts to pressure Islamabad. For a useful review of these limitations, see Andrew Small, "China's Caution on Afghanistan-Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly* (July 2010), pp. 86-87, and Isaac B. Kardon, *China and Pakistan: Emerging Strains in the Entente Cordiale* (Washington, D.C.: Project 2049 Institute, March 2011).

[74] From mid-2007 to mid-2011, Pakistan ranked second behind Iraq (and ahead of Afghanistan) as the country most effected by catastrophic terrorism with 256 attacks and 4,825 recorded deaths over a 45 month period. See the table last in *Crises in South Asia: Trends and Potential Consequences*, Michael Krepon and Nathan Cohn, eds. (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, September 2011), p. 111, with data corroborated at www.nctc.gov.

[75] Since 1998, India has joined Pakistan in a consistent ability to walk up to the line of catastrophic interstate war while simultaneously beckoning U.S. diplomatic intervention to hold the clash short of conflagration. In

large measure, this increasingly unstable brinksmanship has relied for resolution on America's unique diplomatic access in both Islamabad and New Delhi – access that could be compromised in Islamabad should U.S. counterterrorism policy fully alienate the regime. For a review of this pattern of U.S.-focused brinksmanship, see Samuel Black, "The Structure of South Asian Crises from Brasstacks to Mumbai," in *Crises in South Asia*, Krepon and Cohn, eds., pp. 38-70.

[76] For a discussion of this and related growing security risks inherent in the exceedingly tense and nuclear arms-fueled rivalry between Pakistan and India, see *Crises in South Asia*, Krepon and Cohn, eds., pp. 35-38 and 77-99; and Coll, "House Testimony: The Paradoxes of al-Qaeda" (2010).

Main Office
1899 L Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036
Phone 202 986 2700
Fax 202 986 3696

California Office
921 11th Street
Suite 901
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone 916 448 5189

New America Foundation
WWW.NEWAMERICA.NET