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Pakistan and Democracy: Before and After Musharraf

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Executive Summary

The imposition of emergency rule in Pakistan on November 3 is just the latest and most sensational development to attract extraordinary media attention in the past year to President Pervez Musharraf. Many Western commentators believe that General Musharraf's days are numbered, despite his latest move against those resisting his continued rule, but few have seriously considered what will come after his departure. This question has gained in importance following the almost-successful suicide-bomb attack against former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, who returned from exile in late October with the support of Washington. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that some sort of nominally democratic regime will eventually emerge in Islamabad. But the state's structural characteristics suggest that true democracy is a distant dream.

The future of democracy in Pakistan has serious implications for Canada: Ottawa needs Pakistan's help in fighting the Taliban in Southern Afghanistan. But far more importantly, complete state failure in Pakistan, while unlikely, would have serious regional and global repercussions. Lingering instability, too, will have very serious consequences for Canada that should not be underestimated: a weak and semi-governed Pakistan may provide safe haven to proponents of global jihad, and could contribute to uncertainty and conflict in a

volatile region that is also rapidly becoming enmeshed with Western economies. Even if doomsday scenarios of terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons are never realized, instability in South Asia could have a very real impact on the future of the global economy. Ottawa cannot remain immune to crises in distant but strategically significant countries.

While Ottawa's policy options toward Pakistan are very limited, Canada is not regarded with the distrust that Pakistanis reserve for their traditional international partner, the United States. A window of opportunity may open if a civilian government comes to power next year. If this comes about, Canada must rapidly increase international development aid and, most importantly, support government capacity-building initiatives in Pakistan. Such long-term initiatives represent the only way to ease Pakistan's structural problems which are far more threatening than the day-to-day turmoil which rules the headlines of most newspapers. Canada's assistance may be able to transform the uneasy relationship between Islamabad and its Western counterparts into a functioning partnership directed toward the accomplishment of mutual objectives, including the destruction of Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces and regional stabilization.



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Pakistan and the West: Failures of Understanding

Since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, President Musharraf's international backers have applied a Carrot and Stick approach to gain the support of Afghanistan's key neighbour. The carrot, offered immediately after September 11, was a massive transfer of American funds to encourage the regime to prosecute the War on Terror. Generous debt restructuring programs and increased development assistance funding have been implemented in the hope that Pakistan's military establishment will actively destroy Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces operating from within its borders. According to one estimate, the US alone has supplied Pakistan with as much as US\$25 billion in aid since 2001.¹

Yet, there has been little to show for this in the six years since Pakistan became a front-line state in the war against terror. Al-Qaeda and Taliban leadership have reconstituted themselves across Pakistan, most likely with the collusion of elements within the Pakistani security services. From their safe havens in Quetta and the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), terrorists have repeatedly organized attacks on targets in the West and on coalition forces in Afghanistan. Attempts to subdue them by military force have stalled, and Pakistan has lost over a thousand soldiers fighting militants across the western part of the country.



▲ General Pervez Musharraf . . . days may be numbered.

At the same time, Pakistan has been very protective of its sovereignty and has refused to permit US-led forces to strike at known targets within its borders. NATO commanders watch with chagrin as Taliban forces move with impunity from their sanctuaries in Pakistan to Afghanistan and back again.

Despite a few high-profile arrests, assistance to Pakistan has not achieved its purpose. Indeed, a July 2007 US National Intelligence Estimate bluntly stated that Al-Qaeda forces had reconstituted in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas during the cessation of military activities from September 2006 to July 2007.²

Now calls for the "stick" are growing louder. The US Congress has passed legislation tying the disbursement of aid to Pakistan to its progress against Al-Qaeda.³ In newspapers, policy journals, and across the blogosphere, even before the imposition of emergency rule, there were rising demands for Western nations to curtail aid to Pakistan if it did not show tangible progress in the war against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.⁴ Since the imposition of Martial law, the pressure on Western governments to demand General Musharraf abdicate power and hold elections has increased further. Many in the policy establishments of the West believe that a return to democracy will lead to the return of an accountable civilian leadership, pressure the army to take the fight to the Taliban, halt the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism and lead to the development of a stable and progressive Pakistani state. Musharraf has promised to hold new elections in February, despite emergency rule.

Other Western analysts go further, recommending that US or NATO Special Forces should strike at Al-Qaeda or Taliban targets inside Pakistan.⁵ In response, Pakistan has stated that any violation of the country's sovereignty or reduction in aid would have grave consequences for the "strategic partnership" with the US and, by implication, other partners in the War on Terror.⁶

Notions of both the Carrot and the Stick are predicated on a false assumption about Pakistan. Despite a well-developed academic understanding of Pakistan,⁷ many Western observers think Pakistan is a fully rational state -- a black box that will deliver results directly commensurate with the amount of international pressure and aid.

No combination of cajolery or intimidation will force Pakistan to perform in the manner outside observers expect. In part this is because Pakistanis are better at the art of persuasion than their Western partners: as Stephen Cohen dryly notes, "Pakistanis are expert at deciphering American interests and appealing to short term American fears in the hope of establishing a relationship of mutual dependency in which Pakistani obligations are minimal while American ones are substantial."⁸ More importantly, Pakistan itself remains divided on ideological, regional, ethnic, linguistic and sectarian grounds, the unhealed legacy of the partition of British India. The state is reduced to constantly fighting fires on the home front.

A false dichotomy between 'coddling' and 'punishing' Pakistan has led to an impasse for Western policy-makers. The generally muted response to Musharraf's suspension of the constitution is only the latest demonstration of this policy bind. How to formulate policy solutions for structural problems that demand a long-term approach when the problems facing Pakistan and its relationship with the West are so immediate? While some would prefer to return to the state of willful ignorance that has characterized the Euro-American relationship with Pakistan, Islamabad can no longer be left to its own fate: State failure will have catastrophic consequences not only for the region but for the world. A perpetually dysfunctional Pakistan will continue to destabilize the region by its hospitality to Islamic terrorists. This will threaten the current rapid economic development in the region. The prospect of political or economic instability in a nuclear-armed South Asia poses a genuine threat to global security.

There is a ray of hope. General Musharraf's longer-term hold on power is loosening, and popular support for movement toward a more democratic and autonomous state is growing. This is disturbing for many in the West, who would prefer to have a strong central authority lead the flagging war against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. There is no guarantee that a democratic regime in Pakistan would be more amenable to the wishes of the international community: in fact, a weak democratic government in Pakistan might respond more to its constituency's dislike of American meddling than to the demands of NATO forces. But it is becoming increasingly clear that the current state of affairs is unsustainable. General Musharraf has become hugely unpopular at home, and American officials have been pushing Pakistan to move toward a semblance of democracy.⁹ Middle-class Pakistanis see Washington's pressure to bring Benazir Bhutto (who has been convicted of money-laundering in Switzerland) back to Pakistan as a false concession to domestic public opinion. But it seems likely that some sort of power-sharing mechanism between army and civilian leadership will eventually emerge. Such an arrangement is of the greatest importance, because Pakistan today faces an unprecedented set of challenges.



▲ Benazir Bhutto . . . Washington's candidate

Institutional Collapse ...

Five years of rapid economic growth have changed the face of the country, as the rash of new billboards for elite residential estates and high-end consumer goods show. Growth has also exacerbated tensions between Pakistan's affluent urbanites and the poor and discontented. Much like neighbouring India, Pakistan has failed to distribute the gains of economic growth equitably. This has helped spawn the visible challenge to the state of radical Islamic fundamentalism.

The rise of radical Islam in Pakistan is not the natural outcome of Pakistan's identity as the home for Muslims of the subcontinent. Liberal Pakistanis never fail to point out that Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the Father of the Nation, explicitly stated that Pakistan was to be a "secular" nation that would not discriminate among its citizens on the basis of religion. The conservative reaction to the perceived encroachments of Western modernity – demonstrated most strikingly to the world in the beatings administered by the theological students of the Red Mosque to the purveyors of pirated pornographic DVDs – is the product of Pakistan's history during the 1980s. Islam in Pakistan has historically been of the accommodating and tolerant Sufi variety. More recent fundamentalist discourse has been shaped and articulated through the network of theological institutions funded by Saudi Arabia, many of which preached strains of Wahhabi Islam that finds Western morality reprehensible. Pakistan now suffers from the consequences of hosting two jihads – one against the Soviets in Afghanistan (1980-89) and the other to liberate Kashmir from India that continues today, albeit in muted form.

Pakistan's intelligence services operate with a high degree of autonomy and have been blamed for encouraging Islamic fundamentalism in order to wage a "cheap," low-intensity war against India. But it is General Musharraf who first created the political space for Muslim fundamentalists to form parties and take power in local elections. His support of the Muttahida Majlis-i Amal (MMA), a bloc of radical

Islamist parties opposed to the US presence in the region, enabled Islamic fundamentalists to come to power in the troubled regions of the NWFP. In return, the MMA has helped the General retain power over Pakistan's legislature. Musharraf may have once reasoned that the fundamentalists would serve as opposition to the remnants of the traditional political parties that lost their relevance after the last coup in 1999. But events at the Red Mosque in Islamabad -- in which security forces fought pitched battles with Islamic fundamentalists who had established themselves in a mosque two blocks from the nation's Supreme Court -- have demonstrated that Islamic fundamentalism has a life of its own and cannot be co-opted. This has become even more apparent with the process of "Talibanization" that now proceeds apace in the NWFP.¹⁰

Besides the Islamists, Pakistan is also wracked by a series of insurgencies in Baluchistan, in the NWFP and the Federally Administered Tribal Regions (FATA). These disturbances are fuelled by the ethnic resentments that Punjab, and ethnic Punjabis have far more clout in the running of the country than the people of Sindh and Baluchistan. Baluchis, in particular, have complained that 'outsiders' are enriching themselves from the province's plentiful natural resources at the expense of impoverished locals. Baluchistan's proto-nationalist grievances seem mild in comparison to the animus with which Islamabad is regarded in the NWFP and FATA. The Pakhtun tribesmen of these regions have historically resisted any interference from the Plains, whether from the British or their Pakistani successors. Since 9/11, they have been under constant pressure to identify and hand over Arab Al-Qaeda and local Taliban supporters. The Pakhtuns deeply resent such coercion, and have vigorously resisted the Pakistani army in its operations to secure the region. As a result of these ethnic and religious insurgencies, a large swath of Pakistan remains only under the nominal governance of Islamabad.

Limits of Military Force

Despite considerable material support from the US, Pakistani forces have generally been unsuccessful in combat operations against insurgents in Baluchistan, the NWFP or FATA. On September 5, 2006, the Government of Pakistan signed a peace pact with representatives of the tribes that had been giving shelter to Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces. In return for the cessation of military activity, the tribes promised to expel all foreign militants. But within weeks of the agreement, attacks on US forces in Afghanistan tripled as



▲ Canadian military . . . an aid role in Pakistan?

insurgents quickly re-established themselves across the border in FATA.¹¹ This peace agreement broke down immediately after armed operations against militants in the Red Mosque came to an end, and the army moved into the NWFP to resume operations against militants.¹² Since then, the army has suffered more than a thousand casualties, the large majority at the hands of suicide bombers. While the fighting in Waziristan (in the NWFP) has escalated in recent days, there are no apparent long-term objectives that can be achieved by military force: recognizing the fruitlessness of such action, the Governor of the province, Ali Mohammed Jan Aurakzai, has begun efforts to re-establish the abandoned peace deal with the local tribes.¹³ And most recently, Taliban fighters have captured (and released) hundreds of soldiers, many of whom are suspected of having deserted; indeed, Musharraf publicly castigated his soldiers for having acted “unprofessionally.”¹⁴ The story of this continuing military debacle in the tribal areas demonstrates the inefficacy of the application of military force in the pursuit of political objectives. But will Pakistan’s Western partners be satisfied with the pace and achievements of such military action?

... And Structural Stability

Despite challenges and failures, most middle-class Pakistanis have until recently demonstrated a high degree of confidence in their state. To some Western observers, this smacks of the hubris of the middle-class Iranians who supported the Islamic fundamentalists on the eve of the Revolution in 1979.¹⁵ And indeed, the sight of helicopter gunships in action against a mosque in the heart of Islamabad has shaken even the most complacent. But why, then, do ordinary Pakistanis continue to believe in the state? The answer, according to a recent work by Ayesha Siddiqa, lies in the paradoxical role of the army in Pakistan: the military and political classes have in combination

managed to destroy the institutional fabric of the government to the point that the military is now deeply embedded within the political and economic life of the State.¹⁶ Given its strong economic interests, the military will not permit the current state structure to degenerate into chaos.

The Pakistani army has historically posited itself as the guardian of the Muslim nation against the ‘existential’ danger posed by India. Pakistanis have believed that military parity with India is possible and indeed necessary for the very existence of their country, given their perceptions of Indian

irredentism. As in other post-colonial nations, the realm of popular discourse is suffused with the rhetoric of industrial development and progress. This middle-class desire for a progressive and modern Islamic state has been frustrated by the reality of Pakistan's economic structure. Although primarily an agrarian country, Pakistan has never experienced the comprehensive land reforms necessary to change the essentially feudal structures of power that bind large landowners and their tenants in the countryside.¹⁷ The persistence of these feudal relations has prevented the emergence of a popular democracy. Instead, Pakistan has stumbled from crisis to crisis, and the military has been expected to save the state from imminent collapse.

Since Pakistani politics has failed so dramatically, politicians themselves have resorted to the army to adjudicate political disputes. Perceived as the last uncorrupted institution, the army has over the years become less a force for intervention at the last resort, than a regular player in the political world. In this context, Siddiqa demonstrates that the army developed an absolute distrust of politicians since the reign of Zia-ul Haq, (1977-88) and that the desire for economic and political power reinforced one another ever since.¹⁸

Today, the army legitimizes its predatory economic policies by claiming that it is better suited to governance than any of the nation's venal politicians.¹⁹ Political involvement has also permitted the army to establish and extend its presence in the economy by means of agricultural, industrial and commercial enterprises. The army has created a separate economic domain for the profit of its officer corps, one outside the purview of civilian audits or any other form of non-military control.²⁰ It now owns prime urban real estate, provides excellent houses and schools for its officers, and has taken control of large swathes of rural land, which it runs in the feudal manner of the traditional landed elite.²¹

The army's hold over the country and its economy is secured by several factors. For one, Pakistan's West-

ern allies are fearful of the consequences of instability in a country that is a frontline state in the war on terror and possesses nuclear weapons with advanced missile delivery systems. General Musharraf has played to these sentiments by presenting himself as a beleaguered voice of moderation without which the Pakistani state would inevitably collapse under a rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism.²² The political opposition remains fragmented and discredited. There is little to fear from the East, as relations with India have improved dramatically since 2002. Despite persistent fears of 'Islamization' among the members of the armed forces who grew up in General Zia's overtly religious regime, the armed forces have held together even when fighting jihadis once (and perhaps still) supported by its own security establishment. The professionalism and cohesiveness of the army was demonstrated in the destruction of the Islamic militants in the Red Mosque in Islamabad. The Pakistani army bears the institutional ethos of orderly regime changes: it only undertakes a coup once it places confidence as a whole in the leading general.²³ There is therefore no credible danger to the paramouncy of the army from within or without, and it will not withdraw from politics of its own accord despite the advice of foreign observers.²⁴ This holds true even if a popular civilian leader were to come to power in the near future.



▲ President Musharraf and President Bush . . . strategic partners

Transition to Democracy?

What does this mean for the prospects of democracy and stability in Pakistan? A year ago, even the most optimistic of the country's citizens were in despair. But the country has been shocked by the entirely unanticipated spectacle of the Chief Justice refusing to obey the army's diktat. The crisis began on March 9, when President Musharraf suspended the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry, on charges of misconduct: among other things, the Chief Justice was accused of using a car with a 3,000 cc engine instead of the 1,700 cc engine vehicle to which his status apparently entitled him. The Pakistani media, which does not shy away from harshly criticizing the military dictatorship, immediately suggested that the Chief Justice was suspended because of his intractability in recently challenging the legality of the privatization of a steel mill that would have benefited the family of the Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz. Worse still, Justice Chaudhry had begun investigations into the thousands of people who had 'disappeared' within Pakistan's massive security apparatus since the country became a frontline state in the War on Terror.

The spectre of an assertive judiciary is deeply troubling for President Musharraf. At the heart of the matter lies his bare allegiance to judicial procedure in establishing his rule over the country. The General's term as President came to an end this year, and to continue in power he had to be re-elected by the National Assembly, which itself is due for elections. It was a particularly inconvenient time to raise questions about President's Musharraf's dual status as head of government and chief of army staff. President Musharraf must have believed that the removal of the Chief Justice would avert any unseemly pronouncements by the judiciary; but the Chief Justice refused to resign after being technically rendered 'non-functional.'

Subsequent events built their own momentum. First, there was the sight of the Chief Justice of Pakistan

being unceremoniously grabbed by the hair and shoved into a car by secret service agents on March 14. This led to instant protests around the country. Then, the offices of the GEO TV channel, which had broadcast images of the Chief Justice being manhandled, were ransacked by armed policemen; and the government placed the Chief Justice under house arrest and unveiled restrictive new laws to gag the media.

The mistreatment of the Chief Justice did not only enrage just the citizens of his home province of Baluchistan, many of whom feel oppressed by the more populous Sindhis and Punjabis. Instead, the entire nation rallied behind the figure of the Chief Justice; Pakistan's political parties, having long suffered idleness in the Dictatorship of Enlightened Moderation, also sensed their opportunity to at least renegotiate their position vis-à-vis the military. The government was forced to withdraw the new laws restricting press freedoms, and permit Justice Chaudhry freedom of movement. He immediately began touring the country, lecturing citizens on the importance of judicial independence. According to media accounts, hundreds of thousands of ordinary Pakistanis waited for hours by the highways to glimpse the slow caravan of SUVs which ferried the Chief Justice and his entourage from city to city.

The worst moment came when Justice Chaudhry attempted to enter the city of Karachi which is dominated by the MQM party, one of General Musharraf's staunchest allies. On May 12, the MQM ran riot as the Chief Justice and his supporters attempted to address the Karachi High Court. Justice Chaudhry was not permitted out of the airport, while the MQM set up roadblocks throughout the city and attacked all those perceived to support the judicial movement, killing 42 and injuring many more. That the government permitted the MQM to take the law into its own hands caused widespread revulsion among Pakistanis from all walks of life, including

Musharraf's supporters among the middle class. Soon after, a judicial panel found the reference against the Justice Chaudhry illegal, and he was reinstated to his former post.

The political repercussions of Justice Chaudhry's reinstatement initially were drowned out by the crisis in the Red Mosque. The Chief Justice himself subsequently maintained a low profile. But for many Pakistanis, the unexpected assertiveness of the judiciary opened new possibilities for better governance and may point to a path to the future. The rise of the judiciary is part of a broader trend in South Asia, reflecting a drift from the principle of the separation of powers, and a politicization of the judiciary, to the extent that judges have come to control many facets of ordinary life generally under the purview of the Executive branch.²⁵ While

the increasing power of the judiciary has been a source of concern for those who believe in India's constitutionally-ordained separation of powers, it is a source of hope for Pakistanis who have seen every institution of government subordinated to an increasingly unpopular military administration.²⁶ A single act of judicial independence, no matter how welcomed by Pakistanis, is unlikely to lead to radical democratic reform, even though Musharraf felt sufficiently threatened by the court's activism that its suspension -- for "working at cross purposes with the executive" -- was one of the justifications for emergency rule. Now, President Musharraf has sacked the Chief Justice again as part of his efforts to secure his continued rule. But Pakistan's combative legal establishment has immediately responded with protests against Musharraf, leading to days of bloody confrontation.

A Predictable Future?

Given the structural involvement of the Pakistani army in the country's governance, under what circumstances might General Musharraf eventually relinquish power, and what will that mean for Pakistan? The situation is now so hopelessly confused that even seasoned observers write editorials entitled, "So, What is Happening?"²⁷ But it seems fairly certain that if Musharraf were to suddenly depart from the Presidency (by his own volition or that of others) he would be smoothly replaced by a senior military officer of similar mentality. There will be no infighting within the army, and chances of a serious Islamist revolt remain extremely small. A true power-vacuum will only occur if the most senior levels of the army were to be entirely decapitated, and this eventuality is very improbable.

In the aftermath of the suicide attack against Benazir Bhutto, and a similar, though far less deadly attack apparently aimed at Musharraf, the short-term political situation is extremely fluid, and outcomes are difficult to predict. Unless more acts of violence cause further destabilization, it

seems plausible that Bhutto will contest and win the elections (promised for February, 2008) and could become the Prime Minister by next year. But the long-term outlook remains bleak. No matter how much autonomy any civilian leader can claim under a reconstituted government, the army would retain its power. For the structural reasons already outlined, this would be true even if General Musharraf left the political scene forever. No combination of civilian and military rule will cause any fundamental change in the country, given the depth of military involvement in the economy. And no politician now retains the capability to reduce the importance of the army in the everyday political and economic life of the nation. Elections, free and fair or otherwise, are to be desired. But while Western observers remain agreed on the importance of elections for a democratic transition, they have little to say about what must come immediately after elections.²⁸ It is not clear that elections will necessarily yield a democratic regime with the support of the various autonomous forces that operate within government.

Despite all appearances to the contrary, then, Pakistan is probably at a stable equilibrium because of the structure of its polity and economy, and the dominant position of the armed forces within both. But such an equilibrium cannot be construed as permanent -- indeed, the lack of governance that is the hallmark of the present regime is creating the conditions for its own eventual demise. Given the institutional strength of the army, the fragility of Pakistan's current stability cannot be estimated. But observers are mistaken if they believe that the ascension of Benazir Bhutto -- or indeed any other civilian leader -- to power will end the crisis in Pakistan. Beneath the stability of quotidian life, the lasting hold of the armed forces on political life will relentlessly dissolve the fabric of statehood.

Here is certainly cause for worry among the international community and Canada in particular. Canada's military mission in Afghanistan

depends directly on Pakistan's ability to secure its borders and to capture Taliban leaders.²⁹ Unless a popular Pakistani government makes the political settlements necessary to address the grievances of Pakistan's Pakhtun and other tribal populations, there can be no progress in securing southern Afghanistan. Similarly, Canada will remain vulnerable to terrorism at home as long as Pakistan is unable to prevent radical Islamists from preaching hatred of the West. It is therefore directly in Canada's national interest to work for the rise of a truly democratic regime. The dilemma is that no democracy can sprout in a society that is structurally controlled by the army. Not only must Canada lend political support to the return to elected government -- it must also contribute to the development of the institutions on which democracy depends. How might Ottawa begin to move toward these lofty goals?

A Role for Canada: Some Recommendations

Canada needs to increase overall aid spending directed toward Pakistan. Canadian International Development Agency's Community-Based Aid Program, part of a \$50 million aid program, is a very small part of the US\$4 billion that Pakistan receives annually from foreign donors. It has been extremely successful in improving the quality of life for Pakistan's most deprived citizens. For example, the Canadian-supported South Asia Partnership -- Pakistan program has supported civil society activities, such as the training of journalists, and worked with local government partners.³⁰ The scale of these programs, however, is minuscule -- CIDA provided only \$18.56 million in development funding to Pakistan in 2005.³¹

As Ottawa looks at extending development assistance to Pakistan, it must decide where its limited aid resources are best directed. Traditionally, large aid programs have been unsuccessful in Pakistan. Negative

assessments are routine, for instance, in the evaluation reports of multi-million dollar projects sponsored by the World Bank. Indeed, a recent World Bank report pointed succinctly to the problem:

The focus, content, and design of sub-national operations should target capacity and institutional building at that level in conjunction with the transfer of responsibilities from the higher to the lower level . . . When designing sub-national operations, joint discussions with the central government are indispensable for success... Ownership and commitment, at the political as well as at the administrative level, are keys to success.³²

This does not mean that development efforts should be confined to work with NGOs and civil society groups. The key, rather, is to build government capacity to funnel the large amounts of aid being poured into the country toward its intended recipients. Without such capacity, confidence

in government will continue to erode, until other forces step in to fill the vacuum. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the most underdeveloped parts of the country are most susceptible to the influence of radical anti-Western Islamic politicians. Canada, along with other donors such as Japan and the US, must develop a concerted aid program that is delivered through the organs of local government. Canada needs therefore to increase inter-agency contact at all levels in order to increase government capability to fulfill its mandate of satisfying development objectives. Ottawa can 'export' expertise to Islamabad by establishing cross-training programs between the judiciary, elections agencies, ministries of agriculture and rural development, and other areas in which Pakistan displays an interest.

Australian initiative to fund *madrasahs* (Islamic religious schools) in Indonesia that do not preach fundamentalist, anti-Western ideologies.³³ This is a particularly important intervention given the failure of General Musharraf to deliver on his promise to reform these *madrasahs* after the killing of the *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl.³⁴ While Ottawa needs to increase aid, it has to carefully consider which programs meet its own goals for fostering democracy and reducing the risk of Islamic fundamentalism in the region.

The issue of military cooperation with Pakistan is also important. At an operational level, the performance of Canadian forces in Afghanistan depends directly

CANADIAN OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN (\$ million)			
Year	Country-to-country	Multilateral	Total Net Disbursements
2004-2005	19.07	30.71	49.78
2003-2004	17.81	6.62	24.43
2002-2003	16.74	45.71	62.46
2001-2002	18.00	44.53	62.53
2000-2001	22.51	17.55	40.06
1999-2000	22.00	17.53	39.53
1998-1999	23.68	29.11	52.79

Source: Canadian International Development Agency

Any increase in funding by CIDA, therefore, must lead to commensurate increases in support for inter-governmental training programs that will eventually build democratic capacity.

Such programs can be effective in meeting local objectives but they are not integrated into a greater strategic framework that prioritizes combating Islamic fundamentalism. In this context, Canada should closely examine the success of the recent

on the cooperation of Pakistani forces in destroying Taliban safe havens in Baluchistan. Since September 11, Pakistan has been supplied with large amounts of high-technology weaponry in the name of fighting the war on terror. In practice, part of Pakistan's motivation has been to acquire weapons systems to match India's rapidly-expanding forces, even though Pakistan and India are currently in the midst of a rapprochement. In this context, Canada should work with its Western partners to limit the

flow into Pakistan of high-technology weaponry, which does little to support the war on terror. The imposition of the emergency provides a context for Ottawa to take a lead in discussions about restricting this flow of armaments. But if the military begins to make concessions to genuine democratic reform, Canada should shift focus to military capacity-building activities such as officer training programs and joint training exercises. Such cooperation will transcend the current relationship of material rewards and punishments and signal that Pakistan's Western allies are genuinely interested in empowering the country and securing its international position by involving it in regional and global multilateral security arrangements. This will reduce the pressure on the army and intelligence services to support Islamic fundamentalists, who have been seen as a cheap strategic asset in the continuing asymmetric conflict with India. Such training and exchange programs may also boost the case for the reduction of the army's involvement in the civilian economy, which would be the precursor of any normalization in the economy.

Military force alone, no matter how artfully applied, will fail in settling historic ethnic-based grievances that have moved the Baluchis and Pakhtuns to arms. Military action against the ethnic insurgency in Baluchistan and in NWFP is also pushing these politically-motivated guerillas into the arms of Al-Qaeda and Taliban forces.³⁵ The Pakistani centre needs to reach a political settlement with these historically disenfranchised people, and uphold the position of Baluchistan, FATA and NWFP in the federation. This is not possible under the aegis of a military government and can only be led by a democratic civilian regime, which may be perceived to have some civilian support; Musharraf's regime is seen as subservient to US interests and cannot gain the trust of the people living in the centrally-administered regions. Ottawa should offer its expertise in creating institutions that bring lasting and meaningful autonomy to Pakistan's tribal regions. The government's administrative abilities and experience in negotiating accords with First Nations groups and in establishing the jurisdictional framework for Quebec's special status within the federation could be particularly valuable in this regard.

**OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
TO PAKISTAN***
(US\$ million)

1995	820.9
1996	881.9
1997	595.8
1998	1052.5
1999	732.8
2000	692.4
2001	1942.1
2002	2128.1
2003	1061.7
2004	1423.9
2005	1666.5

* Figures exclude military aid.

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators.

In support of the long-term goal of helping stabilize the region, Canada should assist in the establishment of democracy in Pakistan. Aid programs that fund capacity-building in government and the military will help in this cause. Ottawa should also support re nascent government institutions such as the judiciary, human rights organizations, and civil society media organizations. Failure to support such institutions will undermine the prospect of democracy and will push the state further into the hands of Islamic fundamentalists.³⁶ Therefore, Ottawa should establish interdepartmental and interministerial links with Islamabad as soon as civilian government is formed, and must use aid money in programs designed to strengthen the judiciary and other civilian agencies of the government. The focus must be on improving the quality of governance and the delivery of services, particularly in areas where the state currently has limited access.

These suggestions offer frustratingly slow solutions to what is clearly a pressing political situation. But the alternative of doing nothing is no longer an option, since it is easily demonstrable that Pakistan's current crisis itself is the result of years of inaction: the traditional approach of Western policy-makers to Pakistan has been to ignore the country's problems as long as it seemed pliable to short-term regional strategic objectives. The result of this form of engagement is a country that now negotiates with its allies by "holding a gun to its head."³⁷ If Western

policy-makers wish to seriously engage Pakistan – and there is no indication that the country will decrease in importance in the foreseeable future – they need to signal their intention to work with Islamabad over the long run. This is particularly important, given that Pakistanis themselves often regard their principal ally, the United States, as fickle and unreliable.³⁸ Here, Canada has a special position: it shares America's broader regional interests but is not subject to the anti-American animus now held by a broad swathe of Pakistanis. Ottawa can leverage this diplomatic advantage in practical ways, publicly supporting initiatives toward strengthening democracy and working closely with any new civilian authority.

The direction of current events points to the establishment of some form of civilian authority in Pakistan within the next few months. If such civilian leadership is to be anything but nominal, Pakistan will need to renegotiate the balance between government and military on its own terms. The establishment of civilian leadership, whenever it happens, is a golden opportunity. Ottawa could seize the moment and dramatically expand government-to-government contacts as soon as President Musharraf yields some ground to civilian authority. Doing so will not automatically lead to a pro-Western democracy committed to fighting Islamic fundamentalism. But it will give Pakistan a fighting chance against the crises that appear to be overtaking it.

Notes

¹ Stephen Cohen, Testimony before US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, July 25, 2007.

² US National Intelligence Estimate, July 17, 2007.

³ "Congress Passes Legislation to Tie US Aid to Pakistan to Progress Against Al-Qaeda," *International Herald Tribune*, July 27, 2007.

⁴ "Pakistan Faces a Less-Friendly US Congress," *Christian Science Monitor*, January 29, 2007; "The Pakistani Paradox," *Outlook (India)*, October 11, 2007.

⁵ See for example Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, "A War the Pentagon Can't Win." *New York Times*, July 24, 2007, and editorial support of US Presidential hopeful Barack Obama's intention to support strikes inside Pakistan, "Chasing Terrorists," *Washington Post*, August 9, 2007.

- ⁶ “Cut in Aid to Damage Ties with US: Foreign Office,” *The News (Pakistan)*, August 17, 2007.
- ⁷ Perhaps the best analysis of Pakistan is to be found in Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, Brookings Institution Press: 2004; also see Ian Talbott, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, C Hurst & Co.: 1995 (2005).
- ⁸ Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, p. 327.
- ⁹ “US is Prodding Pakistan Leader to Share Power,” *New York Times*, August 16, 2007.
- ¹⁰ “The Talibanization of the North-West Frontier,” *Terrorism Monitor*, Jamestown Foundation, June 2006.
- ¹¹ “Taliban Attacks on US Forces have Tripled,” *New York Sun*, Sept. 28, 2006.
- ¹² “MMA chief condemns army deployment in NWFP,” *Pakistan Daily Times*, July 17, 2007.
- ¹³ “Aurakzai trying to revive talks in N. Waziristan,” *Dawn*, August 17, 2007.
- ¹⁴ “Kidnapped Armymen acted unprofessionally: President,” *Dawn*, October 13, 2007.
- ¹⁵ See for instance, William Dalrymple, “Letter from Pakistan: Days of Rage – Challenges for the Nation’s Future,” *The New Yorker*, July 23, 2007.
- ¹⁶ This point has been excellently argued by Ayesha Siddiqa, *Military Inc.: Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy*, Pluto: 2007.
- ¹⁷ Siddiqa, *Military Inc.*, p. 75.
- ¹⁸ Siddiqa, *Military Inc.*, p. 139.
- ¹⁹ Siddiqa, *Military Inc.*, p. 130.
- ²⁰ Siddiqa, *Military Inc.*, p. 142.
- ²¹ Siddiqa, *Military Inc.*, pp. 178-9.
- ²² This proposition has been robustly demonstrated as false in Frederic Grare, “Policy Brief #45: The Myth of an Islamic Peril,” Carnegie Endowment, February 2006.
- ²³ Siddiqa, *Military Inc.*, p. 152.
- ²⁴ Cf. Stephen Cohen, “The Pakistan Time Bomb,” *The Washington Post*, July 3, 2007.
- ²⁵ This phenomenon has recently been detailed in its Indian context by Pratap Bhanu Mehta, “The Rise of Judicial Sovereignty,” *Journal of Democracy* – Vol. 18, No. 2, April 2007, pp. 70-83. It may apply to Pakistan as much as India, given the widespread perception of the failure of the political and administrative classes in both countries.
- ²⁶ “Pakistanis Express Ire at Army and Musharraf,” *New York Times*, August 9, 2007.
- ²⁷ Shauqat Qadir, “So, What is Happening?” *Daily Times*, August 11, 2007.
- ²⁸ For example, see “Asia Report #137: Elections, Democracy and Stability in Pakistan,” *International Crisis Group*.
- ²⁹ “Canadian Casualties in Afghanistan Depend on Support from General Musharraf,” *Asia Pacific Bulletin*, August 2006.
- ³⁰ “Practical Implications of Local Government: Gaps and Solutions,” *SAP-Pakistan and Federation of Canadian Municipalities*, <http://www.sappk.org/reports/rep-localgovern.pdf> .
- ³¹ CIDA-Pakistan Overview, available online at <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/pakistan-e> .
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- ³⁸ Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, p. 327.

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