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PAKISTANI CAPABILITIES FOR A COUNTERINSURGENCY CAMPAIGN: A NET ASSESSMENT

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Executive Summary

As a more effective Taliban steps up its operations along the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, Western observers increasingly are calling on Pakistan to implement a strategy of population-security counterinsurgency, or COIN. This paper will offer a net assessment of Pakistan's military capabilities to conduct such a campaign based on clearly stated assumptions, an analysis of open-source materials, and textbook COIN doctrine and best practices. It will examine the gap in Pakistani efforts and the choices required to fill this gap based on 1) the *nature of the insurgency*, including its strength, capabilities, tactics, and strategic objectives; 2) the *terrain challenges* posed by the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), and 3) current and potential *Pakistani military capabilities*.

Counterinsurgency doctrine calls for political over military solutions, population security over enemy targeting, ground forces over airpower, and small—rather than large—force deployments for missions such as patrols, intelligence gathering, and development assistance. Thus far, the Pakistani military has conducted a campaign that runs nearly counter to all these prescriptions. This is primarily because of a military doctrine that is rooted in a persistent fear of a superior Indian army threatening the Pakistani core, but even if the Pakistani military hypothetically committed to a COIN campaign, it would face many obstacles to success.

The most optimistic scenario would allow Pakistan to redeploy only two-thirds of its forces from the Indian border (no more than 250,000 troops) to conduct COIN oper-

ations in the FATA and NWFP, which are projected to last two to five years. That means that its regular and paramilitary forces combined still would fall short of average force ratios necessary for a COIN success and woefully short of higher ratios, likely required given the adverse conditions and terrain Pakistan would face in this regional theater. In addition, Pakistan would need to recruit and manage more than 100,000 men in local militias to assist in holding areas that it cleared of insurgents.

An effective COIN campaign also would require the military to coordinate and combine efforts with Pakistan's civilian government, with which it continues to have poor relations.

Finally, Pakistan's reliance on American support to conduct a COIN campaign and offset its disadvantages actually could prove counterproductive, intensifying public resentment, further eroding morale, and strengthening militant recruitment and cohesion.

Counterinsurgency campaigns have confounded the best militaries in the world, including those of the United States, Britain, and Israel, and Pakistan has many more obstacles to overcome than those powers. Based on its limited capabilities and the tremendous potential costs in blood, treasure, and strategic tradeoffs, this paper finds that the chance of a Pakistani COIN success in its tribal areas is low in the short to medium term. Further, absent a dramatic change in threat assessments or new inducements, the Pakistani military is likely to maintain its current approach to the insurgency because of its gap in capabilities and ignore calls for a COIN strategy.

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For eight years, the Taliban insurgency in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) has been growing. Recently, it has become front-page news. In addition to cross-border raids from Pakistan's tribal areas into Afghanistan, U.S. and NATO allies now worry about Taliban advances into the NWFP as well. Taliban militants have come within 60 miles of the Pakistani capital of Islamabad, raising fears that Pakistan's nuclear arsenal could fall into their hands. U.S. government officials have criticized Pakistan's efforts to sign cease-fire agreements with the Taliban. At one point, an exasperated Secretary of State Hillary Clinton even remarked, "I think the Pakistani government is basically abdicating to the Taliban and to the extremists."¹

Pakistan has fought a number of campaigns in the FATA and the NWFP since 2004 at a cost of more than 1,900 troops killed² and 3,400 wounded.³ In each campaign, the military has conducted high-intensity conventional battles, for which it has trained, replete with heavy firepower and tremendous displacement of the population. These battles have been followed by peace deals and cease-fire agreements with the militants. Numerous analysts and officials have heavily criticized this approach for its "failure to prepare for counterinsurgency warfare."⁴ The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. Mike Mullen, is reported

to have pressured the Pakistani military to retrain between two brigades and two divisions to conduct COIN operations, but he has met with resistance from a Pakistani military that believes its primary threat comes from an Indian advance across its eastern border into the heart of Pakistan, the plains of Punjab.⁵

Many analysts identify the primary obstacle to a Pakistani COIN operation to be a lack of political will combined with a military doctrine built around a potential Indian invasion. Pakistani reluctance to conduct a counterinsurgency also has to do with the fact that, as envisioned by Western militaries, it would be "slow, labor-intensive, and very expensive in lives and treasure."⁶ Much attention has been focused on the political *intentions* of the Pakistani government, military, and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and their purposeful evasion of COIN doctrine. But scant regard has been paid to the question of *capabilities*—whether the Pakistani military could, even if it wanted to, carry out such a mission with its current skills and resources. The implicit assumption in policy debates has been that counterinsurgency warfare—specifically as detailed in Army Field Manual 3-24 (FM 3-24), authored by Gen. David Petraeus and at least partially instituted by

1 Arshad Mohammed, "Clinton Says Pakistan Is Abdicating to the Taliban," *Reuters*, April 23, 2009. [<http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSTRE53L69J20090423>].

2 *The Economist*, July 23, 2009. One-month prior, the figure was reported at 1,600. *The Washington Post*, June 12, 2009. [<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/11/AR2009061104264.html>].

3 *Al Jazeera* documentary: (*Al Jazeera* English), *Witness: Pakistan's War: On the Front Line*, Jan. 4, 2009.

4 Ahmed Rashid, "Pakistan's Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy," *CTC Sentinel*, Vol. 2, No. 3, March 2009, p. 7. The sentiment has been echoed by Shuja Nawaz and Stephen Cohen at a conference sponsored by the Jamestown Foundation on April 15, 2009. Also Seth G. Jones, "Pakistan's Dangerous Game," *Survival*, Vol. 49, No. 1, Spring 2007, pp. 15-32; and Moeed Yusuf and Anit Mukherjee, "Counterinsurgency in Pakistan: Learning from India," *AEI National Security Outlook*, September 2007.

5 Rashid, "Pakistan's Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy," March 2009.

6 Stephen Biddle, "The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual as Political Science and Political Praxis," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 2, June 2008.

the U.S. military in Iraq and Afghanistan⁷—could be generalized, and, given the requisite political will, instituted by Pakistan,⁸ but the question of capabilities is not minor. Daniel Byman writes,

[C]ounterinsurgency is difficult for even the best militaries. It requires not only remarkable military skill but also a deft political touch. The soldier on patrol must be a fighter, a policeman, an intelligence officer, a diplomat, and an aid worker. Not surprisingly, even well-trained, well-led, and well-funded militaries such as those of the United States, Britain, and Israel have foundered when facing insurgent movements.⁹

This paper seeks to assess the counterinsurgent capabilities of the Pakistani military and, following in the “net assessment” tradition, to explicate how such a counterinsurgency campaign would look based on some reasonable assumptions and open-source analysis.¹⁰ The second section outlines what a textbook COIN campaign should look like based on FM 3-24. The third section summarizes the type of counterinsurgency operations employed to date by the Pakistani military and where they fall short of the FM 3-24 model. The fourth section, the bulk of this

7 Although I recognize the insight of Jon Lindsay and others that COIN theory in Army Field Manual 3-24 and the practice in Iraq part ways, the policy debates tend to assume they are congruent if not the same. Lindsay, “Commandos, Advisors, and Diplomats: Special Operations Forces and Counterinsurgency,” paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention, New York, February 2009.

8 Rashid, “Pakistan’s Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy,” March 2009. Rashid writes, “Even without receiving training from the U.S. military, the Pakistan Army can learn modern counterinsurgency practices. Professional army officers can study counterinsurgency from books in addition to the vast body of experience that has emerged from recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. By applying that theory to basic military training and doctrine and gaining knowledge of local conditions and the enemy, soldiers and officers can be quickly retrained.”

9 Daniel Byman, “Friends Like These,” *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 2, Fall 2006.

10 Paul Bracken, “Net Assessment: A Practical Guide,” *Parameters*, Spring 2006, pp. 90-100. [<http://www.carlisle.army.mil/usawc/parameters/06spring/bracken.pdf>].

paper, assesses how to bridge that gap—assuming the requisite political will, but accounting for limitations in capabilities. Specifically, this section of the paper details what the Pakistani military could do to conduct something approximating a textbook COIN campaign by looking at force ratios, force makeup, training, terrain, insurgent organization and practices, and tactical choices. The fifth section lays out key findings, and the sixth concludes with remarks on what these findings mean for the prospects of such a campaign.

Counterinsurgency is defined as “comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to simultaneously defeat and contain insurgency and address its root causes.”¹¹ The most recent U.S. COIN manual cites four main components to the approach—economics and development, information gathering, security, and a political strategy.¹² For the most part, this paper will limit its focus to the security issue and the acquisition of information. This analysis requires some assumptions about the economic and political components that will need to work with the security component, but it focuses primarily on the security component for three reasons:

- 1) As Byman implies, the military’s capacity is a necessary though not sufficient prerequisite for COIN operations.
- 2) The security component requires some basic capabilities that lend themselves to assessment and measurement, while economic and political capabilities are intangible, variable, and largely a function of will.
- 3) The lessons of Iraq and Afghanistan suggest that a basic level of security must at least slightly precede the economic and political stages of COIN, as embodied in the phrase “clear, hold, build.”¹³ ♦

11 U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide, U.S. Department of State Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, January 2009. [www.state.gov/t/pm/ppa/pmppt].

12 Ibid.

13 Two regional security experts concur with this writing, “... There can be no meaningful economic development or reassertion of traditional tribal forums without continuous, reliable security.” See Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, “No Sign Until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border,” *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Spring 2009, pp. 41-77.

Textbook Counterinsurgency

The goal of COIN, according to the U.S. government, is to achieve control by “build[ing] popular support for a government while marginalizing the insurgents: It is therefore fundamentally an armed political competition with the insurgents.”¹⁴ In a review of FM 3-24, Stephen Biddle tries to distill essential COIN tactics for achieving control into a few simple propositions.¹⁵ The first is a focus on a *political solution* rather than a military one. This requires emphasizing a “hearts and minds” campaign to win over the general population rather than a reliance on coercive violence. Security must be provided but also economic development and better governance. This second objective puts *population security* and the defense of civilians ahead of the targeting and destruction of enemy forces. It is called a “population-centric approach” rather than an “enemy-centric approach,”¹⁶ and it is more sensitive to civilian casualties than is conventional warfare.

A third component of COIN doctrine is the *force size* used for the average mission. Because daily missions are centered on protecting the local population by patrolling at the village and town level, the preferred force size is the small commando unit¹⁷ which can be dispersed throughout the population. This requires a large number of detachments and is a dramatic shift from traditional deployments at the battalion, brigade, or division level, in which soldiers remain in fortified compounds or bases separate from the local population.

The fourth component of COIN doctrine, which is closely linked to the third, is the promotion of *ground forces over airpower*. Airpower often has been the preferred military option, particularly of the U.S. military, which dominates the skies above 15,000 feet and has worked to develop precision-guided munitions that can target and decimate the enemy with minimal risk exposure.¹⁸ This preference

has been obvious in U.S. military engagements in both humanitarian missions (Iraq, 1991; Bosnia, 1992-1995; and Kosovo, 1999) and regime change missions (Afghanistan, 2001; Iraq, 2003). Airpower dependence also has increased steadily from 2004 to 2007 in U.S. dealings with the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan.¹⁹ Even ground forces that include armored or mechanized units capable of lobbing artillery from afar are much more contestable by lesser militaries and insurgents. The trade-off is between risk-exposure (measured in force vulnerability and lethality) and collateral damage: Smaller commando detachments are more vulnerable and less lethal but are much more discriminatory in their use of force. Ultimately, higher risk exposure of troops is necessary to the pursuit of three tactics essential to COIN operations: the acquisition of *human intelligence* from the local population to “clear” out insurgents, the use of *patrols* to “hold” cleared areas, and the enablement of *civilian provided development assistance* to “build” and win over the population.²⁰

Beyond these tactics, a successful COIN campaign requires certain “best practices,”²¹ including the unification of civilian and military structures; effective use of amnesty and rewards; construction and use of border security; and the development of local, perhaps indigenous, pacification capacities.²²

COIN tactics and best practices must be carefully considered and discretely applied, however. Although the COIN doctrine’s central role in the success of the U.S. “surge” in

14 U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide, 2009.

15 Biddle, “The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual,” June 2008.

16 U.S. Government Counterinsurgency Guide, 2009.

17 Biddle, “The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual,” June 2008. Biddle uses the term “commando detachments” because, although military units, they function much like a gendarmerie.

18 Barry R. Posen, “Command of the Commons: The Military Foundations of U.S. Hegemony,” *International Security*, Vol. 28, Summer 2003.

19 Anthony H. Cordesman, “U.S. Airpower in Iraq and Afghanistan: 2004-2007,” CSIS Report, Dec. 13, 2007. [http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/071213_oif-odef_airpower.pdf].

20 The dominant counterinsurgency approach—“clear-hold-build”—is described in Army Field Manual 3-24, p. 5-18.

21 A report prepared for the U.S. Defense Secretary by RAND drawing on the lessons of COIN from British, French, and U.S. experiences during the past 50 years offers several practices and techniques that have been proposed for the U.S. campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. Austin Long, *On ‘Other War’: Lessons From Five Decades of RAND Counterinsurgency Research*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2006.

22 Again, this departs from FM 3-24, which focuses on building a single national government security force, but the practices in Vietnam with the Regional Forces/Provincial Forces (RF/PF or “ruff-puffs”) and in Iraq with the Anbar Awakening suggest certain variants can be successful in reducing levels of violence.

Iraq has been much touted, the lessons learned from the decline in violence there, especially in the Anbar province, conflict with COIN doctrine almost as often as they support it. The U.S. Anbar operation strayed from traditional COIN doctrine by relying heavily on special operation forces (SOF) trained specifically for offensive operations, which employed lower force ratios than those prescribed by COIN. It also employed irregular forces, such as the Anbar Awakening and the Sons of Iraq, through the engagement of tribal groups, community organizations, and traditional networks. This approach ran counter to COIN's broader goal of centralizing power and securing a monopoly on legitimate violence within the national government.²³ Jon Lindsay writes, "In contrast to this expensive high-profile style of COIN, there is more discrete and sustainable style of COIN with more limited aims. Instead of investing heavily to build a functional democratic state, the alternative approach is to employ SOF to selectively influence various government or irregular groups to advance American interests or to manage dangerous externalities generated by civil conflict."

COIN doctrine also assumes an insurgency motivated by broad popular grievances and ideology rather than by local ones. But a misdiagnosis of the motives on the ground can result in a misdirected campaign based on national rather than local aspirations. Certainly, addressing the nationalist grievances of the Vietnamese or the Algerians required a broad effort, but Lindsay points out that civil war literature may be more applicable to Pakistan's tribal areas than insurgency literature. Civilian groupings are loose, motives for resistance are divergent, and rather than being won over passively, tribes often manipulate counterinsurgents to gain an edge in their own private conflicts.

In Anbar, the United States acquired local support basically by paying off tribal leaders and helping them to defeat their enemy, al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI). Ultimately, endogenous and feudal-like dynamics may be more important than national politics for the consolidation of local power and stability.²⁴ ■

23 Lindsay, "Commandos, Advisors, and Diplomats," February 2009.

24 Even a tribal-based strategy that worked well in Iraq may not be successful in Pakistan if assessments of the degeneration of tribal leadership and the rise of the clergy are correct. In this case, a co-option strategy might need to instead be based around the mullahs.

Pakistan's Current Approach to Counterinsurgency

Rising unrest in Pakistan's tribal areas began soon after the 2001 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Eight years ago, the remnants of the Taliban and al-Qaeda leadership were pushed up against the mountains of Tora Bora, but because of a shortage of forces²⁵ and an absence of coordination between the U.S. and Pakistani militaries,²⁶ the insurgents narrowly escaped, bribing local guides to lead them through the mountains and harbor them in the tribal areas.²⁷ Soon after their escape, the militants began reconstituting and consolidating their power in those areas. Pakistan had dealt with and largely supported the Taliban for many years, believing it could manage and contain the insurgents. However, a combination of U.S. pressure and assassination attempts on Pakistani leader Gen. Pervez Musharraf eventually propelled the Pakistani military to move against the militants.

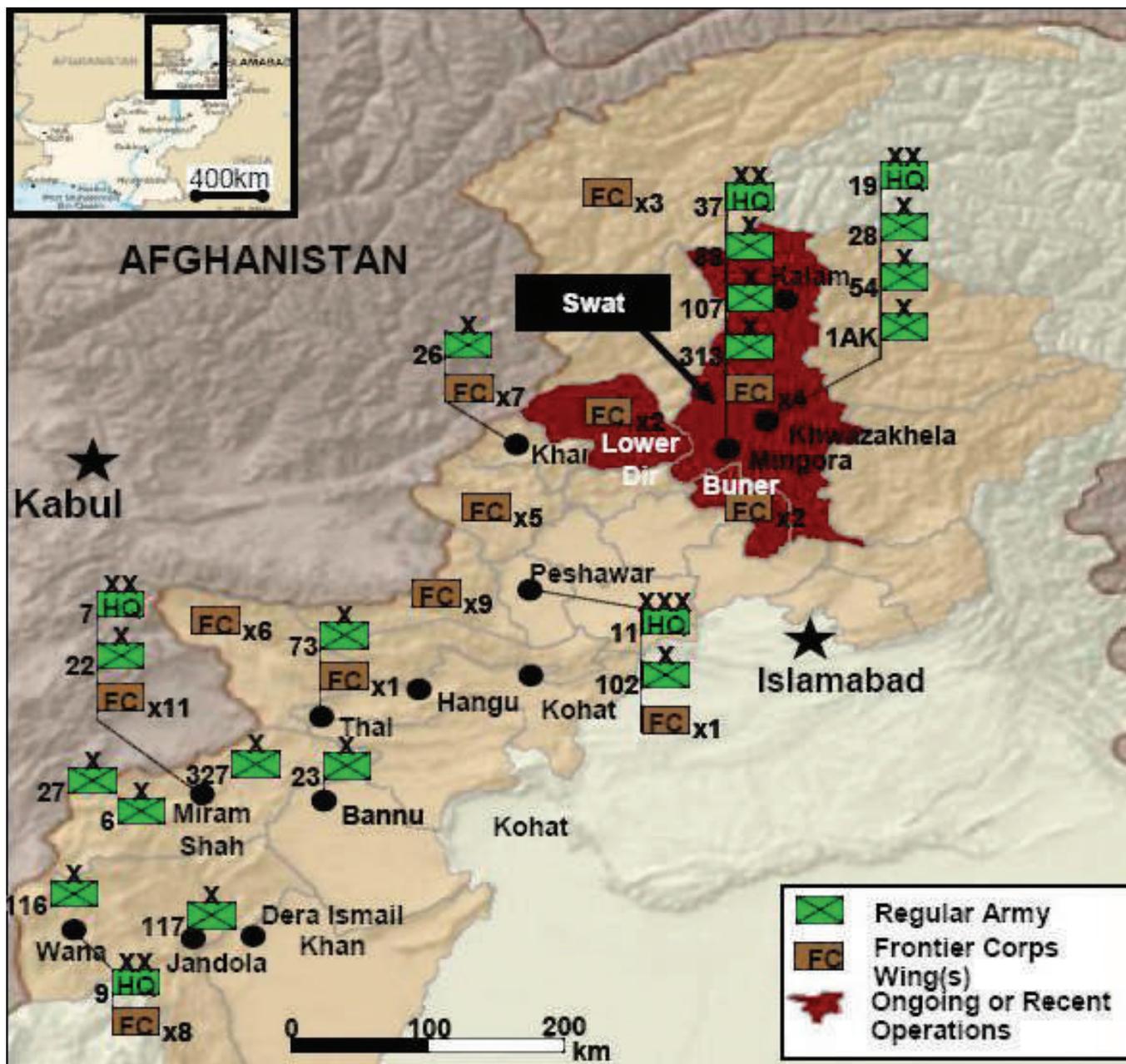
In spring 2004, a section of the Frontier Corps (FC), a regional paramilitary unit, was dispatched to South Waziristan. While attempting to cordon off and search a Taliban stronghold, one of its units was ambushed. The military responded by sending 8,000 troops in to take on 2,000 dug-in and heavily armed militants. Pakistan used a high-intensity, conventional offensive, deploying heavy artillery, helicopter gunships, and fighter bombers to blanket the area with firepower. The result was a disaster. Poor planning and a lack of intelligence led to a loss of about 200 men, numerous FC desertions, and 50,000 displaced locals, while largely failing to damage the militants' power or capa-

25 Campaign analysis concludes that more U.S. forces on the ground could have made difference. Peter Krause, "The Last Good Chance: A Reassessment of U.S. Operations at Tora Bora," *Security Studies*, Vol. 17, No. 4, October 2008, pp. 644-684.

26 Brian Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror: Pakistan's Army In Years of Turmoil*, New York: Skyhorse, 2009, pp. 187-88. Cloughley argues that Tora Bora was not coordinated with the Pakistan military, despite U.S. claims, so it could not seal the border. Upon hearing about the operation through the press, the army deployed 5,000 troops from the XI corps within three days, although they could hardly seal such a long border. The failure of strategies on both sides of the Afghan-Pakistan border over the past few years has been partly attributed to this continued lack of coordination.

27 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place: Meeting the Challenge of Militancy and Terror in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies Press, January 2009.

Figure 1. Pakistan Military Positions in NWFP and FATA



Source: General David H. Petraeus, "CENTCOM Update," Conference Presentation, Center for New American Security, June 11, 2009 [<http://www.cnas.org/files/multimedia/documents/Petraeus%20Slides.pdf>]

bilities.²⁸ Moreover, the Pashtun honor code (*Pashtunwali*) that calls for the deaths of kinsmen to be revenged made collateral damage uniquely problematic, compromising public support and creating more insurgents.²⁹ The gov-

28 This account is largely drawn from Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos: The United States and the Failure of Nation Building in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Central Asia*, New York: Penguin, 2008.

29 Nicholas Schmidle, *To Live or to Perish Forever*, Henry Holt,

ernment's decision to replace knowledgeable local political agents, who historically had been helpful in influencing the tribes, and to remove the population contributed to a lack of intelligence on the ground. Meanwhile, Taliban militants were lionized for seeming to have forced the military to sign a peace agreement.

2009, p. 50-51; Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

on 2,000 militants.³⁷ The initial Swat operation deployed 12,000 to 15,000 troops to battle 2,000 to 4,000 militants.³⁸ As the ranks of the insurgents in Swat swelled to 8,000,³⁹ Pakistani forces expanded to 40,000,⁴⁰ and the most recent force ratio is 4-5:1, still much lower than the 10:1 rule of thumb that Pakistani analyst Farrukh Saleem, who is the executive director of Islamabad's Center for Research and Security Studies, argues is necessary for armies fighting mobile insurgents employing asymmetric tactics.⁴¹

Pakistan's heavy-handed response in the tribal areas seems to be a response to mounting external pressures to "do something." Initially, the United States pressured Pakistan to conduct raiding and search-and-destroy missions⁴² similar to U.S. missions in Iraq from 2003 to 2005.⁴³ But while the United States modified its approach to focus on population security, Pakistan has not followed suit. As pressure mounted in spring 2009 for it to confront the militants who had broken the most recent peace accord and pressed deeper into Pakistan toward the capital of Islamabad, it was hardly surprising that the Pakistani military would launch another high-intensity, heavy-firepower campaign that would end up displacing 2.5 million residents.⁴⁴ A cursory

glance at the military's approach to counterinsurgency during the past 60 years, including in Baluchistan, East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), and Karachi, reveals few variations in its tactics, suggesting that it knows of no other way to pacify a population. Stephen Cohen points out this is partly doctrinal—the Pakistani military doesn't understand the concept of counterinsurgency and simply calls it "low-intensity conflict."⁴⁵

This cycling between raiding and masking and peace agreements while neglecting population security has failed to contain the Taliban within the FATA, prevent cross-border raids, or dissuade the militants from their expansionist goals into Pakistan. (The applause for recent operations in Swat and Waziristan to clear out the Taliban already has begun to turn to criticism as it has become clear that the Taliban only melted away to regroup and fight again.)⁴⁶ Pakistan's methods obviously are one reason for these failures, but its ambivalence also may be at fault: The Pakistani military sees its attempts to crack down on Taliban cross-border activity as the prime cause of Taliban expansionism into Pakistan.

Thus far, Pakistan's military has remained noncommittal about the West's goals, and, at times, it has tolerated or even encouraged some Taliban activity against NATO forces in Afghanistan, as long as it did not threaten Pakistan. But even if the military got serious about pursuing a COIN strategy to eliminate the Taliban insurgency in its tribal areas, it would need extensive support from the West and that likely would be conditional on it taking on the Taliban at the borders as well. The cost of an overt strategic alignment with the United States that would provide essential financial and operational support would be a pronounced shift in Pakistan's approach to the Taliban. If this paper assumes that the Pakistani military could summon the

37 Cloughley, *A History of the Pakistan Army: Wars and Insurrections*, Oxford University Press, 1999; Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 2008.

38 Opiel and Shah, "In Pakistan, Radio Amplifies Terror of Taliban," *New York Times*, Jan. 25, 2009.

39 Zahid Hussain and Matthew Rosenberg, "Pakistani Peace Deal Gives new Clout to Taliban Rebels," *Wall Street Journal*, April 14, 2009 [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123963706622913745.html].

40 Later that spring, the Pakistani military upped troop levels to 40,000 in Swat and modified its tactics to a house-to-house fight to clear out militants. Matthew Rosenberg, "Pakistan Army Faces Test Beyond Swat," *Wall Street Journal*, June 12, 2009. [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124474663366807163.html].

41 Mark Magnier, "Pakistan Faces Challenge of Cementing Victory Against Taliban," *Los Angeles Times*, June 22, 2009. [http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-pakistan-tactics22-2009jun22,0,3198717.story].

42 International Crisis Group, "Pakistan's Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants," *Asia Report*, No. 125, Dec. 11, 2006. [http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4568].

43 Rumbaugh, 2004; Long, "Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence: The U.S. Military and Counterinsurgency Doctrine, 1960-1970 and 2003-2006," *RAND Counterinsurgency Study*, Paper 6, 2008.

44 Andrew Buncombe, "In Pakistan, an Exodus That Is Beyond Biblical," *The Independent*, May 31, 2009. [http://www.inde-

pendent.co.uk/news/world/asia/in-pakistan-an-exodus-that-is-beyond-biblical-1693513.html].

45 Remarks by Cohen, "The FATA Challenge," Jamestown Foundation Conference, *Pakistan's Troubled Frontier: The Future of FATA and the NWFP*, Washington, D.C., April 15, 2009.

46 Jane Perlez and Pir Zubair Shah, "Taliban Losses Are No Sure Gain for Pakistanis," *New York Times*, June 28, 2009. [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/28/world/asia/28swat.html]; Rosenberg and Zahid Hussain, "Taliban Resume Attacks in Swat Valley," *Wall Street Journal*, July 27, 2009. [http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124860097152481663.html].

political will and adapt its doctrine to a COIN campaign, it also must assume that Pakistan must give up selective targeting and retention of only some Taliban and instead fully confront all militants—both the insurgents in Pakistan and the cross-border raiders.

Thus far, Pakistan's military has remained noncommittal about the West's goals, and, at times, it has tolerated or even encouraged some Taliban activity against NATO forces in Afghanistan, as long as it did not threaten Pakistan. But even if the military got serious about pursuing a COIN strategy to eliminate the Taliban insurgency in its tribal areas, it would need extensive support from the West and that likely would be conditional on it taking on the Taliban at the borders as well.

Other strategies to combat the Taliban that have been suggested and considered—"divide and rule," "crown the warlord," "decapitation," and extreme brutal repression—would have to be ruled out. To "divide and rule" the Taliban would be difficult, given its new umbrella organization, its cohesion regarding its core anti-U.S. mission (which will be explained further), and the fact that tribal leaders have learned from historical pacification tactics and have started to band together.⁴⁷ Moreover, attempts to manipulate local leadership and tribal structures could backfire.⁴⁸ The Pakistani military would need to address the broader grievances of social exclusion, the absence of governance, class resentments, economic underdevelopment, and resentment of the West without becoming entangled in the tribal and sectarian competition over territory, smuggling, and the drug trade. The deft navigation that this would require is not something for which Pakistan's military is known.

The "crown the warlord" approach, modeled on Russia's

47 Samir Syed, "Pakistan's New Offensive in South Waziristan," *CTC Sentinel*, Vol. 2, No. 7, July 2009.

48 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009.

approach to Chechnya, would help a single warlord consolidate power, then hold him responsible for stability. However, the usual motives of greed and autonomy may not be sufficient when other ideological drivers present, such as the Taliban's religious-nationalist goal of expelling the United States and NATO from the region. Another risk is that a warlord could become too powerful and uncontrollable.

The Pakistani military has developed "decapitation" strategies to use against some militant groups, but targeting Pakistani Taliban leadership probably would suffer the same fate as American efforts in Afghanistan—either outright failure because of poor intelligence or the rapid ascension of new Taliban commanders to continue the insurgency.⁴⁹ In fact, longtime Afghan scholar Gilles Dorronsoro argues that the international community unwittingly boosted Taliban cohesion by killing the Afghan Taliban commanders who were the most likely to defect.⁵⁰

The fourth option, brutal repression or a massacre along the lines of the Sudanese in Darfur or Nazi Germany in Poland, is unacceptable for a U.S. ally and an ostensibly democratic state such as Pakistan, which has a relatively free press, a powerful domestic audience, and a military with no stomach for a bloodbath.⁵¹

To have any hope of success with a COIN strategy, Pakistan probably would have to align explicitly with the United States and adopt U.S. objectives such as the curtailment of cross-border raids. Simultaneously, such an alignment

49 A "Night of the Long Knives" strategy was developed in the late 1990s under the Sharif government to decapitate leadership of sectarian groups such as Sipah-i-Sihaba, and John R. Schmidt suggests applying these to the Taliban. Schmidt, "The Unraveling of Pakistan," *Survival*, Vol. 51, No. 3, June-July, 2009, pp. 29-54. However, the Taliban probably has metastasized beyond government or military control, and the failure of such a strategy could further enflame the insurgency.

50 Gilles Dorronsoro, "The Taliban's Winning Strategy in Afghanistan," Carnegie Report, June 2009. [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/taliban_winning_strategy.pdf].

51 Paul Staniland suggests the military fears that this would threaten cohesion as it did in the 1971 Bangladeshi counterinsurgency and compromise its core goal of defending against Indian invasion. Staniland, "The Poisoned Chalice: Military Cohesion, Mass Contention, and Pakistan's Peculiar Regime Instability," Unpublished Draft Paper, February 2009.

would constrain any strategic or tactical options other than COIN because both the United States and the Taliban perceive their relationship with Pakistan to be mutually exclusive. This would leave Pakistan facing a catch-22: To increase its chances of COIN success, it would need U.S. alignment and support, but that alignment likely would increase the size and cohesion of the insurgency and foreclose on any other previously effective tactical option. ▀

A COIN Campaign for Pakistan

Given Pakistan's existing and potential capacities, a COIN campaign based on population security probably would rest on three key elements: the nature and strength of the insurgency based on its motives, leadership, forces, and capabilities; the human and physical terrain upon which the insurgency would be waged; and the force requirements and how the Pakistani military might arrive at them based on force type and numbers, sequencing and location of deployments, training times, and practices.

The Insurgency

Leadership and Cohesion

Although militant infiltration and the insurgency began as early as 2002, when al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders driven out of Afghanistan arrived in the tribal areas of Pakistan, the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was not set up until December 2007. This organization now unites some 20 indigenous militant groups⁵² and Taliban commanders throughout the FATA and the northern half of the NWFP.⁵³ Until his death in August 2009, allegedly in a CIA drone attack, Baitullah Mehsud generally was considered to be the head of the TTP, but alliances have continued to shift among tribal leaders, most of whom are committed to only a portion of the TTP's goals. For instance, two major TTP leaders, Hafiz Gul Bahadur of North Waziristan and Mullah Nazir of South Waziristan, are committed to fighting in Afghanistan but remained pro-Pakistan and ambivalent about Talibanizing the NWFP. At one point, they formed an alliance and moved to counterbalance and contain Baitullah Mehsud, also based in South Waziristan, before the three decided to form an

alliance in February 2009 in anticipation of Pakistan's upcoming campaign in Afghanistan.⁵⁴ Only weeks before Mehsud's death, Pakistani analyst Samir Syed predicted that if Mehsud were eliminated, attacks within Pakistan might abate but that cross-border raids on Afghanistan would continue.⁵⁵ Currently the secession of TTP leadership remains shrouded in uncertainty, but recent history has shown successors of assassinated Taliban commanders to be equally capable and zealous, allowing the Taliban to retain cohesion, particularly on its core anti-American mission.⁵⁶ Hakimullah Mehsud, who was announced as the new TTP leader in late August despite rumors of his death, seems to live up to this historical prediction and will likely lead the forces once loyal to Baitullah. Though the TTP seems to be distracted with internal divisions and power struggles,⁵⁷ the surest path to renewed cohesion is a Pakistani military assault or occupation.

Although the militants retain a decentralized command and control structure and regional networks still have varying agendas, the Taliban is not as fragmented or as vulnerable to buyoffs of individual commanders or to colonial divide-and-rule tactics as the groups that have historically governed the area. Thus far, cohesion has been maintained through strong personal ties forged by decades of warfare against occupiers. Recent reports, however, indicate that the Taliban is serious about establishing merit-based civilian governance, which would make it far more entrenched and difficult to co-opt.⁵⁸ While varied objectives remain—with the Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and Haqqani networks far more sanguine about relations with the Pakistani military and ISI than Mullah Omar's Afghan Taliban, and Mehsud's camp far more antagonistic toward Pakistan than TTP collaborator Nazir⁵⁹—the

52 Stephen P. Cohen and Nawaz, "Mastering Counterinsurgency: A Workshop Report," *Brookings Counterinsurgency and Pakistan Paper Series*, No. 3, July 7, 2009.

53 Rahimullah Yusufzai, "A Who's Who of the Insurgency in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province: Part One—North and South Waziristan," *Terrorism Monitor*, Sept. 22, 2008.

54 Sadia Sulaiman, Syed Adnan, Ali Shah Bukhari, "Hafiz Gul Bahadur: A Profile of the Leader of the North Waziristan Taliban," *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 7, Is. 9, April 10, 2009. [http://www.jamestown.org/uploads/media/TM_007_9_03.pdf].

55 Syed, July 2009.

56 Dorronsoro, June 2009.

57 Zahid Husain, "Divided Pakistani Taleban Name Hakimullah Mehsud as Their New Leader," *Times Online*, August 24, 2009 [<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6807237.ece>].

58 Antonio Giustozzi, "One or Many? The Issue of the Taliban's Unity and Disunity," *Pakistan Security Research Unit Brief*, No. 48, April 23, 2009.

59 Schmidle, *Washington Post*, June 14, 2009.

Table 1. Taliban Force Levels

Total Taliban Forces	
Pakistani Taliban (TTP) Forces	20,000-25,000
High End	100,000
Low End	10,000
Possible "Additional Assets"	
Punjabi Militants	2,000
Afghan Taliban	32,000-40,000
Uzbek Militants	1,000-2,000
al Qaeda's "Shadow Army"	8,000-12,000
Maximum Potential Forces	156,000
Reasonable Potential Forces	30,000-40,000

Size

Based on scattered reports and estimates, TTP militants probably number between 20,000 and 25,000.⁶⁶ Mehsud alone was reported to have had about 20,000 fighters, although it was unclear if this figure represented an overlap with other militant factions and the Afghan Taliban. After Pakistani engagements in Bajaur and Swat, new

66 10,000 reported by Yusufzai, July 2009, and Mukhtar A. Khan, "Pakistani Government Offensive in Swat Heading for the Taliban of Waziristan," *Terrorism Monitor*, Vol. 7, No. 17, June 18, 2009; Cordesman, "Sanctum FATA," *The National Interest*, May/June 2009. Even including the Hekmatyar and Haqqani networks, Cordesman estimate the Taliban forces do not add up to more than 20,000 "core fighters." However, this does not seem to account for the reportedly high recruitment rates in Swat prior to and after aggressive Pakistani military operations in the area. Also, if their interests are threatened by Pakistan's strategic realignment with the United States, it is conceivable that "part-time fighters" could commit full-time to the jihadist mission. More recent estimates place this number at about 25,000. Imtiaz Gul, "What the Death of Pakistan's Public Enemy No. 1 Means," *ForeignPolicy.com*, Aug. 7, 2009.

recruits appeared to swell the militant ranks.⁶⁷ Recent Pakistani reports have stated that TTP insurgents formerly under Mehsud's command could number as many as 50,000 in the FATA with another 50,000 who could be called in, although this figure probably includes conscripts and part-time militants who are not battle-hardened and do not possess the same dedication as the regulars.⁶⁸

67 Recent engagements by the Pakistani military suggest the militant numbers are growing with between 1,000 to "several thousand" in Bajaur, (including new fighters from Afghanistan) as well as 6,000 to 8,000 in Swat, nearly doubling between December 2008 and April 2009 after a temporary peace deal was signed. Figures on insurgent/militant estimates are drawn from reports from the Jamestown Foundation's *Terrorism Monitor*, the *Long War Journal*, Rashid's *Descent Into Chaos*, and news reports including the *Wall Street Journal* (April 14, 2009); *New York Times* (Nov. 11, 2008); and *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009; Yusufzai, July 2009; and the *Long War Journal*, June 18, 2009. [http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2009/06/us_strikes_target_mu.php].

68 "What We're Up Against in Waziristan," *The Daily Times*, June 2, 2009. [<http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default>].

Those figures are exceptionally high for an insurgency and probably inflated by double-counting al-Qaeda militants and Uzbek guerrillas who operate between Afghanistan and Pakistan.⁶⁹ Also included may be Taliban militants in Afghanistan, whom David Kilcullen estimates to number between 32,000 and 40,000, although only 25 percent are thought to be core Taliban.⁷⁰ Accepting Kilcullen's 25 percent calculation, hardcore militants under the Mehsud camp's command in the FATA and the NWFP would still number about 12,500. This is a large figure compared with recent insurgencies, such as the one in Kashmir, which had about 4,000 to 5,000 insurgents⁷¹ but took the Indian army more than 14 years and 600,000 troops to defeat. Even assuming the most optimistic real-time analysis that the TTP is in completely disarray would still not be sufficient reassurance. Hakimullah Mehsud alone commands an 8,000 man force and would not need to rely on others to continue a prolonged and violent insurgency.⁷²

asp?page=2009\06\02\story_2-6-2009_pg3_1]. Other estimates of the forces Mehsud commands include: 12,000 local and 4,000, Ali, July 9, 2009; 20,000, Joby Warrick, "Pakistan Taliban Chief May Have Been Killed," *Washington Post*, Aug. 7, 2009; and 30,000 to 40,000, Andrew Gray, "U.S. Commander Consults Pakistan on Anti-Taliban Campaign," *Reuters*, July 16, 2009. [http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSISL213431_CH_2400].

69 Uzbek militants in Pakistan who may have moved to Afghanistan are reported at about 1,000 to 2,000. John C.K. Daly, "Uzbek Fighters in Pakistan Reportedly Return to Afghanistan," *Terrorism Focus*, March 27, 2007. Shadow army figures are estimated at 8,000 to 12,000. Bill Roggio, "Terrorist Rally in Swat, March Through Region," *Long War Journal*, April 14, 2009. Both figures could be accounted for in estimates of TTP or Afghan Taliban. The problem of double counting plagues most estimates.

70 Based on David Kilcullen's estimates. Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp.48-49. Christia estimates a much lower figure of 5,000 to 15,000 but also might mean "core" fighters, Afghanistan presentation, MIT Violent Non-State Actors Working Group, May 6, 2009.

71 Matthew J. Van Wagenen, "An Analysis of the Indian Government's Counterinsurgency Campaign in Jammu and Kashmir," masters thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kans., 2004. [<http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA428962>]. Samay Ram, *Tackling Insurgency and Terrorism*, New Delhi, India: Manas Publications, 2002, p. 141.

72 Omer Farooq Khan, "Hakimullah Mehsud Alive, Insists Pak Taliban," *The Times of India*, September 4, 2009 [[Finally, recent support from Punjabi militants who are no longer engaged on the Kashmiri front adds 2,000 to the ranks of the Taliban, specifically the Mehsud camp. More important, the Punjabi militants add to the Taliban's reach by providing logistical support links \(i.e., the insurgency's "tail"\) to urban centers, madrassa networks, and state security, all of which allow militants to threaten Pakistani core cities such as Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad.⁷³](http://time-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

These numbers are clearly uncertain, affected by systemic problems of undercounting because of limits on intelligence and an ignorance of recruitment rates. Taliban infiltration also is not counted until it reveals itself and is engaged in battle. But even greater challenges to the fidelity of estimates are posed by the militants' mobility across state and district borders, a failure to factor in militant deaths during the military engagements of the past five years, and the tremendous variation in skill and commitment separating hardened guerrillas and foreign fighters from local insurgents who may have joined out of economic interests or because of Taliban coercion.⁷⁴ Kilcullen calls these local insurgents "accidental guerrillas."

Measuring the insurgency is further complicated by internal tribal and Taliban rivalries. For example, only a few months before Mehsud was killed, top-ranking Taliban commander Hafiz Gul was trying to build a rival pro-Pakistani alliance, and his forces could have been counted as allies rather than insurgents.⁷⁵ For now, though, these rivals have sublimated their differing missions to the TTP aim of supporting the Afghan Taliban insurgency and conducting cross-border raids against U.S. and NATO forces. The bottom line, no matter how the numbers are calculated, is that the Taliban insurgency in the FATA/NWFP is quite sizeable by historical standards and poses a formidable challenge to the Pakistani military.

Motives

Because COIN focuses on a political solution rather than simply killing off the enemy, an understanding of

sofindia.indiatimes.com/news/world/pakistan/Hakimullah-Mehsud-alive-insists-Pak-Taliban/articleshow/4973129.cms]

73 Hassan Abbas, "Pakistan Can Defy the Odds: How to Rescue a Failing State," Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, May 2009.

74 *New York Times*, April 16, 2009.

75 Yusufzai, *Terrorism Monitor*, Sept. 22, 2008.

insurgent motives is central to its objective. On its face, the insurgency looks like another ethnic-based conflict with religious elements, but the situation is more complex than that. The Taliban-led insurgency in the NWFP and the FATA mixes Pashtun nationalism with religious extremism as a unique socio-cultural driver, quite different from the self-determination motives of its Baluchi neighbors.⁷⁶ It is adept at manipulating historical political and class grievances and pent-up hostility (particularly among the young) over stifling tribal structures, high unemployment, and bad governance. Simple greed and opportunism also play a role. On top of this toxic blend lies layers of tribal violence and score-settling dating back to the British Raj. Even before foreign fighters infiltrated the FATA, these resentments had been exacerbated by decades of demographic pressure. A change in the sectarian balance produced conflicts over land⁷⁷ and anger about the lack of governance and of basic services, including water, electricity, and education.⁷⁸ These factors do not necessarily drive the insurgency, but they easily could become tangled in a counterinsurgency campaign, especially a careless one.

A power vacuum opened when the Taliban began its decapitation campaign, which has resulted in the killing of more than 600 *maliks* or tribal chiefs since 2007.⁷⁹ Pakistan also contributed to the creation of this vacuum by de-legitimizing tribal leadership (largely inadvertently) by cutting peace deals with the Taliban in North Waziristan and South Waziristan. New opportunists subsequently moved in.

The legitimacy of tribal structures has been a long-standing problem. Many *maliks* as well as the Frontier Crimes Regulation, the system of justice established by the British Raj, were long considered corrupt.⁸⁰ As *maliks* were eliminated by the Taliban or reduced to irrelevance, the vacuum

was filled by mullahs or clergy, who developed independent revenue streams and no longer needed the *maliks* for financial support. Initially, in the 1980s, the mullahs' money was funneled into the area for the mujahideen. Later, the money came from al-Qaeda in exchange for hiding and sheltering its members as well from smuggling, drug-running, and local protection rackets.⁸¹ As fleeing al-Qaeda and Taliban elements settled into the tribal belt after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, they too—along with young fighters celebrated for their parts in battles in Afghanistan and later against the Pakistani military—sought to fill the power vacuum by leading their own militias. Al-Qaeda declared a jihad against Musharraf in August 2007, and, in April 2009, an al-Qaeda leader called for a mass mobilization against the Pakistani government.⁸²

Economic motivations certainly play a role in the Taliban's success and recruitment. Initially, al-Qaeda was able to use money to induce locals to provide shelter and help its members navigate the terrain,⁸³ and the Taliban continues to pay for shelter even in the settled areas of the NWFP.⁸⁴ The insurgency also strengthens its ranks with paid part-time fighters⁸⁵ and tries to secure economic resources, such as diamond mines in Swat. It levies taxes and conscripts males into its ranks.⁸⁶

The TTP appears to be flush with cash coming from across the Afghan border. Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari has publicly stated, "Today the militants pay more than we can pay our soldiers, they're that rich."⁸⁷ In fact, Taliban fighters are reported to make between 12,000 Rupees and 15,000 Rupees a month,⁸⁸ which is substantially more than the NWFP police salaries of 11,000 Rupees a month. A 30 percent raise in police salaries to 16,000 Rupees a month recently sought to address this

76 This unique socio-ethno-cultural driver is the central premise of the paper by Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

77 Robert Kaplan, "The Lawless Frontier," *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 2000.

78 Ibid.

79 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 15.

80 Ziad Haider, "Mainstreaming Pakistan's Tribal Belt: A Human Rights and Security Imperative," Discussion paper #09-01, Belfer Center Student Paper Series, Harvard Kennedy School, January 2009.

81 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 15.

82 *Reuters*, April 30, 2009.

83 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 23.

84 *New York Times*, June 9, 2009.

85 Cordesman, "Sanctum FATA," May/June 2009.

86 *New York Times*, April 16, 2009.

87 *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009.

88 Lower figure from Hasan Faqeer, *North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Provincial Handbook: A Guide to the People and the Province*, Ed. Nick Dowling and Amy Frumin, IDS International Government Services, June, 2009, p. 49. Higher figure from Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 27.

difference.⁸⁹ But Pakistani army soldiers and FC troops are still reported to earn monthly salaries of 8,000 and 4,000 Rupees, respectively.⁹⁰

In addition to providing economic incentives, the Taliban has exploited class resentments in the Swat district. It recognized that a deep resentment of the feudal power structures had continued to fuel remnants of the regional Maoist party and used that frustration to its advantage in the take-over of Swat in spring 2009. The *New York Times* reported:

The Taliban seized control by pushing out about four dozen landlords who held the most power. To do so, Reuters, April 22, 2009. The militants organized peasants into armed gangs that became their shock troops, the residents, government officials and analysts said. The approach allowed the Taliban to offer economic spoils to people frustrated with lax and corrupt government even as the militants imposed a strict form of Islam through terror and intimidation.⁹¹

The Taliban promised, and to some extent delivered, effective governance—including arbitration of disputes, dispensation of Islamic “justice,” a crackdown on crime,⁹² and economic redistribution (probably in the form of land)—to motivate landless peasants to revolt. Ironically, despite the Taliban’s barbaric practices and notions of justice, it is providing at least a nominally more modern and equitable economic system than the one it is trying to replace. Vali Nasr, a senior adviser to American envoy Richard Holbrooke, has expressed concern that if fearful landowners refuse to return to Swat after the recent military offensive, property redistribution could create a support base for the Taliban that might spread to other provinces, such as Punjab.⁹³

89 Reuters, April 22, 2009.

90 Faqeer, *North West Frontier Province Provincial Handbook*, June 2009, p. 49.

91 *New York Times*, April 16, 2009.

92 Based on conversations with Nawaz, the “justice” issue seems to be the primary driver at least in the Swat Valley. Syed Saleem Shahzad confirms this and points out the pervasive problems of governance in Swat. Shahzad, “Swat Valley: Whose War Is This?” *Asia Times Online*, Jan. 31, 2009. [http://atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KA31Df01.html].

93 Perlez and Shah, “Landowners Still in Exile From Unstable Pakistan Area,” *New York Times*, July 28, 2009. [<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/28/world/asia/28swat.html>].

As this scenario illustrates, a COIN campaign must account for tribal structures and local resentments. These structural elements can be either a liability or they can be effectively leveraged. In the NWFP and the FATA, making tribal leaders partners in a COIN campaign, particularly as a conduit for economic aid and for arbitrating disputes, could arrest the decay of governing structures and stem the appeal of alternatives promised by the Taliban.⁹⁴ To be successful, however, tribal leadership would need to modify its hierarchical structure to reduce the profound disparities that have allowed and even fueled the insurgency. Although democracy has been put forth as an alternative to traditional tribal structure, because the political leadership and landed class are one and the same, it would be unlikely in the short or medium term.⁹⁵

Taliban Scope and Tactical Objectives

While some pro-Pakistani TTP leaders exclusively focuses on carrying out cross-border attacks against U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, others are committed to a more expansionist vision, including Talibanizing and spreading Sharia law in the NWFP and perhaps even deeper into Pakistan. In recent congressional testimony, Joshua White, a doctoral candidate at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies who has conducted extensive field-work in Pakistan, described the gradualist course that the Taliban probably would take; it bears a striking resemblance to the events of the past six months:

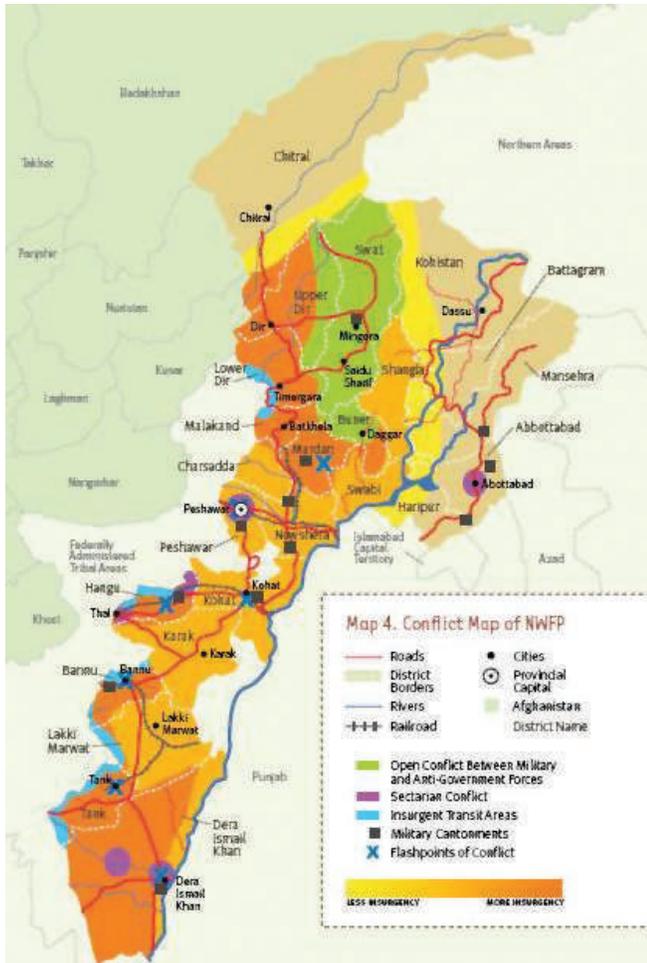
It remains unlikely that Islamists will “take over” the government, but it is easier to imagine scenarios in which the state is significantly weakened, and forced de facto to cede strategically meaningful portions of its territory to Islamist groups. ...While we should be wary of hyperbolic analyses—such as those which extrapolate the Taliban gains of the last four years to conclude that the entire North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) will soon slip out of the hands of the state—there is good reason to worry about the government’s capacity to deal with the rising tide of militancy within its

[nytimes.com/2009/07/28/world/asia/28swat.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/28/world/asia/28swat.html)].

94 Johnson and Mason call for rebuilding the tribal structures. See Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008

95 *New York Times*, April 16, 2009. “The Unraveling of Pakistan.” Schmidt argues that Pakistani feudal politics impedes any serious reforms.

Figure 5. NWFP Conflict Map

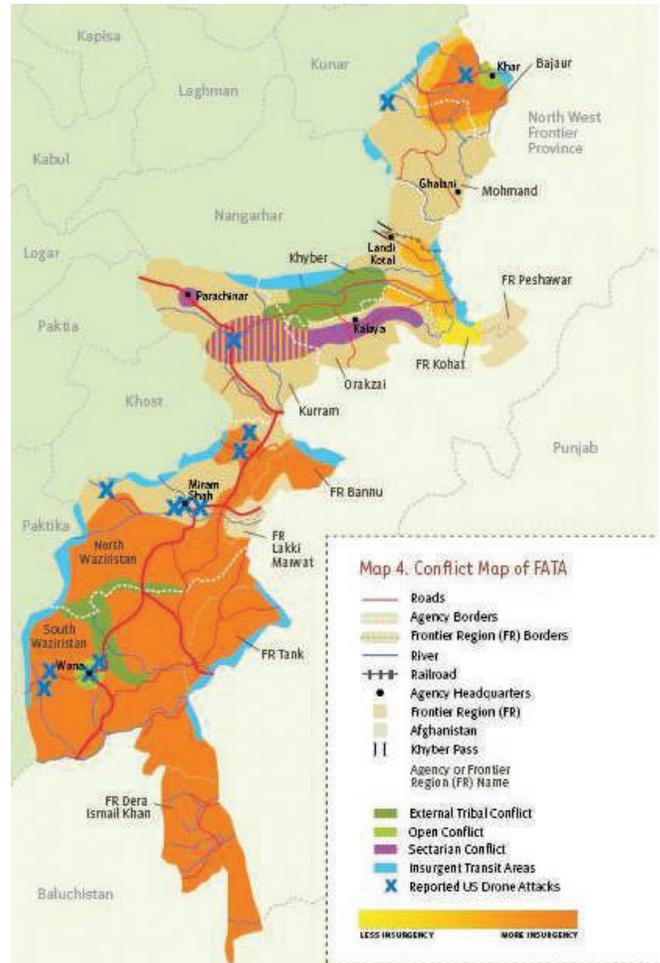


Source: Hasan Faqeer, *North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Provincial Handbook: A Guide to the People and the Province*, Ed. Nick Dowling and Amy Frumin, IDS International Government Services, June, 2009.

own borders. Realistically, the Taliban’s strategy in the Pakistani frontier is likely to be quite sophisticated: they will i) seek outright control of certain strategic areas of the FATA; ii) attempt to blend in to the population in areas like Swat, and take advantage of local discontent regarding the failure of government services; and iii) cultivate “sleeping cell” capabilities in urban environments such as Peshawar, slowly expanding their influence without confronting the state directly.⁹⁶

96 White, “Afghanistan and Pakistan: Understanding a Complex Threat Environment,” testimony before the U.S. House Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, March 4, 2009.

Figure 6. FATA Conflict Map



Source: Hasan Faqeer, *North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Provincial Handbook: A Guide to the People and the Province*, Ed. Nick Dowling and Amy Frumin, IDS International Government Services, June, 2009.

White’s assessment corresponds with other estimates of Taliban control and influence (see *BBC* and *Long War Journal* maps). Given these objectives and the current positions of the Taliban, a successful containment strategy would require a counterinsurgency campaign that extends to all of the NWFP and the FATA.

Capabilities

The Taliban has developed a reputation for being one of the savviest and most capable of modern insurgencies. Its fighters are organized in layers. Newer recruits, who have been forced or bribed to join, although not seasoned guerrillas, are reported to be well trained, well armed, and dedicated to expanding territorial control and instituting their form of Sharia law. In recent exchanges in the Swat district, Taliban combatants reportedly had sniper rifles,

Kalashnikovs, rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers, mortar tubes, night-vision goggles, and flak vests.⁹⁷ The amount of material and equipment they actually possess is difficult to assess, but so far no one has reported instances of Taliban underprepared for a fight. In fact, in most engagements in the FATA and the NWFP, it has been the Frontier Corps (FC), paramilitary fighters mostly drawn from the area, that has been poorly equipped⁹⁸ or caught offguard, requiring the army to respond with disproportional and poorly targeted force. Once civilians are cleared out and the militants dug in, the terrain favors the insurgents, and the military's small arms have had little or no effect.⁹⁹

The TTP also has been able to command heavy weapons, use communications systems to disguise its whereabouts, and home in on army radios to listen to its enemy's plans, presumably allowing it to ambush the Pakistani military routinely in Bajaur.¹⁰⁰ In Swat, insurgents frequently use walkie-talkies to communicate¹⁰¹ and use convoys of pickup trucks for rapid mobile transport;¹⁰² they also have been observed using pickups to patrol villages and cities, including the NWFP capital of Peshawar.¹⁰³

In describing the Pakistani Taliban's capabilities, military analyst Anthony Cordesman writes, "So far, the various factions have been armed largely with conventional small arms, antiaircraft guns and mortars, and a limited number of older man-portable surface-to-air weapons. They have not made extensive use of advanced improvised explosives with capabilities, antitank guided weapons or effective light surface-to-air weaponry." The TTP may not be able to bring down Pakistani aircraft now, but this capability

would seem to be within its grasp in the near term. While the range of its RPGs is limited to 500 meters, meaning insurgents could destroy a helicopter only if it were landing or hovering low, acquisition of even antiquated surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) or anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) could change this. In 2005, the Afghan Taliban reportedly acquired SAMs (SA-7s) with a range of 5,500 meters, but it did not know how to use them properly until trained by al-Qaeda.¹⁰⁴ It is unclear how many SAMs the insurgents now have. More recently, the Afghan Taliban used AAA (ZPU-1s and ZPU-2s smuggled in from abroad) in an attempt to down a British-manned Chinook.¹⁰⁵ Thus far, the TTP has not been reported to be using these weapons, and as long as these weapons are in limited circulation, the Taliban on both sides of the border will focus them on what it regards as the primary enemy: U.S. and NATO forces. However, given the cross-border cooperation exhibited by the Taliban, if Pakistan steps up military operations, the Afghan Taliban might supply these assets to the TTP.

Training

Foreign fighters generally are considered to be well trained and battle hardened from experiences in theaters such as Afghanistan. Local militants, recruited by financial inducements or threats, may be more varied in their skills. However, until recent campaigns, the extent to which insurgent tactics techniques and procedures have been diffused has been underestimated.¹⁰⁶ The Taliban reportedly has been distributing a field manual, "Military Teaching—for the Preparation of Mujahideen," in Afghanistan to train fighters in the art of ambush, spying, and insurgency against NATO forces. The manual also reportedly has been disseminated in Pakistan's tribal areas.¹⁰⁷ For instance, the Pakistani military discovered that militants in Bajaur had training CDs and pamphlets detailing the preparation, arming, and ranges of various arms.¹⁰⁸ Anecdotal evidence from the bordering Afghan theater indicates that local militants are trained in ambush although they still lack basic marksmanship.¹⁰⁹ While this skill deficit suggests a relative advantage for the Pakistani military, experience will reduce

97 *New York Times*, Jan. 25, 2009.

98 For instance, the FC complains that U.S.-provided night-vision goggles are obsolete and useless by moonlight. Arnaud de Borchgrave, "Pakistan Poses Greatest Threat to U.S.," *Newsmax*, Aug. 19, 2008. [http://www.upi.com/Emerging_Threats/2008/08/19/Commentary-From-Tbilisi-to-Taliban/UPI-19471219154761/2/].

99 Perlez and Shah, "Pakistanis Mired in Brutal Battle to Oust Taliban," *New York Times*, Nov. 11, 2008.

100 *Ibid.*

101 *The Guardian*, May 8, 2009. [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/08/pakistan-swat-air-strikes>].

102 *Long War Journal*, April 17, 2009.

103 *National Public Radio*, July 25, 2008.

104 Shahzad, *Asia Times*, March 1, 2007. [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/IC01Df03.html].

105 *The Daily Telegraph*, May 2, 2009.

106 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 201.

107 *The Daily Telegraph*, Aug. 16, 2007.

108 *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009.

109 *New York Times*, April 30, 2009.

the gap for the militants. Moreover, this gap, to be discussed in later sections, could pose a problem for Pakistan when similarly inexperienced local lashkars or militias and FC troops engage the TTP.

Tactics, Techniques and Procedures

TTP operatives have been trained to dig in and set up reinforced positions in villages. The thick, hardened walls and roofs typical of these positions often allow the operatives to evade detection and ambush approaching Pakistani troops, which limits the troops to inch-by-inch advances. Throughout the Bajaur campaign, insurgents would fire rounds to inflict damage, and, when their positions were detected and attacked by helicopter gunships, they would retreat to the safety of basements.¹¹⁰ In the campaign on Mingora in Swat, militants further planted hundreds of mines around the city in anticipation of major army assaults.¹¹¹

Generally, the terrain—whether it is what one *Al Jazeera* report described as a village’s “labyrinth of alleyways,” undeveloped countryside, or arable land planted in high-rising crops—makes the fight difficult for the Pakistani army, while the Taliban’s prepositioning and knowledge of the terrain gives its fighters a relative advantage.¹¹² These problems were pronounced when Pakistan tried to take villages in Bajaur that had been cleared at the command of the military, thereby creating 300,000 refugees.¹¹³ In contrast, in a COIN campaign focused on population security, local residents would be available to provide intelligence to mitigate the advantages of the TTP and even flush out insurgents who might be diffused through the population.¹¹⁴

The TTP also has made effective use of tunnels to avoid detection by imagery intelligence, provide fortification against Cobra helicopter gunships, and provide a safe route for tactical retreat. During the Pakistani Bajaur campaign of 2008 and 2009, the TTP was able to escape and regroup through a network of tunnels linking posi-

tions that clearly had been dug during a course of months or even years.¹¹⁵ Tunnels have long been a favored insurgent tactic, especially of the Viet Cong,¹¹⁶ and their use has been on the rise throughout the world, though mostly to navigate under borders.¹¹⁷

Generally, the terrain—whether it is what one *Al Jazeera* report described as a village’s “labyrinth of alleyways,” undeveloped countryside, or arable land planted in high-rising crops—makes the fight difficult for the Pakistani army, while the Taliban’s prepositioning and knowledge of the terrain gives fighters a relative advantage.

Suicide bombing is another powerful Taliban tactic, but new to Pakistan, where it had been underestimated by the military.¹¹⁸ Along with the infamous “night letters” intended to frighten a population into submission, suicide bombings also serve a psychological operations campaign.¹¹⁹ The first suicide bombing by Egyptians targeting the Egyptian Embassy was in 1995; the second bombing, in 2005, was part of Sunni-Shia feuds. In 2006, six bombings occurred, four of which were attacks on U.S. security targets, but in 2007 and 2008, the number shot up to more than 60, many of which were attacks on the Pakistani military and soft infrastructure. This 10-fold increase was likely attributable to retribution for the military’s operations in the FATA and the NWFP as well as its raid on the Red Mosque.¹²⁰

Because the diffusion of terrorist and insurgent tactics is

110 *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009.

111 *The Guardian*, May 8, 2009. [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/08/pakistan-swat-air-strikes>].

112 *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009.

113 *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009.

114 Rashid, “Pakistan’s Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy,” March 2009, p. 9.

115 *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009; *New York Times*, Nov. 11, 2008.

116 The Viet Cong loved tunnels. They had a huge complex near Saigon called Cu Chi. Tom Mangold and John Penycate, *The Tunnels of Cu Chi*, New York: Berkeley Books, 1986.

117 *Time*, May 2, 2009. [<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1895430,00.html>].

118 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 201.

119 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008

120 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 190; Abbas, “Pakistan Can Defy the Odds,” May 2009, p. 7.

well documented,¹²¹ it is no surprise that Taliban militants have begun increasing use of the roadside bombs and improvised explosive devices (IEDs)¹²² that have proved so devastating to the U.S. military in Iraq. Both weapons were used to halt the advance of U.S. troops in the recent Marine offensive in Afghanistan's Helmand province¹²³ and were part of a larger Taliban response to new COIN tactics.¹²⁴ COIN tactics are meant to disrupt insurgent activities, and the Taliban has displayed an astute reading of that intention and quickly adapted by employing disruptive tactics of its own. IEDs halt road construction and limit usage,¹²⁵ and the deliberate targeting of other visible signs of development combat the "hold" and "build" pillars of COIN.¹²⁶ These tactics likely will travel to Pakistan as its military seeks inroads into the NWFP and the FATA.

Governance

If the state's power is first defined by its legitimate monopoly on violence and on its ability to perform critical functions such as the ability to tax and conscript, then the Taliban in the tribal areas has not only challenged the state's authority, but appropriated it.¹²⁷ The TTP has begun to set itself up as a

parallel and legitimate authority by institutionalizing power, conducting policing, eliminating rival forces and militias, taxing the public, and demanding that one male member from each household join its ranks. Although this might be described as a protection racket, it is in fact the model that Charles Tilly describes for the formation of European states.¹²⁸ Even if the TTP does not directly seek to capture the Pakistani state, this dangerous alternative order in which the religious ideological wing of the organization might be able to achieve its goal of a quasi-religious regime, is very different from even the semi-autonomous tribal governance of the past half-century.

Terrain

Demographics

The Northwest region of Pakistan, which includes the FATA and the NWFP, has always been outside the Pakistani "core" and considered by the state to be mainly an invasion route. The sparsely populated region is riddled with signs of underdevelopment such as low urbanization, high illiteracy, few roads, and even fewer schools and hospitals. Although more "settled" and more formally incorporated into Pakistan, with higher development indicators and actual political representation, the NWFP also has been relatively peripheral to the politics and governance of Pakistan. Pashtuns make up roughly 74 percent of the NWFP and 99 percent of the FATA populations.¹²⁹ The Pashtuns in Pakistan are the second largest ethnic group (after the Punjabis), and nearly twice as many Pashtuns (28 million) live in Pakistan as in Afghanistan (13 million).¹³⁰

The FATA and the NWFP are known to be fiercely independent and highly resistant to efforts at pacification, nation building, and external rule, leading one British official to dub the Pashtuns "the perfect insurgents."¹³¹ The FATA, in particular, is home to tribal groups that have never been fully subdued by Pakistan or by any foreign occupier. The British tried to subdue the Waziristan tribes with military assaults in 1897, 1919, 1930, and 1936. They eventually turned to local

121 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

122 Tom Vanden Brook, "Roadside Bomb Attacks in Afghanistan Shatter Record," *USA Today*, July 9, 2009. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/military/2009-07-08-roadside-bombs_N.htm].

123 Ann Scott Tyson, "Taliban Insurgents Reemerge," *WashingtonPost.com's Battle for Helmand Blog*, July 15, 2009. [http://voices.washingtonpost.com/battle-for-helmand/2009/07/taliban_insurgents_reemerge.html?hpid=topnews].

124 A highly placed intelligence official has expressed concern about the rapidity of Taliban adaptation to U.S. COIN development efforts.

125 In his recent book, David Kilcullen argues road construction is the best thing the United States can concentrate upon in Afghanistan. Commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, had voiced similar sentiments in 2006.

126 For example, the Taliban has consistently impeded British efforts to build a dam Jason Strazius, "Taliban Hamper Dam Project in Afghanistan," *Associated Press*, April 25, 2008. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2008-04-25-3178885999_x.htm]. It also recently destroyed a "model village" built by Canadian forces. Omar El Akkad, "Taliban Attack Canadian 'Model Village,'" *The Globe and Mail*, July 14, 2009.

127 Michael T. Klare, "The Deadly Connection: Paramilitary Bands, Small Arms Diffusion and State Failure," Rotberg (ed.), *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, pp. 116-134.

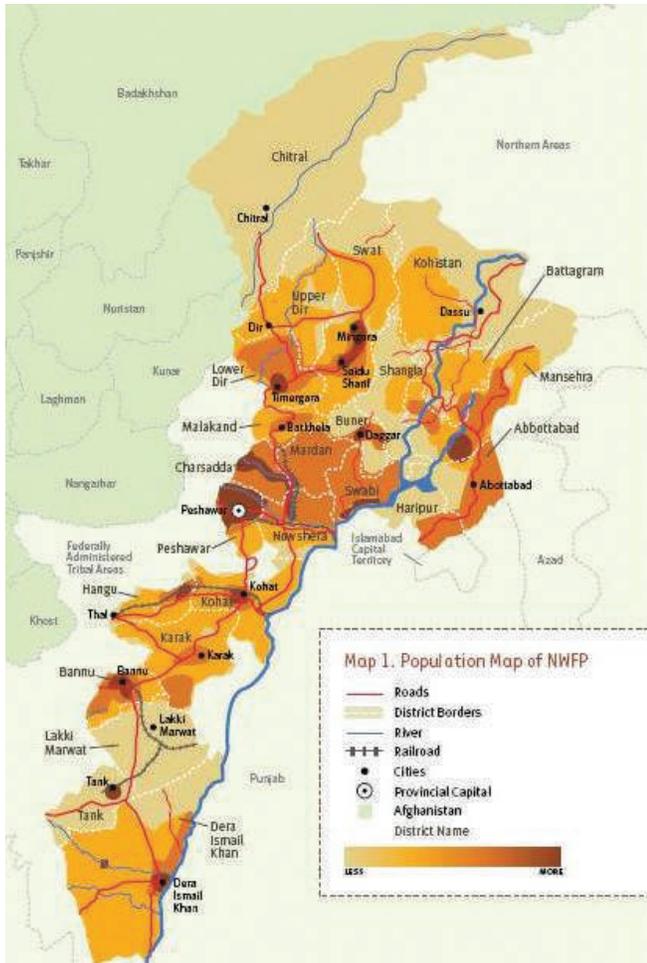
128 Charles Tilly, "War Making & State Making as Organized Crime" in Evans et al (eds), *Bringing the State Back In*, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

129 Based on 1998 Census, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

130 Liaquat Ali Khan, "A Civil War: Obama's Gift to Pakistan," *Counterpunch*, June 17, 2009. [<http://www.counterpunch.org/khano6172009.html>].

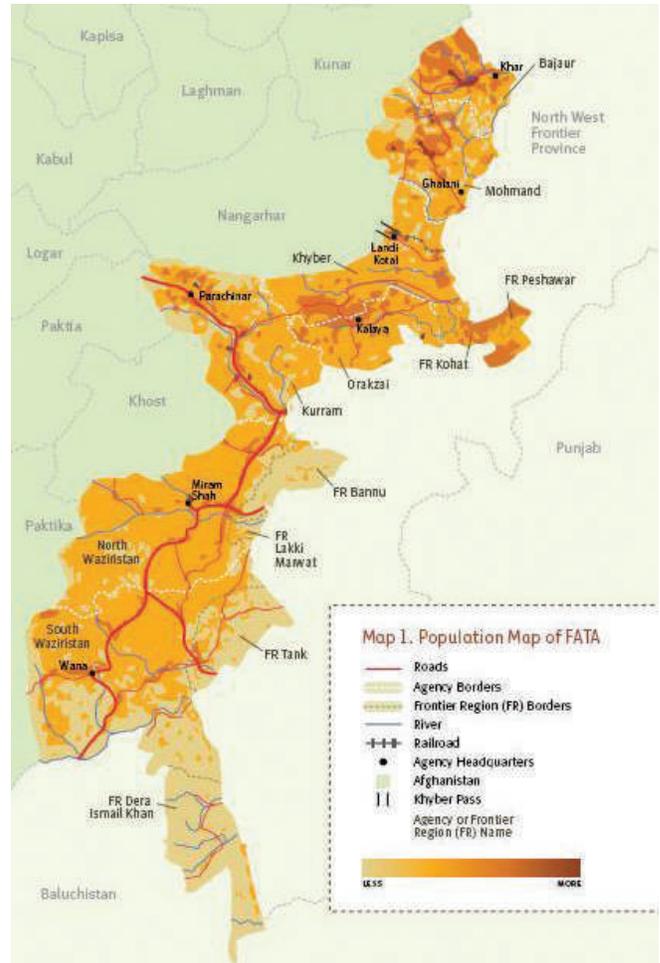
131 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008, p. 50.

Figure 7. NWFP Population Concentration Map



Source: Hasan Faqeer, *North West Frontier Province (NWFP) Provincial Handbook: A Guide to the People and the Province*, Ed. Nick Dowling and Amy Frumin, IDS International Government Services, June, 2009.

Figure 8. FATA Population Concentration Map



Source: Hasan Faqeer, *Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) Local Region Handbook: A Guide to the People and the Agencies*, Ed. Nick Dowling and Amy Frumin, IDS International Government Services, June, 2009.

forces to police the area¹³² and experimented with bribery and personal contacts in the form of political agents. They further attempted to exploit tribal customs and Islam as an ethical force and even resorted to the extremely harsh Frontier Crimes Regulation which remained in place even after the British withdrawal from the Indian subcontinent in 1947.¹³³ The Pakistani military's recent efforts at peace deals and cease-fires have stemmed largely from its five-year failure to subdue these same groups. Undoubtedly, any effort at pacification or counterinsurgency, even a population-centric approach, will encounter some hostility and resistance,

132 Kashif Saeed Khan and Munir Ahmed Syed, "Conflict Transformation and Development in Pakistan's North Western Territories," *Pakistan Security Research Unit Brief*, No. 33, May 24, 2008.

133 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 186.

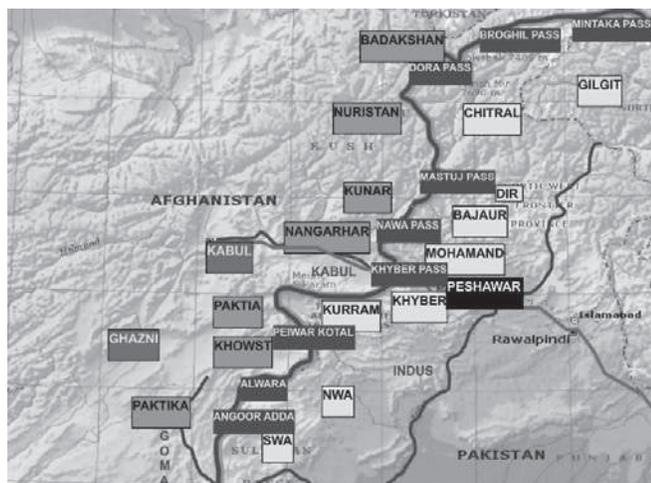
necessitating a higher number of Pashtun regular or irregular forces, especially in the FATA, and perhaps even higher than recommended COIN force ratios.¹³⁴

Topography

The FATA and NWFP are situated on the Afghan-Pakistan border, which is delineated by the Hindu Kush mountains in the north, a sub-range of the Himalayas that is nearly impossible to traverse. A ridgeline basically forms the border of Dir, Bajaur Agency and the Mohmand Agency and falls off at the Khyber Pass. South of this, the border

134 Nawaz has suggested ethnically mixed battalions such as 50 percent Pashtun and 50 percent Punjabi in order to allow more battalions deployed in the theater to relate to and communicate with the host population.

Figure 9. Northern Portion of Afghanistan-Pakistan Border



Source: Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "No Sign Until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border," *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Spring 2009, pp. 41-77.

follows the Safed Koh range, which has altitudes ranging from 1,500 meters to 5,000 meters. According to a report by the global intelligence firm Stratfor Global Intelligence,¹³⁵ "Though still mountainous, this area is rife with passes and trails used for infiltration in both directions—and particularly for moving supplies and fighters west into Afghanistan."¹³⁶

Cracking down on cross-border raids has been and will continue to be difficult, given that the region's many infiltration routes probably would be impossible to seal even with 1,000 posts and 60,000 troops.¹³⁷ The border stretches 1,640 miles and is riddled with over 20 "frequented" border crossings and over 300 "unfrequented" (illegal but unmanned) crossings.¹³⁸ While most accounts of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border blame Pakistan for pro-

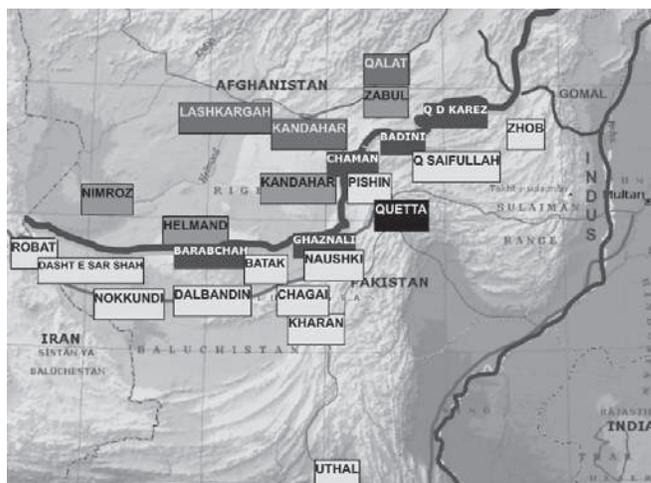
135 Stratfor is a global intelligence company that is considered fairly reputable on political risk analysis and is subscribed to by media outlets, corporations and government agencies. The fact that it has been around for more than a decade (since 1996) suggests that its assessments have found a market.

136 "Afghanistan, Pakistan: The Battlespace of the Border," Stratfor Analysis, Oct. 14, 2008.

137 Border estimates by Nawaz at Jamestown Foundation Conference, April 15, 2009; de Borchgrave, "Pakistan Poses Greatest Threat to U.S.," Aug. 19, 2008.

138 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

Figure 10. Southern Portion of Afghanistan-Pakistan Border



Source: Thomas H. Johnson and M. Chris Mason, "No Sign Until the Burst of Fire: Understanding the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border," *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 4, Spring 2009, pp. 41-77.

viding a safe haven for fighters and a source of manpower for the Afghan Taliban insurgency, reverse infiltration also fuels the Pakistani Taliban insurgency. Supply routes from Afghanistan into Pakistan have been the primary source of money, weapons, equipment, and, occasionally, a surge of troops. Insurgents, using the Afghan side of the border as a safe haven, have launched raids into Pakistan against the military.¹³⁹ Some senior Pakistani military officials have hoped, apparently to little avail, that evidence of this reverse infiltration would point up the difficulties in securing both sides of the border and silence critics who have exclusively faulted Pakistan for weak border control.¹⁴⁰

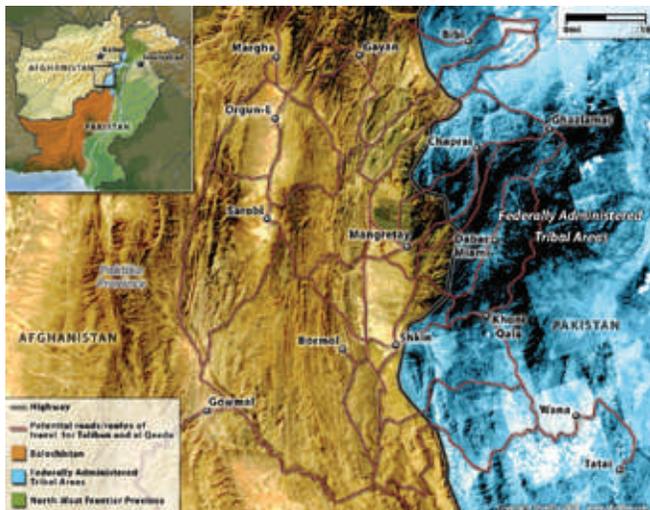
While the FATA is mostly situated in mountainous terrain "broken by small basins or valleys, dotted with settlements and agricultural fields,"¹⁴¹ the NWFP, situated between the mountains and the fertile Indus valley, exhibits varied topography, ranging from its northern hilly regions, which have been likened to Switzerland, to green plains farther east, to a rocky south. According to James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin's comprehensive study of ethnic conflict and insurgency, terrain type is significant in predicting

139 Oppel and Shah, "Unusual Coordination in Taliban Attack on Pakistani Soldiers," *New York Times*, Jan. 12, 2009. [<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/12/world/asia/12iht-taliban.1.19276479.html>].

140 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 203.

141 FATA government Web site [<http://fata.gov.pk/>].

Figure 11. Patika-Waziristan Border Corridor



Source: Stratfor Global Intelligence

insurgency, and rough, mountainous terrain better known and more effectively used by militants hampers an effective state response.¹⁴²

Size

The amount of terrain can be as significant as its type. Smaller areas generally are easier to control than larger ones because they provide fewer safe havens and can be more easily blanketed by security forces. The British were successful in Malaya with a 20:1,000 troop-to-population ratio in an area of about 134,000 square kilometers, as well as in Northern Ireland, which has an area of 14,000 kilometers. However, the French could not control Algeria, a country of 2.4 million square kilometers, with a ratio higher than 20:1,000.

At 27,000 square kilometers and 75,000 square kilometers, respectively, the FATA and the NWFP are smaller than some regions undergoing counterinsurgency campaigns, such as Iraq (438,000 square kilometers) and Afghanistan (648,000 square kilometers). However, Iraq is much more densely populated, and 67 percent of its population is centered in urban areas.¹⁴³ The people in the FATA and the NWFP, on the other hand, much like those in Afghanistan, are highly dispersed. Only 3 percent of the FATA popula-

tion and 18 percent of the NWFP population live in urban areas.¹⁴⁴ The dense urban population of Iraq plus the use of sophisticated technology may have allowed the United States to skimp on troop numbers and still remain in the fight. At the height of the surge, the U.S. troop-to-population ratio in Iraq was no higher than 18:1,000 for all security forces.¹⁴⁵ The dispersed population in the territory that Pakistan seeks to control, however, makes a higher ratio a necessity.

Weather

Weather also can constrain battle space. A Stratfor report states:

Winter arrives early in the extremely high altitudes of the Hindu Kush and Safed Koh. When the snows come, many of the high mountain passes become impassable, causing a noticeable decline in combat activity. With the spring thaw, heavy snow melt in the mountains results in flooding, mudslides and muddy or washed-out roads and paths, also limiting the level of combat. The combat season, then, for much of the border area traditionally runs from late March through October.¹⁴⁶

Stratfor suggests that the Pakistani military should exploit the winter months to squeeze the Taliban, which depends heavily on resupply routes from across the border in Afghanistan.¹⁴⁷ If effective population security under COIN initiatives began to erode the Taliban's local support, and external support was cut off by climate conditions and terrain, the Pakistani military might acquire a significant advantage. Even if the Taliban tried to keep supplies coming in from across the border, the climate would close off many infiltration points and channel traffic towards more navigable and predictable routes that could be better guarded, patrolled, and interdicted.

Logistics and Transportation

In a November 2006 interview, Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, then commander of combined forces in Afghanistan,

142 James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 97, No. 1, February 2003.

143 CIA World Factbook, 2008.

144 Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

145 Lt. Colonel (Ret.) John Nagl, "Lessons From Iraq for Afghanistan and Beyond," MIT Security Studies Program, Wednesday Seminar Series, Oct. 22, 2008.

146 "Afghanistan, Pakistan: The Battlespace of the Border," Stratfor Analysis, Oct. 14, 2008.

147 Ibid.

Table 2. Kilometers of Road in NWFP and FATA (as of 2006-07)

	Pakistan	NWFP	Percentage Share of NWFP	FATA	FATA as Percentage Share of Pakistan
Total	261,821	15,395	5.88	5,810	2.22
High Type	172,891	11,466	6.63	3,663	2.12
Low Type	88,930	3,929	4.42	2,147	2.41
Road per Square Kilometer of Area	0.33	0.21	--	0.21	--

Source: NWFP Bureau of Statistics

stated, “Wherever the roads end, that’s where the Taliban begins.”¹⁴⁸ This usually has been interpreted as a call for development and infrastructure in Afghanistan, and that is partially correct but incomplete. The general also was referring to the difficulty of military mobility in mountainous terrain, particularly in the Pashtun-dominated areas of southern Afghanistan. The same problems persist in the Pakistani NWFP and FATA, where sparse road networks—at least a third of the region’s roads are unpaved—combined with a diffused population severely limit the ability of the Pakistani military to deploy and supply troops for a counterinsurgency.¹⁴⁹ This is abetted by the fact that, constitutionally, the Pakistani central government has no legal jurisdiction in the FATA beyond 100 meters to the left or right of paved roads.¹⁵⁰

Stratfor notes that the Pakistani troops in the FATA and the NWFP regions “occupy small, scattered and isolated outposts attempting to cover hundreds of miles of rugged border terrain. They have little expectation of reinforcement

and their own supply lines either are directly controlled by Taliban loyalists and foreign jihadists or are contingent on the goodwill of the tribal leaders in the territory the supply lines pass through—tribes that are struggling to balance the demands of Islamabad and the Taliban.”¹⁵¹ This situation makes COIN operations especially challenging because they depend on small, vulnerable units being dispersed among the populace. To challenge the foothold of the TTP more seriously, the Pakistan military would have to secure the main road networks and supply lines, which could add to troop requirements and detract from primary COIN operation. Pakistan’s military also would need to build defensible camps or bases inside the territory from which to plan, stage, and resupply operations. It generally has attempted to reduce logistics and the number of support personnel to free up manpower,¹⁵² but James T. Quinlivan argues that the more rustic the environment for a stability operation, the larger the logistical tail needed for operational success.¹⁵³

Air Support

Another way to deal with tactical mobility—including resupply, troop transport, and close air support—is with helicopters.¹⁵⁴ The Pakistani military’s helicopter fleet is

148 *National Public Radio*, Nov. 20, 2006.

149 The NWFP contains about 5.8 percent of the kilometrage of roads in Pakistan, while the FATA contains 2.2 percent. The road density in FATA and NWFP is .21 kilometers per square kilometer. By contrast, Pakistan as a whole has .33 kilometers per square kilometer. Although Iraq’s road density was much lower (.1 kilometer per square kilometer), this was substantially offset by its dense population. Moreover, as of 1999, 84 percent of Iraqi roads were paved while as of 2004, the figure was only 65 percent for Pakistan. the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics and the International Road Federation, *World Road Statistics*, 2006.

150 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

151 “Afghanistan, Pakistan: The Battlespace of the Border,” Stratfor Intelligence, 2008.

152 *Jane’s World Armies*, 2008.

153 James T. Quinlivan, “Force Requirements in Stability Operations,” *Parameters*, Vol. 25, Winter 1995-1996, pp. 59-69.

154 Although fighter aircraft have been used in some Pakistani military engagements with the Taliban, they are generally less effective as their lethal imprecision can create more casualties

said to include 26 to 51 Bell-412 utility helicopters, 26 to 34 Cobra attack helicopters, and 23 to 37 Mi-8/Mi-17s for support and troop transport.¹⁵⁵ Most of the Bell-412s and Cobras were given to Pakistan by the United States in the past three years,¹⁵⁶ and U.S. contractors have been dispatched to help with upgrades and technical assistance.¹⁵⁷ (The mission-capable state of Pakistan's other helicopters is unclear.) At least eight helicopters have been equipped for night-flying,¹⁵⁸ which is essential to 24-hour operations and the deterrence of insurgent activity, but a full-scale COIN campaign would need perhaps four to six times that many Cobras in addition to ground support for firefights with the Taliban.¹⁵⁹

As NATO forces have discovered in Afghanistan, helicopters are critical to resupply and troop transport, and they provide suppressive fire and close support for troops engaged with the Taliban, particularly where difficult terrain and widely dispersed populations make rapid ground transportation difficult or impossible. For example, the United States recently dispatched an airborne brigade with 120 helicopters—possibly more helicopters than the entire Pakistani fleet—to the Afghan province of Wardak, which is roughly the size of Cyprus.¹⁶⁰ Pakistan likewise would need a dramatic increase in its helicopter fleet to cover terrain throughout the NWFP and the FATA.¹⁶¹

Additionally, Pakistan will face the same problems with weather and high altitudes that the U.S. military has faced

and corresponding hostility.

155 Lower estimates from IISS Military Balance; higher estimates from *Jane's World Armies*.

156 Global Security.org, U.S. Embassy [<http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/pr-102207.html>], *Jane's World Armies*, 2008.

157 *Jane's World Armies*, 2008.

158 *Reuters*, Feb. 2, 2007. [<http://www.reuters.com/article/politicsNews/idUSISL15917120070202>].

159 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 34; Husain Haqqani, "How Pakistan is Countering the Taliban," *Wall Street Journal*, April 30, 2009. However, the recent request by Gen. Kayani for Apache helicopters is unnecessary and likely overkill for engaging the Taliban as the helicopter are designed for anti-armor/anti-tank missions. PBS. [<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/gulf/weapons/apache.html>].

160 Ullrich Fichtner, "The West Stares Into the Abyss," *Der Spiegel Online*, March 20, 2009. [<http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,614555-2,00.html>].

161 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 34.

in Afghanistan. Because the Bell-412s have problems with altitude and desert heat, the Pakistani military might need to look at the hardier Mi-17s to bolster its fleet, especially as it already possesses the operational know-how, maintenance capabilities and pilot training for that airframe.¹⁶² The Mi-17s are not only fairly cheap and easy to maintain, they can rapidly transport as many as 24 troops to a contingency.¹⁶³ Weapons also can be mounted on the Mi-17s, or the Mi-17s can travel with Cobra escorts. The United States has acquired this airframe for both the Afghan and Iraqi militaries¹⁶⁴ and recently provided four more Mi-17s to Pakistan.¹⁶⁵ Massive COIN operations, however, would require many more helicopters.

Additionally, Pakistan will face the same problems with weather and high altitudes that the U.S. military has faced in Afghanistan. Because the Bell-412s have problems with altitude and desert heat, the Pakistani military might need to look at the hardier Mi-17s to bolster its fleet.

The Pakistani military likely also would want to buy the CH-47 Chinook, which can transport as many as 44 troops and is even more durable in higher altitudes and hot climates than the Mi-17. (A recent crash of a Pakistani Mi-17 might have been due to weather.¹⁶⁶) In comparison to single-rotor helicopters, which have a hard time gaining traction in thinner air, the CH-47's dual-rotor system generates more

162 Since initial drafts of this report, the United States has provided four more Mi-17s. "United States Provides Mi-17 Cargo Helicopters to Pakistan Military," U.S. Embassy Islamabad Press Release, June 10, 2009. [<http://islamabad.usembassy.gov/pr-09061001.html>].

163 Global Security.org.

164 Based on discussions with Erik Lin-Greenberg and Lt. Col. Lawrence W. McLaughlin, USAF, regarding Pakistan's potential acquisitions and use of helicopters in a hypothetical COIN campaign.

165 Schmidle, June 14, 2009; Gen. David Petraeus, keynote speech, CNAS conference, June 11, 2009.

166 "Deadly Military Crash in Pakistan," BBC News, July 3, 2009. "Helicopter Crash Kills 41 Security Personnel," *Dawn*, July 4, 2009.

lift and is more power efficient. U.S.-operated Chinooks were essential to the support and delivery of Pakistani aid to earthquake victims in the NWFP in December 2005.¹⁶⁷ Because the Chinook does not possess new or sensitive technology, it does not need to be closely guarded by the United States. However, the use of a new airframe would require new training, maintenance, and supply lines for parts, which would make the Pakistan's military campaign even more visibly reliant on the United States.¹⁶⁸

More Cobra gunships would allow Pakistan to undertake new missions, such as route reconnaissance to scan access roads for potential hostility or ambushes. The Cobras also could escort convoys and provide aerial firepower support, neutralizing the high ground of the ambushing insurgents and possibly deterring them from such tactics.

Nevertheless, more Cobra gunships would allow Pakistan to undertake new missions, such as route reconnaissance to scan access roads for potential hostility or ambushes. The Cobras also could escort convoys and provide aerial firepower support, neutralizing the high ground of the ambushing insurgents and possibly deterring them from such tactics. Because the Cobras need refueling every three to four hours, however, makeshift bases would be needed at defensible positions throughout the NWFP. These bases would not only be used for fueling, munitions, and maintenance, they would afford rapid helicopter-lift and support to a wider spectrum of the NWFP and the FATA.¹⁶⁹

Securing Critical Assets

In addition to securing the population, forces would need to be deployed to safeguard critical infrastructure and assets. Road networks would need protection against Taliban ambushes to ensure the secure transport of forces and

supplies, but forces positioned to protect roads could serve a dual role. Many major towns and capitals in the FATA are situated along road networks (see maps), and troops protecting roads also could defend not only the inhabitants of these towns, but key infrastructure, such as communications lines, water towers, and electricity plants. Also needing protection would be water distribution networks and tanks and electricity generators, which are important assets in the frontier areas.¹⁷⁰ They have been targeted by the Taliban,¹⁷¹ along with electricity grids¹⁷² and tunnels.¹⁷³ The NWFP's Tarbela Dam, which has the capacity to generate approximately 3,500 megawatts of electricity and provides 30 percent of irrigation water during the dry season, is a particularly tempting target.¹⁷⁴ Although it may not be feasible initially, because the Taliban has targeted schools, particularly girls' schools, schools eventually would require an added layer of security to continue functioning.¹⁷⁵

Important strategic positions, such as the Ambela heights in Buner district, which overlook most of the province, also would need to be occupied by small detachments.¹⁷⁶ U.S. forces deployed in Afghan villages have learned to abide by local cultural and social mores, and Pakistani troops could learn to do the same. Instead of deploying directly inside villages, though, as was done in Iraq and in Vietnam, they might need to deploy nearby, perhaps on ground overlooking the villages and lines of communication.¹⁷⁷ Other larger population clusters in need of protection include Parinchar in the Kurram Agency with a population of 300,000,¹⁷⁸ Miran Shah in North Waziristan with about 60,000

170 Robert Kaplan, 2000.

171 Bashirullah Khan, "Gunmen Kill Two Men in Attack on Truck Transporting Water to Pakistani Military," *Associated Press Worldstream*, April 10, 2006.

172 GeoTV, May 4, 2009. [<http://www.geotv/5-4-2009/41333.htm>].

173 *Pakistan Tribune*, April 2, 2009 [<http://www.paktribune.com/news/index.php?id=213205>].

174 [http://www.pakistanpaedia.com/mega/tarbela_dam.html].

175 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 201, reports that by mid-January 2009, 181 schools in Swat had been destroyed by the Taliban.

176 NDTV, April 30, 2009. [http://www.ndtv.com/news/world/pakistan_denies_moving_troops_from_indian_border.php].

177 Gen. Petraeus, CNAS conference, June 11, 2009. [http://www.cnas.org/files/multimedia/documents/Petraeus_transcript.pdf].

178 Robert Kaplan, 2000.

167 Bret Stephens, "Chinook Diplomacy: The U.S. Military Wins Hearts and Minds in Pakistan," *Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 22, 2005.

168 Helicopter options based on discussions with McLaughlin.

169 Ibid.

people,¹⁷⁹ and Daggar in Buner district, home to 25,000.¹⁸⁰ This list is hardly comprehensive, but it provides a sense of the sites, positions, and infrastructure that would need to be defended to provide real population security. Additionally, engineering teams—perhaps civilian, but more likely from the army—would be needed throughout the region to assist in restoring insurgent-damaged infrastructure.

Pakistan's Forces

Prescribed Force Ratios

In order to conduct population security, COIN doctrine requires a standard force ratio of “20 to 25 counterinsurgents for every 1,000 residents.”¹⁸¹ This ratio derives from Quinlivan’s “Force Requirements in Stability Operations,” which studies historical cases to determine the levels of forces necessary to conduct two operations critical to a counterinsurgency’s success: gathering intelligence and separating the populace from the insurgents.¹⁸² But Krause points out methodological problems with Quinlivan’s calculations, specifically his inconsistency in counting police as part of security forces and the fact that only two of the cases he cites support the need for such high troop-to-populace ratios. Some of Quinlivan’s cases show success despite ratios in the single digits, while others with ratios higher than 20:1,000 were failures.¹⁸³ The success of lower troop ratios came in cases with peaceful populations (e.g., the police-to-population ratio in the United States is 2.3:1,000) or after opposition has been crushed (e.g., the ratio of U.S. occupation forces to population in Germany was 2.2:1,000, and the ratio of U.N. forces in Cambodia after Vietnam overthrew the Khmer Rouge regime was 2.2:1,000). Forces perceived to be colonial occupiers have needed higher ratios to control more hostile environments, such as Britain’s counterinsurgency efforts in Malaysia and Northern Ireland.

179 Ghulam Hasnain, “Musharraf Risks Civil War as He Invades the al-Qaeda Badlands,” *The Sunday Times*, July 29, 2007. [<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article2159249.ece>].

180 *The Times* (London), April 29, 2009. [<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6190513.ece>].

181 Quoting Gen. David Petraeus and FM 3-24 in Krause’s “Troop Levels in Stability Operations: What We Don’t Know,” MIT Audit of the Conventional Wisdom, February 2007.

182 Quinlivan, “Force Requirements in Stability Operations,” 1995-1996, pp. 59-69.

183 Krause, “Troop Levels in Stability Operations,” 2007.

The varying outcomes of different ratios warrant a closer look, not only at some of Quinlivan’s cases, but at other regional cases to inform what force ratios Pakistan might need. Although Pakistan has conducted many counterinsurgency campaigns since its independence in 1948, most have relied on heavy artillery and firepower, which might be described as raiding and masking or outright massacring. (A *Time* magazine reporter likened the 1971 “pacification” campaign in Bangladesh, Operation Searchlight, to the Nazis’ “pacification” of Poland¹⁸⁴ and the brutal military suppression of the Baluchi insurgency from 1973-78 made extensive use of napalm¹⁸⁵). But even its more benign operations, such as a cordon and search campaign (a type of masking) in Karachi between 1992 and 1995, involved only 32,000 troops and police for a population of 10 million, or a ratio of 3.2:1,000.¹⁸⁶ As a result, Pakistan has little experience with force ratios for a COIN campaign.

On the other hand, India’s counterinsurgency campaign in Kashmir might be instructive in terms of force ratios and other tactics, as Moeed Yusuf and Anit Mukherjee have suggested.¹⁸⁷ Because the population estimates and figures on troop deployments in Indian Kashmir are cobbled together from various sources and fluctuate from year to year, no exact number is possible. However, the ratio of security forces to population seems to range from 30:1,000 to 90:1,000.¹⁸⁸ Even the low-end figure is markedly higher than figures prescribed in FM 3-24, which are based on historical counterinsurgency campaigns.

“In Jammu and Kashmir today,” one Indian newspaper reported, “the Indian military presence is suffocating. Though an official figure is difficult to come by, Pakistan claims that there are approximately 600,000 Indian troops in Jammu and Kashmir overseeing a population of 11 million. This means that there is one Indian soldier for every

184 “Pakistan: The Ravaging of Golden Bengal,” *Time*, Aug. 2, 1971. [<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,878408,00.html>].

185 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

186 C. Christine Fair, *Urban Battle Fields of South Asia: Lessons Learned from Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan*, Santa Monica: RAND, 2004.

187 Yusuf and Mukherjee, 2007.

188 Sources for this include Sumit Ganguly, CNN, The Toronto Star, AFP, Jane’s Defence Weekly, The Nation, UPI, and Margolis.

3 or 4 adult male Kashmiris, the highest military to civilian ratio in the history of modern conflict.”¹⁸⁹

These figures have been rivaled but show that high force-to-population ratios, though correlated to success, do not guarantee it. At the height of the Vietnam conflict in 1969, the United States had 537,000 troops in South Vietnam. With a population of 16 million, the force-to-population ratio was 33.88:1,000. When U.S. troops were combined with Vietnam’s regular and territorial forces, the ratio became about 85.90:1,000.¹⁹⁰ But for reasons including a hostile population, difficult terrain, and slow organizational adaptation, Vietnam still proved too difficult to pacify.

Force levels used in Vietnam and Kashmir might seem excessive, and Quinlivan’s baseline ratio of 20:1,000 appears to rely mostly on the British campaigns in Malaysia and Northern Ireland. Troops engaged in those situations probably were well trained and equipped and had high morale, at least compared with the Indian military in Kashmir. Simpler terrain in terms of demographics and topography, smaller spaces, and a longer deployment probably figured into the 20:1,000 calculation, too.¹⁹¹ The high ratios in Vietnam and Kashmir also may have been generated by the perception that a blanket of security forces was needed to overcome acute distrust, hostility, and resistance driven in part by the ethno-religious identity of local populations. It further might be argued that India’s Kashmiri troops, stationed in a region abutting Pakistan, serve a dual

purpose of pacifying Kashmir while simultaneously deterring an enemy state.

Nevertheless, in some stability operations (see Table 3) conducted in difficult physical and human terrain, such as found in the FATA and the NWFP, required force ratios have been 50 percent to 450 percent higher than the baseline 20:1,000 ratio.¹⁹²

The 20:1,000 ratio is, it should be noted, merely a “best estimate” derived from case studies with different contexts and shortfalls in data.¹⁹³ Certainly, other factors such as terrain, the size of the insurgency, the degree of external support, and the use of local forces can be equally if not more important. Although the results appear equally indeterminate, Table 3 attempts to gain some leverage on how other factors might influence counterinsurgency outcomes.

For instance, if the insurgency were fairly small, the terrain easy to traverse, and external support limited, Pakistan

189 *Mainichi Daily News*, Oct. 8, 1998.

190 Based on rough calculations derived from U.S. troop numbers. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup With a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons From Malaya and Vietnam*, Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2002, p. 173; ARVN forces, Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 289; and South Vietnam population, Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam’s Hearts and Minds*, Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1998, p. 10.

191 It might be argued that Vietnam and Kashmir required more forces because of foreign intervention and external support of the insurgency. However, the Iraqi insurgency received tremendous external support from neighbors as have both the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban insurgencies, which have benefited from a porous border to supply manpower, weapons, and training, as well as tremendous inflows of cash from narcotics and donations from Gulf states.

192 Although Quinlivan offers the case of India’s campaign in Punjab as a success with low force ratios, he does not mention that the obstacles posed by physical and human terrain were moderate to low: No significant ethno-linguistic difference existed between the forces and population, ostensibly only a religious one and that did not catch on among the broader public. The Sikh insurgency was led by a privileged, quasi-feudal, caste-based orthodoxy, and 65 percent of the Punjab police who cooperated with the pacification campaign were also Sikh. The most successful tactic was not necessarily COIN itself but the closing off of the border to prevent external support and the flow of arms from Pakistan. Durga Madhab (John) Mitra, “Understanding Indian Insurgencies: Implications for Counterinsurgency Operations in the Third World,” Strategic Studies Institute, February 2007. [<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub751.pdf>].

193 Some have disputed the relevance of historical ratios, suggesting that the key factors may be conditions, technologies, tactics, and terrain. Cordesman, “Press Briefing With Cordesman,” CSIS, July 29, 2009 [http://csis.org/files/attachments/090729_csis_afghanistan.pdf]. However, social science that relies on empirical analysis can be useful even if case studies are not perfectly matched. Applying historical ratios employed by the British or American armies in different time frames, regional theaters, and interest levels, may have its limits, but some cases may possess similar conditions. India’s counterinsurgency in Kashmir, including force ratios, is a much more instructive and closer match to Pakistan’s potential counterinsurgency campaign.

Table 3. Notable Pacification/Counterinsurgency Efforts

	French in Vietnam	U.S./South Vietnam	Soviets in Afghanistan	French in Algeria	U.S. in Iraq
Total Forces	450,000	1,368,000-1,434,000	200,000 (50,000 on border alone)	560,000	542,000-610,000
Total Population	17 million	16 million	15 million	10-11 million	27 million
Total Space (sq. km)	173,000 sq. km.	173,000 sq. km.	647,500 sq. km.	2,382,000 sq. km.	438,000 sq. km.
Insurgent Levels	300,000	300,000	100,000-200,000	40,000	40,000 hardcore; 150,000 total
Average Troop-to-Population Ratio (per 1000)	26.5	85-90	13.3	51-56	approx. 18-22.5
Troop-to-Space Ratio	2.6/sq. km.	7.9-8.3/sq. km.	.31/sq. km.	.24/sq. km.	1.39/sq. km.
Troop-to-Insurgent Ratio	1.5:1	5:1 though tactically never higher than 1.5:1 (Joes)	Between 2:1 and 1:1	14:1	4:1 to 15:1
Ethno-Linguistic Difference from Target Population	High	High	High	High	High
Average Terrain Type	Jungle	Jungle	Mountainous	Hilly-Mountainous	Urban
Degree of External Support	High	High	High	High, eventually cutoff	High
Local Forces Used	Vietnamese in French Army, Bao Dai's Army, Catholic and Sect Militias	ARVN, RF/PF	Afghan communists	Algerians in French Army, Harkis, Maghzen	Iraqi army/Iraqi police, Awakening/Sons of Iraq
Local Forces as Percentage of Total Forces	67-73%	62%	40%	29%	66-75%
Length of Engagement	8 years, 1947-1954	10 years, 1965-1975	8 years, 1980-1988	8 years, 1954-1962	6+ years, 2003-present
Outcome	Unsuccessful	Unsuccessful	Unsuccessful	Mixed/unsuccessful	Mixed
Source(s)	Joes	Nagl, Lewis, Hunt, Joes, Pentagon Papes	Coll, Joes	Joes; Goetzke	Nagl, O'Hanlon & Campbell; Robb; Parker

Table 3 (continued). Notable Pacification/Counterinsurgency Efforts

	India in Kashmir	India in Punjab	British in Boer War (Orange Free State and Transvaal)	Britain in Malaya
Total Forces	300,000-750,000	115,000	502,000	330,000-351,000
Total Population	10 million	20.2 million	300,000	5.5 million
Total Space (sq. km)	101,000 sq. km.	50,362 sq. km.	465,000 sq. km.	134,000 sq. km.
Insurgent Levels	4,000-5,000	2,000-4,000	27,000-43,000	12,000
Average Troop-to-Population Ratio (per 1000)	30-90	5-7	1673	60-64
Troop-to-Space Ratio	3-7.5/sq. km.	2.28/sq. km.	1.08/sq. km.	.83-2.46/sq. km.
Troop-to-Insurgent Ratio	60:1 and higher	Between 58:1 to 29:1	Between 19:1 and 12:1	28:1
Ethno-Linguistic Difference from Target Population	High	Moderate to Low	Moderate	High
Average Terrain Type	Mountainous	Agricultural plains	Hilly	Jungle
Degree of External Support	High	Moderate to minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Local Forces Used	Paramilt/police	Punjab Police, Home Guard	White South Africans	Malayan home constables/police, militias
Local Forces as Percentage of Total Forces	At least 7-17%	61%	10%	12%
Length of Engagement	20+ years, 1989-present	16 years, 1978-1993	3 years, 1899-1902	12 years, 1948-1960
Outcome	Mixed/successful	Successful	Successful	Successful
Source(s)	Yusuf, Margolis, Jane's Defense Weekly, Ram, Wagenen, Ganguly, Mitra	Quinlivan, Marwah, Wallace	Evans, Joes	Quinlivan; Joes; Combat Studies Institute

Table 3 (continued). Notable Pacification/Counterinsurgency Efforts

	Britain in N. Ireland	Potential Pakistan Campaign in NWFP/FATA
Total Forces	32,000	434,000
Total Population	1.6 million	26-29 million
Total Space (sq. km)	13,843 sq. km.	102,000 sq. km.
Insurgent Levels	1,500 (at peak)	30,000-40,000
Average Troop-to-Population Ratio (per 1000)	20	15-16.7
Troop-to-Space Ratio	2.31/sq. km.	4.25/sq. km.
Troop-to-Insurgent Ratio	21:1	10:1
Ethno-Linguistic Difference from Target Population	Moderate	High
Average Terrain Type	Urban	Mountainous
Degree of External Support	Moderate	High
Local Forces Used	Royal Ulster Constabulary	Frontier Corps, Lashkars, MWFP Police
Local Forces as Percentage of Total Forces	27%	44%
Length of Engagement	30 years, 1969-1999	--
Outcome	Successful	--
Source(s)	Quinlivan, Byman et. al., ESRC Conflict Archive	--

Sources: Anthony James Joes, *Resisting Rebellion: The History And Politics Of Counterinsurgency*, Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004; James T. Quinlivan, "Force Requirements in Stability Operations," *Parameters*, Vol. 25, Winter 1995-1996, pp. 59-69; John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002, p. 173; ARVN forces, see Adrian R. Lewis, *The American Culture of War*, New York: Routledge, 2007, p. 289; and South Vietnam population, see Richard A. Hunt, *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998, p. 10; "Origins of the Insurgency in South Vietnam, 1954-1960," *The Pentagon Papers*, Vol. 1, Boston: Beacon Press, 1971. [<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon/pent14.htm>]; Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden from the Soviet Invasion to September 10, 2001*, New York: Penguin Press, 2004; Col. Karl Goetzke, "A Review of Algerian War of National Liberation Using The U.S. Army's Current Counterinsurgency Doctrine," *US Army War College Strategy Research Project*, March 18, 2005. [<http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA431690&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>]; John Nagl, "Lessons from Iraq for Afghanistan and Beyond," MIT Security Studies Program, Wednesday Seminar Series, October 22, 2008; Michael O'Hanlon and Jason H. Campbell, *Iraq Index*, Brookings Institution; Ned Parker, "Shahwani: More than 200,000 insurgents in Iraq," *Middle East Online*, January 4, 2005. [<http://www.middle-east-online.com/English/?id=12332>]; John Robb, "How Big is the Iraqi Insurgency," Unpublished Paper, *Global Guerrillas*, October 14, 2005. [<http://globalguerrillas.typepad.com/globalguerrillas//How%20Big%20is%20the%20Iraqi%20Insurgency.pdf>]; Eric Margolis, "Old Foes Spoiling for a Fight," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, May 2000; Jane's Defense Weekly, February 2, 2000, p. 24; Sumit Ganguly, "Will Kashmir Stop India's Rise?" *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2006; Sumit Ganguly, "Political Mobilization and Institutional Decay: Explaining the Crisis in Kashmir," *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Fall 1996, pp. 76-107; Moeed Yusuf and Anit Mukherjee, "Counterinsurgency in Pakistan: Learning from India," *AEI National Security Outlook*, September 2007; Matthew J. Van Wagenen, "An Analysis of the Indian Government's Counterinsurgency Campaign in Jammu and Kashmir," Masters Thesis, US Army Command and General Staff College, Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, 2004 [<http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA428962>]; Samay Ram, *Tackling Insurgency and Terrorism*, New Delhi, India: Manas Publications, 2002, p. 141; Durga Madhab (John) Mitra, "Understanding Indian Insurgencies: Implications for Counterinsurgency Operations in the Third World," *Strategic Studies Institute*, February 2007; Vaid Marwah, "India's Counterinsurgency Campaign in Punjab," *India and Counterinsurgency: Lessons Learned*, Ed. Sumit Ganguly and David P. Fidler, London: Routledge, 2009; Paul Wallace, "Political Violence and Terrorism in India: The Crisis of Identity," *Terrorism In Context*, Ed. Maritha Crenshaw, University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1995., p. 357; Martin Marix Evans "Maps and Decisions: Buller South and North of the Tugela, 1899-1900," *Fields of Battle: Terrain in Military History*, Ed. Peter Doyle and Matthew R. Bennett, Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic, 2002; "British Operations in Malaya and Borneo, 1948-1966," *US Army, Combat Studies Institute* [http://www.cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/historic/hist_c3_pt1.pdf]; Daniel Byman et al, *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*, RAND Monograph, 2001; ESRC Conflict Archive [<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/>]; BBC News, "Where are British Troops and Why," April 29, 2008. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4094818.stm]

might have a good chance of success with a lower than 20:1,000 ratio. But Pakistan faces severely adverse conditions on all counts. Given that most successful counterinsurgencies have relied on even higher ratios, it would need, at minimum, the 20:1,000 ratio to have any chance at COIN success in the NWFP and the FATA.

Required Force Numbers

Pakistani forces can be drawn from four sources:

1) Traditional forces, including 520,000 army troops, 500,000 reserves, and 2,100 or more elite special forces; 2) paramilitary troops, including the 55,000-member FC based in the NWFP, another 30,000 FC troops in Baluchistan, and 40,000 skilled but lightly armed rangers; 3) police forces and constabulary, though thus far these forces have been overrun¹⁹⁴; and 4) irregular forces, such as the lashkars or militias that recently have been formed to fight the Taliban.¹⁹⁵

In the spring 2004, Pakistan sent 8,000 army troops to the NWFP to back up FC forces facing off against the Taliban.¹⁹⁶ By that fall, FC and army forces numbered 80,000.¹⁹⁷ Although the military eventually signed peace deals, a 70,000-man force remained in the region through fall 2007.¹⁹⁸ In early 2008, during campaigns to clear militants from the Bajaur Agency and Swat, this figure rose to 100,000.¹⁹⁹ As of June 2008, about 150,000 troops were estimated to be the tribal areas, up from the 120,000 of just a few months earlier. The increase can be attributed to²⁰⁰ a Pakistani offensive against the Taliban in the Swat

Valley, which began in April 2009.²⁰¹ Although Pakistani forces have been able to clear out militants, they have not defeated the Taliban or protected the local population. This failure can be blamed, at least in part, on Pakistan's continued focus on conventional war with India on its eastern front,²⁰² a shortage of troops,²⁰³ and inadequate troop training.²⁰⁴

What would it take for the Pakistani military to have a chance at conducting an ideal COIN campaign in the FATA and the NWFP? Assuming it shifted doctrine to prepare for a COIN approach, it first would have to boost its force numbers to the prescribed force-to-population ratio just detailed. Population figures are notoriously difficult to pin down in this region, with figures based on the last Census in 1998 and distorted by Afghan refugees during the past decade. However, force requirements would range roughly from 196,000 to 580,000 boots on the ground (see Table 4). First, the FATA itself would need to be secured. Initially, the insurgency was believed to be contained within the tribal agencies, estimated to have a population of 3.5 million to 7 million.²⁰⁵ Shuja Nawaz's figure of 3.5 million residents plus 1.5 million refugees, for a population of 5 million, would require a force size of 100,000 troops for a ratio of 20:1,000.²⁰⁶

Second, because the Taliban insurgency undoubtedly has spread to neighboring districts in the NWFP, especially to the Malakand division where the recent Swat Valley battles took place (see *BBC* map), security forces would be required in that region as well. Simply placing forces in the districts that recently have erupted in violence would be insufficient: The Taliban is both mobile and expansionist and already has begun to lay groundwork to take control of neighboring districts. To win over the people through population security, Pakistan would need to secure areas surrounding Taliban encroachments. This COIN sequencing comports with Pakistan's recent "clear" operations in

194 Schmidt, "The Unraveling of Pakistan," 2009, p. 50.

195 Drawn from IISS, 2009; Fair, *Urban Battlefields of South Asia*, 2004; Jane's World Armies, 2008, and Tariq Mahmud Ashraf, "The Pakistan Frontier Corps in the War on Terrorism—Part I," *Terrorism Monitor*, July 25, 2008.

196 Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 2008; Cloughley, *A History of the Pakistan Army*, 1999.

197 Rashid, *Descent Into Chaos*, 2008.

198 Yusuf and Mukherjee, 2007.

199 de Borchgrave, "Pakistan Poses Greatest Threat to U.S.," Aug. 19, 2008.

200 Initially this was estimated to be approximately six divisions of troops and Frontier Corps with half positioned on the border and the other half deployed in the FATA and the NWFP. Nawaz, Jamestown Foundation Conference, April 15, 2009; Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009; *The Economist*, April 30, 2009.

201 Nawaz, "Pakistan's Summer of Chaos," *Foreign Policy*, June 2009. [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=5016].

202 Rashid, "Pakistan's Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy," March 2009.

203 Yusuf, 2007.

204 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 39.

205 International Crisis Group, 2006.

206 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009.

Table 4. Force to Population Ratio Prescriptions and Shortfalls

Regional Scope of the Insurgency	Population Estimate	Force to Population Ratio 10:1000	Force to Population Ratio 20:1000	Current Troop Numbers	Shortfall for COIN (20:1000)
FATA	5 million (3.5m locals and 1.5m Afghan refugees)	50,000	100,000	approx. 70,000 (6 Frontier Corps Wings, 2 Army Infantry Divisions and 1 Army Brigade)	30,000
Malakand Division of NWFP	4.8 million	48,000	96,000	approx. 50,000 (3 Frontier Corps Wings, at least 2 Army Divisions from Eastern front, and possibly 4 more Brigades)	46,000
Rest of NWFP	16.2 million	162,000	324,000	approx. 30,000 (3 Frontier Corps Wings, 3 Army Brigades)	294,000
Total FATA/ NWFP (lower estimate)	26 million	260,000	520,000	approx. 150,000	370,000
FATA + NWFP (upper estimate)	29 million	290,000	580,000	approx. 150,000	430,000

Sources: Shuja Nawaz, *FATA – A Most Dangerous Place: Meeting the Challenge of Militancy and Terror in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan*, Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies Press, January 2009; International Crisis Group, “Pakistan’s Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants,” *Asia Report*, No. 125, December 11, 2006. [<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4568>]; Pakistan Census; Dr. Abdul Jabbar, “Religious Leaders as Partners in Polio Eradication NWFP/FATA,” *World Health Organization*, February 1, 2008 [<http://www.comminit.com/en/node/269402>]; Hassan Abbas, “Is the NWFP Slipping out of Pakistan’s Control?” *Terrorism Monitor*, November 26, 2007; Rahimullah Yusufzai, “Analysis: Pakistan’s Tribal Frontiers,” *BBC News*, December 14, 2001; Richard A. O’Connell Jr. and Pir Zubair Shah, “In Pakistan, Radio Amplifies Terror of Taliban,” *New York Times*, January 25, 2009; Shuja Nawaz, “Pakistan’s Summer of Chaos,” *ForeignPolicy.com*, June 2009. [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=5016]; Praveen Swami, “Obama’s World and Pakistan’s War on Terror,” *The Hindu*, June 8, 2009; Census Data from 1998 [www.fata.pk.gov] combined with the author’s estimates.

Malakand, which advanced into the neighboring districts of Dir and Buner prior to taking on the Taliban stronghold of Swat.²⁰⁷ Based on maps of Taliban control (See BBC map), presence, and infiltration, this would add 4.8 million to the population needing to be secured and would necessitate 96,000 additional security forces.

Estimates of Taliban influence and control beyond FATA

207 *Los Angeles Times*, June 22, 2009. [<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-pakistan-tactics22-2009jun22,0,3198717.story>].

and Malakand vary from claims of near total control²⁰⁸ to control of slightly more than half of the FATA and the NWFP.²⁰⁹ Given Taliban tactics of retreating from fights and melting into the population or relocating to other tribal agencies or NWFP districts, the Pakistani army arguably would need to occupy and conduct COIN operations throughout the NWFP and the FATA. (Because of

208 *Long War Journal*, 2009. See Figure 4.

209 See Figure 3; Farrukh Saleem, April 26, 2009, states that the Taliban control 56,103 square kilometers of the FATA/NWFP’s 102,000 square kilometers.

the absence of any substantial Taliban insurgent presence, Baluchistan could be excluded.²¹⁰) The goal would be a geographic quarantine of the Taliban so that insurgents could be confined and defeated.²¹¹ But securing not only the FATA and the Malakand division but the rest of the NWFP would mean protecting 16.2 million to 19.2 million more people²¹² and adding 324,000 to 384,000 security forces. Total force requirements would reach 520,000 to 580,000.

Force Makeup

The mechanics of a COIN campaign heavily depend on the type of forces employed. Suggestions for filling the ranks have included raising police forces or drawing on the lashkars,²¹³ but so far and for the most part, Pakistan has used only some combination of army and FC troops against the Taliban. Each force type has its strengths and weaknesses for a COIN campaign.

A problem common to both regular and paramilitary forces both, however, is their reluctance to fight fellow tribesmen or fellow Muslims on behalf of U.S. interests.²¹⁴ Islamist sentiment has penetrated to some of the army and FC rank-and-file, partly out of sympathy for al-Qaeda and the

210 While it is largely acknowledged that the Afghan Taliban's leadership council headed by Mullah Omar is based in Baluchistan's capital of Quetta, there does not seem to be Taliban insurgent violence there. The violence that does exist is related to the ethnic nationalist Baluch insurgency. Based on discussions with Nawaz as well as Schmidt, "The Unraveling of Pakistan," 2009, and Fair, "Islamist Militancy in Pakistan: A View from the Provinces," *World Public Opinion Report*, July 10, 2009. [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/julo9/PakProvinces_Julo9_rpt.pdf].

211 Harinder Singh, "The Taliban: Challenges for Pakistan Army," Institute for Defense Studies & Analysis, *Strategic Comments*, May 1, 2009. [<http://www.idsa.in/publications/stratcomments/HarinderSingho10509.htm>].

212 Population estimates in the FATA and the NWFP significantly vary because the last Census was in 1998 and refugee numbers confound a complete accounting.

213 Lashkars were used and supported by the army in the Bajaur campaign. Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, supports further use of the *lashkar* model, while Rashid, "Pakistan's Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy," March 2009, argues this is a dangerous idea.

214 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 187.

Taliban, but also because of U.S. actions.²¹⁵ Most civilian Pakistanis also do not support either the mission against the extremists or cooperation with the United States.²¹⁶ Some Western and Pakistani analysts argue that this situation is beginning to change, after empirical evidence showed more public support²¹⁷ during the spring operations in Swat, but, clearly, COIN information operations will need to target the Pakistani public and all Pakistani forces to maintain morale and support for the campaign.

The Army

The advantage of deploying the Pakistani army is that is a professional force that is relatively well trained and well equipped and has good morale.²¹⁸ Byman roundly criticizes U.S. allies in the Middle East and South Asia for their lack of "fitness" for COIN operations on tactical, organizational, structural and political grounds,²¹⁹ and although the Pakistan military at first glance seems vulnerable to that criticism, a case analysis tells a different story.

215 This includes U.S. conduct of policy towards Iraq and Palestine and combating terrorism. Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 185.

216 The International Republican Institute's most recent poll from March 2009 shows that while an overwhelming majority agree that religious extremism is a problem in Pakistan ranging from 60 percent to its highest point of 74 percent in March of 2009, only 45 percent support "fighting the extremists in NWFP and FATA" while 52 percent still oppose it. In the past two years, support has been as low as 27 percent. This certainly points to a recent uptick, but the majority still holds. Additionally, support for cooperation with the United States has increased by almost 30 percent since January 2008, but 61 percent still oppose cooperation, and 72 percent oppose U.S. military incursions on Pakistani soil. Since these figures predate operations in Swat, which were said to have significantly shifted public attitudes, positions may have softened. Poll, *Terror Free Tomorrow*, June 2008. [<http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/upimagestft/PakistanPollReportJune08.pdf>]. World Public Opinion, July 1, 2009. [http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/pdf/julo9/WPO_Pakistan_Julo9_rpt.pdf]. Both organizations found very negative Pakistani sentiment toward the United States.

217 Fair, *World Public Opinion Report*, July 10, 2009.

218 Cloughley, "Pakistan's Army and National Stability," *Pakistan Security Research Unit Brief*, No. 47, April 22, 2009. [<http://spaces.brad.ac.uk:8080/download/attachments/748/Brief+47.pdf>].

219 Byman, 2006.

At the tactical and organizational level, the Pakistani military looks to be the best of the nine U.S. allies in the region that Byman studied, scoring well in intelligence, integration across units, initiative, morale, and officer as well as non-commissioned officer quality. Byman docks it on grounds of training, learning, and creativity but offers little explanation for that judgment. If his criticism stems from the Pakistani military's poor exercise of COIN tactics, that would be unfair, because the military has not trained for COIN, and the lack of ability to carry out such a mission would be no reflection on its raw capacity or its soldiers' abilities. And, in contrast to the other militaries Byman studied, the Pakistani military invests heavily in training and what it calls "man management" to compensate for inferior technology.²²⁰

In discussing the 1965 war, Nawaz explains that a recurring theme of Pakistan's external military engagements is tactical brilliance and gallantry at the lower levels of command but strategic failure at the higher levels.

The history of Pakistani military engagements often has been one of tactical success but strategic failure. In discussing the 1965 war, Nawaz explains that a recurring theme of Pakistan's external military engagements is tactical brilliance and gallantry at the lower levels of command but strategic failure at the higher levels. He blames a "lack of vision and courage among the higher levels of leadership of the Pakistan army."²²¹ Nawaz made a similar assessment of the 1999 Kargil incursion.²²² This suggests that with the

220 Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 40.

221 Nawaz, *Crossed Swords: Pakistan, Its Army, and the Wars Within*, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 214.

222 Nawaz, *Crossed Swords*, 2008, p. 515, describes the Kargil infiltration as a resounding success that managed to avoid Indian anticipation or detection for three months and the recognition that Pakistani regulars were a part of the mission. Once discovered, the Pakistani troops and irregulars were initially able to shoot down some Indian aircraft and helicopters before running out of supplies and being overwhelmed by sheer Indian numbers. Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, points out that the Pakistanis were well dug in because they occupied former well-established Indian positions. Cloughley, "Pakistan's Army and National Stability," April 22, 2009,

right strategy, resources, and training, the Pakistani army, specifically as represented by its lower-level commanders, has the initiative and potential to execute a COIN campaign.

Byman also points to political and structural problems in Pakistan that would hamper a COIN campaign, but while these would affect the governance and economic stages of such an operation, the initial security provision phase would be little affected.

One political element that can cripple the ability of a military to conduct a COIN operation is "coup-proofing," or the building of parallel and competing military institutions to neutralize the threat of a small group seizing power. Yet because Pakistan's military is arguably the most powerful institution in Pakistan, it is largely immune to this problem that cripples so many other militaries.²²³ Other obstacles Byman cites might be overstated, such as a vulnerability to insurgent penetration, or would be mitigated by the choice of who conducts a COIN campaign. Good rapport with a patron country, such as the United States, he maintains, is essential to military effectiveness. The shortage of economic resources, which Byman cites, already has begun to be rectified.²²⁴ However, some deficiencies—the perception of endemic corruption, questions about the legitimacy of the regime, and social exclusion—would persist and would pose a threat to the nonmilitary aspects of COIN's "hold" and "build" phases and to its long-term success.²²⁵

characterizes this as "militarily successful but political disastrous."

223 "Coup-proofing" involves building parallel and competing military/security institutions based on various loyalties with overlapping jurisdictions and monitoring to neutralize the threat of a small group seizing power. The byproduct, however, is an overall reduction in military effectiveness. James T. Quinlivan, "Coup-Proofing: Its Practice and Consequences in the Middle East," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 2, Fall 1999, pp. 131-165. By contrast, the Pakistani military—regardless of whether it was formally ruling—always has been more powerful than civilian institutions and thus has maintained a single, integrated command structure rather than competing security bureaucracies.

224 The United States and the international community already have begun to offer resources to finance the costs of military operations as well as economic development in the tribal areas. *Economist*, April 30, 2009.

225 Pakistan still retains many vestiges of feudalism and has never undergone serious land reform. While taking this on might help in the counterinsurgency campaign, it would overturn the structure of society, not simply in the NWFP and FATA, but in the

The conclusion, then, is that the army possesses valuable skills that, combined with retraining, could be major assets to the security phase of a COIN campaign.

Unfortunately, other than the 20 percent of army troops that hail from the region, Pakistani soldiers lack knowledge of the demographics, structures and institutions, terrain, and the language in the tribal areas.²²⁶ Given the country's ethnic divides and fragmented identity, non-Pashtun troops drawn from the Punjab garrisons easily could be seen as an occupying force. (In 1971, similar dynamics led to civil war and the secession of Bangladesh.²²⁷)

As local knowledge and the ability to blend in would be essential for collecting intelligence and ferreting out insurgents in the tribal areas, the military would be forced to engage in a form of anthropology to "[identify] every possible social cleavage or identity, which might play a role in supporting violence or providing information."²²⁸ This is a task for which it has not been trained and that other elements with more local knowledge and identity, such as the Frontier Corps, might be better suited.

The Frontier Corps (FC)

In contrast to most of the army, the FC is drawn from local Pashtun tribal areas and villages, and its ranks know the region's terrain, demographics, and language well. That can be an asset in a COIN campaign, but also a liability: FC members have refused to confront the Taliban or other insurgents out of fear of being ostracized or killed by their own tribes. Additionally, when positioned on the borders, FC troops sometimes have allowed militants to cross.

Although it has been lauded for recent improvements and successes, notably in the Bajaur Agency, the FC nevertheless practiced a low-intensity, enemy-centric approach there that came with a high casualty toll.²²⁹ The challenge

provinces of Punjab and Sindh as well. Schmidt, "The Unraveling of Pakistan," 2009.

226 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 187, writes that only one-fifth of the army is drawn from the Pashtuns.

227 Insight offered by "Pakistan: What Will It Take to Hold Swat," Stratfor Intelligence, June 3, 2009. [http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/20090603_pakistan_what_it_will_take_hold_swat].

228 Lindsay, "Commandos, Advisors, and Diplomats," February 2009, p. 14.

229 Abbas, "Pakistan Can Defy the Odds," May 2009.

would be to maximize the FC's assets and minimize its vulnerabilities for a COIN operation, perhaps through *encadrement* with the army, which will be discussed later.

Another critical weakness of FC troops is their poor training, equipment, and leadership. Pakistan considers the FC is more of a police force than a military force, and, consequently, its members reportedly lack helmets, possess obsolete or nonexistent communications equipment, and have limited transportation. Until recently, for example, FC troops were armed with World War II-vintage bolt-action rifles.²³⁰ In addition, when the FC has been dispatched to combat the Taliban, it has not had access to air support, radar or good intelligence.²³¹ This is in striking contrast to the Taliban, which is well organized, well trained, and well equipped.

Because of poor training, a lack of equipment, missions that require troops to shoot at their own people, and repeated losses in battle, the FC's morale has been weakened. Its troops have little stake in the success of missions, leading many to desert or surrender. The FC also is reputed to have poor leadership. Instead of promoting from within the ranks, its officers are rotated in from the army for two or three years.²³² Poor morale certainly could hinder plans to recruit 11,000 more men to the FC.²³³

To remedy these FC weaknesses, various analysts have proposed that the military improve the FC's weapons, communications, transportation, and intelligence and train its troops on counterinsurgency tactics, techniques, and procedures. The Pakistani government, with U.S. support,²³⁴ appears to have begun this process, though with limited numbers.

230 Ashraf, July 25, 2008.

231 *New York Times*, Nov. 11, 2008.

232 Ashraf, July 25, 2008; Yusufzai, "Pakistan's Frontier Corps Struggles to Hold Forts Against Taliban Attacks," *Terrorism Focus*, Jan. 22, 2008.

233 Trudy Rubin, "Pakistan Must Help Stop Taliban," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 26, 2009.

234 Eric Schmitt and Perlez, "U.S. Unit Secretly in Pakistan Lends Ally Support," *New York Times*, Feb. 23, 2009. [<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/23/world/asia/23terror.html>]; Lolita C. Baldor, "U.S. Wants Faster Training In Pakistan," *Associated Press*, May 15, 2009. [<http://content.usatoday.net/dist/custom/gci/InsidePage.aspx?cId=freep&sParam=30757681.story>].

While FC troops are more suited to the population security aspect of COIN than army troops, they would need to be consistently rotated throughout the area to stay de-linked from the local tribal networks.²³⁵ Swapping more army units for FC troops on the borders would make better use of the talents of both: The FC would do a better job of engaging the population, while the army would be better trained and equipped to confront militants attempting forays into or out of Afghanistan.

The Pakistani military could improve morale within the FC by promoting officers from within and by eventually considering the formal incorporation of the FC into the regular army, as it did with the Northern Light Infantry after its success in Kargil.²³⁶ Although the economic and governance aspects of the COIN campaign have been bracketed off to focus on the security elements of stabilization and pacification, Nawaz also suggests that retired FC and Pashto-speaking officers would need to be rehired to provide security for the development projects that are part of the latter stages of the COIN doctrine.²³⁷

The Police

Some analysts have proposed that the Pakistani police should play a major if not pivotal role in counterinsurgency efforts, but this proposal faces significant limitations.²³⁸ First, Pakistan has only 350,000 police officers, which means the current distribution of force-to-population ratio is roughly 2:1,000.²³⁹ Assuming it is not advantageous to

transfer police from one province to another, police officers for the NWFP would number between 50,000 and 55,000.²⁴⁰ But even these numbers should be considered soft because of under-training, under-equipping, and high attrition rates. Police in the NWFP possess only 7,500 bulletproof vests, 17,000 automatic rifles, and three functioning armored personnel carriers,²⁴¹ and, lately, they have been targeted by the Taliban because they are so vulnerable. This has caused morale problems and affected officers' willingness to fight. During the Swat Valley engagements of spring 2009, the attrition rate was close to 70 percent with nearly 40 percent deserting and the rest staying home or killed in action.²⁴² A salary of \$120 a month hardly improves morale. If the police force were to be transformed into a central part of a COIN campaign, it would require significant investments and training, some of which might impinge upon the equipping and training of army or FC units.

Lashkars

To further boost force numbers and offset the Taliban's advantage in knowing the demography and terrain, Pakistan would need to encourage, support, and possibly employ the lashkars.²⁴³

Parallels can be drawn between the Anbar Awakening and Sons of Iraq and the lashkars in the NWFP and the FATA. The Awakening began prior to the U.S. "surge," when tribal leaders became frustrated with AQI's encroachment on their revenue streams from smuggling and banditry. As Austin Long points out, despite press accounts that the tribes turned on AQI because of its heavy-handedness and

235 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009 p. 39.

236 Ashraf, "The Pakistan Frontier Corps in the War on Terrorism—Part II," *Terrorism Monitor*, Aug. 11, 2008.

237 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009 p. 39.

238 Fair and Abbas argue that COIN will only work with significant investments in the police force, while Schmidt, "The Unraveling of Pakistan," 2009, dismisses the police and civilian security forces as inadequate to deal with the Taliban. Fair, "Time for Sober Realism: Renegotiating U.S. Relations with Pakistan," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 32, No. 2, April 2009, pp. 149-172; Abbas, "Police and Law Enforcement Reform in Pakistan: Crucial for Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism Success," Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, April 2009.

239 Abbas, "Police and Law Enforcement Reform in Pakistan," April 2009. The figure is close to the U.S. level of police to population ratio of 2.3:1,000, though Pakistan lacks the same level of governance, legal capacity, and citizen confidence in the juridical and political institutions.

240 Figures based on Abbas, "Police and Law Enforcement Reform in Pakistan," April 2009, and Alex Rodriguez, "Pakistani Police Are on the Front Line Against Terrorism," *Los Angeles Times*, July 19, 2009.

241 Rodriguez, *Los Angeles Times*, July 19, 2009.

242 Abbas, "Police and Law Enforcement Reform in Pakistan," April 2009 writes "700 out of a total of 1,737 policemen deserted when Swat's Maulana Fazlullah told the local police to give up their jobs or face the Taliban's wrath." Rates of total attrition from "Pakistan-Taliban Swat Battle Rages," *Al Jazeera*, Feb. 3, 2009. [<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2009/02/200922233417104503.html>].

243 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, p. 33; Robert Kaplan, "It's the Tribes, Stupid!" *The Atlantic*, November 2007. [<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200711u/kaplan-democracy>].

Table 5. A Partial Recent History of Lashkars in the NWFP and FATA

Date	Agency/District	Details	Source
January 2008	South Waziristan	600 men were raised to fight al Qaeda and foreign fighters.	McGregor
January 2008	Orkazai	Tribesman claimed to raise a force of 15,000 to clear area of Taliban.	<i>Pakistan's Troubled Frontier</i>
September 2008	Swat	500 followers of Pir Samiullah fight Taliban in Mandal Dag—but he gets killed.	Oppel Jr. and Shah
Summer 2008	Lakki Marwat	When a force was raised, the Taliban were told to quit so they gave up or left area.	<i>Pakistan's Troubled Frontier</i>
2008	Khyber	A 300 strong laskkar was raised and leaders threatened to demolish the house of anyone found harboring militants and to fine them.	Yusufzai
2008	Khyber	3,000 armed men, laid siege to the bases and training camps set up by Taliban militants near the central Shagai village, and forced them to surrender or flee the area	Yusufzai
2008	Hangu	A local Lashkar resisted militants after they attack convoys of Frontier Corps. Taliban fighters were eventually pushed out of Hangu into the adjacent Orakzai tribal agency	Yusufzai
2008	Buner	After an attack on a police pos in Kingargalli village, villagers volunteered to join squads to patrol the area and defend their villages, and eventually confronted and killed most of the Taliban in the area.	Yusufzai
2008	Bajaur	A 4,000 man force was raised by the Salarzai tribe who chased out militants. However, they retaliated with suicide bombs and killed a number of tribal leaders.	Khan
2008	Kurram	Captured Bagzai area, then reclaimed Char Dewal and Jalmai, driving the Taliban out.	Khan
2008	Peshawar	Police organize and lead 500 people to march on a fort and drive out Taliban.	Perlez and Shah
June 2009	Dir	In response to a suicide bombing of a mosque during prayers, about one thousand residents rose up and attacked Taliban militants and supporters, which numbered about 200-400.	Tavernise and Ashraf

Sources: Andrew McGregor, "South Waziri Tribesmen Organize Counterinsurgency Lashkar," *Terrorism Monitor*, January 14, 2008; *Pakistan's Troubled Frontier*, Washington DC: Jamestown Foundation, 2009; Richard A. Oppel Jr. and Pir Zubair Shah, "In Pakistan, Radio Amplifies Terror of Taliban," *New York Times*, January 25, 2009; Rahimullah Yusufzai, "The Tribes Fight Back," *Newsline*, October 2008; Mukhtar A. Khan, "The Role of Tribal Lashkars in Winning Pakistan's War on Terror," *Terrorism Focus*, November 26, 2008; Jane Perlez and Pir Zubair Shah, "Confronting Taliban, Pakistan Finds Itself at War," *New York Times*, October 3, 2008; Sabrina Tavernise and Irfan Ashraf, "Attacked, Pakistani Villagers Take on Taliban," *New York Times*, June 10, 2009.

violence toward civilians and their Anbar kinsmen, self-interest turned the tribes against AQI as early as 2005.²⁴⁴ AQI violence against the tribes actually may have been a response to this shift rather than its cause. In any case, the U.S. military recognized the fissure and exploited it, initially by supporting local tribal forces in fights against AQI and eventually by folding them into local and auxiliary police forces. This led to better security and a decline in overall violence in the region.²⁴⁵

A similar set of events is beginning to unfold in Pakistan, where the lashkars formed in recent years have tried to challenge the Taliban, though with little success so far (see Table 5).²⁴⁶ However, the case of the Salazarai tribe in Bajaur shows it is possible for the lashkars to be effective. The Salazarai began organizing in response to Taliban control of Bajaur and, though it received limited support and arms from the Pakistani military, the tribe eventually contributed to the success of the government's campaign to drive the Taliban from Bajaur.²⁴⁷

The military would need to encourage and support the lashkars with small arms and perhaps economic inducements, as was done by the Americans in Anbar. These lashkars likely would be capable of snuffing out small Taliban cells, but they would not be able to stand up to better-organized and better-armed insurgents. In the past, uprisings have collapsed because of the Taliban's severe coercive violence and mass killings.²⁴⁸ In such situations, the regular army would need to backstop local forces with combat-savvy, rapid-response forces with better training and heavier weapons.²⁴⁹ However, military support without close-combat ground forces can put civilians at risk, as occurred recently when the military sent in helicopters to support an uprising in Dir Province, which alienated the local lashkars.²⁵⁰ The event in Dir suggests that the

lashkars may require substantial backup from the regular army or the FC. One obstacle that disadvantages the lashkars is the Pashtunwali code which prohibits a man from fighting under another clan's leadership, effectively placing an upper limit on the scale, organization, and coordination. The only exception to this rule is organizing to fight for the purpose of holy war. As a result, the Taliban have used this cultural feature to their advantage, aggregating tribal forces under a religious banner to overwhelm any lashkar challenges.²⁵¹

Another complication of using the lashkars is that such an approach could work at cross-purposes with other objectives. Just as the Anbar strategy threatened Iraq's democratic transition, the use of the lashkars in Pakistan, which often rests on a semi-feudal relationship, might postpone or foreclose the option of democratic rule or the possibility of self-sustaining development in the tribal areas.²⁵²

Unlike the United States, Pakistan did at one time possess the skill to manage tribal complexities—it had done so for 50 years through the use of political agents. Unlike the Iraqi government, it was able to control these forces, although the rise of the mullahs may have compromised or ended this capacity. Regardless, to stop defections and make a lashkar strategy work would require a steady and costly integration of tribal forces into the national police and military.

A lashkar strategy also would leave open the question of whether the Pakistani military would be aligning itself with the wrong group, especially given the class-based resentments caused by the feudal structures in the NWFP. Before backing landlords and tribal elders, the military would need to be sure that a lashkar had a legitimate base of support. Directly integrating locals into the security services and police would circumvent this problem, but it would require substantial civilian acumen and management for recruitment, training, and funding.²⁵³

Funding, again, would be critical to maintaining the loyalty of tribal-based militias, at least until they were integrated into the national police or military, but to pay the lashkar members the equivalent of the Taliban salary of 15,000

244 Long, "The Anbar Awakening," *Survival*, Vol. 50, No. 2, April-May, 2008, p. 77.

245 Long, "The Anbar Awakening," 2008.

246 Trudy Rubin, "Pakistan Must Help Stop Taliban," April 26, 2009, reports that these militias have been largely crushed by the militants.

247 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009; *Al Jazeera* documentary, 2009.

248 *New York Times*, June 9, 2009.

249 Based on conversations with Long.

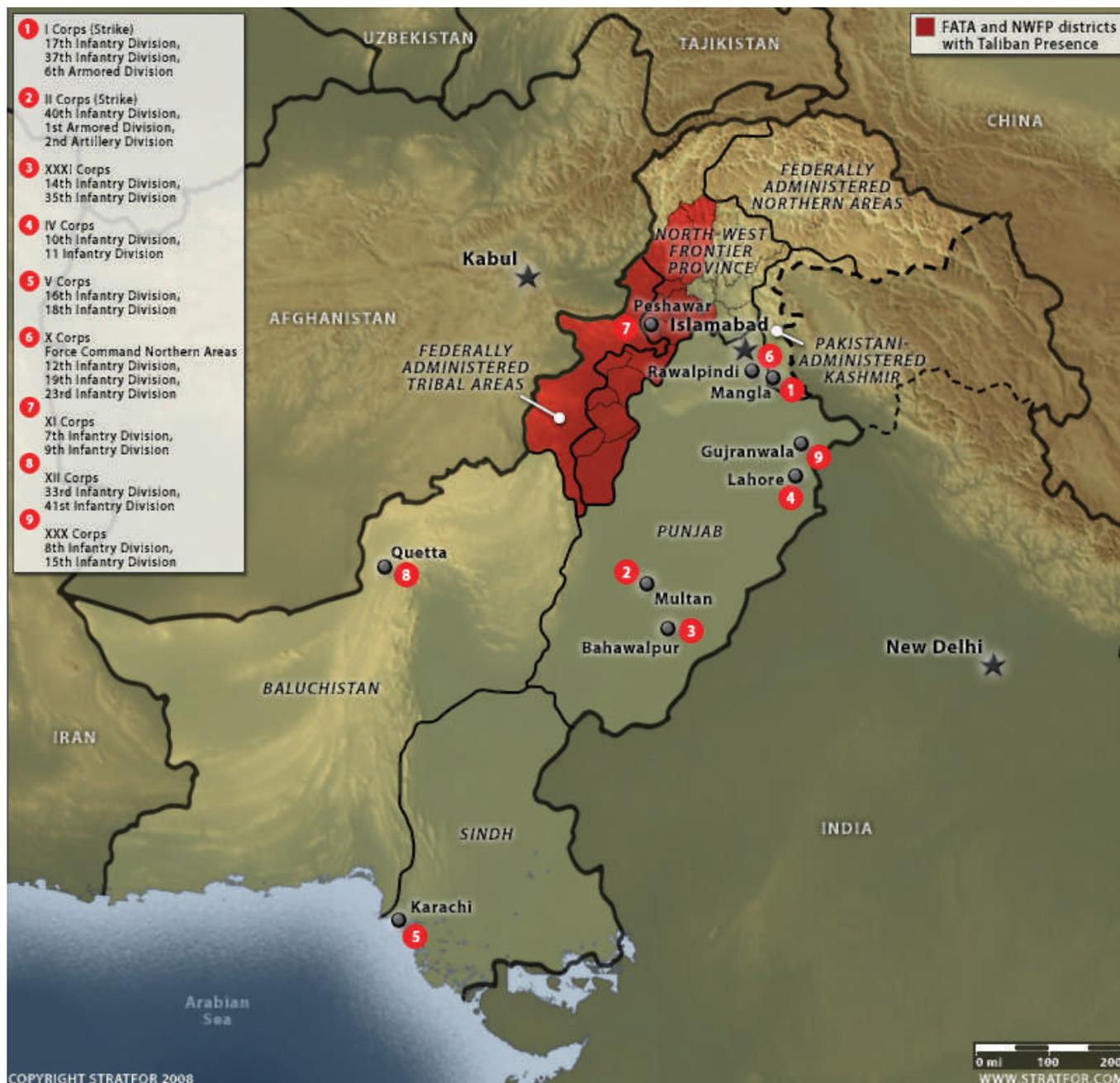
250 *New York Times*, June 9, 2009.

251 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

252 Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009; White, 2009; Haider, 2009.

253 Based on conversations with Long.

Figure 12. Pakistan Army Disposition



Source: Stratfor Global Intelligence

Rupees a month would add up to \$230 million to \$260 million annually, based on the figures I have hypothesized for this paper.²⁵⁴ Using tribes to provide security based on tribal law is common in weak states and is also used by external actors, given the greed mechanisms motivating the rapid rise of the Taliban in the FATA and the NWFP, continued funding would be essential. As Long points out,

when the Soviet Union cut funding to Afghanistan, the militias essential to defenses defected, causing the collapse of the state in 1992.²⁵⁵

Border Redeployments

The fundamental constraint on the Pakistani military's operations in the NWFP and the FATA is its assessment

254 Section "Adding Up Forces."

255 Long, "The Anbar Awakening," 2008, p. 71.

of the threat that India poses on its eastern front. There, Pakistan faces a larger and superior force adjacent to its most vulnerable and critical area, the Punjab plains, home to the state's industrial, political, and military power, its nuclear program, and more than half its population. Cohen explains:

Officers attending the Staff College (Quetta) are taught in their geopolitics course that every country has a core area, which contains the strategic centers of population, political authority, and the basic sinews of economic life, "the military loss of which would normally result in the collapse of national resistance." Of course, if Pakistan has a "core area" it is Punjab, and the other three provinces constitute "invasion routes."²⁵⁶

The unfortunate geography of Pakistan forces it to defend nearly every part of its territory,²⁵⁷ but its concern about the Punjab's vulnerability is acute because the region's communication lines, industrial centers, and major cities all lie fairly close to a border that has few major strategic impediments to an Indian tank invasion across deserts and plains.²⁵⁸ In the event of an attack, Pakistani planners assume that even a small, fast-moving force would be unable to defend its border and that it would have little time to raise new forces or shift large numbers of troops from north to south because its road and rail transport are so poor.²⁵⁹ Even assuming that Pakistan would alter its strategic calculus to allow more forces to be redeployed to the NWFP, its perception of the Indian threat would remain. The minimum force it would need to leave on its eastern border thus is part of any determination of how many troops Pakistan could train and redeploy to a COIN mission.

Force-to-Force Ratios

Pakistan has reason to fear a rapid Indian advance that could isolate, control, or destroy vital assets. In its territorial counterattack in the 1965 war, India attempted not simply to take control of the major city of Lahore, but to cut Pakistan in half and "destroy its war potential."²⁶⁰ The success of a similar plan would fragment Pakistan and cripple

its command structure before the army could fall back, regroup, and counterattack. Because a static stand-and-fight defense would allow for deep Indian penetration into Pakistan without leaving Pakistan's army room to maneuver, Pakistan has developed what it calls the "Offensive Defense" doctrine—often referred to as the "Riposte" doctrine after the fencing maneuver—to counterattack. The Riposte doctrine calls for a rapid, limited advance to occupy Indian territory that then could be traded for any occupied Pakistani territory, as was done after the 1965 war.²⁶¹

Of the six Pakistani corps in the Punjab, the three with heavy infantry formations (the IV, XXX, and XXXI Corps) would be deployed against an initial Indian thrust, slowing the invaders by making use of natural and manmade water barriers on both sides of the border. The I and II strike corps, along with independent armored and mechanized brigades, would implement the Riposte doctrine.²⁶²

One way to estimate minimum required defenses is force-to-force ratios. This was the subject of heated debate among security studies scholars and military analysts, with some contending that a 1:3 defense-to-offense ratio was enough to prevent a breakthrough in the line of defenses.²⁶³ Others argued that even a 1:1.5 ratio would be vulnerable to offensive breakthroughs.²⁶⁴ In 2001, when India and Pakistan were

261 *Jane's World Armies*, 2008. The beginnings of this strategy may have been formulated earlier. Based on Nawaz's account of Brasstacks in *Crossed Swords*, the massive scale Indian war game in January 1987 that threatened to turn into an operation, Pakistan developed a plan to respond by counterattacking into the Indian Punjab.

262 Most of this analysis is drawn from assessments of "Operational Art and Tactical Doctrine" in *Jane's World Armies*, 2008.

263 John J. Mearsheimer, "Why the Soviets Can't Win Quickly in Central Europe," *International Security*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Summer, 1982.

264 Joshua Epstein seems to argue more for this point but also suggests that there is tremendous variance. He estimates that attackers win nearly 50 percent of the time even when they are outnumbered between 1:3 and 2:3, but they also can lose 25 percent of the time even when they outnumber the defender by more than 3:1. Kim Holmes argues that theater-/front-wide, a 1.5:1 advantage is substantial enough to generate a number of 5-6:1 axes that would create breakthrough points. Epstein, "Dynamic Analysis and the Conventional Balance in Europe," *International Security*, Spring 1988, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 154-165. Kim Holmes, "Measuring the Conventional Balance in Europe," *International Security*, Spring 1988, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 166-173.

256 Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, 1994, p. 45.

257 Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, 1994, p. 141-42.

258 Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, 1994, p. 142.

259 Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, 1994, p. 143.

260 Nawaz, *Crossed Swords*, 2008, p. 220.

Table 6. Comparing Force-to-Force Ratios

	Presently Deployed	Minimum Forces Needed	Releaseable	Troops Freed	Comments
<i>Force to Force</i>					
Tactical (1:3)	58 brigades	21-29 brigades	29-37 brigades	194-247,000	India has 20 divisions on the border plus another 6 deployable—or between 62-87 brigades.
Front-wide (1:1.5)	58 brigades	42-58 brigades	0-16 brigades	0-107,000	
2001 posture (3:7 or 1:2.33)	58 brigades	27-38 brigades	20-31 brigades	134-207,000	
<i>Force to Space</i>					
1 Brigade to 15 km	58 brigades or 19 divisions	118 brigades	None	0	Based on this measure, Pakistani brigades are already overstretched by a factor of 2, assuming India can threaten along 2/3 of the border or 1770km.

Sources: Shuja Nawaz, *FATA – A Most Dangerous Place: Meeting the Challenge of Militancy and Terror in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan*, Washington DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies Press, January 2009; International Crisis Group, “Pakistan’s Tribal Areas: Appeasing the Militants,” *Asia Report*, No. 125, December 11, 2006. [<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4568>]; Pakistan Census; Dr. Abdul Jabbar, “Religious Leaders as Partners in Polio Eradication NWFP/FATA,” *World Health Organization*, February 1, 2008 [<http://www.comminit.com/en/node/269402>]; Hassan Abbas, “Is the NWFP Slipping out of Pakistan’s Control?” *Terrorism Monitor*, November 26, 2007; Rahimullah Yusufzai, “Analysis: Pakistan’s Tribal Frontiers,” *BBC News*, December 14, 2001; Richard A. Oppel Jr. and Pir Zubair Shah, “In Pakistan, Radio Amplifies Terror of Taliban,” *New York Times*, January 25, 2009; Shuja Nawaz, “Pakistan’s Summer of Chaos,” *ForeignPolicy.com*, June 2009. [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=5016]; Praveen Swami, “Obama’s World and Pakistan’s War on Terror,” *The Hindu*, June 8, 2009; *Census Data from 1998* [www.fata.pk.gov] combined with the author’s estimates.

on the brink of conflict after a terrorist attack on India’s Parliament building, India massed 700,000 troops on the Punjab border to compel Pakistan to give up 20 suspected terrorists. Pakistan deployed 300,000 troops of its own and stared India down.²⁶⁵ Pakistan’s response in that crisis would seem to indicate that it would adopt a 1:2.33 defense ratio in anticipation of a full-scale clash with India.

The following hypothesis concerning the number of Pakistani troops that could be freed up for a COIN campaign in the tribal areas assumes that a front-wide theater requires no less than a 1:1.5 defense-to-offense ratio, although a 1:3 ratio could be sustainable in certain tactical engagements.²⁶⁶ Based on open-source defense analy-

sis, Pakistan has a little more than 15 divisions (13 of them infantry) based in the Punjab and positioned to defend its

ance implicitly assumes the force quality is the same. This may be a mistaken assumption at times as Posen pointed out in regard to the NATO-Soviet balance on the Central Front, where NATO forces were arguably of superior quality with better command and logistical organization, thus acting as a force multiplier and adding combat capability. Posen, “Correspondence: Reassessing Net Assessment,” *International Security*, Vol. 13, No. 4, Spring 1989, pp. 144-160. Therefore the force-to-force calculations for the Indo-Pakistan border may not be wholly accurate. However, an imbalance in force quality likely would favor India and only strengthens the argument that the Pakistani military would not be able to pull sufficient troops from its eastern border to redeploy to the NWFP/FATA. Jonathan Marcus, “India-Pakistan Military Balance,” *BBC News*, May 9, 2003. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/1735912.stm].

265 Inter Press Service, Dec. 7, 2008. [<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=45015>].

266 Exclusively using force ratios to determine military bal-

eastern border.²⁶⁷ Inclusion of the Multan Corps, located 100 miles from the border, would add three divisions—one infantry, one armored, and one artillery—plus one independent brigade, bringing Pakistan’s total available forces on the border to nearly 19 divisions of 58 brigades. Meanwhile, India has about 20 divisions close to the same border—13 infantry, three rapid-response, three armored, and one mechanized—as well as six divisions in its southern command that could be quickly moved to the theater totaling between 62-87 brigades.

Even if Pakistan dropped to a minimal 1:3 tactical defense ratio,²⁶⁸ it would still need 21 to 29 brigades on or near its border,²⁶⁹ which would severely limit or eliminate a Riposte strategy by curtailing its ability to counterattack with its two strike corps.²⁷⁰ NATO forces on the Central Front during the Cold War accepted such ratios in part because their superior skill, training, and technology mitigated the Soviets’ raw numerical advantage. However, the Pakistan’s military is generally believed to be slightly outclassed by India’s, making the 1:3 ratio an extremely conservative estimate of the minimum forces it would need. Thus the 1:2.3 ratio that was actually implemented theater wide in the recent crisis seems more appropriate ratio to employ in this assessment.

The above scenario would free up 20 to 31 brigades from the Punjab. Assuming three brigades to a division,²⁷¹ and that each division is composed of about 20,000 men,²⁷² that would mean about 134,000 to 207,000 troops. However,

about 8 brigades, or about 55,000 troops,²⁷³ have already been redeployed, mostly to the the Malakand region because of the recent Swat offensive, which means that only an additional 79,000 to 152,000 troops would be available for redeployment to the NWFP and the FATA. To increase numbers, the military could draw a division from the V corps in Karachi, which defends the Karachi-Lahore road and guards against Indian land or marine advances there. It also could borrow a division from the XII corps in Quetta, which is engaged in a pacification campaign against the frequent Baluchi uprisings. Such a redeployment would leave behind at least one division in each province to concentrate on missions there and to protect potential invasion routes. This would bring the total of troops available for the Afghan border area to about 119,000 to 192,000.

Adding up Forces: Redeployment, Reserves and the Lashkars

Troops moved from the border would join the 150,000 troops already based in the NWFP and the FATA, who mainly conduct raids on insurgents and provide border security.²⁷⁴ Although the balance of army to paramilitary in the present deployment is unclear, most if not all of the 55,000-member FC has been deployed for this fight. In addition to the 55,000 border redeployments, the other 40,000 army troops already in the region, representing two army infantry divisions, are reported to have been largely drawn from the XI Corps in Peshawar.²⁷⁵ This combination of forces adds up to about 269,000 to 342,000 troops, enough to conduct a COIN campaign with the recommended numbers in the FATA and the Malakand division but not enough for all of the NWFP, unless the ratio was dropped to between 9.3:1,000 and 13.1:1,000. Troops, however, could be concentrated in areas of highest vulnerability, importance, or violence. Calling up 178,000 to 311,000 or even more reserves to reach a 20:1,000 ratio would place tremendous strain on the Pakistani military and reserves and require significant time for raising and training forces.

267 Based on *Jane’s World Armies*, 2008; GlobalSecurity.org. Disposition of Pakistani Army based on material from Global Security.org and Stratfor, “A Crisis in Indian-Pakistani Relations,” Dec. 18, 2008. [http://www.stratfor.com/memberships/129068/analysis/20081216_part_2_crisis_indian_pakistani_relations_0].

268 Mearsheimer, 1982.

269 Given that India and Pakistan have fought three wars and that each considers the other its arch-nemesis, drawing an analogy to the Central Front does not seem out of order. Moreover, the analogy works well because nuclear deterrence is present in both cases.

270 *Jane’s World Armies*, 2008.

271 Based on e-mail with Ravi Rikhye, editor of Orbat.com, and *Concise World Armies*, 2009.

272 Based on Nawaz’s estimates and statements. Nawaz, *FATA—A Most Dangerous Place*, 2009, and remarks at Jamestown Foundation Conference, April 15, 2009.

273 Based on reports and estimates by Nawaz, “Pakistan’s Summer of Chaos,” June 2009, as well as Swami, “Obama’s World and Pakistan’s War on Terror,” *The Hindu*, June 8, 2009.

274 This is composed of 55,000 NWFP Frontier Corps, 40,000 from the two infantry divisions in the XI Corps in Peshawar, and the balance made up by army divisions and brigades brought in from the Eastern front.

275 *Jane’s World Armies*, 2008; Swami 2009.

Table 7. Total Pakistani COIN Forces

Currently Deployed	150,000
Frontier Corps	approx. 55,000
Local Garrisoned Army	approx. 40,000
Redeployed Army	approx. 55,000
Further Releaseable from Border (Potential)	0-192,000
Reasonable (based on 1:2.3 theater ratio)	152,000
Other Army Redeployments	40,000
NWFP Police (Potential)	50-55,000
Reasonable (Minus 40% Attrition)	33,000
Rangers	40,000
Lashkars	104-116,000
Maximum Potential Forces	593,000
Reasonable Potential Forces	519,000

One way to reduce pressure on the reserves while still raising the number of fighters available would be to use the lashkars. In Bajaur, the Salarzai were able to raise a militia force of 4,000 to assist in driving out the Taliban and in providing security. Even though this militia represented only 0.4 percent of the region's 1 million population,²⁷⁶ if the same percentage was replicated across the NWFP and the FATA, it would yield a militia force of 104,000 to 116,000. Creating such a force would take substantial time, hinge on internal fissures and defections, and require careful sequencing, but given the proper incentives, a militia could add to Pakistan's force numbers.

Finally, Pakistan's 40,000 lightly armed ranger force could assist in a COIN operation. Although the rangers have been deployed around the capital to defend it from a Taliban incursion, they could continue with that mission while also helping in a COIN campaign in districts neighboring the capital, such as Haripur and Abbottabad. Drawing on all these resources, the military might still fall short of needed troop levels unless it drew on the 55,000-member NWFP police force, despite that force's questionable skills and 40 percent attrition rate, which would translate in to an actual force closer to 33,000. Pakistan also could call up army reserves and recruit more Frontier Corps, but this would take time.

Force-to-Space Ratios

If instead of force-on-force ratios, the reallocation of

forces were to be based on measures of force to space, the picture looks even less promising for Pakistan. On the Central Front during the Cold War, it was assumed that a brigade could defend 7 kilometers to 15 kilometers of territory.²⁷⁷ Six of the nine corps of the Pakistani military are based in the Punjab. One of the remaining three corps is based in each of the three other provinces of Sindh, Baluchistan, and the NWFP. All the brigades from the divisions based in the Punjab plus the independent brigades total 58, an estimate based on Brian Cloughley's definition that each division contains approximately three brigades²⁷⁸ and that the Force Command for the Northern Areas, which has functioned since 1999 as another corps command, contains five.²⁷⁹

Assuming each brigade could defend the upper end of the defensible force-to-space ratio of 15 kilometers, the total defensible area would be 870 kilometers. Although the Indo-Pakistan border is about 2,900 kilometers,²⁸⁰ a senior general has suggested that Pakistan needs to seriously defend only about 1,100 miles, or 1,770 kilometers, in the east, presumably because the northern mountains offer a natural defense against conventional militaries.²⁸¹ Still, the Indian army can threaten along most of the eastern front, even in the deserts around Sindh province, because of its

²⁷⁷ Mearsheimer, 1982.

²⁷⁸ Cloughley, *A History of the Pakistan Army*, 1999 p. 376.

²⁷⁹ GlobalSecurity.org.

²⁸⁰ *The Indian Express*, 2002.

²⁸¹ Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*, 1994, p. 141.

²⁷⁶ AFP, Sept. 27, 2008.

air superiority.²⁸² The Punjab features some water barriers that the Pakistan military could use to its defensive advantage, but the proximity of major Pakistan cities and population centers means that fallback and the ability to extend offensive lines, counter-concentrate, and counterattack—all elements critical to the “modern system” of defensive operations—would be limited.²⁸³

Based on current deployments, Pakistan already would be stretched too thin to mount an adequate defense, able to protect only half its border with India and needing each of its brigades to cover about 30 kilometers, or double what forces were expected to be able to do on Europe’s Central Front. Reducing the number of brigades in the Punjab to between 27 to 38 in order to reallocate forces to the NWFP would mean that each brigade would be left to defend an unrealistic 45 kilometers to 65 kilometers. Pakistan might feel that it would need to offset this imbalance of forces by investing in superior conventional technologies and more strategic weapons or by lowering the threshold for its use of nuclear weapons,²⁸⁴ a prospect even the most ardent COIN supporters would not welcome.

Organizational Resistance

Although questions of political and organizational will are being bracketed for the purposes of this paper, if Pakistan sought to move more forces from the Indian border to the NWFP, resistance to a COIN campaign probably would increase out of proportion to the forces being redeployed, as it increasingly transforms the military. On top of political obstacles, senior military leadership also likely would become increasingly concerned that forces trained for a

COIN mission would be incapable of protecting the eastern border with India. The experience of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) provide a cautionary tale. Some scholars have blamed the IDF’s organizational transformation for a mission in the occupied territories for its poor performance in the 2006 Lebanon war.²⁸⁵ According to Matt M. Mathews, prolonged counterinsurgency in the Palestinian occupied territories left the once-indomitable IDF ground forces “tactically unprepared and untrained to fight against a determined Hezbollah force that conducted what was, in many ways, a conventional, fixed-position defense.”²⁸⁶ Fear of a similar result if troops were retrained for a COIN campaign could magnify Pakistan’s fears about becoming locked into a new military paradigm.²⁸⁷

Further, the shift away from conventional high-intensity war to COIN likely would produce organizational objections in Pakistan similar to those that emerged in the United States, concerning prestige, resources, and a potential generational gap in skills. But the biggest potential organizational concern in Pakistan might be the military’s fear that adopting a COIN strategy and transforming itself into what it sees as a glorified police force would compromise its status as the nation’s most indispensable institution.²⁸⁸

282 The Indian army massed forces in the Rajasthan desert threatening Sindh during the Brasstacks war game. Globalsecurity.org.

283 Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle*, Princeton University Press, 2004, p. 46-48.

284 The argument that Pakistan has not accounted for most of U.S. aid during the past six years (GAO, February 2009) and defrayed it toward conventional capabilities for the Indo-Pak border supports this prediction. Further, its purchase of F-16 fighter jets and requests for high-intensity conventional battlefield weapons, such as Apache helicopters, also indicates it will seek technological improvements to “substitute” for redeployed forces. Finally, reports on the growth of its nuclear program reveal how it might try to offset the widening conventional imbalance, compounded by a COIN campaign, with strategic weapons. *New York Times*, May 18, 2009. [<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/18/world/asia/18nuke.html>].

285 Avi Kober, “The Israel Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War: Why the Poor Performance?” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 1, 2008. Martin Van Creveld had warned of this prospect nearly eight years before in *The Sword and the Olive: A Critical History of the Israeli Defense Forces*, New York: Public Affairs, 1998. In the U.S. military, one person to make this argument is Col. Gian Gentile. Yochi J. Dreazen, “Officer Questions Petraeus’s Strategy,” *Wall Street Journal*, April 7, 2008. [<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB120753402909694027.html>]. Gentile, “Misreading the Surge Threatens U.S. Army’s Conventional Capabilities,” *World Politics Review*, March 2008.

286 Matt M. Mathews, *We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War*, The Long War Series Occasional Paper 26, Ft. Leavenworth, Kans.: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008. [<http://www.cgsc.army.mil/carl/download/csipubs/matthewsOP26.pdf>].

287 Derived from Long’s analysis on organizational adaptation. Long, “Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence,” 2008.

288 Van Creveld predicts that prolonged combat in low-intensity conflicts results in regular forces degenerating into police forces. Van Creveld, *On Future War*, London: Brassey’s, 1991, p. 207. Argument drawn from Khalid Aziz, “Causes of Rebellion in Waziristan,” Regional Institute of Policy Research and Training, Peshawar Policy Report, Feb. 22, 2007, p. 3.

Whether organizational interests drive threat assessments and doctrine or the other way around, the resistance to COIN doctrine would not be linear but likely would rise more steeply as certain thresholds were crossed. Thus getting from 150,000 troops to 250,000 troops might be considerably easier than getting from 400,000 troops to 500,000 troops.²⁸⁹

Sequencing

On its face, raising force levels from 150,000 to between 520,000 and 580,000 in the FATA and the NWFP is not necessarily beyond the scope of the Pakistani military. But even if the military could draw of all the force types previously described to raise the numbers necessary for a COIN operation throughout the NWFP, redeploying, rotating, and retraining regular and paramilitary forces, calling up reserves, and organizing the lashkars would require a sequenced approach.

To accommodate the time frame for raising sufficient numbers for a Coin campaign, the military would need to use an “ink-blot” or “oil-spot” strategy. Under this approach, Pakistani forces would control critical areas, then spread outward (like an expanding oil spot), probably along road networks to maintain good logistics for resupplying troops. But even an oil-spot strategy needs large troop numbers and a long logistical tail.²⁹⁰ A logical starting place for an oil-spot campaign would be Peshawar in the NWFP, which is the home of the XI Corps, with two infantry divisions, as well as the Frontier Corps at Bala Hisar Fort.

The Taliban strategy in spring 2009 was to consolidate its hold on Swat and send fighters in groups of 50 to 100 to infiltrate and begin to take control of neighboring districts, such as Buner, Mansehra, Shangla, and Kohistan. An oil-spot strategy would fortify areas of government control and assume positions in contested territories to clear out Taliban influence. Then, the military could spread and gradually encircle the enemy, encroaching upon and retaking Taliban positions without allowing militants to melt away to fight another day. If the starting point were Peshawar and the more controlled and stable districts bordering the Punjab province, the endpoints would be North Waziristan and South Waziristan. The tribal agen-

cies’ more “settled” areas, such as the Mohmand and the Orakzai agencies, where schools, roads, and clinics were built from 2002 to 2004, would be primed for COIN’s later stages of development.²⁹¹

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At the same time, the military would want to continue to disrupt Taliban operations and target concentrations of insurgents that might be training or massing for a fight. The dispersion of operations necessary for population security would need to be backstopped by infantry and rapid-reaction forces that can prevent dispersed and lightly-armed military, paramilitary, and lashkar positions from being overrun by the Taliban. Dispersed Taliban positions could be gradually eliminated by the lashkars and the Frontier Corps, as well as by the local police or constabulary. If Taliban fighters attempted to counter this strategy by concentrating their numbers to overrun these lightly armed and less-trained forces, they would expose themselves to the type of heavy assaults the Pakistani army loves to fight.

Greenhill and Staniland point out the lessons of COIN require flexibility depending on context.²⁹² If the militants are dug in, as they were in Fallujah (and perhaps Bajaur), the army must conduct raids with heavy firepower to clear

289 Insights based on conversations with Joshua Shiffrinon.

290 Quinlivan, “Force Requirements in Stability Operations,” 1995-1996.

291 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 186.

292 Kelly M. Greenhill and Paul Staniland, “Ten Ways to Lose at Counterinsurgency,” *Civil Wars*, Vol. 9, No. 4, December 2007, pp. 402-419.

them out.²⁹³ Pakistan's special forces could be employed for such operations. Contrary to the prevailing media narrative, a close review of the raid on Islamabad's Red Mosque in June 2007 by Pakistan's rangers and elite commandos from its Special Service Group not only revealed the military's sophisticated capabilities in surgical lethality, but its adaptability to the terrain challenges of securing "sacred spaces."²⁹⁴

Training and Transformation

Retraining is the linchpin of organizational adaptation to COIN, especially for a force such as Pakistan's, which is steeped in "large-scale conventional manoeuvre warfare and ... armored operations."²⁹⁵ Previous operations, which deployed troops into the tribal theater without specialized training, met with disastrous consequences and high casualty rates. Cloughley explains, "Fighting through every defile, every nala—'every rock, every hill'—demands very different skills to those required in an armored advance. They can be acquired of course ... but not overnight; and it was extremely unwise to commit troops to footslogging, ambush-prone, classic frontier warfare without intensive and lengthy preparation."²⁹⁶ During the 2006 to 2008 campaigns in Bajaur and Swat, the military tried to pull aside officers for retraining in counterinsurgency skills but had to balance this with the competing demands of day-to-day operations.²⁹⁷

293 Based on conversation with Long.

294 Manjeet S. Pardesi, "The Battle for the Soul of Pakistan at Islamabad's Red Mosque," *Treading on Hallowed Ground: Counterinsurgency Operations in Sacred Spaces*, Ed. Fair and Sumit Ganguly, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Cloughley, "Pakistan's Army and National Stability," April 22, 2009, explains how hardened media sentiment against the Musharraf government led to skewed coverage that first lamented inadequate action and then excessive, hasty force. Cloughley argues that the military deserved credit for attempting negotiations and then for conducting a successful operation that freed many hostages and killed about 70 armed militants.

295 Cloughley, "Pakistan's Army and National Stability," April 22, 2009, p. 10.

296 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 127.

297 Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 200, points out that in 1982 the Sri Lankan army faced the twin imperatives of immediately disrupting insurgent Tamil Tiger activities and retraining territory to effectively combat insurgents. Although, a host of other reasons are involved, it does not bode well that the

COIN training times vary based on the operations for which the troops are being trained and their experience. However, some benchmark figures are possible. During the British experience with the Malay insurgency, local security forces were trained for three months to a year, depending on the promise they showed; in 15 months, 50,000 police were trained.²⁹⁸ But because Pakistan's army lacks a counterinsurgency doctrine²⁹⁹—and for that matter, a stability operations doctrine, despite being the highest contributor of U.N. peacekeepers—it will be substantially more difficult for it to conduct training domestically.³⁰⁰ Even if Pakistan could follow the Malay example of large-volume and rapid training (roughly 10,000 trained in three months), it still could take at least 24 months for it to transform the 80,000-strong Frontier Corps into a capable COIN force.³⁰¹

A Pakistani army battalion undergoing concentrated training (instead of being trained concurrent with operations) reportedly can prepare for a new mission in eight months.³⁰² Assuming Pakistan retrained two divisions, or 40,000 troops, at a time³⁰³ it would take two and a half to

Tamil Tigers were undefeated until May of 2009.

298 FM 3-24, p. 6-22.

299 Despite suggestions that Pakistan is starting to adapt (Haider Mullick, "Lions and Jackals: Pakistan's Emerging Counterinsurgency Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, July 15, 2009 [<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/65191/haider-ali-hussein-mullick/lions-and-jackals>]), the measures it has taken are likely not much more than "learning by doing" and gradual improvement over time. This approach constitutes neither a doctrinal shift nor institutionalization of change as evidenced by two facts: 1) There is no staff college or school for counterinsurgency, and 2) The resources and manpower required for this scale of change are not being deployed to the theater. Based on conversations with Shuja Nawaz. Also, based on remarks by Cohen at Jamestown Foundation Conference, April 15, 2009.

300 Maria Kiani, "Pakistan's Contribution to U.N. Peacekeeping," *Islamabad Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Autumn 2004. [http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2004_files/no_3/article/3a.htm].

301 Assuming this modeled the British pace in Malaysia of training 10,000 every three months. FM 3-24.

302 Cloughley, *A History of the Pakistan Army*, 1999, p. 343; Cloughley, *War, Coups, and Terror*, 2009, p. 127.

303 There is some basis for assuming the retraining of two divisions at a time. Rashid, "Pakistan's Continued Failure to Adopt a Counterinsurgency Strategy," March 2009, writes that Adm.

five years for a full transformation, depending on the scope of a COIN campaign. Training seven divisions to accompany the FC in covering the FATA and the Malakand division of the NWFP could be done in two and a half years, but the numbers required to cover all of the NWFP would require training 14 regular army divisions³⁰⁴ and the equivalent of two ranger divisions, an undertaking that could take as long as five years.³⁰⁵

U.S. advisers could make a difference. Currently, such advisers are conducting seven-month training courses in counterinsurgency for a select group of 400 Pakistani FC.

Such crude estimates do not, of course, account for the simultaneous training of reserves or garrisoned troops or for the possibility that training times might get shorter as proficiency and efficiency increased. However, the assumption that two divisions could be retrained at the same time remains a generous one. Moreover, the transformation of the professional military into a force suitable for COIN operations requires a degree of “unlearning” of the skills critical to conventional conflict, skills that are considered “bad habits” in a COIN campaign.³⁰⁶ Logistics and ground transport alone required weeks of on-the-job training during recent campaigns in the Bajaur Agency

Michael Mullen tried to persuade the Pakistani military to allow the United States to retrain from two brigades to two divisions for COIN operations. It seems reasonable to think that the military could not retrain all its forces simultaneously and that two divisions at a time would be the upper limit. Moreover, given that the Pakistani military has deployed no more than two regular army divisions to the FATA/NWFP theater at a given time, it seems unlikely that it would retrain more than that number of troops at one time.

304 The 119,000 to 192,000 troops redeployed from the border, including the ones already in FATA/NWFP but not trained in COIN.

305 Up to 16 divisions retrained with two divisions being retrained at a time means that it would take eight rounds of eight-month retraining for a total of 64 months or roughly five years to reach full strength.

306 Long, “Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence,” 2008.

and Swat, where the military’s acute vulnerability to militants resulted in many casualties.³⁰⁷

U.S. advisers could make a difference. Currently, such advisers are conducting seven-month training courses in counterinsurgency for a select group of 400 Pakistani FC.³⁰⁸ The U.S. military estimates that its plans to retrain 9,000 more FC in COIN would take at least two years.³⁰⁹ Scaling up U.S. advisers and trainers could speed this process, but it also could mean serious trade-offs.³¹⁰ The larger the U.S. footprint, the more the Pakistani military might be perceived as doing the bidding of the United States. This could alienate residents of the region, drive away or compromise the recruitment of the lashkars and new FC personnel, and feed the Taliban narrative and insurgency. An indigenous training center, drawing on some Western advisers, though, would lengthen the time it would take to train all the forces needed for a COIN campaign.

Pakistani Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Chief of the Army Staff, has called for more training at the unit level instead of major formation exercises, but while some resources are shifting westward, no concerted effort to retrain and redeploy on the scale necessary for a population-centric COIN campaign has been undertaken. And, as long as the Pakistani

307 Cloughley, “Pakistan’s Army and National Stability,” April 22, 2009. Although the military was conducting a counterinsurgency campaign, it was not the population-centric COIN doctrine and more akin to “low-intensity warfare.”

308 *New York Times*, Feb. 23, 2009.

309 *Associated Press*, May 15, 2009, reports that this assumes the trainers could slash training times in half from the estimated four years it would normally take.

310 Based on a June 23, 2009 *New York Times* editorial, across the border in Afghanistan, about 4,000 American trainers are being sent to raise and train an additional 126,000 Afghan soldiers. This is expected to take seven years at a cost of \$10 billion to \$20 billion for training and equipment. Paying the soldiers is estimated to cost another \$150 million to \$450 million annually, the amount subject to whether the wages were competitive with the Taliban. The costs, the footprint, and the time frames are staggering and can be roughly applied to Pakistan. It might be argued that retraining Pakistani forces substantially differs from raising and training a new Afghan force, if Long’s argument in “Doctrine of Eternal Recurrence,” 2008, holds that retraining for COIN to “unlearn” bad habits is almost as difficult, then the analogy might hold up.

military continues operations that “clear” militants—more likely displacing them to another district—while creating millions of refugees and some collateral damage, as it did in the Swat campaign,³¹¹ COIN theory predicts that the insurgency will deepen, especially if jihadists continue to supplant the government in providing assistance.³¹²

In addition to official training times, it will take years of counterinsurgency experience at the individual and organizational level to make a COIN campaign effective. A deployed force that takes up residency rather than being rotated in and out of the area might improve the learning curve. On the other hand, creating a resident counterinsurgency forces would transform that force, and Pakistan would be loath to have more than half its military “unlearning” how to fight a conventional war.

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Like most modern militaries, Pakistan has a rotation policy to prevent the fatigue and demoralization of its forces. Units regularly are moved from hard or semi-hard areas to peaceful ones. But every serious counterinsurgency effort studied has been a multiyear effort, so Pakistan would either have to call up more reserves or rotate troops from one hard

or semi-hard area (the FATA and the NWFP) to another (Indian border).³¹⁴ Quinlivan warns that fatigue, caused by such sustained and extended rotations, eventually damages an army, with negative effects on force readiness, retention, and overall professionalism. This damage, along with the effective transformation of a traditional army into a police force and the loss of conventional military skills, would heighten Pakistan’s sense of vulnerability and could cripple a COIN campaign if it extended beyond a few years.³¹⁵

Practices

The best concrete measures for COIN distilled during 50 years of RAND research³¹⁶—including the unification of civilian and military structures, the effective use of amnesty and rewards, the construction and use of border security, and localized pacification—all could be attempted in the NWFP and the FATA, but not without facing serious obstacles.

COIN requires tremendous emphasis on a united civilian and military leadership both at the national and provincial levels, but the Pakistani military operates autonomously and is unaccustomed to sharing the stage with civilian leaders.³¹⁷ At times, it even has taken on governance and development responsibilities and arguably handled them better than civilian leaders. Certainly, a powerful argument has been made about the military’s kleptocracy and corruption,³¹⁸ but equal if not stronger charges have been levied against Pakistan’s civilian leadership.³¹⁹ Considering Pakistan’s history of civilian under-capacity, mutual distrust,³²⁰ and cen-

314 Shafqat Baig, “Scheduling the Peacetime Rotation of Pakistan Army Units,” Naval Postgraduate School masters thesis, September 1992.

315 Stanislaw Andrewski makes a seminal contribution to political science revealing that military dictatorships that concentrate their military assets on internal repression or pacification are not good at fighting external wars. While some countries can endure this because of natural defenses (Indonesia) or strategic depth (China), Pakistan’s strategic outlook cannot afford such conditions. Andrewski, “On the Peaceful Disposition of Military Dictatorships,” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, December 1980.

316 Long, *On “Other War,”* 2006.

317 Anatol Lieven, “A Difficult Country: Pakistan and the Case for Developmental Realism,” *The National Interest*, March 2006.

318 Ayesha Siddiqi, *Military Inc.: Inside Pakistan’s Military Economy*, London: Pluto Press, 2007.

319 Cloughley, *A History of the Pakistan Army*, 1999.

320 Recent events and tensions over reconstruction of the Swat

311 *The Financial Times*, June 5, 2009, reported 2.5 million refugees had been created from the Swat operation.

312 Samina Ahmed, “The Peshawar Problem,” *Foreign Policy*, June 2009. [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=5023].

313 Singh, 2009.

tralization struggles,³²¹ adapting to joint leadership might be more difficult for the military than adapting to COIN procedures.³²²

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Amnesty programs should be used to peel away insurgents to avoid costly fights to the finish and perhaps convert them into local security forces, an approach congruent with the use of the lashkars. A financial reward program for information on even rank-and-file insurgency members could be useful. Of course, the military will need to guard against manipulation of these programs, but experience has shown them to be cost-effective in terms of both blood and treasure. Even assuming high-end estimate of 100,000 Taliban forces in the

Valley bear this out. Perlez and Shah, "Taliban Losses Are No Sure Gain for Pakistanis," *New York Times*, June 28, 2009.

321 Staniland, "The Poisoned Chalice," 2009.

322 Recent events and tensions over reconstruction of Swat Valley bear this out. Perlez and Shah, "Taliban Losses Are No Sure Gain for Pakistanis," *New York Times*, June 28, 2009.

NWFP and the FATA, buying off each one for \$10,000, at a total cost of \$1 billion, would represent a fraction of what is being spent now and what will be spent in a COIN campaign. However, such tactics would undoubtedly engender anger and resistance from international donors financing the buy-off of the Taliban.

Rugged terrain makes security along Afghan border difficult. Even with 1,000 posts along the 1,500 mile border, the Pakistani military says it cannot control access. The use of sensor technology along major access routes combined with mobile pursuit forces (most likely helicopters) would be costly. Further, interdicting insurgents crossing the border might incite more resentment and anger by attempting to enforce a border that is hardly recognized by Pashtun tribes because it divides Pashtun territory in half.³²³

Finally, pacification would involve the combination of local security provided by permanent security forces, perhaps with *encadrement* with the Pakistani military or Frontier Corps, and local development. A tactical lesson of Vietnam and Iraq is that small indigenous force units can be rendered effective with the embedding of a few seasoned troops. In Vietnam, the integration of a six-person U.S. squad into a once-ineffective 18-person local Vietnamese platoon rendered the larger unit operationally effective (through training, monitoring, and boosting morale), thereby tripling capable forces. This model was adopted in Iraq, but only at the battalion level instead of at the smaller platoon or company level. The Pakistani military eventually might try a similar strategy by integrating regular army forces with the FC or FC troops with the local lashkars, but such a change could take several years, partly because the army regards the FC as a second class force.

Meanwhile, development, though largely outside the scope of this paper, would need to focus on channeling money into local hands. Despite the inevitable inefficiencies and corruptions, the local populace would need to have a stake in development projects to help counteract economic motives for the insurgency. This could extend to cash incentive programs, paying the lashkars for securing their villages against the Taliban and paying locals not to provide shelter to militants. These incentives could be confined to localities that provide cooperation, information, or security. ■

323 Johnson and Mason, *International Security*, Spring 2008.

Summary Findings

This paper's findings for a prospective Pakistani military COIN campaign include:

1. **Shortfalls.** Between 370,000 and 430,000 more troops would be needed in the FATA and the NWFP region to meet the minimum force-to-population ratios prescribed by counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine, much higher than current Pakistani deployments of 150,000, and even this is no assurance of success given adverse conditions. Moreover, Pakistan now is conducting low-intensity warfare rather than using counterinsurgency tactics, partly a function of its military doctrine.
2. **Too Big for the Army Alone.** Troop numbers required for a COIN campaign in the NWFP and the FATA would necessitate the calling up of Pakistani reserves or the extensive use of lesser-trained and more poorly equipped paramilitary and irregular forces, including the Frontier Corps.
3. **Troops Able to be Released From Indian Border.** Based on threat perceptions and baseline principles of force-to-force or force-to-space ratios, the Pakistani military likely would release, at most, 207,000 from its Indian border, 55,000 of whom already have been deployed to the tribal theater. Given organizational resistance and absent a steep escalation of the threat, it is highly unlikely that Pakistan would redeploy the additional 152,000 troops to the tribal areas for a COIN operation.
4. **Time Frame and Force Composition.** The most optimistic time frame for raising and training the requisite forces for a counterinsurgency would be two to five years. Forces could include:
 - 232,000 irregular forces. This figure would encompass 55,000 members of the Frontier Corps, 33,000 active police, 40,000 rangers, and 104,000 local lashkars.
 - 287,000 regular army troops. This figure is based on the 95,000 troops already present in the region (from the I, IV, X, XI, and XXX Corps), 152,000 troops redeployed from the Indian border, and another 40,000 redeployed from regional corps in Quetta and Karachi.
5. **Strategy.** Two strategies are possible for the Pakistani military:
 - A conventional COIN campaign, with an oil-spot strategy that makes the best use of forces based on levels of instability in the region.
 - An unconventional COIN campaign modeled on the U.S. strategy in Iraq, which depends on irregular forces and favorable events, such as voluntary ceasefires or fissures and defections within the insurgency.
6. **Terrain Disadvantages.** The demographic and topographic terrain of the FATA and the NWFP are ideal for a protracted insurgency and require higher than average force ratios and far more military assets than Pakistan possesses.
7. **A Distant Development Agenda.** Even piecemeal development in the region would be questionable, given the realities of the Pakistani economy. More fundamentally, reform would require undermining the power of the country's existing elites and land-owning classes, which dominate the political scene.
8. **A Strategic Catch-22.** Pakistan's limited resources would necessitate substantial U.S. and Western military aid, assistance in training, and economic support to wage a capital-, labor-, and time-intensive COIN campaign. However, as the U.S. role expands and becomes more visible, Pakistan likely would face a stiff public backlash, a steep decline in the morale of its regular and irregular forces, and a more cohesive insurgency.
9. **Needed: An Exogenous Shock.** Without substantial change in its threat perceptions of the Taliban or India or new inducements from the United States and NATO, the Pakistani military probably will take a default position on the tribal areas, clearing out extremist elements of the Taliban using current tactics while seeking to cut deals with more moderate elements in the hope that those elements could take control. It would draw on standard divide-and-rule tactics and perhaps on the lashkars. While this approach might stem attacks on Pakistan, it would not end cross-border raids or support of the Taliban's Afghanistan insurgency. ■

This highly optimistic accounting could still mean a shortfall of 61,000 troops, which might be filled by reserves and new police and Frontier Corps recruits, all of whom would require time to train.

Conclusion

In addition to examining Pakistani capabilities for a COIN campaign, this paper has sought to put into perspective Western expectations for Pakistani action in the Afghan border area. A COIN campaign would require Pakistan to commit a sizeable chunk, if not most of, its forces to fighting the Taliban, although it does not perceive the Taliban to be a threat to the state. Despite recent Taliban suicide attacks in the Punjab,³²⁴ Farrukh Saleem, the executive director of the Centre for Research and Security Studies, best summarizes Pakistani threat perceptions and commensurate deployments:

In effect, some 80 to 90 percent of our military assets are deployed to counter the threat from India. The Pakistan army looks at the Indian army and sees its inventory of 6,384 tanks as a threat. The Pakistan army looks at the Indian air force and sees its inventory of 672 combat aircraft as a threat. The Pakistan army looks at the Indian army and notices that six out of 13 Indian corps are strike corps. The Pakistan army looks at the Indian army and finds that 15, 9, 16, 14, 11, 10 and 2 Corps are all pointing their guns at Pakistan. The Pakistan army looks at the Indian army and discovers that the 3rd Armoured Division, 4 RAPID Division and 2nd Armoured Brigade have been deployed to cut Pakistan into two halves. The Pakistan army looks at the Taliban and sees no Arjun Main Battle Tanks (MBT), no armoured fighting vehicles, no 155 mm Bofors howitzers, no Akash surface-to-air missiles, no BrahMos land attack cruise missiles, no Agni Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles, no Sukhoi Su-30 MKI air superiority strike fighters, no Jaguar attack aircraft, no MiG-27 ground-attack aircraft, no Shakti thermonuclear devices, no Shakti-II 12 kiloton fission devices and no heavy artillery.

Pakistan is on fire and our fire-fighters are on the Pakistan-India border. To be certain, none of those Indian tanks can cross the Himalayas into China so Arjun MBTs must all be for Pakistan. Thus, the

324 *Washington Post*, June 17, 2009. Some also suggest that the suicide attacks are retaliation for Pakistani incursions into the FATA/NWFP and would likely abate if Pakistan ceased its counterinsurgency activities.

Pakistan-India border has to be defended. Then, what about this hyperactive insurgency that is snatching away Pakistani physical terrain—bit by bit? There certainly is no easy way out. America wants the Pakistan army to neutralize threats to the mainland US. The Pakistan army, on the other hand, has to defend the Pakistan-India border.³²⁵

While this perception of India's threat may be inflated as a result of Pakistani doctrine and history, a more objective view of the situation might not differ tremendously. In fact a forthcoming study reveals this perspective to be shared by the broader Pakistani public rather than being confined to security elites or rogue ISI cells.³²⁶

A COIN campaign would require Pakistan to commit a sizeable chunk, if not most of, its forces to fighting the Taliban, although it does not perceive the Taliban to be a threat to the state.

The Taliban has encroached upon Pakistani territory (most of it outside the Pakistani "core") and perhaps may be able to control some of it for an extended period. But the Taliban does not possess conventional superiority, so its reach is limited. In contrast, India's ground-force superiority, air superiority, intermediate range missiles, nuclear weapons, and 500,000 troops facing the Pakistani border could be used for a massive land invasion. Further, India's provocative "Cold Start" doctrine³²⁷ outlines a strategy to disrupt military command, take control, and destroy the Pakistani state. Pakistan has not forgotten the loss of one-eighth of its territory in 1971, when the Bangladeshi secession was aided by Indian military intervention. Today,

325 Saleem, "Where Is the Pakistan Army?" *The News*, April 26, 2009. [http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=174334].

326 The paper indicates that there is a sophisticated public (urban) support for violent militant groups to serve a strategic function. See Jacob N. Shapiro and C. Christine Fair, "Why Support Islamist Militancy? Evidence from Pakistan," Unpublished Paper, May 18, 2009.

327 Walter C. Ladwig III, "A Cold Start for Hot Wars?" *International Security*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Winter 2007/08), pp. 158–190.

Pakistan is extremely concerned about what it perceives to be India's effort to encircle it through operations run out of Iran and through its support of the Baluchi insurgency in Pakistan. It also fears the influence of India in Afghanistan and the potential deployment of Indian security forces there.³²⁸ As South Asia specialist C. Christine Fair writes, "Pakistan's fears about India are historical, neuralgic, and deeply existential. The Pakistan army cannot imagine a future wherein its very existence is not imperiled by India."³²⁹ This is a threat perception that is unlikely to change during the time that Pakistan would need to conduct a COIN campaign.

Western allies expect Pakistan to launch a military campaign that emphasizes benevolent occupation and population security. The Pakistani military has not trained for this type of campaign, a campaign that few militaries in the world are capable of even attempting. Moreover, the COIN campaign would be waged in an inhospitable terrain that favors the insurgency.

In addition to running counter to the Pakistani military's threat perceptions, Western allies expect Pakistan to launch a military campaign that emphasizes benevolent occupation and population security. The Pakistani military has not trained for this type of campaign, a campaign that few militaries in the world are capable of even attempting. Moreover, the COIN campaign would be waged in an inhospitable terrain that highly favors the insurgency. It would need to cope with tribes that have gone largely ungoverned by a centralized state for most of history, and, certainly, since the inception of the Pakistani state. Further, the Pashtun population in this region is as big as or slightly larger than the populations of Iraq or Afghanistan.

328 Fair, "What's the Problem With Pakistan," *Foreign Affairs* Roundtable, March 31, 2009 [<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/discussions/roundtables/whats-the-problem-with-pakistan>]. Fair, "Time for Sober Realism," April 2009.

329 Ibid.

In addition, the West wants Pakistan, a nation ranked 170th in the world in GDP per capita, to wage a campaign that is described as "slow, labor-intensive, and very expensive in lives and treasure."

While many analysts have concluded that the Pakistani military needs to retrain for and employ COIN doctrine, facts show that this is an unreasonable expectation, especially in the near term of one to two years. Even assuming full U.S. support of \$15 billion to \$50 billion, Cordesman estimates that development of COIN capabilities would take three to five years.³³⁰

Prevailing opinion in Washington suggests that Pakistan is an intransigent ally that for six years has bilked the United States of \$12.3 billion, with little if nothing to show for that expenditure.³³¹ The perception might be a result of Pakistan's strategic thinking, which has been outlined above. Pakistan also may want to maintain its strategic depth³³² and hedge its bets in case some combination of U.S. and NATO withdrawal³³³ allows the Taliban to return to power in Afghanistan leaving Pakistan to deal with the aftermath. But Pakistanis also see these tribal areas, arguably even the NWFP, as not fully integrated into their state and not a major threat or source of instability—at least until the United States invaded Afghanistan and militants were displaced to the tribal areas, forcing the problem of

330 Cordesman, "Sanctum FATA," May/June 2009, states that the security side alone will take three to five years, with the price tag of \$2 billion to \$3 billion a year. Development aid of \$1.5 billion has been allocated for five years. On the higher end, Rashid reported that special envoy Richard Holbrooke has remarked that Pakistan would need \$50 billion. Rashid, "Pakistan on the Brink," *New York Review of Books*, June 11, 2009, Vol 56, No. 10 [<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/22730>].

331 "Securing, Stabilizing, and Developing Pakistan's Border Area With Afghanistan," GAO Report 09-263SP, February 2009 [<http://waggon/new.items/d09263sp.pdf>].

332 Fair, "Time for Sober Realism," April 2009, indicates this may be a fundamental divergence in interests.

333 Gen. Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq told CIA Director William Casey "being an ally of the United States was like living on the banks of an enormous river. The soil is wonderfully fertile," he said, "but every four or eight years the river changes course, and you may find yourself alone in a desert." Steve Coll, *Ghost Wars: The Secret History of the CIA, Afghanistan, and Bin Laden From the Soviet Invasion to Sep. 10, 2001*, New York: Penguin Press, 2004.

governing the area upon Pakistan.³³⁴ Because the Pakistani

334 This perception of Taliban insurgency and instability as an externality of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan is best exemplified by an interview with NWFP Gov. Owais Ahmad Ghani. See Shahzad, "Frontier Wisdom," *Asia Times Online*, April 24, 2009. [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KD24Df01.html]:

"The world is responsible for Afghanistan, all the troubles we face here are from Afghanistan, the roots of the problems are in Afghanistan, not in Pakistan. We have been battling the fall-out from Afghanistan, and I say it is not Pakistan's responsibility. Nobody should blame Pakistan because, number one, we never invited the Soviet army into Afghanistan. It was the Afghans themselves. We never brought international terrorists into Afghanistan. It was not our ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence] or anybody, it was international intelligence agencies, over and above the objections of the ISI.

"There was a basic agreement that only Pakistani intelligence would deal with the [Afghan mujahideen groups in the 1980s] and jihadist organizations and everybody in Europe and the U.S. supported this. But they started their own operations, and they were warned that they would not be able to control these people. And that is exactly what happened. But Pakistan was not responsible for that.

"The second time, when al-Qaeda came into Afghanistan [in the mid-1990s during mujahideen rule], Pakistan did not invite them. It was among the Afghans themselves. Today, if the U.S.A. and NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] are in Afghanistan, they are not there on Pakistan's invitation, they are there because of an Afghan invitation or whoever invited them.

"Secondly, in Pakistan, every AK-47 bullet till now comes from Afghanistan, every gram of explosives comes from Afghanistan, every heavy weapon comes from Afghanistan, and every gram of heroin comes from Afghanistan. This is fueling the militancy and giving rise to the activities of criminal gangs in Pakistan." Schmidt, "The Unraveling of Pakistan," 2009, describes how the Pakistani elite and political class buy into this narrative, and even secularists perceive the United States as a pro-Israel, anti-Islam force threatening Pakistan. Broader Pakistani public opinion shares these perceptions. Survey data reveals the Pakistanis are highly suspicious of U.S. motives in the region, perceive the U.S.-Pakistan relationship to mostly benefit the United States, and believe that Pakistan's relationship with the United States, not its past actions, is driving domestic terrorism. Fair, "Pakistani Attitudes Towards Militancy in and Beyond Pakistan." *Saving Afghanistan*, Ed. V. Krishnappa, Shanthie Mariet D'Souza and Priyanka Singh, New Delhi: Academic Foundation, 2009. Cohen

Taliban's prime objective is to drive out U.S. and NATO forces, the Pakistani military believes it is being asked to wage a battle on behalf of Western objectives.³³⁵ Pakistan's intransigence and resentment are increased by the perception that NATO forces may even be free-riding on its back. As of mid-July, the Pakistani military's casualties from the fight against the Taliban and al-Qaeda outstripped the combined losses of U.S. and NATO contributors by almost 50%.³³⁶

While many analysts have concluded that the Pakistani military needs to retrain for and employ COIN doctrine, facts show that this is an unreasonable expectation, especially in the near term of one to two years.

The likelihood that Pakistan would want to wage a COIN campaign would increase only if the risk of an Indian invasion were mitigated by a Kashmir peace agreement or by mutual de-escalation at that border,³³⁷ or if the risk of a Taliban threat to the Pakistani "core" rose tremendously. The United States or other outside actors also would need to offer much larger inducements; show a credible commitment to the region for the long haul; provide more military and economic aid and access to training and weapons³³⁸; defray the costs of what is essentially nation-

and Nawaz, "Mastering Counterinsurgency: A Workshop Report 2009," July 2009, argue that even from an objective perspective, this instability Pakistan is experiencing is unique because of multiple problems and was not always the case.

335 Certainly, such as Baitullah Mehsud's faction, are targeting the Pakistani state, but there is more unity among other factions (such as Nazir and Haqqani) on Afghanistan. Some Pakistani leaders also believe that perceived alignment with the United States is what is driving the Taliban's turn on the Pakistani state and if Pakistan were to cease or even tone down its cooperation with the United States, the Taliban would not pose a real threat.

336 Based on [Icasualties.org](http://icasualties.org) last checked on Aug. 13, 2009.

337 An agreement and peace was remarkably close under President Pervez Musharraf. Steve Coll, "The Back Channel," *The New Yorker*, March 2, 2009. The Daily Times reports Track II dialogue has resumed.

338 If Holbrooke estimates the cost to be \$50 billion, then the

making and state-building³³⁹; and help decrease credible threats to Pakistan, such as incursions on sovereign territory and Indian encirclement. Some analysts recognize that the United States can exert little influence by exclusively employing “sticks.”³⁴⁰

If the United States and its allies believe a Pakistani COIN campaign is imperative, they will need to dramatically alter Pakistan’s assessment of who its real enemies are. That might entail support for a Kashmir peace process or a de-escalation of troops on the border. Meanwhile, the United States and its allies should continue to share (and perhaps inflate) intelligence on Taliban strength to augment Pakistani perceptions of an existential threat while reconfiguring incentive structures by an order of magnitude along the lines of the “strategic realignment” of the India nuclear deal.

While defending US strategic priorities amidst Congressional scrutiny in 2007, Adm. Mullen stated that the United States will do what it must in Iraq and what it can in Afghanistan.³⁴¹ Pakistan might say the same about its own military goals. Given its strategic limitations, it will do what it must on its Indian border and what it can on its Afghan one. After all, this economization of resources and

campaign has only been funded at 20 percent to 40 percent and would naturally generate uncertainty in U.S. commitments and indicate a hedging strategy.

339 Jeremy Allouche, “State Building and U.S. Foreign Policy,” MIT Audit of Conventional Wisdom, December 2008. [http://web.mit.edu/cis/editorspick_allouche_audit.html].

340 Cordesman, “Sanctum FATA,” May/June 2009; Barnett R. Rubin and Rashid, “From Great Game to Grand Bargain: Ending Chaos in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 87, No. 6, November/December 2008; Fair, “Time for Sober Realism,” April 2009.

341 Associated Press, Dec. 11, 2007.

strategic prioritization is at the heart of military doctrine.³⁴² If the United States and its allies believe a Pakistani COIN campaign is imperative, they will need to dramatically alter Pakistan’s assessment of who its real enemies are. That might entail support for a Kashmir peace process³⁴³ or a de-escalation of troops on the border.³⁴⁴ Meanwhile, the United States and its allies should continue to share (and perhaps inflate) intelligence on Taliban strength to augment Pakistani perceptions of an existential threat while reconfiguring incentive structures by an order of magnitude along the lines of the “strategic realignment”³⁴⁵ of the India nuclear deal. Absent this sweeping strategic move that changes the stakes and incentives for Pakistan, Pakistan’s threat assessments and capabilities gap will likely not allow it to make a serious commitment to a counterinsurgency campaign in the NWFP and FATA. ■

342 Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984.

343 The biggest obstacle is that both India and Pakistan oppose internationalization of the Kashmir dispute, and India vehemently opposed any mention of India or Kashmir in the U.S. “AfPak” strategy document. Laura Rozen, “India’s Stealth Lobbying Against Holbrooke’s Brief,” *ForeignPolicy.com’s The Cable*, Jan. 23, 2009 [http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/01/23/india_s_stealth_lobbying_against_holbrooke]. Therefore, unconventional means of supporting the peace process could include the standing offer of aid/trade incentives to both parties, akin to the military and civilian aid provided to Israel and Egypt, and incentives or assistance to Pakistan to convert its irregular forces to more conventional forces to offset its security dilemma but limit salami tactics and use of terrorist proxies. Support should also encompass support for nuclear safety as well as constraint of an Indian missile-defense deployment that would alter the current nuclear parity. These would seek to create a permissive environment for a peace process dialogue and minimize the elements that threaten derailment.

344 Fred Kaplan, “The AfPak Puzzle,” *Slate*, May 7, 2009 [<http://www.slate.com/id/2217900/>]. Graham Usher, “Taliban v. Taliban,” *London Review of Books*, April 9, 2009. [http://www.lrb.co.uk/v31/n07/ushe01_.html]. Simon Tisdall, “Obama’s Kashmir Conundrum,” *The Guardian*, Jan. 26, 2009. [<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/jan/26/barack-obama-pakistan-india-richard-holbrooke>]. Kaplan, Usher and Tisdall, among others, have supported this notion.

345 A term used by Ashton Carter, “America’s New Strategic Partner,” *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2006.

Appendix: Military Balance of the Border: A Partial List of India and Pakistan Army Deployments

Pakistan Army—Indo-Pak Border

I Corps (Mangla)

- 6 Armored Division,
- 17 Mechanized Infantry Division
- 37 Mechanized Infantry Division (redeployed to NWFP)
- One Independent Armored Brigade

II Corps (Multan)

- 40 Mechanized Infantry Division
- 14 Infantry Division (was deployed to South Waziristan in 2007)
- 1 Armored Division
- One Independent Armored Brigade

IV Corps (Lahore)

- 10 Infantry Division
- 11 Infantry Division
- Two Independent Infantry Brigade Groups (part mechanized)
- One Independent Armored Brigade Group

X Corps (Rawalpindi)

- 111 Independent Infantry Brigade
- Force Command Northern Areas—Four Brigades
- 12 Infantry Division
- 19 Infantry Division (redeployed to NWFP)
- 23 Infantry Division

XXX Corps (Gujranwala)

- 8 Infantry Division
- 15 Infantry Division
- Two Independent Armored Brigade Groups

XXXI Corps (Bahawalpur)

- 26 Mechanized Division
- 35 Infantry Division
- 40 Infantry Division (partially redeployed to NWFP)

Pakistan Army—Non-Border

XI Corps (Peshawar)

- 7 Infantry Divisions
- 9 Infantry Division

V Corps (Karachi)

- 16 Infantry Division
- 18 Infantry Division
- Three Independent Armored Brigade Groups

XII Corps (Quetta)

- 33 Infantry Division
- 41 Infantry Division

Indian Army—Indo-Pak Border

Northern Command (Udhampur)

XIV Corps (Leh, Ladakh)

- 3 Infantry Division (Leh), 8 Mountain Division (Nimer)

XV Corps (Srinagar)

- 19 Infantry Division (Baramulla), 28 Mountain Division (Gurais)

XVI Corps (Nagrota)

- 10 Infantry Division (Akhnur)
- 25 Infantry Division (Rajouri)
- 26 Infantry Division (Jammu)
- 29 Infantry Division (Pathankot)
- 39 Infantry Division (Yol)
- Three Independent Armored Brigades (2, 3, 16)

Western Command (Chandimandir, Chandigarh)

II Corps (Ambala)

- 1 Armored Division, 14 RAPID Division
- 22 Infantry Division, 14 Independent Armored Brigade

X Corps (Bathinda)

- 16 Infantry Division (Gobindgarh), 18 RAPID Division (Kota)
- 24 RAPID Division (Bikaner), 6 Independent Armored Brigade

XI Corps

- 7 Infantry Division (Ferozepur)
- 9 Infantry Division (Chandimandir)
- 15th Infantry Division (Amritsar)
- 23 Armored Brigade
- 55 Mechanized Brigade

Central Command (Lucknow)

I Corps (Mathura)

- 31 Armored Division (Babina)
- 4 Infantry Division (Allahabad)
- 6 Mountain Division (Bereilly)

XII Corps (Jodhpur)

- 11 Infantry Division (Ahmadabad)
- 12 Infantry Division (Jodhpur)

XXI Corps (Bhopal)

- 33 Armored Division (Fatehabad)
- 36 RAPID Division (Saugori)
- 54 Infantry Division (Secunderabad)

Three Direct Reporting Units

- 30 Artillery Division,
- 50 Independent Parachute Brigade
- 33 Missile Group

Sources: *Jane's World Armies*, 2008; *GlobalSecurity.org*; *Stratfor Global Intelligence*; Ikram Sehgal, "India's Possible War Deployment," *South Asian News Agency*, January 15, 2009.

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