

**The Conflict in Kashmir:
An Examination of Security Imperatives for the United States**

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Abstract

One of the major security issues facing the United States today is how to handle the disputed Kashmir region. Since the independence movement in India, the valley has been the source of repeated conflicts between India and Pakistan. After evaluating the history of the conflict in and over Kashmir, this paper proposes a roadmap for peace in the region, drawing on strategic interests of Pakistan, India, and major terrorist actors while reinforcing the conflict's significance to American security imperatives. The paper (1) advises Pakistan to resist further attacks against India in return for territorial concessions in Kashmir, (2) encourages India, due to the disproportional cost of attempting control of a region it has never ruled, to cede much of the region, and (3) provides a framework under which U.S. policy can support these changes. The paper ultimately aims to encourage America to diplomatically facilitate the rise of a powerful Indian state that can balance China's growing regional power, and lead the way in many of the regional issues that continue to plague South-East Asia.

Key Terms: Kashmir, India-Pakistan Relations, United States, National Security Policy, Terrorism, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Peace Settlements

Introduction - Kashmir: Beyond a Geographical Location

Generations of Indian pilgrims have chanted the mantra, "Kashmir without an equal-Kashmir, equal to paradise! (India- Pakistan 1947)" Yet, the region we speak of loosely as Kashmir is large and diverse, a view not into paradise, but a microcosm of the world. Geographically, it has many barriers, and it covers plains, glaciers, mountains and lakes, forested foothills and high ranges such as the Himalayas and the Karakoram. The geological pressures, which formed those features, were mirrored by the political pressures on a region subject to British, Chinese, Indian, and Pakistani influence. Historically, Kashmir is an agglomeration of diverse territories brought under the political power of one Maharajah. Due to this, the population is diverse and subject to contending pressures. Contemporarily, Kashmir denotes a larger area that includes the Indian administered state of Jammu and Kashmir, the Pakistani administered Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir, and the Chinese-administered regions of Aksai Chin and the Trans-Karakoram Tract. However, Kashmir represents politically much more than a small, disputed valley; with seemingly intractable differences and conflicts defining the region's history and present condition. The conflict maintains the ability to shift the balance of global power and politics. With over 600 terrorist attacks in India last year alone, and with many stemming from the region, instead of an equal to paradise, Kashmir seems a catastrophe, which merits investigation and resolution.

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Since the United Nations involvement in the process has seemingly failed to this point, the United States should more actively and directly work through diplomatic channels to induce a settlement in the region. A successful India and a secure Pakistan are vital imperatives for success in both the global economy and any effort to combat extremism and discourage the growth of terrorist networks. Moreover, a successful India can serve to balance the growing power of China in the region- a critical component of American grand strategy. To establish the strategic importance of settling the Kashmiri conflict, this paper begins with a historical review of the region, the contention of its possession, and the resultant conflict. From there, it explores Pakistani, Indian, and American interests for peace in order to outline the necessity, viability, and as opposed to continued conflict, even favorability of settlement for all parties. After delineating the options for peace, this essay concludes that the United States should construct policy to support a peace settlement in the region that permits the disentanglement of Indian security policy from localized issues and refocuses it onto regional objectives.

Historical Overview

For there to be traction for resolution, a reassessment of the history of the Kashmir and an understanding of the dynamics of the conflict as it currently stands is necessary. From 1820 until the Partition of India in 1947, the Hindu rulers called the Maharaja's of Kashmir, governed the valley, even though the majority of the population in Kashmir was Muslim. The state was created in the first half of the 19th century by the Hindu Dogra dynasty, partly through conquest and partly through gift from the Sikhs and the British, between whom control over north-west India was passing (Bowers 2004, 11). In 1947, British suzerainty over the 565 Indian princely states ended with the creation of two new nations: the Union of India and the Dominion of Pakistan. According to the Indian Independence Act of 1947, Britain left the states to choose whether to join India or Pakistan. Of these princely states, the region of Jammu and Kashmir, proved the most difficult to assign to either India or Pakistan. In October 1947, as fears that Jammu and Kashmir would accede to India mounted, a Pashtun revolution intending to liberate Kashmir from the pro-India Dogra rule invaded western Kashmir. The Maharaja was unable to withstand the invasion on his own and he turned to Indian support, signing the Instrument of Accession on October 27, 1947. Pakistan immediately protested the accession, suggesting that it was fraudulent because the Maharaja had acted under duress. Moreover, they argued that as the region maintains a significant Muslim majority, the Hindu Maharaja did not have the legitimate authority to decide the fate of Jammu and Kashmir.

In the agreement with the Maharaja, the British Lord Mountbatten, who accepted the accession, suggested that in view of India and Pakistan's competing claims for the state, the accession should be confirmed by a plebiscite (Schofield 2002, "Kashmir's Forgotten"). However, this referendum never occurred and became a main point of contention between the Pakistani and the Indian governments. The result was war over Kashmir. The First Kashmir War lasted until 1948, when India moved the issue to the UN Security Council. The war left two-thirds of the state under the control of India, while Pakistan garnered de facto control over one-third of the region. India still officially claims dominion over all of Kashmir.

Over the next several years, the UN Security Council passed four new resolutions, revising the terms of Resolution 47 to include a synchronous withdrawal of both Indian and

Pakistani troops from the region. These resolutions established the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) whose functions were to observe and report, investigate complaints of ceasefire violations, and submit its findings to each party and to the Secretary-General. These resolutions also called for a plebiscite to determine the status of the territory (Bowers 2004, 13). Nevertheless, as has become a theme in the region, UN efforts failed and in the 1950s and the Indian government distanced itself from its commitment to hold a plebiscite. India claims this was because Pakistan had not withdrawn forces, and secondly, Indian elections had already been held, thus in the Indian Government's view, legally affirming the state's status as part of India (Schofield 2002, "Kashmir: The Origins").

Conflicts in the Latter 20th Century

At the end of 1971, the conflict shifted back to its old paradigm, and hostilities broke out again between India and Pakistan. They started along the borders of East Pakistan and were related to the movement for independence which had developed in that region and which ultimately led to the creation of Bangladesh (United Nations). When a ceasefire came into effect on 17 December 1971, a number of positions on both sides of the 1949 ceasefire line had changed hands. The Security Council met on the 12th and 21st of December, and adopted resolution 307. This demanded that a ceasefire in all areas of conflict remain in effect until all armed forces had withdrawn to their respective territories and to positions that fully respected the ceasefire line in Jammu and Kashmir supervised by UNMOGIP. In 1972, following another war, the two countries concluded the Simla Agreement. This committed them to settle their differences through bilateral talks; however, these have sometimes produced more complications than solutions.

While these various conflicts shaped the trajectory of the dispute over Kashmir, the 1987 elections were the tipping point in the Kashmir conflict. Following these "rigged" elections, a paroxysm of violence occurred. A leader of the Congress Party at the time, Khem Lata Wukhloo, recalls, "I remember that there was a massive rigging in 1987 elections. The losing candidates were declared winners. It shook the ordinary people's faith in the elections and the democratic process." Kashmiri youths had participated in the 1987 elections with great enthusiasm and seriousness; these flawed results inspired deep anger (Hussain 2002). Insurgency broke out in Indian-administered Kashmir in 1989. As a sign of increased tension, it is interesting to note that in this year, the level of terrorist attacks recorded in India in the Global Terrorism Database jumped to over 420, up from merely 60 in 1985. This statistic is persuasive in the fact that it seems to show that a majority of the attacks India has suffered can be attributed to a few groups in the Kashmir region that are sponsored by Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence. The year 1989 was also the year that the Pakistani government began sponsoring groups such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, the most violent insurgent group in the region, which advocates Islamic rule over Kashmir, and has ties to al Qaeda.

The conflict between India and Pakistan became more treacherous as both became declared nuclear powers in 1998 (Bowers 2004, 21) and the last direct conflict occurred in the 1999 Kargil conflict, which left over 1000 soldiers dead (Sagan 2003, 254). Following the attacks of September 11, 2001 and the U.S. response in Afghanistan, a détente occurred. In 2002,

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Pakistan's then President Pervez Musharraf banned the most violent of the militant groups. He also ordered a reduction in Pakistan's open support for Kashmir militancy (Hasan 2010).

Since then, violence and unrest have returned and 2008 marked the greatest number of anti-India protests since 1980, with several hundred thousand protesters spilling out onto the streets demanding freedom from India. The Indian army suppressed the protests with attacks leading to the deaths of 40 unarmed civilians (Arney 2008). Additionally, the Mumbai attacks orchestrated by Lashkar-e-Taiba in 2008 have placed significant constraints on the relationship between Pakistan and India as India called off peace talks. In response, training camps are once again being set up in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir, and since 2009, militant activity has increased dramatically in the Kashmir region (Hasan 2010). According to the Global Terrorism Database at the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism, over 600 attacks occurred in 2010 alone, and while most were not catastrophic in content, their destabilizing nature continues to undermine faith of both foreign investors and Indian citizens in the ability of the New Delhi government to provide security. In July 2011, three explosions simultaneously ripped through Mumbai, India's commercial capital, killing seventeen people and wounding 131 (Bajaj 2011). The most recent major attack came in early September 2011 when another explosion destroyed a reception area in the Delhi High Court, located in the heart of the capital. The blast killed ten people and wounded more than sixty others (Yardley 2011). In October, officials claimed a breakthrough in the case of the Delhi High Court attack, detaining a key conspirator who they identified as from the Kishtwar area of Jammu and Kashmir, once again revealing concerns about India's vulnerability to terrorism because of the Kashmir issue (Gottipati 2011).

Pakistani Interest

If the United States is to establish a compromise between the two parties, a clear understanding of the interest and politics of the conflict is necessary. According to the Pakistani Ministry of Foreign Affairs, India has no legitimate claim on the Kashmir territory, as even if one accepts the accession as lawful, there has never been a plebiscite as proposed in the agreement. On the Ministry's website, they claim, "the Kashmiri people have now been forced by the circumstances to rise against the repression of the Indian army and uphold their right of self-determination." Due to their involvement and support for insurgent groups both indigenous to Kashmir and those originating outside of the valley, Pakistan has fundamentally altered the dimensions of the conflict in Kashmir.

Islamabad's backing for these groups revolves around the perennial conflict with India - a militarily, economically, and demographically superior state viewed as posing a fundamental threat to Pakistan's long-term viability and integrity (Chalk 2001). Religious imperatives also come into play, particularly on the part of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Directorate, which enjoys a high degree of autonomy and executive space within Pakistan. A RAND study estimates that the annual ISI expenditure to the main militant organizations is between US\$125 and \$250 million a year. At least 91 insurgent training camps have been identified in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (Chalk 2001). This is an unprecedented level of support for insurgent groups and has resulted in a prodigious escalation of conflict. The RAND study also proposes that the medium to long-term aim, according to intelligence sources, is to trigger a generalized Islamic revolution across the northeast and eventually India as a whole (Chalk 2001). A particularly strong example

of this activity comes in the support of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), a terrorist group who proclaims its intention to bring the jihad to the USA, Israel, Russia, the UK and France- announcing plans to “plant Islamic flags in Delhi, Tel Aviv, Washington, Paris, and London.”

While Islamabad may view involvement in Kashmir as a viable way of provoking unrest in India, the policy carries definite risks. In fact, it is no longer apparent that the army or ISI exercise complete control over the proxies they have helped to create, some of which are now openly talking about fomenting a fundamentalist revolution in Pakistan itself (Chalk 2001). For example, problems arose when a few breakaway Lashkar members who disagreed with President Musharraf’s strategy began anti-government attacks (“Profile: Lashkar” 2010). This experience shows the inherent risk in sponsoring terrorist organizations and provides the first incentive for seeking peace in the region.

In addition, such a high level of focus on India leaves much of western Pakistan vulnerable. The recent U.S. Navy Seal night dispatch into Pakistani territory that ended in the death of Osama bin Laden revealed deep security concerns for the western border. When an Indian reporter asked why the Pakistani military did not detect U.S. helicopter teams as they flew into and operated in Pakistani airspace for more than two hours, General Musharraf retorted that most of Pakistan’s radars “are focused more towards your side” (Joseph 2011). These gaps in security must certainly leave huge issues and potential vulnerabilities that Pakistan would be well advised to rectify as they make the state look weak to preying foreign powers and internal terrorist organizations seeking a change in Pakistani policy. Correcting these security gaps would only be possible by redirecting resources away from terrorist activities and instead into a new focus on territorial sovereignty and control.

Due to this risk and increasing international pressure, Pakistan has displayed a willingness to soften its stance on Kashmir and move away from the proxy war. On Dec. 5, 2006, the BBC reported that former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf told an Indian TV channel that Pakistan would give up its claim on Kashmir if India accepted some of his peace proposals, including a phased withdrawal of troops, self-governance for locals, no changes in the borders of Kashmir, and a joint supervision mechanism involving India, Pakistan and Kashmir (“South Asia” 2006). However, over four years later, no progress has been made on this issue and Pakistan continues to claim Indian intransience on the issue as the main barrier to peace.

Indian Interest

To state that India is a rising power on the world stage would seem to be an understatement; with economic growth at almost 10% before the world recession and the world’s tenth largest military expenditure, India is well on its way to stability and prosperity. It is a growing partner with the United States and could prove to be a critical ally in the coming century. However, this rising power has recently struggled to make the necessary steps to cement it as a major player in the realm of international affairs. One of the major issues is the Kashmir conflict. India has suffered hundreds of terrorist attacks on its soil every year, with the impetus behind the majority of these attacks coming from recalcitrant insurgents in the Kashmir region of the country, who desire autonomy from New Delhi. These attacks not only affect the attitudes and solidarity of the citizenry, make the government appear not credible, and have significant

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economic repercussions, but they also distract the Indian government from focusing on the major issues that would allow the country to more quickly take its place as a world power.

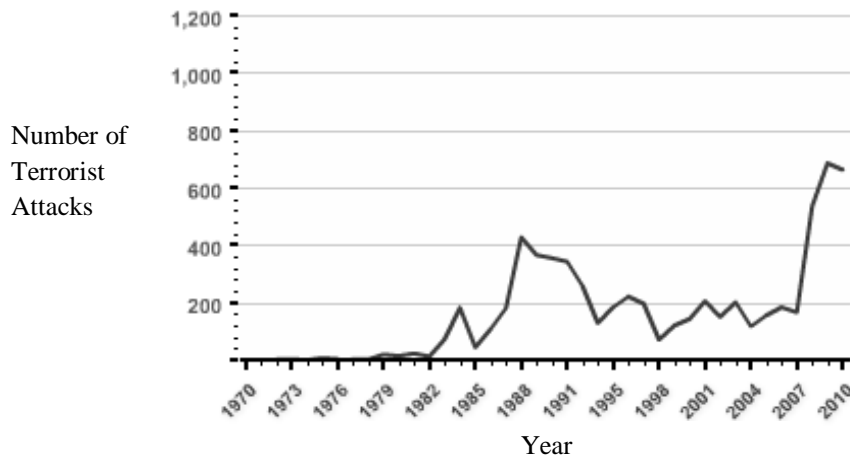


Figure 1- Attacks per year in India
National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism

India views Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of the Indian State. They argue that the UN Security Council Resolution 1172 accepts India's stand regarding all outstanding issues between India and Pakistan and urges the need to resolve the dispute through dialogue, and does not call for a plebiscite (Indian Ministry of External Affairs 2003). In addition, India claims that the Simla Agreement between the two states supersedes the UN resolutions, negating any previous agreement (Bowers 2004, 19).

While India may have legitimate rights to Jammu and Kashmir, it is mistaken to argue that the insurgencies in Kashmir have not had a profound effect on New Delhi. The success of these attacks yields credence to the belief that their strategic purpose is to keep India's armed forces in the constraining mission of territorial defense, cost large sums of money, and prevent the rise of India on the international scene (Friedman 2008). While some argue that capitulating Kashmir would signal weakness internationally, any potential perception of weakness would be offset by a reality of increased strength and activity.

A response to this argument might be that while the territory itself has no economic or strategic value, it carries a high level of psychological importance. In fact, Paul Bowers argues in a paper to the British House of Commons, "Kashmir has a symbolic weight" more than anything else. Yet, India should have little concern for such petty disagreements as it marches into the global realm. Moreover, as Pankaj Mishra notes in "Fresh Blood from an Old Wound," the Indian's have already paid a huge price for their intransigence over Kashmir, "with an estimated 80,000 dead in the valley in the last two decades." Additionally, due to the indiscriminate and overbearing actions of the Indian military, "there has been a resultant rise in terrorist attacks." In fact, military dictators in Pakistan have used the idea of a hostile neighbor in India to justify their rule, and various governments have used the Kashmir issue for populist ends (Bowers 2004, 9). Consequently, expanded military responses are unlikely to end the conflict over Kashmir, and will only further hamper India's rise as they could lead to full warfare between the two nuclear

powers. As Friedman argues in his article “Strategic Motivations for the Mumbai Attack,” sufficient “pressure on Pakistan’s civilian government could cause it to collapse, opening the door to a military government” or worse, “devolve into chaos, giving Islamists the opportunity to reshape Pakistan.” The risk of these possibilities demonstrates that no symbolic value outweighs the rationality of granting Kashmir independence.

Some like Barbara Walter might argue that the Indian government has “incentives to invest in building a reputation for toughness” (1997). She argues that it is possible that by conceding land to the Kashmiri rebels, India creates strong incentives for other nationalist rebellions, which will cause greater harm to the solidarity of the already fragile state. In her paper, “Reputation: Why Governments Fight some Separatist but Not Others,” Walter claims that the “risks and costs of future confrontations should factor into a governments decision to compromise or fight” (1997). However, a more compelling argument presented by Bueno de Mesquita presents the idea that while militancy increases following concessions, this is because “only the moderate terrorist factions accept concessions, leaving extremist factions in control” (2007). Thus, one might see an initial rise in violence. Yet, the corollary to this is the fact that the counterterror benefits gained from information derived from moderates may outweigh the cost of heightened militancy. In addition, extremists may end up alienating themselves, as happened in Iraq with Zarqawi. By conceding Kashmir, the Indian government could develop a greater counterterrorism network as appeased rebels will desire prosperity in the region and will look to accomplish this by providing information about the extremists who disrupt peace. Therefore, as the land itself is of little value, and the threat of future attacks can be mitigated with proper counterterror measures, a peace agreement based on concessions is a viable and preferable option to extended warfare.

India may also have an interest to end the conflict sooner rather than later as the stakes of the conflict over Kashmir are escalating. Recent developments in three of India’s neighboring states- Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka- demonstrate the expanding regional presence, reach, and influence of groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (Roul 2010). Animesh Roul, the Executive Director of the New Delhi-based Society for the Study of Peace and Conflict, reports that arrests made in October 2010 reveal that LeT operatives use Bangladesh as a conduit for counterfeit currency and recruitment. Moreover, India’s Ministry of Home Affairs has claimed that hundreds of Naxalites (Maoists) from India were being trained in Nepal under the supervision of LeT. This strategy of “encirclement” is increasingly dangerous as concern mounts for LeT’s strategic positioning against India. Commentators, such as Roul, suggest that “the day when LeT could establish itself as a formidable non-state terror hegemon,” like al-Qaeda, is not far off. India should move quickly to end the Kashmir conflict and preclude any chance of such a system developing.

As C. Raja Mohan argues, “progress on the resolution of the conflict in Kashmir, would liberate India’s political and diplomatic energies so that the country could play a larger role in the world.” Fareed Zakaria explains that “for decades Pakistan has sponsored militant groups like Lashkar as a low cost strategy to bleed India.” India has nothing to gain from this continued game with Pakistan and should seek to free itself of localized issues in order to assume a greater role in world politics.

United States' Strategic Incentives

Two critical reasons for the United States to pursue a path to peace in Kashmir are the prevention of nuclear warfare and precluding global instability in both markets and security. However, a more specific rationale is that what happens in Kashmir directly affects U.S. security and mission success in Afghanistan. US Intelligence officials and foreign diplomats have concluded that Al-Qaeda and Taliban members are helping organize a terror campaign in Kashmir to foment conflict between India and Pakistan (Diamond 2002). Osama Bin Laden wrote in 2002 in his "Letter to the American People," one of the reasons the jihadist are fighting America is because of "her support to India on the Kashmir issue." However, it is also clear that they are fighting in Kashmir in order to discourage American success in the region. In light of this fact, the Obama administration must continue to make it clear that lowering hostilities between India and Pakistan is a crucial part of a regional solution to the war in Afghanistan (Masood 2009).

Evidence of this fact exists in the fact that the most powerful Kashmiri terrorist group also has ties with al-Qaeda. In a special report to Congress, a panel determined that Lashkar-e-Taiba, an insurgent group in Kashmir, was the largest and best-organized group fighting India (Cronin et al 2004, 56) and there is no doubt that its connection to al-Qaeda only serves to bolster its agenda. To understand its connection to al-Qaeda, a full examination of the history Lashkar-e-Taiba is necessary. Formed in 1986, Lashkar-e-Taiba, or the "Army of the Righteous" (Cronin et al 2004, 56), was designed as the military wing of Markaz Daawa wal Irshad (Center for Religious Learning and Social Welfare), a fundamentalist organization established during the Afghan war to recruit Arab volunteers to fight against the Soviets (Blanche 2004, 18). The insurgency seeks to "establish Islamic rule throughout South Asia, with a primary focus on freeing Kashmir from Indian control and establishing an Islamic state there" (Cronin et al 2004, 56). Palestinian activist Abdullah Azzam, the mentor, and intellectual father figure to Osama Bin Laden founded the organization, and continuing with its ties to Bin Laden, in February 1998, LeT became a signatory member of his International Islamic Front for Jihad against the Jews and Crusaders. Lashkar has been attributed with executing the attacks in Mumbai in 2008 that resulted in 164 fatalities and the attack perpetrated on July 12, 2006, resulting in the deaths of 187 people individuals (Chidambaram 2008). Clearly, this group is a significant threat to the stability of South Asia and U.S. missions in the arena.

The strategic incentive behind such attacks was to free up constraints on the Taliban operating in Pakistan. As strategically anticipated by LeT, one of Islamabad's first responses to the new Indo-Pakistani crisis in 2008 was to announce that if the Indians increased their forces along Pakistan's eastern border, Pakistan would be forced to withdraw 100,000 troops from its western border with Afghanistan. In other words, threats from India would cause Pakistan to dramatically reduce its cooperation with the United States in the Afghan war.

This would free the Taliban from whatever limits the Pakistani army had placed on it. The Taliban's ability to fight would increase. Meanwhile, India's influence in Afghanistan has grown as it pours reconstruction money into the country. Add to this the Bush administration's decision to reward India with an extraordinarily generous nuclear deal and to more or less ignore Indian security forces increasingly brutal suppression of the biggest nonviolent demonstrations in

the valley's history, and the recent attacks against the Indian Embassy in Kabul, the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad, and now in Mumbai begin to appear to be connected by more than chronology. They are efforts to preclude India from cooperating with the U.S. and have an even greater operational goal. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has been cited as implicating groups in Pakistan as trying “to destabilize not just Afghanistan, not just Pakistan, but potentially the whole region by provoking a conflict between India and Pakistan” (“Al Qaeda could provoke new India-Pakistan war: Gates” 2010). This could also dangerously complicate the Obama administration’s efforts in Afghanistan. Success there depends on avoiding open conflict between India and Pakistan, so that Pakistan’s military can focus on battling the Taliban insurgents who base themselves in Pakistan (Polgreen et al 2009). Concordantly, success would also release India’s armed forces from the constraining mission of territorial defense, allowing them to get more involved in peace and stability operations around the Indian Ocean, lightening the global security load on the United States.

Another key reason for focusing on a peace deal in Kashmir is that and increased Indian role in the region is in line with American grand strategy. George Friedman has defined the five geopolitical goals that drive American grand strategy as follows. One will notice that as one moves down the list, the goals increase in magnitude and difficulty.

1. The complete domination of North America by the United States Army.
2. Elimination of any threat to the United States by any power in the western hemisphere.
3. Complete control of the maritime approaches to the United States by the Navy in order to preclude any possibility of invasion.
4. Complete domination of the world’s oceans to further secure U.S. physical safety and guarantee control over the international trading system.
5. The prevention of any other nation from challenging U.S. global naval power (2009, 40-45).

In seeking to resolve the Kashmir conflict and release Indian efforts from the limiting scope of territorial defense, the primary concern is with a fulfilling the fifth goal of American grand strategy. With the rising power of China and its concordant affects on U.S. economic and security interest in Asia, aiding in the rise of India becomes even more critical. A balancing power in South Asia will become ever more crucial in protecting American interests in the region. The United States emerged from the Cold War with a strategy to prevent any Eurasian power from “becoming sufficiently secure to divert resources to navy building” (Friedman 2009, 45). Since then, the United States has focused on creating continually shifting alliances designed to tie down any potential regional hegemon. This strategy will continue into the next century with the rise of Asian powers. As China mounts an ever-increasing rise into the foray of world politics, including launching a navy, American interest will prodigiously align with Indian and Australian incentives in the region. Securing strong alliances with the Australians and Indians in the region will become the twenty-first century’s rendition of the “special relationship” and the United States must continue to aid India’s rise as a regional power. From this perspective, it is clear that the United States must adopt a regional approach when addressing the war in Afghanistan and the other strategic and security concerns developing in South Asia.

Options for Peace

While there are several options for peace, few are likely to work. One incredibly unlikely option is that all of Kashmir could join India. India could attempt to use its intelligence and air power to go after Lashkar's camps in the borderlands. However, that seems pointless and possibly counterproductive as bombing Lashkar's camps would be an attack on the symptoms of the problems, and could possibly fuel the sympathy for the militants among ordinary Pakistani's and Kashmiri's, broadening and intensifying the violence. The increase in violence and cost might be worthwhile if the region was more valuable; however, geographically it has many barriers and contains no resources. The second option would be for India to cede Kashmir to Pakistan. Aside from the political consequences, this is unlikely as the Hindu's of Jammu and the Buddhists of Ladakh have no interest in pursuing this option. Another option rest on an Independent Kashmir- neither of the parties' want this as both would be required to give up land.



Figure 1- Disputed region of Kashmir
"The Future of Kashmir", BBC Special

Any U.S. sponsored peace strategy should pressure India to address the socioeconomic resentment that lends support to groups like Lashkar. One way to approach the problem is to reduce alienation of Muslim youths. Muslims won the right to set up their own schools during Partition, but these institutions continually suffer from a lack of sufficient funds. Consequently, the poor education that many children receive excludes them from higher professional paths and breeds resentment in the few who do manage to attain professional careers. Providing the basic social services that radical organizations such as Lashkar offer to poor Muslims would help prevent conversion to extremism. Other efforts, like encouraging banks to provide greater credit access to their Muslim clientele, would show greater faith in the minority population. The influence of radical forces could be mitigated if governments demonstrate national support for Indian Muslims (Unni 2010). However, given Pakistani involvement, this may not be enough, and a settlement is the best way to pursue peace.

The most viable option is the Chenab Formula. This plan, first suggested in the 1960s, would see Kashmir divided along the line of the River Chenab. This would give the vast majority

of land to Pakistan. The entire valley with its Muslim majority population would be brought within Pakistan's borders, as well as the majority Muslim areas of Jammu ("Future of Kashmir"). As Bowers explained to the House of Commons, it might be reasonable for India to withdraw its claim from areas it has never ruled, while Pakistan might be content for the substantial non-Muslim populations in Jammu to remain with India.



Figure 2- Chenab Formula
 "The Future of Kashmir", BBC Special Reports

While suggested in the 1960s, this agreement was never installed due to the credible commitment problems faced; however, as Navin Bapat points out in his article, "State Bargaining with Transnational Terrorists Groups," there may still be an opportunity for peace. In this paper, Bapat argues that "under certain conditions, constraints from a host state might allow transnational terrorists to establish credibility in negotiation." If one assumes that the Lashkar and New Delhi would prefer to negotiate and determine a preferable alternative, and also that Pakistan is a sponsor to the rebels, then one should expect the two to move towards bargaining.

The likelihood of negotiation increases if terrorists are constrained by a moderately powerful host state, such as a state sponsor. Pakistan can serve as an enforcement mechanism, as they have an incentive for peaceful settlement, and can punish the terrorist to prevent defection, but the Pakistani government does not have the ability to entrap the terrorist into agreements. Pakistan could be trusted as a moderate sponsor if they were to openly claim they had ties to the Kashmiri rebels, and therefore, had a certain level of capability to control the groups and stop the violence after Islamabad gained control over the provinces. Additionally, Pakistan could protect the insurgents from India were New Delhi to renege on its commitment. In addition, since Pakistan cannot completely control the terrorists, the terrorists can guarantee their interests are accounted before settling and will be willing to negotiate. It is critically important for Pakistan to serve as an enforcement mechanism of the peace treaty as according to Barbara Walters in her paper, "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement," "negotiations always succeeded with third party enforcements regardless of the initial goals, ideology, or ethnicity of the participants."

Finally, due to the purpose of the tactic of terrorism, which is to influence a larger audience than the immediate victims in order to procure greater concessions, one may determine that groups such as Lashkar would agree to cease attacks if granted concessions. Andrew Kydd

and Barbara Walter support this argument in their paper, “The Strategies of Terrorism.” They argue that terrorist violence is a form of signaling because terrorists are too weak to impose their will directly, they seek to persuade audiences beliefs about their power. LeT continued to increase its activity in attempts to gain greater recognition and a better seat at the bargaining table. This theory explored in David Lake’s article, “Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-first Century” assumes that the terrorist actions result from a bargaining problem, in which none of the possible alternatives presented are acceptable. However, if concessions are made, there would no longer be a *raison d’être* of groups like Lashkar, and attacks would cease.

Kashmiri terrorists, who have claimed they would pursue a peaceful settlement of the Kashmir problem, have repeatedly endorsed credence for this line of thought. LeT and other groups have stated that their struggle is confined to the Kashmir region, and they “don’t see armed struggle as the only way to achieve our goals.” LeT has gone so far as to release a statement saying they would abandon violence if it could achieve “freedom” for Kashmir by political means: “if the world listens to our cries, and plays its role in resolving the Kashmir issue, there is no point in continuing the fight” (Roul 2009). While this is a strategic departure from the traditional position, it is possible that under tremendous international pressure, Pakistani sponsors directed them to restore the Kashmir agenda (Roul 2009). If so, Bapat’s theory seems even more plausible as Pakistan may be committed to providing credible constraints and opening up bargaining positions.

The Chenab design would allow the two conflicting parties to do the unthinkable and disarm. In addition, the watchful eye of the international community would serve as the final incentive for Pakistan to follow through on its most important of commitments. Through this, India would no longer have to finance extensive security measures and pay armed forces to secure its sovereignty in the region, opening up more resources to focus on the international scene.

So far, India has made positive moves regarding increased violence in Kashmir. The government will be enhancing its coastal security and streamlining security operations within a federal investigatory agency, instead of engaging in attacks. India is showing restraint for some wise reasons--the two nations are nuclear-armed and a military strike would only inflame Pakistani nationalism (Zakaria 2009). Any war, even one that was fought solely with conventional weapons, would invariably lead to a weakening of Pakistani defense and security systems, opening up the possibility that the war could end with nuclear warheads in the possession of a terrorist organization. If this were to occur, the chance of stability in the region would greatly dissipate. The U.S. should continue to encourage this prudence on the part of the Indians with an increased focus on seceding the Kashmir territory above the Chenab. A peace agreement would be beneficial for all parties involved. This is especially true for the people of Kashmir, as resolution of the international difference surrounding them would allow for a more peaceful and productive life.

Conclusions

India and Pakistan both have incentives to end the conflict in Kashmir peacefully. Not only do civil wars “raise the incidence of infectious diseases, increase homicidal violence, and destroy infrastructure” as elucidated in “The Post-War Public Health Effects of Civil Conflict,” but because of this, India is losing out on innumerable possibilities to grow that could raise millions of its citizens out of poverty, strengthen the national government, and rise solidly into the realm of world powers (2004). As argued by Fareed Zakaria in *The Post-American World*, these continued divisions such as Kashmir “will make it difficult for New Delhi to execute a set of international policies” (2009). India must make the choice to struggle to control Kashmir, or to take the much more effective and important opportunity to influence world affairs.

Additionally, Pakistan would be greatly benefited by increased international cooperation and a refusal to continue hosting and sponsoring terrorism. More closely aligning themselves with international law and U.S. political will would increase foreign aid and result in a more prosperous Pakistan. Moreover, the government would be able to assert a higher degree of sovereignty over its regions by choosing to eradicate terrorist organizations that eventually become difficult to control and have broader aims of replacing state authority.

Finally, any American administration looking to secure a lasting peace in South Asia must address the issue of Kashmir. Scott D. Sagan points out in his article, “The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: Nuclear Instability in South Asia,” whether Pakistan and India begin the long journey toward peace or find themselves staring down nuclear war, depends on their actions relating to this small area (2003). If India were to take matters into their own hands and violate Pakistani sovereignty, the conflict could escalate quickly. Nuclear warfare is the deleterious end game that would most detrimentally affect India and Pakistan, precluding progress and excluding them from many of the benefits of the international order. Additionally, insurgent groups such as Lashkar maintain the power to complicate America’s strategy in Afghanistan. If tensions were to rise between India and Pakistan, as Fareed Zakaria argues, the Pakistani military would become distracted from fighting insurgents in its tribal areas, freeing up the Taliban and al Qaeda (2009).

For all parties, restraint and conciliation on this matter will be a necessary condition to a lasting peace. While the future of Kashmir remains to be determined, what is certain, however, is that the idea that the road to stability in South Asia goes through Kashmir, is as persuasive as the notion that the path to peace in the Middle East goes through Jerusalem. Thus, the United States must continue and even increase efforts to establish a settlement over Kashmir.

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