

New Peace, New War: Global Perspectives

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Introduction

In this paper I want to do three things: offer some thoughts on the broader “war on terrorism”, reflect on the way in which the “war on terrorism” is being fought in South Asia, and finally discuss the implications the war on terrorism is having for the prospects for a “new peace” in South Asia. By “new peace” I mean the prospects that the present rapprochement between India and Pakistan might presage a gradual transition to a durable peace in which inevitable disputes and conflicts are addressed at the political level and without violence.

The War on Terrorism

Lacking sufficient power themselves to effect direct political change, one of the few consistent strands in the history of terrorism is the attempt by terrorists to radicalise populations by provoking states into repressive action, confident that this repression will garner new recruits to terrorism, expand their support base and drive the state to greater repression in a spiral of violence which will eventually force political change¹. Viewed in this way it is hard to argue that the present US-led war on terrorism is going well. Across the world states are being provoked into repressive action: Israel is assassinating terrorist leaders and bulldozing the family homes of terrorists, Russia is levelling much of Chechnya, the United States is killing civilians as it hunts for terrorists in Afghanistan and seek to impose political stability in Iraq, and India is condemned for human rights abuses as they crack down on terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir². In none of these cases is there real evidence of progress towards the defeat of terrorism. The terrorists in this sense are winning.

I want to suggest that, as they are presently being conducted, these wars on terrorism lack political sophistication and are bound to fail. In the end each of these states will have to learn that terrorism cannot be defeated in this way. To the extent the past is a guide it teaches instead that terrorism is only weakened and finally defeated by a combination of three policies:

¹ See: Albert Camus, *The Rebel*, Penguin Classics, Reprint December 2000; Walter Lacquer, *The Age of Terrorism*, Weidenfield Press, 1997; Simon Reeve, *The New Jackals: Osama Bin Laden and the Future of Terrorism*, Carlton Books, 2002; Thierry Vareilles, *Encyclopedie du Terrorisme International*, L'Harmattan Press, Paris, 2001.

² See the annual *Human Rights Watch* reports on Jammu and Kashmir which detail the atrocities of both Indian security forces and of separatist militants. For an alternative analysis of terrorism in South Asia see: Brahma Chellaney, “Fighting terrorism in Southern Asia: the lessons of history”, *International Security*, Winter 2001/2, pp 94-116.

- downward pressure by the intelligence and security services against terrorists *consistent with the rule of law and with the values and norms a society would wish to defend*;
- the creation of political space and economic and social conditions which will increasingly deny the terrorists their tenuous legitimacy and appeal;
- a willingness to pay the price of separating the terrorists from those who support them, a price that is paid in loss, restraint, and ultimately in compromise.

The War on Terrorism in South Asia

Since 9/11 South Asia has become one of the key battlegrounds in the war on terrorism and the way in which this war is being fought in the region I will argue is corrosive, though not finally destructive, of the prospects for a “new peace”.

The three key states involved in the war on terrorism in South Asia are each failing to make meaningful progress towards their political objectives. For both India and Pakistan this is because neither are observing the principles outlined above for the defeat of terrorism and are consequently locked in permanent crisis over the issue of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan’s recent downward pressure on cross-border infiltration and terrorist groups within Pakistan and India’s recent efforts to create greater political space and curb the excesses of its security forces in Jammu and Kashmir are welcome developments but both need to go much further.

The role of the United States, which could be decisively constructive³, is presently equally corrosive and in addition to the failure of the US to also observe the principles I have outlined, I would offer three further reasons for this:

- The first is the simplistic way in which the war on terrorism was conceived in the United States as a crude dichotomy between those for and against the terrorists and thus the way in which the present US administration is purblind to the spectrum of groups and positions which exist between those struggling for legitimate rights and self-determination at one end of the scale and those committed to a nihilistic anti-western agenda which neither represents the aspirations of any coherent political community nor offers a credible political vision for Islam in the modern world at the other⁴. In rolling these groups up into one “enemy” the US forges bonds between groups where none existed and denies itself allies in face of the genuine threat it faces.
- The second is that the United States administration appears purblind also to the social, political, cultural and religious complexity of Pakistani society⁵ and

³ K. Shankar Bajpai, “Untangling India and Pakistan”, *Foreign Affairs*, May 2003, pp 112-127. For some thoughtful ideas about how the US might play that more positive role in the region see: Michael Craig and James Henderson, *US Strategies for Regional Security: South Asia*, Report of the 42nd Strategy for Peace Conference, Warrenton, Virginia, October 2001.

⁴ Peter Bergen, *Holy War, Inc*, Ted Smart Press, 2001; Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda*, Taurus Press, 2003; John Gray, *Al Qaeda and What it Means to be Modern*, Faber and Faber Press, 2004; Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al-Qaeda*, Hurst Press, 2002.

⁵ On this complexity, see for example: Owen Bennett-Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, Vanguard Books, 2002; Stephen Cohen, “The Jihadist threat to Pakistan”, *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer

thus purblind to the longer term implications for Pakistan of the way in which the US is pursuing its short-term objectives in the region. The US attention span is short, as the people of Pakistan discovered in the decade after the Soviet disengagement from Afghanistan. Given that a stable, democratic and liberal Islamic Pakistan is a *sine qua none* both for the defeat of terrorism and for the wider stability of South Asia, present US policy is an obstacle to Pakistan moving towards that future. .

- Finally, the reliance by the US on its preponderant military power in the war on terrorism has provided a stimulus to those seeking to exploit conventional military advantage by developing “punitive military options” for purposes of political coercion. The interest expressed by the Indian military in seeking such options as its conventional military advantage over Pakistan grows over the next few decades is one of the more pernicious and destabilizing developments of recent years in South Asia, and something I very much expect wiser heads in India will resist.

Towards a “New Peace” in South Asia

I have thus far argued that the war on terrorism is not going well, either in general or in South Asia specifically. I have also argued that US, Indian and Pakistani policy by and large seems to be playing into the hands of the terrorists rather than weakening and undermining them. I want now to conclude by arguing that while this is very damaging it can be addressed in ways I have already outlined and that the prospects for a “new peace” remain good. My reasons for arguing this primarily flow from my judgement that the prospects for the “new peace” will depend less on the security context in South Asia *per se* than on the broader political and particularly economic changes that the region is poised to undergo. In this respect the most important developments of recent years are:

- the pace and trajectory of India’s economic growth⁶;
- the important signs of Sino-Indian rapprochement⁷;
- the emergence of what Buzan and Waever have called an “Asian Supercomplex” as the interdependence of South Asia and North and South East Asia grows⁸;
- the creation of a South Asian Free Trade Area [SAFTA] from 2006;

2003, pp 7-25; Rodney Jones, *The Prospects for State Failure in Pakistan: Ethnic, Regional and Sectarian Fissures*, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 1 May 2001; Anatol Lieven, “Preserving Pakistan”, *Foreign Affairs*, February 2002, pp 106-117; Ian Talbot, *Pakistan: A Modern History*, Vanguard Books, 1999; and Mary Anne Weaver, *Pakistan: In the Shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan*, Farrar Straus Giroux Press, 2003. India of course faces its own internal contradictions and ethnic tensions. On the latter see amongst many: Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civil Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*, Yale University Press, 2002.

⁶ World Bank, *Policy Brief: India*, World Bank, 2003.

⁷ Some date this Sino-Indian rapprochement from then Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee’s visit to China in June 2003. See, for example: Sultan Shahin, “US smarts over India-China ties” *Asia Times*, 3 April 2004. For a deeper look at the issues see: Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu and Jing-Dong Yuan, *China and India: Cooperation or Conflict?*, Lynne Reiner Press, 2003 and Francine Frankel and Harry Harding [eds], *The India-Chinese Relationship*, Columbia University Press, March 2004.

⁸ Barry Buzan and Ole Waever, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security*, CSIR, Cambridge University Press, 2003, esp pp 172-182.

- the renewed interest in strengthening SAARC as a proto-regional security fora⁹.

It seems clear in this context that stabilizing the Indo-Pak relationship is key both to India's prospects for economic and political success and to Pakistan's prospects for inclusion in the wider politico-economic dynamics. In a globalized world it is more and more evident that the policies of the past have been disastrous for India and Pakistan not only in terms of human and material cost but also in terms of lost political and economic opportunity¹⁰. This I believe is what both President Musharraf and former Prime Minister Vajpayee have alluded to in recent statements which reveal a shared sense of optimism about the future and I believe, following the Indian elections results, we will see serious political effort put into finding common ground over the next few years. I am even more confident that India and Pakistan's business, industrial, agricultural and financial communities will find that common ground even as political leaders and the two strategic communities struggle to do so.

And therein lies an implicit challenge to strategic analysts and security policy makers in the region and those concerned with South Asia outside it. That challenge is broadly to seek to create and maintain the conditions of stability under which bilateral and regional political and economic co-operation can be developed and to find the common ground on which India and Pakistan can jointly address their security concerns at the political level. Analysis of what needs to be done in economic and political terms is abundant – strengthening democracy, developing civil society, opening markets, opening borders and enhancing cross-border activity, expanding the tax base, moving black market activities into the formal sector, expanding education, developing and strengthening the “middle class”, taking advantage of potential regional opportunities such as trans-Asian pipelines and communication links, and so forth¹¹. Equally there is a great deal of impressive work going on within and outside South Asia on stabilizing the nuclear relationship and some important work is emerging in the areas of arms control, confidence-building measures and joint risk reduction centres¹². These discourses are however largely insulated from one another and much less analytic attention has been given to broadening the essentially military-politico security discourse in South Asia to more fully reflect these economic and political needs and opportunities or to institutionalizing and regularizing bilateral and regional security fora and security dialogue in ways which facilitate sustained communication and bilateral activity even as the relations between India and Pakistan oscillate as they inevitably will¹³.

⁹ Eric Gonsalves and Nancy Jetly [eds], *The Dynamics of South Asia: Regional Co-operation and SAARC*, Sage Press, 2000.

¹⁰ For a useful overview see: Strategic Foresight Group, *Cost of Conflict between India and Pakistan*, International Centre for Peace Initiatives, Mumbai, 2004.

¹¹ See for example: Hernando De Soto, *The Mystery of Capital*, Black Swan Press, 2001 and Hernando De Soto and June Abbot, *The Other Path: The Economic Answer to Terrorism*, Perseus Books, 2002; Avinash Persaud, “The knowledge gap”, *Foreign Affairs*, April 2001, pp 107-117; and Jonathan Schell, *The Unconquerable World: Power, Non-Violence and the Will of the People*, Allen Lane, 2004.

¹² For some excellent analysis and ideas see: Michael Krepon, *Conflict Prevention, Confidence-Building and Reconciliation in South Asia*, Palgrave Press, 2000; Michael Krepon, *Nuclear Risk Reduction in South Asia*, Palgrave [forthcoming, December 2004]; Michael Krepon and Ziad Haider [eds], *Reducing Nuclear Dangers in South Asia*, Stimson Centre Report No 50, January 2004; Clifford Singer, *Nuclear Confidence Building in South Asia*, ACDIS Research Report, June 1995.

¹³ One of the relatively few frameworks which offers insight into the broadening of the politico-military security agenda to include wider political, social, economic, cultural and other elements and

It is highly significant and more than a coincidence that the steps needed to respond to the threat posed by terrorism in South Asia closely align with an agenda for developing economic and political co-operation in the region. Both point to the need to redefine bilateral and regional security in broader terms and to strengthen bilateral and regional security co-operation in the face of the shared threats to both India and Pakistan posed by terrorism, the risk of nuclear war, the failure to resolve the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, and the failure to give adequate attention and resources to domestic and regional political and economic development.

Ends.

which offers some prescriptive insights about the role and place of armed forces within such a framework is the Deutschian notion of "Security Community", developed most recently in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities*, CSIR, Cambridge University Press, 1998 [Reprint 2000]. Those who reject the security community idea as irrelevant to South Asia overlook in my view the arguments Adler and Barnett make about latent security community factors present in even the most conflict-prone regions.