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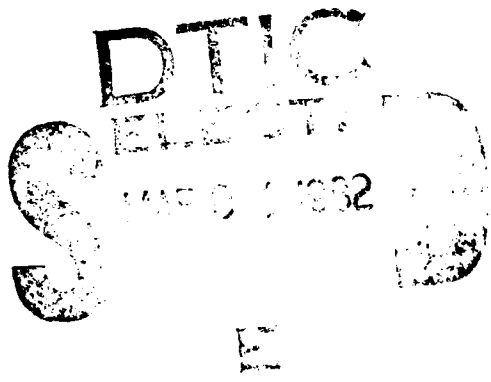
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PAKISTAN SINCE THE SOVIET INVASION
OF AFGHANISTAN

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**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
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**PAKISTAN SINCE THE SOVIET INVASION
OF AFGHANISTAN**

by

Francis Fukuyama

25 January 1982



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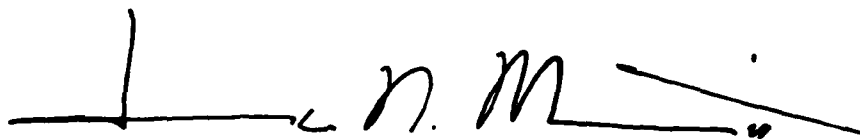
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FOREWORD

This memorandum evolved from the Military Policy Symposium on "US Strategic Interests in Southwest Asia: A Long Term Commitment?" which was sponsored by the Strategic Studies Institute in October 1981. During the Symposium, academic and government experts discussed a number of issues concerning this area which will have a continuing impact on US strategy. This memorandum considers the importance of Pakistan to both the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Strategic Issues Research Memoranda program of the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, provides a means for timely dissemination of analytical papers which are not constrained by format or conformity with institutional policy. These memoranda are prepared on subjects of current importance in areas related to the author's professional work.

This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. N. Merritt", is written over a horizontal line.

JACK N. MERRITT
Major General, USA
Commandant

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

DR. FRANCIS FUKUYAMA is currently a member of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff. Besides covering South Asian affairs there, he has been a member of the US Delegation to the Egyptian-Israeli talks on Palestinian autonomy since September 1981. Previously, Dr. Fukuyama was a member of the Social Science Department of the Rand Corporation, specializing in Soviet foreign policy in the Middle East and South Asia. He is the author of a number of articles and studies, including *The Future of the Soviet Role in Afghanistan* and *The Security of Pakistan* (The Rand Corporation, 1980). He is a graduate of Cornell University and received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in government.

PAKISTAN SINCE THE SOVIET INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN

The importance of Pakistan to both the Soviet Union and the United States has increased dramatically in the past few years. This has been the result of several factors. First, the revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan have made Pakistan, by virtue of its geographical position and historical ties to both countries, simultaneously the target of and an obstacle to Soviet ambitions in the area. Second, while not itself an oil-producing country, Pakistan has been orienting itself increasingly toward the Middle East and North Africa in both economic and military terms, particularly since the loss of the east wing in 1971. Finally, Pakistan's efforts to acquire a nuclear capability have introduced a major new uncertainty into the region's security. Consequently, decisions taken in Islamabad over the next few years will have an impact on the interests of the superpowers and the other states of the region that is probably without precedent since the establishment of the state in 1947. It is at present possible to do no more than describe the broad outlines of Pakistan's emerging response to this newfound attention, and to point to some of the major uncertainties that lie in that country's future.

PAKISTAN'S SECURITY SITUATION SINCE THE AFGHAN INVASION

Any understanding of the likely course of Pakistani foreign policy must begin with an analysis of Pakistan's underlying security predicament since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Islamabad faces a quantitatively and qualitatively more advanced enemy in India, which in the course of the 1970's had succeeded, with Soviet help, in widening its margin of conventional superiority while at the same time developing a nuclear weapons option. Onto this unenviable situation was grafted a major new security threat to the west. Since the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, Moscow has had three principal objectives with regard to Pakistan: first, to control and, if possible, eliminate threats to its own position in Afghanistan arising from Pakistani territory; second, to block the emerging relationship between Pakistan and the United States, and to prevent the former's possible inclusion in a larger Western security system for the Persian Gulf; and third, over the longer term, to gain direct air and naval access to the Arabian Sea through the Balkanization of Pakistan.

The most immediate security problem that Pakistan will have to face is the possibility that Soviet forces in Afghanistan and their Afghan collaborators will seek to extend their counterinsurgency campaign into Pakistani territory. Under a practice inherited from the British, the tribal agencies of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) are governed by a special set of laws which leaves the day-to-day enforcement and adjudication of the laws up to the tribes themselves. The federal and provincial governments are represented only by a political agent in each district, who must work through the local tribal *maliks* and *sardars*. Regular Pakistani law is applied only on the highways, in order to keep open vital lines of communications.

It is not surprising, then, that the Pakistani government can do very little to control the movement of men and weapons across the border into Afghanistan, or the flood of refugees escaping the war. Tribesmen on either side are free to cross without passports or visas, and do so with great regularity. All but three of the dozen or so major tribes in the Frontier have branches on the other side of the border. Prior to 1978, there was a yearly migration of nomads called *powindahs* (or *kuchis* in Afghanistan) who spend the winter

in Pakistan and the summer in Afghanistan, numbering between 100,000 and 300,000. Roughly two million Afghans have crossed the border and registered with the Pakistani authorities as refugees since the beginning of the civil war in 1978. It would be virtually impossible for the Pakistanis to stop this movement now even if it were politically acceptable to do so in light of the two million refugees now there. The Pathans of the borderland are too numerous and heavily armed, and the Pakistani forces stretched too thin over difficult terrain, to ever effectively seal off the frontier.

Since September, there have been at least 10 serious incursions over the Durand Line by Afghan and/or Soviet forces. Most of these involved attacks by MIG's or helicopter gunships against Pakistani border posts or Afghan refugee camps. One, however, consisted of a ground operation by 40 Afghan troops against an outpost in Baluchistan. There were, in addition, hundreds of airspace violations, some probably unintentional but many intended to convey a clear political signal to Pakistan. The Soviets also delivered a number of direct and rather bluntly-worded warnings to the Pakistani government not to support the Afghan Mujahedeen or to proceed in the security relationship with the United States. The Soviets appear to have given support to (or at least allowed the Afghan government to assist) the al-Zulfiqar terrorist group headed by Murtaza Bhutto, which was responsible for hijacking a Pakistani airliner in March 1981. At the same time, the Soviets extended an olive branch of sorts to Islamabad in the form of repeated offers to negotiate a solution to the Afghan problem, albeit on Soviet/Democratic Republic of Afghanistan terms.

Apart from these pressure tactics, the Soviets have avoided large-scale military action against Afghan rebel or Pakistani positions along the border. This degree of restraint could break down, however, if the existing military stalemate in Afghanistan continues. The second year of the Soviet occupation saw, if anything, a deterioration in the overall security situation throughout the country. The tactics and morale of the Mujahedeen improved, despite their inability to unify politically, and various rebel groups remained in full control of large expanses of territory in the provinces. Soviet attempts to conduct large-scale search-and-destroy missions, most notably in the Panjshir Valley, were

repeatedly rebuffed. The Afghan Army continued to disintegrate, as reflected in the government's desperate efforts to press-gang previously exempt categories of recruits like students in technical fields. The regime's pool of trained and politically reliable manpower suffered further declines as a result of impressment, assassinations, defections, and the Khalq-Percham rivalry within the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), which paradoxically seemed to intensify in proportion to the deterioration of the party's position in the country as a whole. While hard-pressed simply to maintain their position in the cities and along lines of communications, the Soviets undoubtedly have considered the option of increasing their stakes in order to pacify the countryside and force their opponents to come to terms. Were they to do so, Pakistan would clearly come under significantly greater threat from cross-border operations and other intimidation tactics.

It is important to note that such a decision could arise from motives that were, from Moscow's perspective, entirely defensive. Having committed themselves to the preservation of Communist rule in Afghanistan, the Soviets might regard control of Afghanistan's southern borders simply as means to that end. There have been numerous recent examples of conflicts expanding over international boundaries as a result of the methodical pursuit of a counterinsurgency campaign, such as the US incursion into Cambodia in 1970 and Vietnam's attacks on Thailand.

Another Soviet option would be to exploit suspicions and antagonisms between India and Pakistan as a means of increasing pressure on Islamabad. While direct military action by the Soviet Union against Pakistan would generate considerable sympathy and support for the latter, particularly on the part of the United States and moderate Islamic countries, a clash with India would be much less likely to do so for obvious reasons. While Moscow by no means controls Indian foreign policy, it can encourage and shape hostility towards Pakistan to which the Indians for their own reasons are predisposed.

The prospects for the creation of an independent Baluchi state giving Moscow direct access to the Arabian Sea are not particularly good over the near term, but could improve. The separatist movement in Baluchistan can be divided into two parts, an older group of tribal leaders like the Marris, Mangels, and Bizenjos, whose loyalties are primarily feudal, and a younger cadre of

ideologically-motivated leftist students who are sympathetic to the Soviet Union and the PDPA in Afghanistan. The rebellion that occurred between 1973 and 1977 was tribally based. While it tied down a large portion of the Pakistani Army at first, it was basically brought under control by 1975 and ended with the surrender of the last tribesmen by 1977. A replay of this war would probably lead to similar results, even if the tribes were equipped with Soviet weapons. The younger Baluchis have not been able to cooperate with the older leaders in the past, and their operations have been confined to towns like Sibi and Quetta. It is difficult to imagine them mounting more than an urban terrorist campaign at present. Over the longer term, however, the separatist threat could become more severe: if the tribes and students are able to cooperate, particularly at a time when the Pakistani Army was preoccupied with India and/or the Soviets, arms from Afghanistan could prove sufficient to tip the balance in their favor.

PAKISTAN'S SECURITY CHOICES

In the past, Pakistan has attempted to meet its security problems in one of two ways. The first was to seek superpower support to compensate for its weakness and geographical exposure, as when it joined the SEATO and CENTO in the mid-1950's and became the recipient of large quantities of American military and economic aid. The second, practiced in the late 1960's and throughout most of the 1970's, was to accommodate its enemies by attempting to steer a more nonaligned course, and to seek outside support from countries like China, Saudi Arabia, and France. The latter course demanded increasingly autarchic security policies in several respects, most notably in Pakistan's efforts to achieve a nuclear weapons capability.

In theory, both these courses remained open to Pakistan after the Soviet intervention in December 1979. While Pakistani elites (and particularly the army) tended to remain ideologically pro-Western, their earlier experience with the United States as an ally was mixed, and in many ways paralleled that of other close American partners of the 1950's like Turkey. When, as a result of the 1965 war, the United States placed an arms embargo on the subcontinent at a time when Pakistan was almost totally dependent on American weapons, the Pakistanis felt a sense of shock similar to that caused

in Turkey by the Johnson letter to Inonu the previous year. The Pakistanis felt similarly isolated and betrayed during the 1971 war, despite the American "tilt" towards Islamabad during the later stages of that conflict. They observed US behavior since the end of the Vietnam War closely and were not impressed either by American power relative to that of the Soviets, or by Washington's constancy of purpose.

On the other hand, the price of accommodation rose substantially after the invasion of Afghanistan. Pakistani acceptance of the Soviet offer for a "political settlement" to the conflict in Afghanistan would involve recognition of the Babrak Karmal regime in Afghanistan, acquiescence in the indefinite occupation of a neighboring country by Soviet forces, and an end to Pakistani attempts to rally diplomatic opposition to the Soviet presence. The Pakistanis over time would be forced to assert increasingly active control over their border with Afghanistan, a move that would entail substantial domestic costs, and in the end would have to trust in Moscow's continuing good will not to move against the NWFP or otherwise seek to exploit domestic or ethnic instability within Pakistan. While such accommodation would probably buy peace with the Soviets and Indians over the short run, it would facilitate the eventual consolidation of Communist rule in Afghanistan and improve Moscow's long run strategic position in Southwest Asia.

Pakistan's choice between these two broad strategies, therefore, depended to a great extent on the exact nature of the relationship that would be possible with Washington, once such a prospect was renewed in early 1980. They originally expressed a preference for a conversion of the existing 1979 Executive Agreement pledging American assistance in the event of Soviet aggression into a full-fledged treaty. The United States was prepared to offer something less than this, a congressional reaffirmation of the 1959 Executive Agreement. Alternatively, the Pakistanis sought a military and economic assistance agreement to provide them real capabilities against the Soviets, which would also serve as an earnest of American political commitment. General Zia's rejection of the \$400 million aid package proposed by the Carter Administration in March 1980 was not a bargaining ploy in the sense that the Pakistanis would have settled for that figure had the United States been unwilling to up the ante, but reflected the feeling that it would

expose Pakistan to Soviet retaliation and damage its credentials in Islamic and nonaligned circles without buying any real security in return. By contrast, Islamabad has given its acceptance to the Reagan Administration's offer of a 6-year, \$3.2 billion package of support, divided evenly between economic and military aid.

The Reagan Administration package was designed in large measure to meet Pakistan's air defense needs along its Western border. A large proportion of the total military credits (some \$1.1 billion) will go to the acquisition of 40 F-16 fighter aircraft. The Pakistanis were quite insistent on procuring the F-16 over other available models such as the F-5E or G, both as an earnest of renewed American political commitment, and because they felt it best suited to their air defense requirements over the long haul. Islamabad also expressed concern over the "window" that might exist between the onset of the new political relationship with the United States and the actual delivery of the promised hardware, which Pakistan felt the Soviets might try to exploit. As a result, the first six F-16's were to be diverted from European production lines by December 1982, while the remaining 34 were to be delivered beginning in April 1984.

In addition to the F-16's, Pakistani ground and naval forces were also to be modernized. Among the items promised by the United States were 100 M48A5 tanks, 35 M88A1 recovery vehicles, 20 M901 I-TOW vehicles (together with 1,005 I-TOW missiles), 64 M109A2 self-propelled howitzers, 40 M110A2 8" self-propelled howitzers, 75 M198 towed howitzers, and 10 AH-1S attack helicopters. Other items still under discussion included further tanks and attack helicopters, A-10 close-support aircraft, APC's, surface-to-air missiles, anti-aircraft artillery, and new naval ordnance.

The military equipment was to be purchased through FMS credits under the standard terms for sales of this type, with no element of concessionality. The Pakistanis were particularly insistent on not receiving grant aid for their military goods. Funding for the first year's purchases before US assistance becomes available would have to come from Pakistani resources supplemented by other friends, most likely Saudi Arabia.

While the proposed aid package is substantially larger than its Carter Administration predecessor, at today's prices it does not secure Pakistan against the full range of potential threats from

either the Soviet Union or India. It will not provide for the sort of overt military cooperation with the United States that existed in the late 1950's; both sides agreed that the United States would respect Pakistan's nonaligned status and not seek bases or facilities. Nor will it significantly shift the existing balance of power on the subcontinent. The Indian armed forces, having demonstrated their superiority in 1971, have been undergoing a steady modernization over the past decade. While the Indian Air Force does not possess a fighter with the exact capabilities of the F-16, it operates or plans to acquire a number of aircraft of a comparable technological generation, including the MIG-23, Jaguar, and Mirage 2000. Numbers are very significant here; even with the acquisition of 40 F-16's, the Indian Air Force will still outnumber its Pakistani counterpart by a 4.8:1 ratio in first-line aircraft by 1986.* It is unlikely that Pakistan will be able to do more than slow a determined full-scale attack by either Moscow or New Delhi. On the other hand, the proposed modernization does provide Pakistan with the capability to deal with (and thereby hopefully deter) the far more likely range of intermediate military contingencies arising out of the conflict in Afghanistan, such as cross-border raids and attacks on refugee camps in the NWFP. On a psychological level, it should provide Islamabad with the self-confidence to withstand Soviet pressure for a political accommodation with the regime in Kabul. The economic components, together with the sizable increases in donations from other sources, should help Pakistan continue its relatively strong economic performance of 1979-81.

With congressional passage of the proposed aid package and an effective waiver of the Symington amendment, Pakistan should be able to continue to maintain a relatively independent foreign policy and modernize its armed forces with US help, subject to three conditions. The first concerns its nuclear ambitions. The Pakistani program to seek a nuclear weapons option began in the early 1970's

*Compared to a 1981 ratio of 5.0:1. The 1986 figures assume the following aircraft:

	<u>India</u>		<u>Pakistan</u>
400	MIG-21	35	Mirage III
150	Mirage 2000	40	F-16
85	Jaguar	70	Mirage V
8	Harrier	10	Mirage III recce
8	MIG-25		

in response to its almost total political isolation in the wake of the 1971 war and the Indian detonation of a nuclear device in 1974. The Pakistani program is quite ambitious and has sought to obtain fissile materials from both ends of the nuclear fuel cycle through an elaborate effort to covertly acquire foreign technology. If Pakistan crosses any of the major thresholds on the route to a weapons capability, such as a clear-cut violation of International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, reprocessing, or a nuclear test, the reaction of both the Administration and Congress is likely to be quite severe and will jeopardize continuing US military assistance. However, the incentives facing Islamabad with regard to nuclearization are quite different now from what they were when their program was conceived originally. With access to American weapons and substantial economic support, Pakistan has alternative means of dealing with its immediate security problems without a nuclear capability. India's recent preparation of a new nuclear test site in the Rajasthan Desert in the spring of 1981 suggests that it will respond to a Pakistani test with an accelerated testing and weaponization program of its own, in which it will continue to outdistance Pakistan for some time to come. Moreover, especially after the Israeli strike at the Iraqi nuclear facility in June 1981, it is impossible to rule out the possibility of India's taking more extreme measures to deal with an emerging nuclear threat from Pakistan.

The second issue that will determine Pakistan's ability to maintain its present course is Islamabad's handling of its broader relations with India. Regardless of the American aid program to Pakistan, India will remain by far the stronger country, and one that will retain many options against its neighbor for the foreseeable future. To some extent, Indian policy (particularly under Mrs. Gandhi) will remain beyond Pakistan's ability to influence, particularly if the Indians decide that even the present degree of Pakistani independence in foreign policy is intolerable to their own interests. Nonetheless, the Pakistanis do have a margin for choice in the degree to which they give the Indians the opportunity or excuse to take actions—for example, in how they deploy and use the American weapons they receive, whether they proceed with their nuclear program, how they respond to incidents along the border, their attitude on Kashmir, etc. The Indian reaction will depend as well on the behavior of Pakistan's outside

supporters, particularly the United States and China, and the degree to which they can avoid the appearance of colluding to back India against the wall.

The final factor affecting the future of Pakistan's external relations will be its ability to avoid the domestic instabilities that have marked its past history. While it is obviously impossible to make firm predictions in this regard, Pakistan may be able to avoid dramatic upheavals for the next few years, *provided* it is able to maintain its recent level of economic performance. The main source of opposition to military rule, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), became an increasingly heterogeneous collection of political personalities and ideological viewpoints in the late 1970's, which lost its unifying core with the execution of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1979. The party was seriously fragmented and discredited by the Pakistan International Airlines highjacking and by the radicalism of Murtaza Bhutto and his followers. The political parties as a class have lost a good deal of their legitimacy as a result of their maneuvering and opportunism both before and after 1977, and have yet to produce a leader who can serve to focus political opposition to Zia. The parties like the NDP representing regional or ethnic concerns have been, if not exactly discredited by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, at least preoccupied with other concerns. A strong case can be made that the present military government has been more sensitive to the concerns of ethnic groups like the Baluch than its civilian predecessor, and has been fairly successful in defusing the separatist tensions that initially were provoked by Bhutto's dismissal of the provincial governments in Baluchistan and the NWFP in the early 1970's. Its ability to continue to do so will have enormous implications not only for Pakistan's national survival in the 1980's, but for the interests of both superpowers in a singularly important part of the world as well.

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