

On the Brink: Instability and the Prospect of State Failure in Pakistan

**A Monograph
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Abstract

ON THE BRINK: INSTABILITY AND THE PROSPECT OF STATE FAILURE IN PAKISTAN by MAJ David Scott Sentell, United States Army, 64 pages.

The ongoing military operations in Afghanistan underscore the importance of regional stability in Central and South Asia. While much of our attention remains focused on Afghanistan, the unstable nature of Pakistan creates a problematic scenario for the United States. Although the media and policy makers are showing a growing interest in the state, Pakistan's problems are not new. Instead, they represent a history of domestic, regional, and international troubles that leave the state in an unpredictable posture. Most importantly, these historical events, coupled with current political, economic, and security related issues, have created a fragile state with the propensity to fail. Therefore, this monograph highlights and explains many of Pakistan's problems under the framework of assessing the likelihood of state failure. Existing research provides the fundamental characteristics of fragile and failed states and serves as a benchmark for comparison to determine whether Pakistan is merely weak, in transition, or on the brink of failure. Pakistan's potential collapse would have severe consequences for many regional and international actors. However, the U.S. military, operating in Afghanistan, would face immediate and significant challenges in a failed state scenario. As a result, U.S. officials continue to reiterate the importance of Pakistan's stability. Yet, it may take years of continuous external support to ensure Pakistan's worst-case scenario does not occur.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Methodology	2
Understanding Failed States	5
Characterizing Failed States	5
The Spectrum of Failure	10
Identifying and Measuring the Indicators of Failure	13
A History of Instability: Pakistan’s Troubled Past.....	16
Instability in the Aftermath of Partition	17
Early Constitutional Efforts.....	22
The Problem of Kashmir	24
Foreign State Influence and the Rise of Islamic Extremism: 1977-1988.....	27
Drivers of Pakistan’s Instability	32
Government Stability.....	33
Economic Performance	37
Religious Extremism	42
The Issue at Hand: Potential Military Consequences of State Failure in Pakistan.....	47
The Impact on Supply Lines and Logistics	47
The Expansion of Extremist Safe Havens	50
Conclusion.....	55
APPENDIX 1	59
Map of Pakistan.....	59
BIBLIOGRAPHY	60

Introduction

In today's complex global environment, many actors – state and non-state – demand the attention of the United States. Insurgencies and terrorist organizations dominate the media and U.S. security concerns driving national policy and U.S. troop deployments. One problem state that is demanding more U.S. policy and military attention is Pakistan. Since Pakistan's partition from India in 1947, the state has remained rife with instability. During these six decades, Pakistan has endured the death and assassination of key leaders, weak governmental institutions, four military coups, the emergence of radical Islam, civil war, and conventional conflicts with India. Today, terrorism, insurgency, and the state's possession of nuclear weapons reinforce the significance of ensuring Pakistan's long-term stability. Yet, it remains unclear whether these events and characteristics will eventually lead to state failure in Pakistan. As a result, a pressing need exists to identify and examine the primary sources of instability in Pakistan. Therefore, an analysis of domestic, regional, and international events in Pakistan may uncover critical evidence that implies that the state's future is daunting.

Essentially, Pakistan's instability is a result of the combined effects of domestic, regional, and international hardships that have affected the state's political stability, economic performance, and security. These unrelenting problems lie at the foundation of a state whose welfare is directly linked to U.S. interests in the region. Unfortunately, much of the evidence suggests that Pakistan is currently a fragile state, exhibiting the political, economic, and social indicators that place the state on the brink of failure.

Perhaps the illusion of a democratic government, coupled with a strong security apparatus found in the Pakistani Army keep U.S. concerns at a manageable level. In reality, however, these characteristics merely create a façade that hides a threat that is perhaps more dangerous than any we currently face. Therefore, this study attempts to highlight and explain many of Pakistan's problems under the framework of assessing the likelihood of state failure.

Until there is a shared understanding of Pakistan's turbulent history, and a clear image of the state's enduring problems emerges, the future of Pakistan may remain a mystery.

Methodology

State failure is a legitimate threat to both global and regional stability. As such, Pakistan's geo-political situation creates a unique challenge in that this unstable state is a vital link between Central and South Asia. Given its regional importance and the state's historical and current problems, this monograph seeks to determine the likelihood of state failure in Pakistan. This task requires a detailed analysis of Pakistan in the years prior to partition through the state's current or ongoing troubles. From this, a single-country case study methodology provides the best "contextual description" of the state and may be useful in explaining specific causal mechanisms of instability in Pakistan.¹ Specifically, an overview of the existing literature on the characteristics of state failure, a historical description of the various hardships – domestic, regional, and international - encountered by Pakistan, and an analysis of several key drivers of the state's instability will help the author build a plausible argument that leads to only one conclusion: that Pakistan is on the brink of failure. Yet, if state failure is in fact a likely scenario in Pakistan's future, this phenomenon would certainly create additional problems that extend well beyond the state's borders. Most importantly, the success of ongoing military operations in Afghanistan relies heavily on stability in Pakistan leaving the U.S. military the immediate recipient of the negative consequences associated with state failure.

The initial step in developing the structure for this investigation involves an overview of past scholarly research on state failure. This review will provide a theoretical foundation to frame the subsequent analysis of Pakistan as a fragile or failing state. Numerous definitions of state

¹ Todd Landman, *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 86.

failure exist, including varying levels of failure such as weak, fragile, and collapsed states. In addition, examining the indicators of failure as well as the criteria and methods for measuring failure will help to explain why some states fail while others may only possess the possibility of failure. Various resources, including numerous books, professional journals, and other electronic or web-based resources add to the body of literature concerning failed states. Ultimately, this literature review will provide the essential basis for comparison when attempting to determine whether Pakistan is merely weak, in transition, or on the brink of state failure.

Although the state is barely sixty-two years old, Pakistan's short history provides ample evidence that suggests a potentially bleak outlook. In order to solidify this claim, a description of Pakistan's turbulent history may reveal why this adolescent state is "one of the least stable polities in the world."² The section entitled "A History of Instability: Pakistan's Troubled Past," provides a detailed description of various domestic, regional, and international events that set the conditions for instability in the state. Specifically, this historical analysis will describe Pakistan's partition with India and this event's associated problems, the state's difficulty with drafting and maintaining a constitution, Pakistan's ongoing conflict with India over control of the Kashmir region, and finally the consequences of foreign state influence focusing primarily on the significance of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the advent of Islamic extremism under President Zia ul-Haq.

While this overview of Pakistan's past provides several historical examples that explain Pakistan's troubled past, the section entitled, "Drivers of Pakistan's Instability," will examine and describe many of the state's ongoing difficulties. In this analysis, state stability represents the dependent variable while several domestic issues – Government Stability, Economic

² Daniel G. Cox, John Falconer, and Brian Stackhouse, *Terrorism, Instability, and Democracy in Asia and Africa* (Lebanon, NH: Northeastern University Press, 2009), 146.

Performance, and Religious Extremism – in the state represent the independent drivers of instability. This operationalized analysis is a combination of many political, economic, and security related aspects found in existing literature and provides substantial empirical evidence that highlights Pakistan’s struggle to remain a functioning, yet unpredictable state in the international community.

Given this historical and quantifiable data, an additional and perhaps more immediate concern emerges. State failure in Pakistan would include severe consequences for U.S. military forces operating in Afghanistan. Perhaps the most critical of these being the impact on ground lines of communications (GLOCs) – the disruption of the flow of materiel through Pakistan– coupled with an unstable and drastically expanded safe haven for terrorists and insurgents within the nuclear-armed state. Using existing research, this monograph will examine these possible scenarios and explain the immediate military consequences of Pakistan’s collapse. Ultimately, this monograph will assess the evidence previously provided and suggest whether Pakistan is on the brink of failure or simply experiencing the pains of state development.

Although this research design and its associated methodology focus only on Pakistan, this in-depth analysis highlights comparable concerns faced by other countries around the world. The political, economic, and social struggles endured by Pakistan over the past six decades are representative of many of the domestic, regional, and international pressures placed on other immature states. However, each of these countries has its own unique circumstances and challenges as well. As a result, this single-country methodology is perhaps limited in its ability to draw broad generalizations about state failure in other countries.³ Yet, according to Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, “several influential works in comparative politics have used such

³ Landman, 93.

single-case designs to good effect.”⁴ As a result, this research design provides an adequate framework to feasibly determine if Pakistan is a fragile state with failure looming ominously on the horizon.

Understanding Failed States

Insecurity in the 21st century appears to come less from the collisions of powerful states than from the debris of imploding ones.

- Marla C. Haims et al, *Breaking the Failed State Cycle*

Today’s geopolitical environment is inundated with examples of states on the brink of failure. Africa, Asia, and Latin America all possess examples of fragile, failing, or failed states. As a result, both scholars and politicians have written and spoken extensively on the characteristics of such states. As a result, state failure is a topic that remains at the forefront of critical discussions among policy-makers, academia, and military decision makers. The purpose of this overview is to develop a common understanding of the existing definitions and the primary characteristics of state failure as described in past scholarly research. This review will serve as the theoretical foundation to frame the subsequent analysis of Pakistan. For the purposes of this analysis, defining and characterizing state failure, understanding the varying degrees of failure – the spectrum of failure – and finally identifying and measuring indicators of impending failure are essential.

Characterizing Failed States

Throughout the existing scholarly literature, a single, “universally accepted definition of state failure” does not exist.⁵ As a result, many scholars and politicians present varying

⁴ Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 33.

⁵European Security, “Failed States: Nature Hates Vacuum,” <http://www.europansecurity.com/index.php?id=4834> (accessed September 22, 2009). Online transcript of a presentation by Ambassador Mahmoud Kassem at the International Expert Conference in Wildbad Kreuth on November 10-11, 2003.

definitions of state failure. Yet, many of these definitions rely heavily upon shared characteristics possessed by failed states. Although current policymakers' interests in these struggling countries are substantial, the term "failed states" has not always played a significant role in U.S. national security discussions. Instead, the characterization of failed states as a threat to national security has evolved in conjunction with the nature of the security environment. A brief overview of this evolution will reveal the current nature of the threat posed by failed states.

During the Cold War, the major threat to the United States was the Soviet Union and the government's focus remained centered on the "monolithic and ruthless conspiracy" or the "defense against Communist aggression."⁶ Yet, this myopic approach soon became inadequate as other, less structured actors threatened our security. In the immediate aftermath of the Cold War, President George H.W. Bush filled this security void by declaring the 'war on drugs' as the nation's top priority, while in the mid-1990s President Clinton focused U.S. foreign policy on 'terrorist states' or 'rogue states' and eventually 'failed states.'⁷ More recently, President George W. Bush coined the term 'axis of evil' to describe the nation's major threat following the terrorist attacks of 9/11.⁸ Today, terrorism or terrorist organizations that reside in the lawlessness of ungoverned states may offer the biggest threat. However, there is certainly no shortage of struggling states in today's environment that are either fragile or have simply failed.

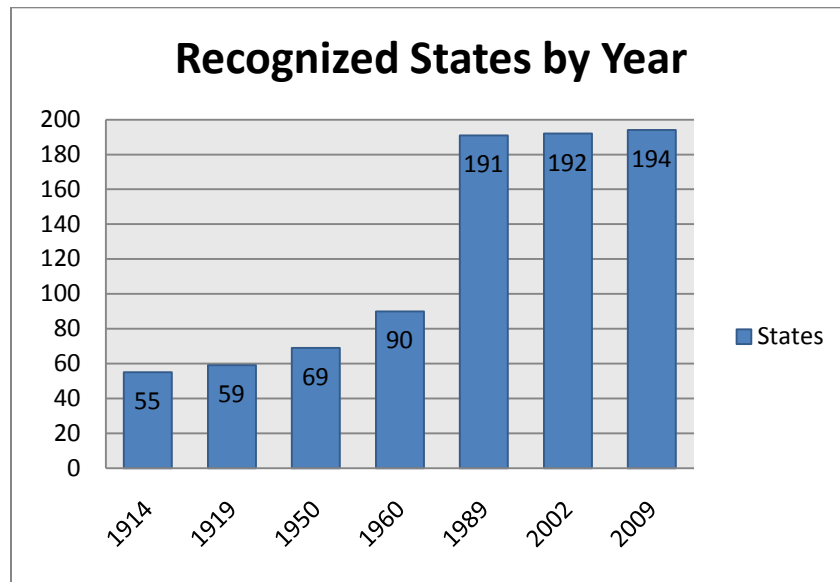
In addition, perhaps the rapid proliferation of internationally recognized states (see Figure 1), specifically since 1960, helped to shape the evolving terminology and created a scenario where immature states are essentially unable to handle the pressures of globalization and remain stable polities in the complex contemporary environment.

⁶ Noam Chomsky, *Failed States: The Abuse of Power and the Assault on Democracy* (New York: Metropolitan Books/Henry Holt, 2006), 106.

⁷ Chomsky, 107.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 107-108.

Figure 1: The Proliferation of Nations 1914-2002



Source: Data Adapted from Robert Rotberg, ed. *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 2.

Note: In addition, the U.S. Department of State website <http://www.state.gov/s/inr/rls/4250.htm> states that as of 29 JUL 09, the United States recognizes 194 independent countries.

Thus, the gradual evolution and proliferation of the phrase, failed state, supported by the massive increase in new and developing nation-states over the past half-century underscores the need to understand the causes and consequences of state failure in today’s environment.

Since no universally recognized definition of a failed state exists, it is prudent to review many of the available interpretations of the phrase. One working explanation suggests that these nations are “tense, deeply conflicted, dangerous, and contested bitterly by warring factions.”⁹ Although very descriptive, this definition of state failure provides a broad and somewhat generic definition of this phenomenon. Other scholars define failed states as “those utterly incapable of

⁹ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 5.

sustaining itself as a member of the international community.”¹⁰ Much like the previous definition, this explanation is subjective and remains open for interpretation. An additional definition provided by The Crisis States Research Centre (CSRC) at the London School of Economics and Political Science defines state failure as:

A condition of state collapse – eg. A state that can no longer perform its basic security and development functions and that has no effective control over its territory and borders. A failed state is one that can no longer reproduce the conditions for its own existence.¹¹

The RAND Corporation provides another definition in their work, *Breaking the Failed-State Cycle*, published in 2008. They define failed states as those who “typically suffer from cycles of violence, economic breakdown, and unfit governments that render them unable to relieve their people’s suffering.”¹² Given these various examples of existing definitions, perhaps identifying the common characteristics and geopolitical and social factors among failed states may help to clarify these subjective definitions.

Identifying these common characteristics is critical when attempting to establish a method for categorizing a state’s ability to function in the international community. Initially, perhaps the most overt characteristic is the state’s use of government troops to battle existing armed revolts or insurgencies within the state’s borders. However, it is not merely the fact that such conflict exists, but it is the enduring nature of the conflict that is paramount.¹³ Failed states simply do not possess the capacity to control the proliferation of violence once conflict begins. Additional characteristics of a failed state include predation on the state’s own citizens, the state’s

¹⁰ Gerald B. Helman and Stephen R. Ratner, “Saving Failed States,” *Foreign Policy*, 89 (Winter 1992-1993), 3.

¹¹ The Crisis States Research Center, “Crisis, Fragile, and Failed States: Definitions Used by the CSRC.” The London School of Economics and Political Science <http://www.crisisstates.com/download/drc/FailedState.pdf> (accessed September 22, 2009).

¹² Marla C. Haims et al., *Breaking the Failed-State Cycle* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2008), xi.

¹³ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 5.

inability to control the hinterlands within its borders, an increase in criminal violence, dysfunctional government institutions, and deteriorating physical and social infrastructures such as roads and education systems.¹⁴ The RAND Corporation groups many of these characteristics into three specific areas: Government, Economy, and Security.¹⁵ When examined independently, instability in any single area is problematic, but does not equal failure. Instead, it is the combined impact of all three that most likely results in a failed state. Essentially, states that exhibit many of these critical characteristics have most likely failed, or will fail in the near future.

In contrast to failed states are those polities that are strong and considered stable by the international community. Those characteristics previously discussed for failed states juxtapose the primary features exhibited by strong states. For example, the primary characteristic of a strong state is its ability to provide public goods to its citizens.¹⁶ These goods constitute many political, economic, and social elements that are both tangible and intangible. However, the most important of these characteristics is security as this establishes the fundamental conditions for the successful delivery of all other public goods.¹⁷ Additional capabilities prevalent in strong states are the state's capacity to meet the demands of its citizens, to act in the best interest of its citizens, to perform well economically, and finally to maintain an orderly and conflict-free environment.¹⁸ According to the 2009 Failed States Index sponsored by *Foreign Policy* and The Fund for Peace, Norway, Finland, and Sweden possess these essential characteristics and are world's strongest or most stable states. The United States ranks nineteenth from the top, just below Singapore and

¹⁴ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 6-7.

¹⁵ Haims, 2.

¹⁶ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 2.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

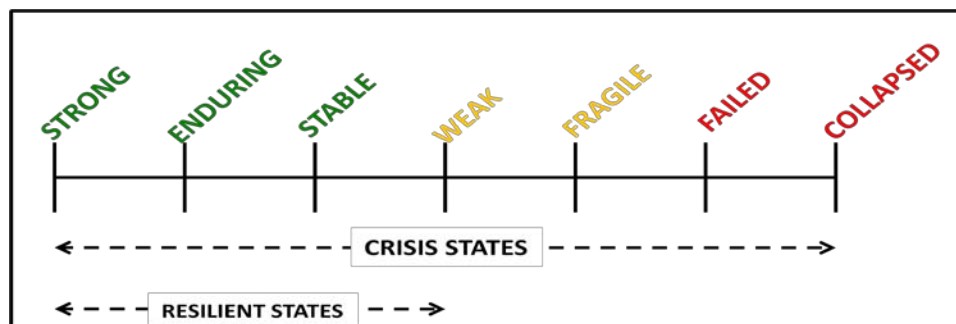
¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

directly ahead of France in the Failed States Index.¹⁹ Although not exhaustive, the contrasting characteristics previously discussed provide sufficient information to easily distinguish between a strong state and a failed state. However, a significant void exists between these two extremes.

The Spectrum of Failure

Failure is not the single or immediate outcome for states struggling to find their way in today's complex environment. In fact, complete and catastrophic collapse is perhaps the final stage of varying degrees of failure that a state may encounter. A need exists to establish clear differences among states that are strong, those that are merely weak, those that have failed, and those destined to collapse.²⁰ Although no predetermined path to failure exists, there is a likely progression or spectrum of failure where states may transition from weak or fragile to failed and then to collapsed. Within the literature are other degrees of failure to include fragile states, enduring states, resilient states, and crisis states. The subsequent analysis seeks to examine these progressive levels of failure in order to fill the existing void between strong and collapsed states. Figure 2 visually represents this proposed spectrum of failure.

Figure 2: The Spectrum of Failure



¹⁹ The Failed States Index 2009, Foreign Policy Magazine Online, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/images/090624_2009_final_data.pdf (accessed September 22, 2009). The Failed State Index 2009 is the fifth annual installment of this collaborative study between *Foreign Policy* and *The Fund for Peace*. Countries are ranked based on their aggregate score out of 12 individual state strength indicators. Higher scores in the index indicate more instability.

²⁰ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 1.

Weak or fragile states are probably the most common classifications of states short of those that have completely failed or collapsed. Perhaps a better understanding of these troubled states will reveal insights about the process that too often results in a failed state. Rotberg defines a weak state as those “states in crisis.”²¹ These states exhibit some of the characteristics of failed states, but due to various reasons, the state has avoided slipping into the failure category. Beyond weak states on the spectrum of failure are those that are fragile. U.S. Army Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations* dedicates a section to fragile states and defines them as countries “that suffer from institutional weaknesses serious enough to threaten the stability of the central government.”²² The RAND Corporation cites the World Bank’s definition of fragile states as those “characterized by economic and social deterioration, prolonged political impasse or crisis, post-conflict burdens, and little scope for rapid improvement or development.”²³

Also within the weak state category are those states that may appear strong but are fundamentally weak.²⁴ These semi-authoritarian states are essentially the icebergs of the international community displaying very little, if any, of the danger that exists below the surface. According to Marina Ottaway, “the superficial stability of many semi-authoritarian regimes usually masks a host of severe problems and unsatisfied demands that need to be dealt with lest they lead to crisis in the future.”²⁵ This classification is also representative of many semi-authoritarian states or other states attempting to transition from an authoritarian regime to one of democratic rule.

²¹ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* , 4.

²² Department of the Army, FM 3-07, *Stability Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, October 2008), 1-10.

²³ Haims, 1-2.

²⁴ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences* , 5.

²⁵ Marina Ottaway, *Democracy Challenged: The Rise of Semi-Authoritarianism* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 5.

An additional category found within the spectrum of failure is crisis states. Again, the Crisis States Research Center provides an adequate definition for this particular type of state. Crisis states are “those states under acute stress, where reigning institutions face serious contestation and are potentially unable to manage conflicts and shocks.”²⁶ This definition does not focus on enduring instability, but on the state’s inability to deal with an unexpected crisis at a given point in time. In addition to crisis states are resilient states. These states may also be weak, but possess the capacity to adequately manage conflict and contestation within its borders.²⁷ Crisis and resilient states can reside at various locations along the spectrum of failure. However, resilient states traditionally possess more of the characteristics representative of strong, enduring or stable states.

Finally, beyond failed states on the spectrum of failure are those polities that have completely collapsed. However, collapsed states are “rare and extreme versions of failed states.”²⁸ Although exceptional, these states represent the worst-case scenario for regional stability and policy alternatives. Robert Rotberg highlights the ominous nature of these states and suggests that they represent “a black hole in which a failed polity has fallen. There is dark energy, but the forces of entropy have overwhelmed the radiance that hitherto provided some semblance of order.”²⁹ A fine line exists between a failed and a collapsed state. Some scholars argue that states cross this line when the government completely loses its ability to influence policy.³⁰

²⁶ The Crisis States Research Center, “Crisis, Fragile, and Failed States: Definitions Used by the CSRC.” The London School of Economics and Political Science. <http://www.crisisstates.com/download/drc/FailedState.pdf> (accessed September 22, 2009).

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 9.

²⁹ Robert Rotberg, ed. *State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), 9.

³⁰ Robert Olsen, “Iraq: An Example of a Collapsed State,” The Global Policy Forum, <http://www.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/173/30484.html> (accessed September 27, 2009).

Essentially, the political apparatus and sovereignty of the state no longer exist, leaving a chaotic struggle for power and control.

Identifying and Measuring the Indicators of Failure

The previous review of the existing definitions of state failure, its primary characteristics, and the associated spectrum of failure provides the necessary context that allows for a thorough description of the primary indicators of state failure. The Failed States Index provides a comprehensive listing of indicators of failed states, those on the verge of failure, and stable states. The Failed States Index groups twelve key indicators used in this data set into three broad categories of social, economic, and political/military factors. Table 1 shows these categories and their associated indicators. Poor marks in these categories provide substantial evidence that a state is certainly at a critical point in its existence and perhaps on the verge of failure.

Table 1: The Failed State Index 2009 Indicators of Failure

Category	Indicators
Social	1. Demographic Pressures 2. Refugees/IDPs 3. Group Grievance 4. Human Flight
Economic	5. Uneven Development 6. Economic Decline
Political/Military	7. Delegitimization of the State 8. Public Services 9. Human Rights 10. Security Apparatus 11. Factionalized Elites 12. External Intervention

Source: Data adapted from The Failed States Index 2009, Foreign Policy Magazine Online, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/images/090624_2009_final_data.pdf (accessed September 22, 2009).

Other foreign policy websites have also developed methodologies for identifying key indicators of state failure. For example, the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy uses seventy-five indicators of state failure listed under six broad categories. These categories are governance,

economics, security and crime, human development, demography, and environment.³¹ In addition, consistent with many of the themes found in the Failed States Index 2009 and the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy methodologies, Robert Rotberg's interpretation of Daniel Esty's work suggests that four primary indicators of state failure exist: 1) a closed economic system; 2) high infant mortality rate; 3) lack of democracy; 4) low GDP/capita.³² Again, economic, social, and political indicators dominate the failed state literature. Overall, many of the indicators discussed seem to fall into broad categories, which allow researchers to group data for more efficient analysis.

These various indicators are not the immediate causes of state failure. However, they do represent key structural conditions that allow a state to fall prey to massive and often continuous social, economic, or political pressures. Yet, identifying the indicators of failure is only one step in developing a method to examine this phenomenon. Within each indicator, various organizations derive numerous ways of measuring failure. For example, the Failed States Index 2009 uses the following data to measure "Economic Decline" in a given state:

- Per capita income, GNP, Debt, Child Mortality Rate, Poverty Levels, Business Failures
- Sudden drop in commodity prices
- Devaluation of the national currency
- Extreme social hardship imposed by economic austerity programs
- Growth of hidden economies, including the drug trade, smuggling, and capital flight
- Increase in levels of corruption and illicit transactions among the general populace
- Failure of the state to pay salaries of government employees and armed forces or to meet other financial obligations to its citizens, such as pension payments³³

³¹ Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, "Indicator Descriptions," under Data and Methodology, Carleton University, http://www.carleton.ca/cifp/ffs_indicator_descriptions.htm (accessed September 27, 2009).

³² Rotberg, *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, 21. Rotberg's interpretation is based on Daniel Esty's work with the Failed States Project at Purdue University.

³³ The Failed States Index, "FfP: Failed State Indicators," The Fund for Peace, http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/content/fsi/fsi_6.htm (accessed September 27, 2009).

Meanwhile, the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy uses twenty-four different measurements to determine a state's economic strength. The Country Indicator for Foreign Policy collects the data associated with these measurements from various sources including the World Development Indicators, The Heritage Foundation, and the World Bank.³⁴ The Brookings Institute also published a report on measuring state weakness. This report utilizes twenty separate indicators – in the “baskets” of Economic, Political, Security, and Social Welfare – to measure state weakness in the developing world.³⁵ Based only on the data presented in the Failed States Index, the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, and the Brookings Institute Report, measuring state failure can become an arduous task of compiling massive amounts of data on a specific state. However, this data is essential, as it provides the necessary evidence to support any claim that a state is on the verge of failure.

In Pakistan's case, many of the aforementioned indicators are also relevant. However, attempting to capture data on every possible indicator is well beyond the scope of this monograph. As a result, the operationalized portion of this monograph, “Drivers of Pakistan's Instability,” will use a combination of various indicators found in the existing literature. In an effort to maintain the legitimacy of this monograph, these indicators will provide the requisite framework for analysis. To avoid selection bias, the author uses randomly selected indicators under each of the larger categories of political, economic, and security related issues derived from existing research. According to Landman, this method may help to avoid selection bias and an “overestimation of effects that do not exist or an underestimation of effects that do exist.”³⁶

³⁴ Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, “Indicator Descriptions,” Carleton University, http://www.carleton.ca/cifp/ffs_indicator_descriptions.htm (accessed September 27, 2009).

³⁵ Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, “Index of State Weakness in the Developing World,” The Brookings Institute, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/02_weak_states_index/02_weak_states_index.pdf (accessed December 28, 2009).

³⁶ Landman, 37.

Politically, this monograph will assess the permanence of regime type, the emergence of military rule/rule of law, and overall political stability to measure Pakistan's governance. Economically, per capita income, GDP Growth Rate comparison, and an analysis of Pakistan's Real GDP Growth provide additional data for evaluation. Pakistan's security, measured by the number of religious-based terrorist organizations in the state, the number of intrastate terrorist attacks, and the rise of armed insurgencies within the state highlights the final variable for analysis. Although not inclusive, these selected variables derived from existing literature test the stability of Pakistan and provide a snapshot of state's current situation.

A keen understanding of state failure is paramount when attempting to claim that a state is either weak or failing. As such, scholars and policy analysts have covered a vast array of approaches to this problem. This literature review has highlighted only a small, but significant portion of the existing body of literature on this topic. However, the previous definitions, characteristics, and indicators of state failure provide the necessary background material vital to the subsequent analysis of Pakistan and present many potential approaches to operationalize the conditions evident within the state throughout its turbulent history.

A History of Instability: Pakistan's Troubled Past

Those Pakistanis old enough to remember the advent of independence in 1947 could be forgiven for thinking that they have been in the eye of a storm all their lives.

- Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*

Pakistan's brief but troubled past offers several examples that expose how the state has experienced numerous setbacks and crises over time. An examination of these domestic, regional, and international problems highlights Pakistan's troubles and suggests that the state's current instability is not new. Instead, understanding Pakistan's past is significant in defining the contemporary problems that exist within the state. A closer look at Pakistan's partition from India in 1947 illustrates how Pakistan's violent and uncoordinated birth perhaps set the conditions for instability and future conflict in the region. In addition, immediately following partition, the death

of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, left a considerable void in both the political and leadership spheres of the state. From this, remaining political leaders took years to develop the state's first constitution. This initial version did not last, as future leaders abrogated this and two other adaptations of the original constitution to match the needs of their regimes. Combined with these domestic problems is Pakistan's ongoing conflict with India; specifically in the contested Kashmir region. This enduring rivalry has prevented Pakistan from focusing exclusively on the unstable political, social, and economic conditions within the state, thus compounding the Pakistan's predicament. Lastly, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, coupled with a successful coup by the Islamist General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq in Pakistan, set the conditions for the rise of Islamic extremism in Pakistan. These radical groups still reside within the ungoverned spaces of Pakistan creating fertile ground for training and educating radical Muslim individuals and organizations such as the Pakistani Taliban.

Instability in the Aftermath of Partition

As early as the seventh century, the first Muslim traders arrived in south Asia.³⁷ Over time, their numbers steadily grew in the sub-continent, but remained significantly lower than the population of the native Hindus. Throughout the early 1900s, the growing Muslim population of India sought separate political representation in the state in an effort to equalize their status among the Hindus. The British colonial leadership did not completely oppose this move, and eventually acceded to the demands of separate Muslim electorates within India in 1916.³⁸ This decision provided the necessary momentum that would empower the Muslim political elites for the next three decades. In 1940, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League in India, formally sought independent states within northwestern and eastern India where Muslims enjoyed

³⁷ Stephen P. Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2004), 5.

³⁸ Cohen, 25.

the majority at the time.³⁹ On 14 August 1947, Pakistan finally achieved independence, finally creating the sovereign territory sought by Muslims in the sub-continent. The new state consisted of five former provinces of British India and other princely states.⁴⁰ However, poor planning and a lack of discourse concerning the political, social, and economic implications of independence created significant problems that plagued Pakistan in the aftermath of partition.⁴¹

Politically, Pakistan did not enjoy the same benefits as did India. At the most fundamental level, the post-independence environment forced Pakistan to create a federal government essentially from scratch “with many ministers using wooden boxes as their tables.”⁴² However, the quality of their furniture would prove to be the least of their worries. The Muslim League, West Pakistan’s only true secular political party, shouldered the burden of the political hardships immediately faced by the infant state. Yet, the Muslim League was ill-prepared to handle such an arduous task and was plagued by weak institutions, conflicting provincial factions, and inexperienced leaders preventing the party from functioning as an effective and integrated governmental institution.⁴³ India, on the other hand, continued to mature under the Indian National Congress where the political infrastructure was in place and functioning prior to partition. As such, many of the bureaucratic lessons learned under British colonialism potentially remained in India after partition. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, Pakistan’s prime minister from 1956-1957, suggested that the Pakistanis lacked the “traditions, usages, and premises of self-

³⁹ Peter Blood, *Pakistan: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1995), 29.

⁴⁰ Cohen, 6.

⁴¹ Cox, Falconer, and Stackhouse, 147.

⁴² Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 100.

⁴³ Talbot, 454.

government” once available in British-controlled India.⁴⁴ With little or no knowledge of nation-building available in Pakistan, the state was left to struggle through the early years of statehood. These political shortfalls eventually sent the state into years of military rule, only interrupted briefly by periods of pseudo-democracy. In the short term, however, political turmoil would nearly paralyze Pakistan’s ability to function as a stable government.

Socially, partition offered its own distinctive set of problems in Pakistan. According to Graham Fuller, Pakistan is unique in that “it is the only modern country created solely on the basis of a religion.”⁴⁵ Specifically, the influence of Islam, the state’s hostility towards India, and language (Urdu) became the foundational elements for defining Pakistan’s national identity.⁴⁶ However, many of these components would soon become sources of internal and external conflict for Pakistan. Primarily, what would be role of Islam in the state? The Muslim League envisioned Pakistan as a “state for Muslims, rather than an Islamic state.”⁴⁷ These secular views were in contrast to the views of religious leaders who sought a larger role for Islam in the governance of Pakistan. Throughout the next six decades, various leaders altered the influence of Islam in the state thus creating an ambiguous political environment. Unfortunately, these intrastate religious and social tensions were erupting outside of Pakistan as well. A different social conflict waged between the ethnic societies of India and Pakistan; one that would shape the states’ relationship for the next sixty years. Perhaps the extreme violence that ensued between India and Pakistan was the most shocking social aspect of partition.

⁴⁴ Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, “Political Stability and Democracy in Pakistan,” *Foreign Affairs* 35, no. 3 (1957): 423.

⁴⁵ Graham E. Fuller, *Islamic Fundamentalism in Pakistan: Its Character and Prospects* (Santa Monica: RAND Publishing, 1991), 1.

⁴⁶ Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between the Mosque and Military* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), 15.

⁴⁷ Cohen, 161.

In the months following partition, millions of Muslims and Hindus traded homelands. Muslims in India moved to Pakistan, while the Hindus residing in the Punjab migrated to India. Although these migrations seemed like a natural post-partition occurrence, the violence of the process was appalling and even unexpected. Stanley Wolpert described this painful process as a “caesarian section permitting two new nations to be born.”⁴⁸ Both Pakistan and India reeled in the aftermath of the mass slaughters, as genocide seemed to be the objective of both sides. In the end, the death toll varied. However, some sources estimate casualties to be as high as 500,000.⁴⁹ The actual tally may be irrelevant as the influence of ethnicity and religion – internally and externally – was already evident. The effects of these social tensions would have negative consequences in other segments of Pakistan’s history as well.

Pakistan’s post-partition economic predicament is partially related to the mass migration of Muslims and Hindus in the region. The poor planning that occurred among the pro-independence leaders in the years prior to partition obviously failed to account for the many second and third order effects of their desires. For example, the majority of business owners in pre-partition Pakistan were Hindu. In West Pakistan alone, non-Muslims owned eighty percent of the industrial base.⁵⁰ With that, of the businesses that did remain functional in Pakistan, industries that required power and employed at least twenty workers generated only one percent of the state’s income.⁵¹ With a majority of the state’s industry relocating along ethnic lines to India, and a significant lack of internal revenue producing industry, Pakistan’s post-partition economy suffered greatly. To make matters worse, the new and predominantly Muslim population in

⁴⁸ Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 348.

⁴⁹ Lionel Baixas, “Thematic Chronology of Mass Violence in Pakistan, 1947-2007,” Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence, <http://www.massviolence.org/+Pakistan?artpage=1-12> (accessed November 18, 2009).

⁵⁰ Cohen, 49.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 48.

Pakistan had little background in effective banking procedures. For example, Islamic banking practices prohibit the lending of money with an associated interest rate for the borrower.⁵² As a result, interest-bearing accounts were essentially nonexistent, preventing Pakistan from growing economically during its formative years. The conditions that existed within Pakistan's economy simply highlight an additional crisis faced by the fledgling state. This poor economic start created an environment that resulted in decades of poor economic performance.

Strong, charismatic leadership may have righted the ship for Pakistan during the state's early years. However, the death of Mohammad Jinnah in 1948 compounded the political, social, and economic problems that emerged on the heels of partition. Unlike India under Jawaharlal Nehru, Pakistan was unable to benefit from its appealing founder, leader, and visionary. Although Liaquat Ali Khan, Pakistan's first prime minister and protégé of Jinnah, attempted to assume Jinnah's role, he was assassinated in 1951 without having the opportunity to establish the stable governmental institutions once envisioned by Jinnah.⁵³ As a result, an innovative and captivating leader did not exist in Pakistan in the aftermath of partition. Instead, the Muslim League never had the opportunity to fully transition from a strong and influential political movement to a functioning and legitimate political party.⁵⁴ Overall, Jinnah's passing created a political void in the years following independence that the military would soon fill. Unfortunately, the initial military coup set the stage for numerous regime changes over the next sixty years. Yet, Pakistan's immediate lack of political stability had abrupt consequences on the state's ability to accomplish the most fundamental tasks within the government.

⁵² Cohen, 49.

⁵³ Hasan Askari Rizvi, *Military, State, and Society in Pakistan* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 3. According to Rizvi, the true motive behind Liaquat's assassination has never been revealed.

⁵⁴ Cohen, 133.

Early Constitutional Efforts

According to Stephen Cohen, “Pakistan was unstable from the outset.”⁵⁵ Thus, the instability and turmoil left in the wake of partition, coupled with the death of Jinnah, immediately affected the state’s ability to conduct even the most fundamental political processes. Perhaps the most glaring of these shortfalls is the inability of Pakistan’s remaining political leaders and religious elites (*ulema*) to develop and agree on a stable constitution in the formative years of the state. Mohammad Weseem highlights the importance of this political process and affirms, “the constitution represents the way a nation wants to live its collective life in terms of laws and institutions” and provides essential guidelines for governance within the state.⁵⁶ As for Pakistan, nearly nine years passed before political leaders and the *ulema* finally framed this fundamental document in 1956. This timeline is much longer than Jinnah anticipated in his 11 August 1947 address to Constituent Assembly of Pakistan when he stated that the first order of business for the new state is “the task of framing the future constitution of Pakistan.”⁵⁷ The ensuing political conflict among the remaining Pakistani elites and the religious leaders immediately affected the state’s governing capacity and increased discontent among the population.

The primary stakeholders of Pakistan’s initial constitution consisted of two divergent groups. On one hand were the *ulema* and on the other were the western-educated political elites or intellectuals. The *ulema* sought a strict interpretation of established Islamic principles while the politicians attempted to combine modern ideals with more traditional values.⁵⁸ This debate, which

⁵⁵ Cohen, 54.

⁵⁶ Mohammad Waseem, “Constitutionalism in Pakistan: The Changing Patterns of Dyarchy,” *Diogenes* 53 (2006): 106.

⁵⁷ The Web for Pakistanis, “Mr. Jinnah’s address to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan,” http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/constituent_address_11aug1947.html (accessed November 17, 2009).

⁵⁸ G.W. Choudhury, “The Constitution of Pakistan,” *Pacific Affairs* 29, no. 3 (September 1956): 244-245.

began immediately following partition, was the primary source of discontent among the framers for nearly a decade. The *ulema* argued that a constitution was not necessary since the *Quran* and the *Sunnah* provided the necessary laws required by man.⁵⁹ This assertion was counter to the secular legacy envisioned by Jinnah and many of the modernist political elites within the state.

Over the next seventeen years, as political power in Pakistan shifted from elected leaders to Pakistani Army officers and back to civilian rule, the constitution never found solid ground on which to stand and foster political stability in the state. Between 1956 and 1973, Pakistan had three separate constitutions, with each new version appearing on the heels of a regime change. In 1958, Major General Iskander Mirza declared martial law and abrogated Pakistan's first constitution after only two years.⁶⁰ General Ayub Khan, Mirza's ouster, implemented a new constitution in 1962. This version lasted for nearly seven years until General Yahya Khan assumed power in 1969 following Ayub Khan's resignation, implementing martial law and consequently abrogating the existing document. The latest version of the constitution emerged in 1973 when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto assumed duties as Pakistan's Prime Minister following the state's military defeat by India and the ensuing loss of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) in 1971.⁶¹ The 1973 version of the constitution is currently still in place, with nearly 20 amendments since 1974.⁶²

Pakistan's constitution has a history of being irrelevant to the state's rapidly changing leadership. These changes left Pakistan without a political azimuth on its critical journey to statehood. Overall, the state's inability to develop and maintain a stable constitutional system, coupled with other political, social, and economic problems encountered in conjunction with

⁵⁹ Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 13.

⁶⁰ Cohen, 58.

⁶¹ Cohen, 78.

⁶² The Web for Pakistanis, "The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan," <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/> (accessed November 17, 2009).

partition, created an unstable foundation that Pakistan has since been unable to effectively build upon. Historically, Pakistan's leaders have not focused on these domestic issues. Instead, since 1947, India has unfortunately claimed more of Pakistan's attention than the domestic problems existing within the state.

The Problem of Kashmir

As Pakistan attempted deal with post-partition crises and domestic instability, their already strained relationship with India continued to deteriorate as well. The princely state of Kashmir provided the battleground for this conflict and remains contested even today. In 1947, the debate over control of the Kashmir region added to the seemingly unending list of problems facing Pakistan. When given the option by colonial British leaders, Kashmiri leader Maharaja Hari Singh decided not to choose sides – India or Pakistan – but instead chose to remain independent from either state. On one hand, Pakistan remained committed to Kashmir as Muslims enjoyed the majority in the region.⁶³ On the other hand, India saw the region as a strategic security asset, providing a buffer zone between the state's northern areas and Russia, China, and Afghanistan.⁶⁴ Indeed, Pakistan's unwieldy economy also envisioned Kashmir as a strategic asset as Pakistan's agricultural revenues attempted to make up for the lack of significant industry in the state. Therefore, since the headwaters of the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab rivers rested in Kashmir, Pakistan not only wanted the region, but perhaps needed it in order to develop an irrigation system for their growing agricultural base in the wake of the state's waning industrial capacity.⁶⁵

⁶³ Gowher Rizvi, "India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Problem, 1947-1972," in *Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia*, ed. Raju G.C. Thomas (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 49. Based on the results of the 1941 census, Muslims made up nearly seventy-seven percent of the population of the Kashmir region.

⁶⁴ Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 10.

⁶⁵ Talbot, 114.

Regardless of either state's needs or desires, Kashmir became a drain on both political capital and material resources.

In the months immediately following partition, the situation in Kashmir worsened. The Maharaja's indecision certainly intensified the situation as the tension between Pakistan and India continued to escalate. As a result, it did not take long for the new state to experience its first taste of interstate conflict with India. In September 1947, Muslims in Kashmir accompanied by tribesmen from the Northwest Frontier Provinces revolted against the Maharaja in an effort to sway his allegiance towards Pakistan.⁶⁶ The initial success of this decision was short-lived as Indian forces eventually entered into the fray. In an attempt to quell the revolt, the Maharaja acceded to India in exchange for Indian military intervention. On October 26, 1947, India dispatched troops to Kashmir and subsequently ended the revolt, but left the conflict in a stalemate.⁶⁷ Regional conflict with India was the last problem that Pakistan needed in the months immediately following partition. Unfortunately, since the Kashmir region remained contested in the aftermath of the war, tensions between the neighboring states remained high. From this, it is no surprise that India and Pakistan would fight future wars over the same territory. What may be surprising however is that it took nearly two decades for war to return to the region.

Any chance for a peaceful end to the Kashmir conflict during the 1950s and 1960s ended in 1965 when the second war between India and Pakistan erupted. In the months before hostilities began, Pakistan saw a window of opportunity that was potentially wide open. Although both India and Pakistan benefitted from economic aid from the United States, Pakistani military officials felt that it retained "theater superiority" over India in a quick and localized war in

⁶⁶ Rizvi, "India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Problem, 1947-1972," in *Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia*, 50.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Kashmir.⁶⁸ As a result, Pakistani tanks assaulted Indian border forces on April 9, 1965 scoring a quick tactical victory over the overwhelmed Indian forces.⁶⁹ Again, the early successes of Pakistan proved to be fleeting as Indian forces absorbed this initial attack and eventually regained their strategic balance. Specifically, Indian forces moved to threaten the Indo-Pakistan international border forcing Pakistan to reposition forces in response.⁷⁰ In essence, this strategic decision by India ended the war in September 1965 while Pakistan found itself on the losing end of the war and failed yet again to end the conflict in Kashmir. This hostile trend continued in 1971 as Indian forces intervened on behalf of East Pakistan, which resulted in the secession of the region - the formation of Bangladesh - and another military defeat for Pakistan at the hands of India.

Although the Kargil War, fought between India and Pakistan over the control of Kashmir ended in 1999, Pakistan has continued to resort to unconventional means to further their interests in the disputed region. This new type of opposition took the form of terrorist organizations, bound by radical Islamic or perhaps nationalistic fervor, in an attempt to break the stalemate in the region. According to a RAND terrorism study, as of 2006 twelve named terrorist organizations were active in Pakistan seeking to reestablish Pakistani control of the Kashmir region.⁷¹ The fact that Pakistan has used both conventional and unconventional means against India in the Kashmir region simply highlights the state's obsession with its southern neighbor. Unfortunately, as the struggle over this territory continued, domestic instability remained a common characteristic within the state. Bennett Jones argues that the conflict over Kashmir "has been the single most

⁶⁸ Rizvi, "India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Problem, 1947-1972, 67.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 69.

⁷⁰ Rizvi, "India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Problem, 1947-1972," 70.

⁷¹ The RAND Corporation, "The 2006 RAND Terrorism Database." This database is an Excel-based spreadsheet that allows the user to query and sort data on terrorist organizations.

significant reason for Pakistan's chronic instability."⁷² In the late 1970s and 1980s, emerging problems in Afghanistan provided an additional distracter for Pakistan.

Foreign State Influence and the Rise of Islamic Extremism: 1977-1988

Foreign state influence also left an indelible mark on the already struggling state. Although Pakistan's domestic struggles and regional troubles with India are well documented and somewhat interconnected, they provide only part of the historical evidence of the state's instability. Significant events in the late 1970s continued this trend and ultimately created a permissive environment that allowed Islamic extremism to gain a strong foothold within Pakistan that threatened the state's security. In 1977, Pakistan's third military coup empowered General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, who essentially opened the door for increased Islamic influence in the state. To make matters worse, the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 created a rallying cry for *jihad* in the region. In an effort to counter Soviet influence in Afghanistan and the region, the United States funneled money and arms through Pakistan to mujahedeen fighters combating the Soviet forces. Although the Soviet-Afghan War and the funding of the mujahedeen by the United States are perhaps the most significant events during the 1980s, the impact of General Zia's Islamist policies throughout the 1980s must not be overlooked.

Prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the political leadership in Pakistan changed yet again. The incumbent president, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), reportedly won the general elections of 1977 by a significant majority. However, the PPP's primary challenger, the Pakistan National Alliance immediately proclaimed that Bhutto had rigged the election.⁷³ Both sides took drastic measures to sway the population to their side.

⁷² Jones, xii. Jones states that the loss of lives, the growth of militant Islam, and drained scarce economic resources are the primary reasons for this claim.

⁷³ Blood, 63.

However, as the conflict emerged as a stalemate, General Zia, Chief of Staff of the Pakistani Army, arrested Bhutto and other political leaders and established martial law on July 5, 1977 in an effort to return domestic stability to the state.⁷⁴ The desire to return to stability seemed to be the motive for previous and subsequent coups in Pakistan. Yet, it is arguable whether any of the military regimes actually accomplished much more than the ousted politicians were able to achieve.

Under General Zia, religious extremists potentially made their biggest gains in the state. From the beginning of his rule, Zia “pampered the Islamic parties and encouraged the fundamentalist groups to enter politics to undercut the support of his political adversaries.”⁷⁵ Zia’s policies became known as *Islamization* and easily built on the existing power that the state’s instability offered the *ulema*. Under his policies, Zia proposed that the state’s sovereignty rested solely with God and not the laws or institutions of the legislature.⁷⁶ Such statements further incensed religious hard-liners, offering them the opportunity for additional influence in the government. During Zia’s reign, he banned non-Islamic banking practices and in accordance with *sharia* law, established the mandatory collection of the *zakat* (tax) from all Muslims.⁷⁷ He also brought the judicial system into conformity with Islamic law and introduced Islamic-style punishments. Meanwhile, the influential *ulema* felt that Islam was in constant danger in Pakistan leaving religious minorities more vulnerable to Zia’s Islamist policies.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Blood, 29

⁷⁵ Hasan Askari Rizvi, “Islamic Fundamentalism and Democracy in Pakistan,” The Institute of South Asian Studies, <http://www.isasnus.org/20061108conference/papers/Plenary%20Session%20II%20-%20Dr%20Hasan%20Rizvi.pdf> (accessed December 7, 2009).

⁷⁶ Mahnaz Ispahani, “Pakistan: Dimensions of Insecurity,” *Adelphi Papers*, 246 (London: The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1989/90), 19.

⁷⁷ Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America’s War on Terror*, (New York: East Gate Publishing, 2005), 113.

⁷⁸ Abbas, 103-104.

Throughout his tenure, Zia consistently made concessions for religious leaders, giving them power and influence while perpetuating *Islamization* in the state. From this, it is not surprising that seven religious-based terrorist organizations emerged in Pakistan under Zia's permissive rule; all of which were still active as of 2006.⁷⁹ Unfortunately, according to Hassan Abbas, "the way he [Zia] handled domestic issues did great long-term damage to the interests of his country by sowing the seeds of a tragedy that is likely to keep sprouting for decades."⁸⁰ In addition, perhaps the United States overlooked Zia's shortfalls and the potential dangers associated with the *Islamization* of Pakistan, as he was so vital to U.S. efforts to reduce Soviet influence in Afghanistan. On the surface, Zia's tenure merely marked an additional significant domestic milestone in Pakistan's history. More importantly, however, the magnitude of this incident, when coupled with the Soviet invasion, provided a prime opportunity for religious extremists to emerge and perhaps affected the long-term security of the state.

On December 25 1979, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan became a substantial security concern for Pakistan and influenced the state's domestic, regional, and international policies.⁸¹ Domestically, the war in Afghanistan forced Pakistan to deal with a refugee problem that the state was ill prepared to handle. Second, General Zia's relationship with the United States significantly improved. These events provided the key ingredients – a poor and uneducated refugee population, economic aid, and external support from the United States– for General Zia to pursue his policy of *Islamization*.

Initially, during the Soviet-Afghan War, an unexpected consequence of foreign state influence in Afghanistan emerged when nearly four million refugees fled Afghanistan and moved

⁷⁹ The RAND Corporation, "The 2006 RAND Terrorism Database."

⁸⁰ Abbas, 132.

⁸¹ Ispahani, 42.

into Pakistan.⁸² Many of these refugees resided in the ungoverned Northwest Frontier Provinces (NWFP) along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Needless to say, this mass migration of people into Pakistan further stressed the already weak domestic structure within the state resulting in a rise in violence, as well as many other social, political, economic, and environmental problems.⁸³ If these problems were not enough, an additional, and perhaps more enduring problem emerged out of the refugee problem: a large impressionable and uneducated youth population. Since many of the men remained behind to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan, nearly two-thirds of the refugees were women and children.⁸⁴ Where were these refugee children going to find educational opportunities in Pakistan's hinterlands? Perhaps radical Islamic *madrassas*, or religious schools, would provide an easy answer. Under Zia's *Islamization* policies, many of these *madrassas* emerged to maintain support from the *ulema* and to provide a continuous supply of troops for the anti-Soviet war in Afghanistan.⁸⁵ In 1979, approximately 1,745 *madrassas* existed in Pakistan. Recent estimates as of 2000, place this number closer to 15,000 with students coming from Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other foreign countries.⁸⁶ These unregistered *madrassas* still exist today as they continue to produce a parade of Islamic militants who operate in the region.

Throughout the Soviet-Afghan War, the United States viewed Pakistan as staunch ally with the geopolitical traits necessary to counter the encroachment of communism into Central Asia. As such, the United States' relationship with Pakistan changed dramatically following the

⁸² Khawar Mumtaz and Yameema Mitha, *Pakistan: Tradition and Change* (Oxford: Oxfam, 2003), 28.

⁸³ Ispahani, 44.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ Jessica Stern, "Pakistan's Jihad Culture," *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 6 (November/December 2000): 118.

⁸⁶ Suba Chandran, "Madrassas in Pakistan: A Brief Overview," Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, January 25, 2000, <http://ipcs.org/article/pakistan/madrassas-in-pakistan-i-madrassas-a-brief-overview-314.html> (accessed December 31, 2009).

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In 1979, U.S. President Jimmy Carter argued that the invasion threatened our national interests by potentially endangering the free flow of oil imports from the region.⁸⁷ As a result, the United States took a newfound interest in Pakistan as a means to influence the outcome of the Soviet-Afghan War. Short of sending military forces to the region, perhaps the only feasible option that remained was to send money and weapons to support the *mujahedeen* fighters in Afghanistan. Initially, President Carter offered \$400 million (USD) to General Zia, which he immediately rebuked. President Ronald Reagan significantly upped the amount in 1981 when he offered \$3.2 billion (USD) over the next six years.⁸⁸ Yet, how was General Zia spending these funds? Many U.S. policy-makers were concerned that Zia was apportioning the massive aid package to empower the *mujahedeen* and other Islamic extremists.⁸⁹ Zia's domestic policy of *Islamization*, coupled with the additional U.S. funds supporting Islamic *mujahedeen* fighters and a significant refugee problem in the northwest, created a permissive environment for the emergence of religious extremism in the state. This problem remains today as militants and terrorist organizations operate in the ungoverned spaces of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Pakistan's NWFP.

As previously explained, Pakistan's first four decades were significantly shaped by domestic, regional, and international influences. Unfortunately, these events have primarily resulted in negative consequences for the state. Similarly, these troubles are not isolated in history, but have considerable considerations for Pakistan's ability to mature as a reliable and stable state in the international community. As such, the events outlined in Pakistan's historical

⁸⁷ Shirin Tahir-Kheli, *The United States and Pakistan: The Evolution of an Influence Relationship*, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), 98. The United States deemed this area vital because nearly thirty-three percent of the oil imported by the United States came from the region.

⁸⁸ Blood, 72.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 73.

narrative set the necessary conditions for several drivers of instability to emerge. The following section seeks to examine many of these contemporary problems.

Drivers of Pakistan’s Instability

The historical examples previously discussed serve as the early warning signs that Pakistan was and remains a fragile state. A shaky political foundation, coupled with economic stagnation and social turmoil have placed Pakistan in a precarious situation. In order to support the claim that Pakistan is a fragile state and on the brink of failure, this section will operationalize several key indicators of state failure. These indicators include political, economic, and security related examples suggesting that Pakistan displays many of the characteristics of a fragile, if not failing, state. This analysis will utilize the framework provided in Table 2, “Operationalized Analysis,” to identify enduring and emerging problems in the state. The indicators utilized in this analysis are derived from existing information including data sets and statistical research from the Pakistani Government, the Failed States Index, the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, the World Bank, the Brookings Institute, and the RAND Corporation.

Table 2: Operationalized Analysis

Dependent Variable	STATE STABILITY		
Category	Political	Economic	Security
Drivers of Instability	Government Stability	Economic Performance	Religious Extremism
Indicator	1. Permanence of regime type 2. Emergence of military rule/ Rule of law 3. Political Stability	1. GNI Per Capita Income 2. GDP Growth Rate (2007) 3. Real GDP Growth	1. # of Religious-based Terrorist Organizations 2. # of intrastate terrorist attacks 3. Rise of armed insurgencies

Initially, this section will demonstrate how a lack of stable civilian leadership, multiple regime changes, and periods of military rule have created political disorder in the state. Second, based on several fundamental economic indicators identified in the existing literature, this section

will examine Pakistan's recent economic performance. Finally, this analysis will reveal a degradation of security in the state and will highlight the dramatic increase in the influence of religious extremism and terrorist organizations. Given the various interpretations of state failure and the evidence presented in this monograph, the author will attempt to categorize Pakistan within the spectrum of failure.

Government Stability

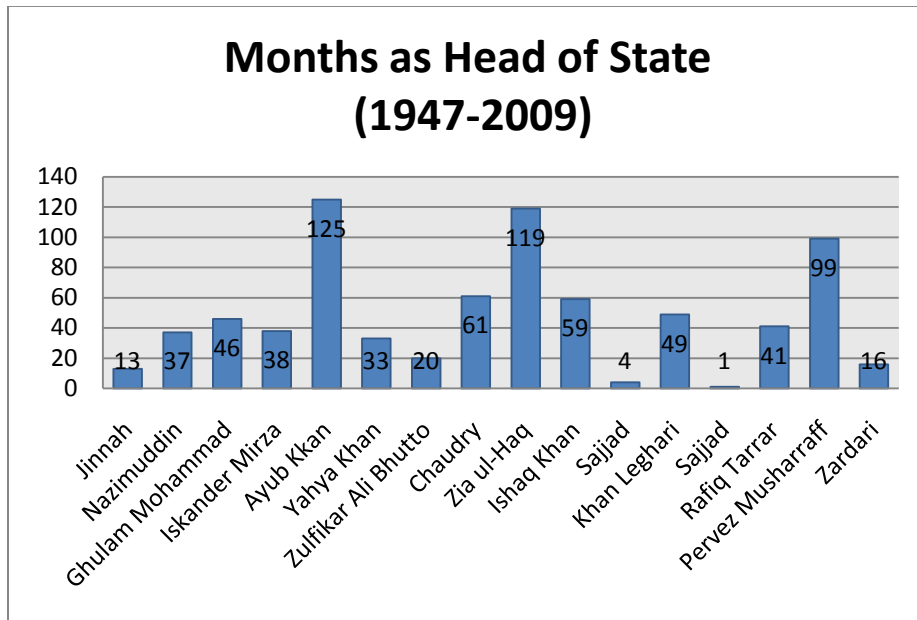
To date, the lack of strong leadership, numerous regime changes, and constant military interference has plagued Pakistan's political structure. These characteristics have set an unfortunate precedent in Pakistan that leaves the current government in an uneasy predicament. For example, will Pakistan's current president, Asif Ali Zardari, fall prey to strong military influence the way other Pakistani political leaders have in the past? Will political instability in Pakistan result in yet another regime change? The answers to these questions are perhaps unknown. However, if history can provide any evidence at all, then the answer may unfortunately be "yes."

First, Pakistan has never enjoyed the benefits of a permanent regime type – whether a democracy, an autocracy or a semi-authoritarian regime. The Country Indicators for Foreign Policy lists "Regime Durability" as one of the primary indicators of "Governance and Political Instability."⁹⁰ This indicator is applicable in the subsequent analysis of Pakistan's tumultuous political history. Additionally, according to Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, co-founders of the Institute for State Effectiveness, states must provide the rule of law to its citizenry in an effort to

⁹⁰ Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, "Indicator Descriptions," Carleton University, http://www.carleton.ca/cifp/cra_indicator_descriptions.htm (accessed January 21, 2010).

cede power through orderly processes.⁹¹ Pakistan's four military coups over the past six decades are certainly not orderly, and have undermined this essential requirement. From this, it is important to point out that Pakistan has endured sixteen different heads of state (Governor General or President) since 1947, with many leaders assuming control under questionable circumstances. In contrast, the United States has had eleven democratically elected presidents over the same period. Figure 3, "Pakistani Heads of State: 1947-2009," shows the tenure, in months, of each head of state. This figure graphically illustrates the lack of durability within Pakistan's leadership with tenures ranging from as little as one month to over ten years. Essentially, for various reasons, half of Pakistan's former heads of state did not fulfill even a full four-year term.

Figure 3: Pakistani Heads of State (1947-2009)

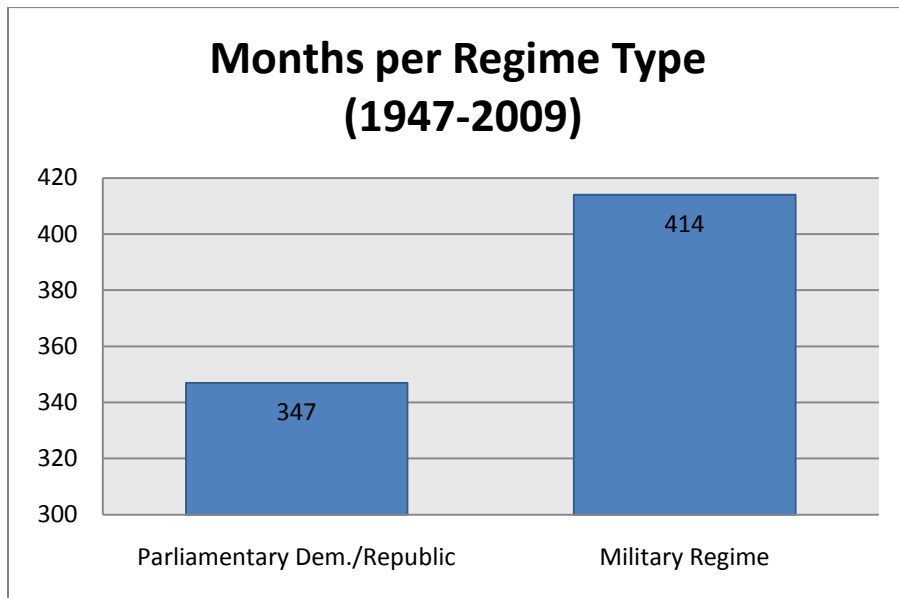


Source: Data adapted from the Government of Pakistan: Statistics Division, "Pakistan Statistical Pocketbook, 2006," Federal Bureau of Statistics <http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/fbs/publications/pocketbook2006/general/head-of-state.pdf> (accessed on December 7, 2009).

⁹¹ Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failed States: A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 127.

Second, the emergence of military rule/rule of law is an additional indicator found in the Failed States Index’s analysis of political instability. In Pakistan’s case, an essential feature to highlight is the significant difference in the length of time a military regime stayed in power when compared to the tenures of civilian leaders. Figure 4, “Months per Regime Type (1947-2009)” highlights this discrepancy by comparing the total duration, in months, of civilian and military rule between 1947-2009.

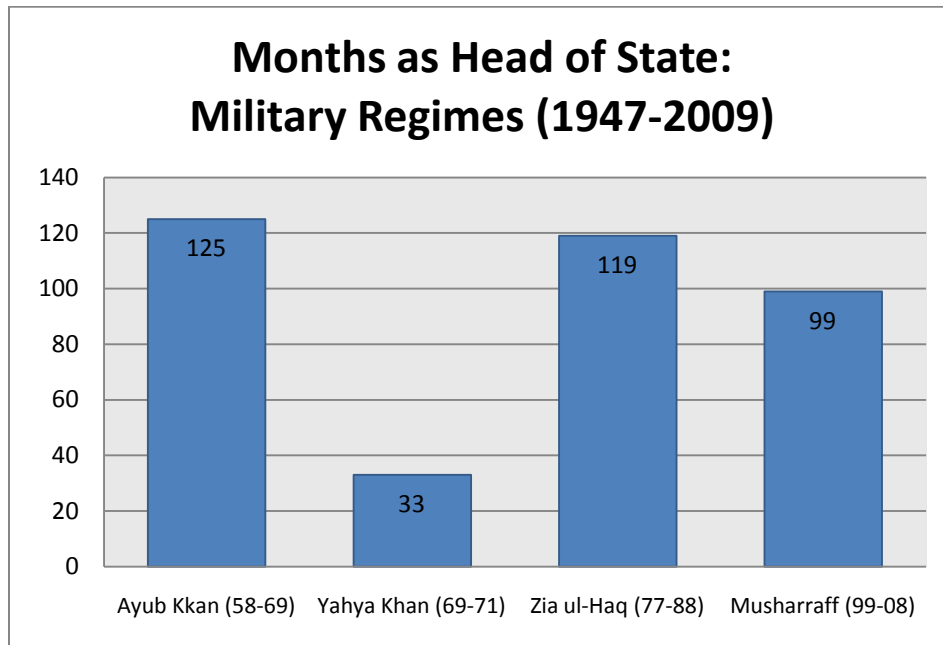
Figure 4: Months per Regime Type (1947-2009)



Once in power, military regimes in Pakistan traditionally stay in place regardless of their role in stabilizing the government. For example, since 1947, Pakistan’s civilian leadership has averaged thirty-two months in power per individual. On the other hand, military leaders who assumed power through a coup enjoyed nearly ninety months per term on average. These military regimes generally resulted in the establishment of martial law and the abrogation of the existing constitution. Unfortunately, the Pakistani Army has not possessed the capability to finally

stabilize the state and have traditionally “dug the hole deeper” while in power.⁹² Figure 5, “Months as Head of State: Military Regimes (1947-2009)” shows the tenures, in months, of each military regime in Pakistan.

Figure 5: Months as Head of State: Military Regimes (1947-2009)



The shorter tenure of General Yahya-Khan remains the exception. His rapid demise is best explained by Pakistan’s military defeat at the hands of India and the ensuing independence of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) in 1971. In essence, military regimes have dominated Pakistan’s political history. Meanwhile, periods of civilian rule, interrupted by generally bloodless military coups and martial law, have prevented Pakistan from developing stable governmental institutions. When coupled with the post-partition problems and the lack of an enduring constitution supported by all regimes, it is no surprise that the capacity and the legitimacy of Pakistan’s current government remains questionable at best.

⁹² Cohen, 130.

Lastly, the overall political stability of Pakistan remains in question. According to the “World Governance Indicators” sponsored by the World Bank, their description of “Political Instability and the Absence of Violence,” attempts to capture the likelihood that the government will be overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means.⁹³ Based on Pakistan’s history of regime change at the hands of military coups, this scenario remains a disquieting possibility.

On the surface, the extended lengths of Pakistan’s military regimes may suggest a level of stability in the state. However, a closer look at the process that brings these military leaders to power may indicate otherwise. According to Stephen Cohen, the Pakistani military’s traditional relationship with politics is a recurring “five step dance” consisting of the following; warnings against incompetent civilian leadership, army intervention in the wake of a crisis, attempts to stabilize the government through major constitutional changes, public discontent persuades military leaders to reinstate civilians into office, the army reasserts itself under the guise of civilian rule.⁹⁴ This cyclical dance is a dangerous one that leaves Pakistan’s current president in a precarious situation. Although this analysis does not immediately suggest that Pakistan is currently a failed state, the traditional lack of government stability provides one example indicating that Pakistan is a fragile state.

Economic Performance

In the same manner as government stability, an analysis of economic performance in Pakistan provides an additional approach to determining the state’s overall stability. In general, Pakistan’s economy no longer possesses the potential is once enjoyed due to three decades of

⁹³ Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, “Governance Matters VIII: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators, 1996-2008,” Social Science Research Network, http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1424591## (accessed January 21, 2010).

⁹⁴ Cohen, 124.

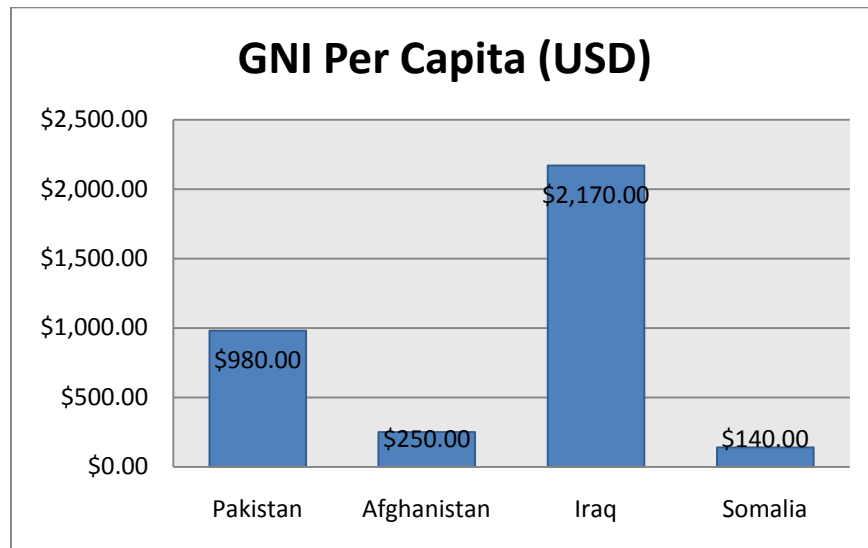
“squandered” opportunities under various regimes.⁹⁵ However, a closer look at several significant indicators of economic performance seeks to reveal evidence to support this claim. Initially, a comparison of Pakistan’s Gross National Income (GNI) per capita to other failed or fragile states highlights the need for concern. Second, a comparison of Pakistan’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Growth Rate in 2007 with the same states, coupled with an analysis of Pakistan’s GDP Growth Rate since 2000 are illustrative of Pakistan’s unpredictable economy. Although these economic indicators are not inclusive, they do provide the capability to draw feasible conclusions about the stability of the state.

Initially, the status of Pakistan’s economy is perhaps best understood when compared to other fragile or failed states. As a result, Figure 6, “GNI Per Capita,” compares Pakistan to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia using U.S. dollars (USD). According to a recent study by the Brookings Institute, this indicator is significant because “low per capita income is a proximate cause (as well as an effect) of state weakness, circumscribing a state’s capacity to fulfill essential government functions.”⁹⁶ As a result, this comparison is alarming since these states – Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia – rank seventh, sixth, and first respectively in *Foreign Policy’s* Failed States Index.

⁹⁵ Cohen, 265.

⁹⁶ Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, “Index of State Weakness in the Developing World,” The Brookings Institute, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/02_weak_states_index/02_weak_states_index.pdf (accessed December 28, 2009).

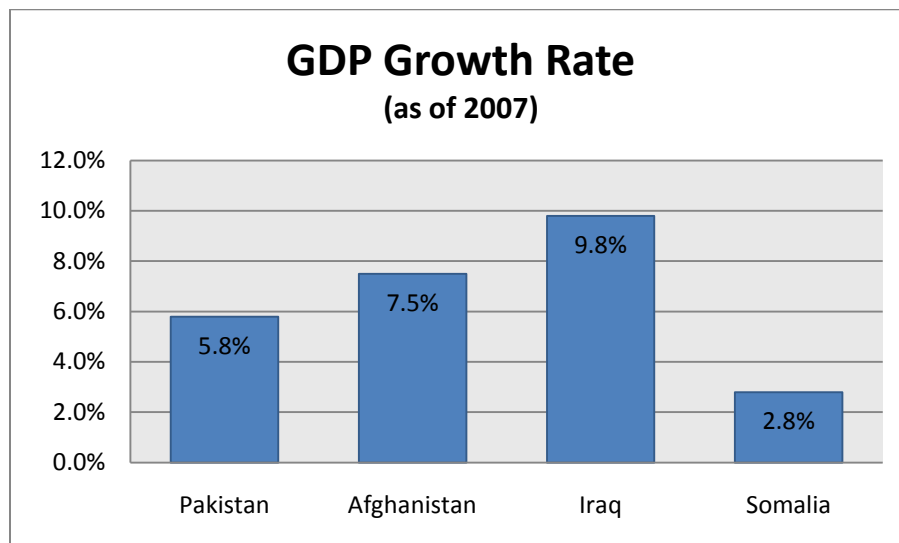
Figure 6: GNI Per Capita in USD



Source: Data adapted from The World Bank, “Key Development Data and Statistics,” <http://worldbank.org/data> (accessed January 26, 2010).

To further this comparison, an examination of Pakistan’s GDP growth rate (as of 2007) suggests that the state may be falling behind both Afghanistan and Iraq in economic performance. Figure 7, “GDP Growth Rate (2007),” shows how Pakistan compares to other states where either the United States is currently involved in nation-building, or in Somalia’s case, a failed state.

Figure 7: GDP Growth Rate (2007)

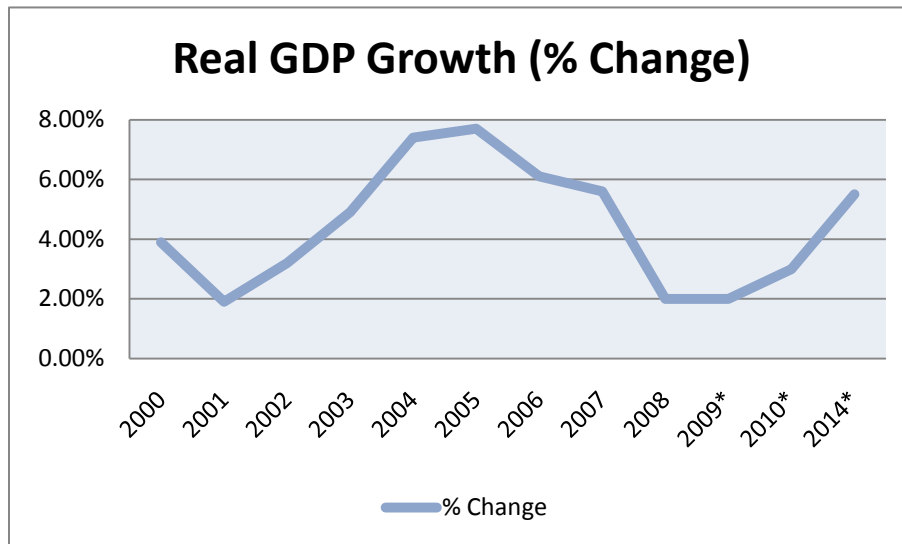


Source: Data Adapted from The Failed States Index 2009, Foreign Policy Magazine Online, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/images/090624_2009_final_data.pdf (accessed September 22, 2009).

Note: The data used to develop Figure 7 is based on the queries of the individual states depicted (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Somalia).

At this point, it is also prudent to look at Pakistan’s GDP Growth Rate over time. This economic indicator provides key insights given that “countries that manage to sustain economic growth generally exhibit relatively stable and secure societies.”⁹⁷ Figure 8, “Real GDP Growth (% Change),” shows the unpredictable nature of Pakistan’s economy since 2000. The first half of the past decade reveals a favorable shift in Pakistan’s economy, while the latter half shows a significant decline in the GDP Growth Rate. Most likely, there are numerous reasons for this fluctuation including inflation, debt, unemployment, as well as other social and security-related factors. Yet, as Figure 8 graphically illustrates, The International Monetary Fund, remains optimistic about the ability of Pakistan’s economy to rebound over the next five years. However, is this long-term growth sustainable given Pakistan’s other stability issues?

Figure 8: Real GDP Growth



⁹⁷ Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, “Index of State Weakness in the Developing World,” The Brookings Institute, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/02_weak_states_index/02_weak_states_index.pdf (accessed December 28, 2009).

Source: Data adapted from The International Monetary Fund, “World Economic Outlook: Sustaining Recovery,” October 2009, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/02/pdf/text.pdf> (accessed January 26, 2010).

Note: Original data presented in Table A4. “Emerging and Developing Economies by Country: Real GDP” (Annual Percentage Change).

Overall, Pakistan’s economic performance is plagued by several significant shortcomings. Combined with a low GNI per capita and unpredictable GDP growth, Pakistan’s economy also suffers from massive unemployment (approximately fifteen percent in 2009), high inflation (approximately fourteen percent in 2009), and low levels of foreign investment.⁹⁸ However, despite the bleak picture painted by the previous analysis, not all may be lost for Pakistan’s economy. According to Stephen Cohen, the Pakistan economy seems to be on a rebound since 2004 and forecasts remain optimistic for the future.⁹⁹ In the end, Pakistan’s economic welfare will also depend heavily on external support, as it has in the past, to mitigate the state’s internal deficiencies. For example, the Kerry-Lugar Bill proposed by the United States Government in 2009 plans to provide \$1.5 billion (USD) per year in non-military aid to Pakistan over the next five years.¹⁰⁰ Yet, historical issues and decades of distrust make the U.S.-backed bill undesirable for some Pakistanis. For many, the bill undermines Pakistan’s sovereignty and brings into question the true intentions of U.S. influence and interest in the region.¹⁰¹ Although reasons for optimism certainly exist, many sources unfortunately show that Pakistan’s economy is actually not faring well. Pakistan’s Failed States Index country profile shows that the state’s economic indicator declined from 2007 to 2009 and remains one of the world’s weakest

⁹⁸ The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) World Factbook, “Pakistan,” <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pk.html> (accessed January 26, 2010).

⁹⁹ Cohen, 262.

¹⁰⁰ Salman Masood, “Pakistanis View US Aid Warily,” *The New York Times*, October 7, 2009, under “At War: Notes from the Frontline,” <http://atwar.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/10/07/pakistanis-view-us-aid-warily/> (accessed January 26, 2010).

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

economies.¹⁰² Whether on a potential rebound or in unmanageable crisis, Pakistan's economy is certainly not exclusive or independent from other problems in the state. The government's durability and the impact of militants operating in the state present significant obstacles for Pakistan's future economic growth. Should Pakistan remain too focused on regional security concerns, economic stability is likely to remain an afterthought and a continuous burden on Pakistan's stability.

Religious Extremism

Unfortunately, evidence of political instability and economic weakness only tells a small portion of Pakistan's troublesome story. The security situation in the state is perhaps the most alarming characteristic of Pakistan's instability. Specifically, the rise of religious extremism in the form of terrorist organizations and militant groups pose a significant threat to the welfare of the state and the security of the entire region. Pakistan's infatuation with India and the state's inability to control ungoverned space within its borders offers the rationale as well as the opportunity for militants to emerge and to even thrive. As Pakistan's Army currently battles the Pakistani Taliban in South Waziristan and U.S. drones attack militant leadership in the FATA and NWFP, a brief examination of these groups is essential to understand their impact on the state's security and stability. An analysis of the number of religious-based terrorist organization active within Pakistan, followed by an investigation of the number of reported intrastate terrorist incidents conducted by Islamic extremists highlights the role of religious militancy in the state. In addition, a study of the *Tehrik-e-Taliban* (TTP) or Pakistani Taliban shows the significant influence of armed insurgencies in the state. Together, these variables suggest that religious

¹⁰² The Failed States Index, "FfP: Country Profiles," The Fund for Peace, http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=387&Itemid=544 (accessed January 26, 2010).

extremism plays a major role in Pakistan's security dilemma, threatening the state's overall stability.

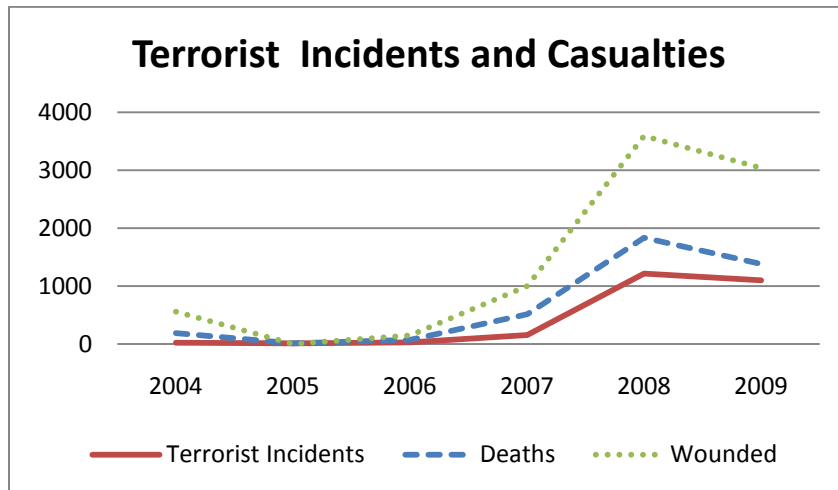
Perhaps religious extremism in Pakistan is a result of decades of concessions by political leaders in response to pressures from religious elites. Although the first evidence of religious-based terrorist organizations began to emerge under General Zia's regime, the rise of religious extremism is not exclusive to his tenure. According to a RAND database that examines terrorist groups between 1968 and 2006, the first religious-based terrorist organization emerged in Pakistan in 1977; the same year General Zia came to power after a military coup. RAND research identifies this initial organization as the *Hizb-I-Islami-Gulbuddin* or HIG. Between 1977 and 2006, seventeen additional religious-based terrorist organizations emerged with ties to Pakistan, with all groups still active as of 2006. Six of these organizations emerged under Zia's watch alone.¹⁰³ Other sources state that over forty terrorist groups – domestic and transnational – reside in Pakistan with either religious or nationalistic goals.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps the most well known of the active terrorist organizations operating in Pakistan today is al-Qaeda. Although an in-depth analysis of al-Qaeda or any other terrorist organization operating in Pakistan is beyond the scope of this monograph, the growth of religious-based terrorist organizations in the state over the past quarter century is concerning. It is also noteworthy that a majority of these twenty-five years was under military rule, when security should stand as a vanguard against the emergence of such threats.

¹⁰³ The RAND Corporation, "The 2006 RAND Terrorism Database." The six terrorist organizations that emerged under Zia are al Fuqra, al Qaeda, Hurakat ul-Jihad-I-Islami (HUJI), Hurakat ul-Mujahideen (HuM), Hizb-I-Islami-Gulbuddin (HIG), and Sipah-e-Shaba Pakistan (SSP).

¹⁰⁴ The South Asia Terrorism Portal, "Terrorist and Extremist Groups of Pakistan," http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/pakistan/terroristoutfits/group_list.htm (accessed January 28, 2010).

A rise in terrorist organizations will logically bring additional violence. Violence that is beyond the control of the state certainly tests the legitimacy of the government and the ability of security forces to adequately protect its population. According to the Brookings Institute, a strong state has the ability to “to exercise its sovereignty and maintain a monopoly of armed force across the entirety of its territory.”¹⁰⁵ However, over the past several years, Pakistan – the government and military included – have been unable to thwart the massive increase in terrorist incidents and casualties caused by these attacks. Figure 9, “Terrorist Incidents and Casualties,” depicts the dramatic increase in intrastate terrorist incidents and the associated casualties – both killed and wounded – between 2004 and 2009. Essentially, this figure illustrates an almost 500 percent increase in the number of intrastate terrorist incidents over this five year period. The ensuing fatalities place Pakistan second, only behind Iraq, in the number of deaths caused by terrorist incidents in a specific state.¹⁰⁶

Figure 9: Terrorist Incidents and Casualties, 2004-2009



¹⁰⁵ Susan E. Rice and Stewart Patrick, “Index of State Weakness in the Developing World,” The Brookings Institute, http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/reports/2008/02_weak_states_index/02_weak_states_index.pdf (accessed December 28, 2009).

¹⁰⁶ National Counterterrorism Center, “The 2008 Report on Terrorism: 30 April 2009,” <http://wits.nctc.gov/ReportPDF.do?f=crt2008nctcannexfinal.pdf> (accessed January 28, 2010).

Source: Data adapted from the National Counterterrorism Center, The Worldwide Incidents Tracking System, www.wits.nctc.gov (accessed December 28, 2009).\

Note: Figure 9 represents the data returned from a query of terrorist incidents in Pakistan between 2004-2009.

Although terrorist organizations and the seemingly wanton slaughter of Pakistani citizens caused by their actions jeopardizes the security of the state, armed insurgencies also play a role in undermining the stability of Pakistan. The emergence of the Pakistani Taliban reveals the true propensity of Pakistan's ungoverned spaces to accommodate religious militants. The Failed States Index uses the rise of armed insurgencies as a political factor that has the potential to delegitimize the state.¹⁰⁷ For years, the Taliban seemed like a problem isolated within Pakistan's northern neighbor, Afghanistan. In reality, the Pakistani Taliban is actually the "prodigal son coming home to roost" in Pakistan.¹⁰⁸ According to Rahimullah Yusufzai, the Pakistani Taliban movement began December 13, 2007 when senior Taliban leaders from Pakistan's tribal areas met to create an organization capable of stopping the encroachment of Pakistani security forces into the FATA and NWFP, while simultaneously "extending help to the Afghan Taliban taking part in the *jihad*."¹⁰⁹ The structural conditions that exist in the FATA and the NWFP make the area desirable for a new organization seeking to prey on the religious ideologies of the poor, uneducated youth in the area. As a result, Islamic schools or *madrassas* "provide an ideal way out for providing education, especially when the ideology, food, facilities, and education are all free."¹¹⁰ The endless flow of graduates from these growing institutions provides the labor that fuels the armed

¹⁰⁷ The Failed States Index, "FfP: Failed State Indicators," The Fund for Peace, http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/content/fsi/fsi_6.htm (accessed September 27, 2009).

¹⁰⁸ Syed Manzar Zaidi, *The New Taliban: Emergence and Ideological Sanctions*, (New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2009), 3.

¹⁰⁹ Rahimullah Yusufzai, "A Who's Who of the Insurgency in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province: Part One – North and South Waziristan," in *Pakistan's Troubled Frontier*, ed. Hassan Abbas (Washington, DC: The Jamestown Foundation, 2009), 32.

¹¹⁰ Zaidi, 22.

insurgency in the FATA and NWFP, keeping Pakistan's government and security forces constantly on edge. Without these *madrassas*, the TTP is left wanting when it comes to recruits. Therefore, the rapid increase in the number of *madrassas* in Pakistan is perhaps representative of the rise in religious extremism in the state. For example, one source reports only 900 *madrassas* in Pakistan in 1971, climbing to 1,745 in 1979, and ultimately to around 15,000 in 2000.¹¹¹ The Pakistani Army may eventually defeat the TTP in these areas, but the religious ideology taught in many of the *madrassas* may take much longer to overcome. In the meantime, Pakistan's political and economic institutions may be unable able to handle the growing burden?

Based on the evidence presented in this section and the previous definitions of failed and fragile states, it is thus plausible that Pakistan is certainly a fragile state on the brink of failure. Political instability, poor economic performance, and the unencumbered growth of religious extremism and militancy reveal a potentially bleak outlook for the scarred state. In order to solidify this claim, this analysis relies heavily on existing research to determine those factors or indicators that are important. If the indicators found in the literature are representative of the characteristics of state stability, then the conclusions drawn from the analysis of Pakistan presented here are certainly reasonable. In addition, the "Drivers of Instability" in Pakistan are not mutually exclusive. More precisely, a complex web of interrelated causes and effects inherently links them. If Pakistan's government remains unstable or unpredictable, poor economic performance will continue to reign while militants and terrorist organizations take advantage of ungoverned spaces. The relationships that exist within this system create a multifaceted situation with no readily available solution. Stabilizing or mitigating only one of these problem areas will only alleviate the likelihood of state failure in the near term.

¹¹¹ Zaidi, 47.

Unfortunately, the worst-case scenario for Pakistan remains possible with severe and immediate consequences for a multitude of stakeholders.

The Issue at Hand: Potential Military Consequences of State Failure in Pakistan

Although state failure in Pakistan is certainly avoidable, given the state's tumultuous past and recent developments, it remains a very likely scenario for the unstable state. Should Pakistan succumb to the internal and external pressures that exist and fail to recognize and thwart the drivers of instability that plague the state, the effects will be substantial. Yet, the most immediate of those actors affected outside the troubled state will be the U.S. military, currently conducting counterinsurgency (COIN) operations against the Taliban and other militants in Afghanistan. Given the United States' recent decision to send 30,000 additional troops to Afghanistan, the most dangerous consequence would be the loss of key supply lines or ground lines of communication (GLOCs) that transit Pakistan from the port of Karachi into Afghanistan. A second, and perhaps more enduring consequence for the U.S. military, is the expansion of a militant safe-haven, dominated by the emergence of the Pakistani Taliban, in the FATA and Pakistan's NWFP. These regions border the volatile provinces of Khowst, Paktia, Nangarhar, and Konar in Afghanistan; perhaps one of the centers of the Taliban-backed Afghan insurgency. In addition, this militant expansion would certainly raise significant issues over the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Nuclear material in the hands of militants would create a new dynamic in the region and throughout the world, which transcends any existing conventional threat. Any of these scenarios would prove extremely problematic for the United States, who is already facing a very complex geopolitical situation in Afghanistan and the region.

The Impact on Supply Lines and Logistics

In the summer of 2008, insurgent attacks along the two southern GLOCs through Pakistan increased from petty acts of violence to well-organized and coordinated attacks that

resulted in destroyed transportation infrastructure, supplies, and vehicles.¹¹² The ongoing increase in U.S. troop strength in Afghanistan will certainly place additional stress on these supply routes that initiate at the port of Karachi and currently cross the Durand Line through Peshawar and the Khyber Pass at Torkham in the north, and through Baluchistan at Chaman in the south. As it currently stands, over seventy percent of the U.S. military supplies enroute to Afghanistan travel along these supply routes that span nearly 1,200 miles through Pakistan.¹¹³ According to a report from the *Christian Science Monitor*, insurgents destroyed over 500 vehicles and temporarily halted supply transportation along these routes in 2008 alone.¹¹⁴ A closer look at the current insurgent threat along these routes provides a mere snapshot of the turmoil that would ensue should Pakistan succumb to state failure.

The northern supply route through Pakistan initiates at Karachi, traverses the Sindh Province, the Punjab Province, the NWFP, the FATA and finally crosses the Durand Line at Torkham. There are few security concerns in either the Sindh or the Punjab provinces based on historically low reports of attacks, militant group activity, and the availability of supplemental, yet secondary routes.¹¹⁵ However, the situation in the NWFP and the FATA is significantly different and poses a substantial threat to U.S. supplies enroute to Kabul, Afghanistan. The route from Peshawar to Torkham is rife with militant activity, threatening military supplies required by U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Along this shortest stretch of the northern route, insurgents have attacked logistics convoys on more than twenty occasions since March 2008 resulting in hundreds

¹¹² Cornelius Graubner, "Implications of the Northern Distribution Network In Central Asia," The Central Asia-Caucasus Institute <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5169> (accessed December 30, 2009).

¹¹³ Graubner.

¹¹⁴ Anand Gopal, "NATO, US Seek Alternatives to Pakistan Supply Routes," The Christian Science Monitor, <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Global-News/2009/0412/nato-us-see-alternatives-to-pakistan-supply-routes> (accessed December 30, 2009).

¹¹⁵ STRATFOR, "Threat Assessment: US-NATO Supply Lines in Pakistan," http://www1.stratfor.com/images/interactive/Supply_line_attacks.htm (accessed December 30, 2009).

of destroyed vehicles, supply containers, and even bridges.¹¹⁶ If this is the state of affairs the U.S. military faces today with Pakistan as a fragile but functioning state, the security situation will certainly deteriorate on the heels of state failure.

Attacks along the southern route through Baluchistan to Chaman have been more sporadic. Yet, only about twenty-five percent of the U.S. military supplies that transit Pakistan utilize this route. However, this GLOC remains subject to attacks by both Baluch Nationalist groups and religious militants operating in the province.¹¹⁷ An unstable Pakistan that lacks effective government institutions, rule of law, and internal security would most likely invite additional attacks along this route making it untenable for U.S. supply operations. Much like the northern route through Pakistan, this southern approach would quickly fall prey to militant groups in the event that Pakistan cannot overcome its hardships. The U.S. military forces operating in landlocked Afghanistan would suffer greatly as a result.

Given the reliance of the U.S. military on GLOCs into Afghanistan, coupled with the potential for state failure in Pakistan, the United States must consider viable alternatives to the existing supply options. As a result, the United States is currently developing additional supply options north of Afghanistan – the Northern Distribution Network (NDN) – to augment or serve as an alternative to the routes through Pakistan. However, based on the ample capacity of the existing supply routes through Pakistan, there is little chance that the NDN can completely mitigate the catastrophic loss of the existing supply routes. Therefore, the NDN will not be a replacement for the Pakistani routes as the new system may only be able to handle twenty to twenty-five percent of the monthly supply capacity of the routes through Pakistan.¹¹⁸ In addition,

¹¹⁶ STRATFOR, “Threat Assessment: US-NATO Supply Lines in Pakistan.”

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Sabrina Tavernise, “Avoiding Pakistan, New Supply Route to Afghanistan Opens,” *The New York Times*, March 3, 2009, under “Asia Pacific,” <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/04/world/asia/04>

substantial diplomatic efforts must continue in order to improve the existing relationships with those Central Asian states vital to the NDN's success. As such, the loss of these crucial routes through Pakistan would hinder, if not halt U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. This scenario alone highlights one of the extreme consequences for the U.S. military that may result from the implosion of Pakistan.

The Expansion of Extremist Safe Havens

As the author previously explained, the Pakistani Taliban already operates in the ungoverned areas of the FATA and the NWFP with ease. Ongoing Pakistani military operations in South Waziristan that began in October and November 2009 highlight the Pakistani government's struggle to control these hinterlands considered a breeding ground for Islamic militants. Also, in the spring of 2009, the Pakistani Army clashed with Taliban fighters after the insurgent group seized control of the Swat Valley on May 5.¹¹⁹ If the Taliban, terrorists, and other extremist groups currently have the ability to seize and control towns in the FATA and the NWFP, how far could their control expand if Pakistan falls prey to state failure? The more stable Punjab and Sindh provinces would eventually fall under the influence of the TTP, the Quetta Shura Taliban (QST), and other extremist groups vying for power and influence in the state. For the U.S. military, the loss of the vital supply lines through Pakistan would be exacerbated by the rapid expansion of militant safe-havens allowing an unhindered flow of fighters – insurgents and terrorists – into Afghanistan. Internally, the control of Pakistan's approximately sixty nuclear warheads adds a stark reminder that there is more at stake here than just state and regional

[supply.html? r=2](#) (accessed December 30, 2009). This article estimates that the NDN will be able to accommodate 500 containers/month. The current routes through Pakistan handle 2000 – 3000 containers/month.

¹¹⁹ Nasir Khan, "Taliban Seizes Swat Valley Hub," *The Washington Post*, May 6, 2009, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/06/taliban-seizes-swat-valley-hub/> (accessed December 31, 2009).

stability.¹²⁰ Therefore, in the event of state failure in Pakistan, would the United States have to expand its conventional military operations across the Durand Line to prevent the expansion of militant safe-havens and to ensure the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal? Perhaps a closer examination will reveal a handful of the various characteristics associated with the growth of ungoverned space in Pakistan.

A majority of the current U.S. operations in Pakistan are classified and controlled primarily by the Central Intelligence Agency. These operations currently do not include conventional ground troops, but rely on missile attacks fired from Unmanned Aerial Systems (UASs) or drones targeting militant leadership and other high value targets. United States President Barak Obama recently approved an increase in drone attacks in order to deny these militants safe haven in the tribal areas of Pakistan.¹²¹ However, due to a lack of government or military control, should these militant groups and terrorist organizations significantly expand their operations outside of the FATA and the NWFP, selective targeting of high-ranking militant leadership would be inadequate. Instead, U.S. ground forces operating in Afghanistan would face a significant influx of fighters crossing the porous border. Alternatively, the proliferation of militancy in an ungoverned Pakistan could force the United States to expand its conventional military operations into sovereign Pakistani territory. As it currently stands, both courses of action are certainly undesirable with the latter being perhaps politically unacceptable.

Beyond the Taliban-backed insurgency, Pakistan is considered by many to be a vital area in the fight against terrorism. The FATA and the NWFP offer ungoverned territory for militant

¹²⁰ Larry P. Goodson, "Pakistan – The Most Dangerous Place in the World," Strategic Studies Institute: United States Army War College, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?PubID=931> (accessed November 18, 2009).

¹²¹ David E. Sanger and Eric Schmitt, "Between the Lines, An Expansion in Pakistan," *The New York Times*, December 1, 2009 under "Asia Pacific," <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/02/world/asia/02strategy.html> (accessed December 31, 2009).

madrassas, unregulated terrorist training facilities, and sanctuary. Following the possibility of state failure in Pakistan, these training areas would undoubtedly expand into other provinces within the state. Unfortunately, the current U.S. administration is already seeing evidence of Pakistan's inability to control the proliferation of violence and terrorist organizations in the tribal areas. In a September 8, 2009 United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) press release, Defense Secretary Robert Gates proposed that the growing insurgency in Afghanistan is due to a lessening of pressure on al Qaeda and the Taliban across the border in Pakistan.¹²² If a marginally functional Pakistan is allowing the expansion of militant sanctuaries within its borders and fueling the insurgency against the U.S. military and the fledgling Afghan government, then an anarchic state with no capacity to halt extremism would become the worst-case scenario. This catastrophic event would undermine any progress made by the United States in Afghanistan and would perhaps open a new front in the war to prevent the spread of militant extremism in the region and to avoid the compromise of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal.

The growing specter of militancy and the expansion of safe havens in Pakistan place the state's nuclear arsenal in an alarming position. According to a recent statement by General David Patraeus, Commander, USCENTCOM, "Pakistani state failure would provide transnational terrorist groups and other extremist organizations the opportunity to acquire nuclear weapons and a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks."¹²³ Although the control and security of these devices remain an ongoing debate among the military, academia, and the media, there is little doubt that recent events have raised substantial concerns around the world. For example, the Taliban offensive in the spring of 2009 came within 100 miles of Islamabad, generating

¹²² Jim Garamone, "Gates Speaks Frankly on Pakistan, Iraq to Al-Jazeera," United States Central Command, September 8, 2009 <http://www.centcom.mil/en/news/gates-speaks-frankly-on-pakistan-iraq-to-al-jazeera.html> (accessed December 31, 2009).

¹²³ Paul K. Kerr and Merry Beth Nikitin, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons: Proliferation and Security Issues," Congressional Research Service Report for Congress, December 9, 2009, 1.

considerable concern over the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, U.S. officials continue to downplay the threat to those weapons and expressed confidence in Pakistan's ability to safeguard them. In April 2009, President Obama reinforced the claim that the United States respects the sovereignty of Pakistan, and gave no indication of the U.S. military's role in securing the devices in the event they are threatened by militants.¹²⁴ Most likely, however, the U.S. military would play a significant role in protecting Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Identifying and analyzing the specific problems associated with this scenario are well beyond the scope of this study. However, any option would include the deployment of U.S. ground forces – conventional and unconventional – to secure these weapons. According to Thomas Donnelly, any U.S. response would involve significant strategic, operational, and tactical considerations that are constant regardless of how the specific scenario unfolds.¹²⁵ In any instance, however, domestic support and international approval would again be absolutely essential for direct U.S. military intervention.

The possibility of U.S. troops on sovereign Pakistani soil requires a closer, although brief examination. Several questions arise immediately if the United States decides to intervene in Pakistan with conventional ground forces. Initially, will the U.S. population support the decision to send additional troops to the region? Will the Pakistanis see the U.S. military as an invading or occupying force? Will the international community support any unilateral action on behalf of the United States to stave off the consequences of state failure? These simple questions barely scratch the surface of a situation that would move rapidly from complex to chaotic. Additional U.S. troops in Pakistan – likely well above the 30,000 soldiers recently approved by President Obama

¹²⁴ Kerr and Nikitin, 1.

¹²⁵ Thomas Donnelly, "Bad Options: Or How I Stopped Worrying and Learned to Live With Loose Nukes," in *Pakistan's Nuclear Future: Worries Beyond War*, ed. Henry D Sokolski (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, January 2008), 358-359.

for Afghanistan – would require significant approval and support from the U.S. population. As it currently stands, U.S. public opinion is already sharply divided over the issue to keep troops in Afghanistan long enough to stabilize the state. According to a Pew Research Center survey taken in September 2009, fifty percent of Americans support keeping troops in Afghanistan, while forty-three percent feel that troops should redeploy immediately.¹²⁶ However, if the propensity in Pakistan is state failure, an increased role for the U.S. military may be unavoidable regardless of public opinion. The decision to send U.S. troops to Pakistan is a significant domestic political risk that any U.S. administration would have to consider in this scenario.

Pakistan's failure would certainly affect multiple actors around the world. However, the state's demise would have immediate consequences for the U.S. military operating in Afghanistan. Initially, the lack of security would result in the loss of the two critical ground supply lines through Pakistan that enable the delivery of vital military equipment to soldiers in Afghanistan. This event would force the U.S. military to place a greater reliance on the developing an unproven Northern Distribution Network in an attempt to sustain operations in Afghanistan. Second, an expansion of extremist safe havens throughout Pakistan would place a great deal of pressure on ground troops already encountering militants crossing the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. This scenario would also threaten the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons, creating an immediate global crisis. To mitigate any of these increased risks, the U.S. military would be forced to alter or halt its current operations in Afghanistan in order to confront the expanding threat in Pakistan. As such, domestic and international support would be essential if the United States should intervene in the wake of Pakistan's failure. Either scenario would end the possibility of a safe, secure, and stable environment in Afghanistan and perhaps the entire

¹²⁶ Pew Research Center for People and the Press, "Public Divided Over Afghan Troop Requests, But Still Sees Rationale for War," Pew Research Center, November 5, 2009 <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1400/public-divided-over-afghanistan-troop-requests-still-sees-rationale-for-war> (accessed January 17, 2010).

region. Ultimately, the possibility of Pakistan’s failure should remain a significant global security concern.

Conclusion

Pakistan needs to change for its own sake, as it seems headed toward a societal meltdown, state failure, and/or revolution if current conditions continue.

- Dr. Larry P. Goodson, “Pakistan – The Most Dangerous Place in the World”

Pakistan’s current predicament is dire, placing the state on the brink of failure. As such, this monograph provides the necessary evidence to draw the plausible conclusion that Pakistan is a fragile state with the propensity to fail. When compared to the existing definitions and characteristics of fragile and failed states, Pakistan’s situation is jarringly similar.

Characterizations such as “contested bitterly by warring factions,” “no effective control over its territory and borders,” and “cycles of violence, economic breakdown, and unfit governments” are all representative of Pakistan’s current dilemma.¹²⁷ The state already exhibits many of these symptoms, but how severe are these problems and can Pakistan overcome them? Perhaps time and significant international support will provide suitable answers and help to alleviate the symptoms of a fragile or failing state.

Historically, the throes of partition, unstable constitutional processes, regional conflicts with India, and the impact of foreign state influence and Islamic extremism all play a significant role in developing Pakistan’s narrative. Secondly, the analysis of Pakistan’s drivers of instability uncovers how the historical events served as significant milestones suggesting the likelihood for both enduring and emerging problems that span political, economic, and security related themes. In addition, state failure in Pakistan would create substantial consequences for numerous actors. As a result, this monograph dedicated a section on the immediate consequences for the U.S.

¹²⁷ The characteristics of fragile states listed in this sentence are restatements of definitions listed and cited in the previous section of this monograph entitled “Understanding Failed States.”

military fighting a resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan. Ultimately, the confluence of history and reality makes Pakistan a fragile state and a legitimate security concern for the United States.

Pakistan's unfortunate situation is significant for many reasons. First, the state's inability to control ungoverned spaces within its borders is creating significant problems for U.S. forces operating in Afghanistan. The free-flow of militants across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border is currently unmanageable by Pakistan. Second, Pakistan is a nuclear state. Historical and ongoing hostilities between Pakistan and India, both nuclear states, leave the region in a precarious position. However, the most significant nuclear threat may come from terrorist groups or militants perhaps capable of gaining control of Pakistan's nuclear material. Lastly, historical tensions between Pakistan's civilian and military leadership creates an unpredictable state that calls into question their ability to work together to maintain stability within the state and emerge as a dependable ally of the United States.

If the Pakistani government or the military were unable to prevent the state from slipping into the throes of failure, the U.S. military would obviously assume a much greater role in stabilizing the state. As a practical approach to this potential scenario, Army Field Manual 3-07, *Stability Operations*, devotes several pages that help to identify the fundamental characteristics that fragile and failed states possess. For example, the document goes into detail in describing the causes of state weakness and the potential effects of failing to prevent this phenomenon.

These weaknesses arise from several root causes, including ineffective governance, criminalization of the state, economic failure, external aggression, and internal strife due to disenfranchisement of large sections of the population. Fragile states frequently fail to achieve any momentum toward development. They can generate tremendous human suffering, create regional security challenges, and collapse into wide, ungoverned areas that can become safe havens for terrorists and criminal organizations.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, 1-10.

Therefore, the U.S. strategy that attempts to mitigate the dangers listed in this selection draws upon a “distinctly American policy of internationalism” that seeks to make the world a “safer, better place.”¹²⁹ Since Pakistan already displays many of the characteristics of a fragile state, the United States must pay more attention to the state – using all elements of national power – to prevent a dangerous, yet needless situation.

In an effort to address the realization that Pakistan plays a significant role in stabilizing the region, both Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates have made recent visits to the state. In a current statement to the Pakistani people, Secretary Clinton made the following remarks:

We join the people of Pakistan in our deep concern about the threat posed by al-Qaeda and its extremist allies. We condemn the violence that has been inflicted on innocent Pakistani people in recent months with bombings and other brutal assaults targeting civilians, your military, and other important aspects of your country and society. We are committed to Pakistan’s security, stability, and sovereignty for the long term.¹³⁰

This statement reflects not only the importance of Pakistan to U.S. efforts to deny terrorists the ability to operate in the region, but also the long-term dedication of the United States. Yet, given our historical relationship of convenience with Pakistan, this enduring partnership may be a hard sell. As a result, Secretary of Defense Gates tried to ease these tensions during a visit to Pakistan in January 2010. Gates stated that the purpose of his visit was to “provide reassurances that we are in this for the long haul and intend to continue to be a partner of theirs for years into the

¹²⁹ FM 3-07, *Stability Operations*, 1-10.

¹³⁰ United States Department of State, Transcript of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton Pakistan Video Message, December 4, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/dec/133174.htm> (accessed January 30, 2010).

future.”¹³¹ However, unless other regional and international powers seek similar partnerships, U.S. efforts may be too little too late.

As the intensity of U.S. military operations increase in Afghanistan, the U.S. government must also maintain a close eye on Pakistan. The dynamic nature of the state is note-worthy, and highlights a level of unpredictability that warrants additional scrutiny. Unfortunately, Pakistan has never truly enjoyed the enduring benefits of a democracy. In those fleeting periods of “democratic” rule, instability often emerged to create a position that was untenable for the existing civilian leadership. If the Pakistani government and the Pakistani Army cannot work towards a common goal to maintain security in the state, then a stable government and a competitive economy will never emerge. Therefore, the interrelationships between politics, the economy, and security are strong and fluctuations in one area create ripple effects in the others. These expanding tremors can quickly lead to failure in an already fragile state. This is a situation that the United States cannot afford.

¹³¹ Julian E. Barnes and Mark Magnier, “Robert Gates Brings Praise and Pressure to Pakistan,” *The Los Angeles Times*, January 22, 2010, <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/jan/22/world/la-fg-gates-pakistan22-2010jan22> (accessed January 30, 2010).

APPENDIX 1

Map of Pakistan



Source: Map from the United States Department of State, "Pakistan," <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/ci/pk/index.htm> (accessed January 30, 2010).

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