

# Intrigues target India, Russia, China triangle

by Hussein Al-Nadeem

The escalating wars in Afghanistan and Kashmir are an attempt to reverse the important, positive development of a Russian-Chinese-Indian strategic-economic triangle. Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan and Iran were being brought into this arrangement, as an important flank for the triangle, stabilizing the Caucasus, Central Asia, Afghanistan, and Kashmir. Most of these crisis spots were historically created by British geopolitics, and continue to be fuelled by what Lyndon LaRouche has called the British-American-Commonwealth (BAC) Dark Age forces.

The apparently complicated conflict in the region can be understood, if viewed in the light of the following events.

- In early May, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and government officials openly accused the "British intelligence establishment" of attempting to destabilize and overthrow Sharif's government. Spearheading this campaign was the British intelligence apparatus of the Hollinger Corp.'s *Daily Telegraph* and the British Broadcasting Corp., in cooperation with British "insurance" firms and certain Pakistani factions. The campaign aimed to defame Sharif and his family as "corrupt, money launderers," and to fuel the faction fight inside Pakistan between, mainly, Sharif's Muslim League and Benazir Bhutto's People's Party of Pakistan. In 1996-97, the same British establishment had helped the Pakistani opposition reveal some of the "corruption" of then-Prime Minister Bhutto and her husband, Asif Zardari. Bhutto was forced to resign, and Zardari ended up in a Pakistani jail. This paved the way for Sharif to come to power in 1997. The wealthiest Pakistani and Kashmiri families' businesses are based in Britain, closely observed by British intelligence. As the saying goes, the British Empire has "permanent interests, no permanent allies."

- Two weeks later, during May 14-19, tensions along the Line of Control (see **Figure 1**) broke out into fighting between Indian forces and the Pakistan-backed "Kashmiri infiltraters."

It was later learned that, at the same time that diplomatic preparations were being made by the Pakistani and Indian governments to break through the ideological deadlock that has strained relations between the two countries for decades, which led to the February signing of the Lahore Declaration and the initiation of "bus diplomacy" in April, the so-called Kashmiri "mujahideen" were slipping through the Line of Control from the Pakistani side of Kashmir into India-con-

trolled Kashmir, and entrenching themselves in a number of strategic positions in the mountain areas, especially in Kargil. This was reportedly done with the help of certain factions within the Pakistani military intelligence organ, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). This grouping is the controller of Afghanistan's Taliban and related operations, such as the Arab "Afghansis" in the Middle East. The ISI obtained its over-arching governmental power because of its role as "intermediary" between the Thatcher-Bush war campaign against the Soviets in Afghanistan, and the mujahideen who were fighting this war on the ground. Many governments, including that of India, have recently warned Sharif that if he does not regain control over the Pakistani Army, nuclear-armed Pakistan will end up either as a military dictatorship or a new Afghanistan.

## The Taliban

- In early June, the Taliban, who now control almost 80% of Afghanistan's territory, were planning a number of operations to take over the strategic areas north and northeast of Kabul, the capital, which are under the control of the opposition alliance headed by former Afghanistan Defense Minis-

FIGURE 1  
**The Afghanistan and Jammu and Kashmir areas of conflict**



*Jammu and Kashmir province is claimed by both India and Pakistan. The Line of Control is the de facto administrative and military boundary between the two countries.*

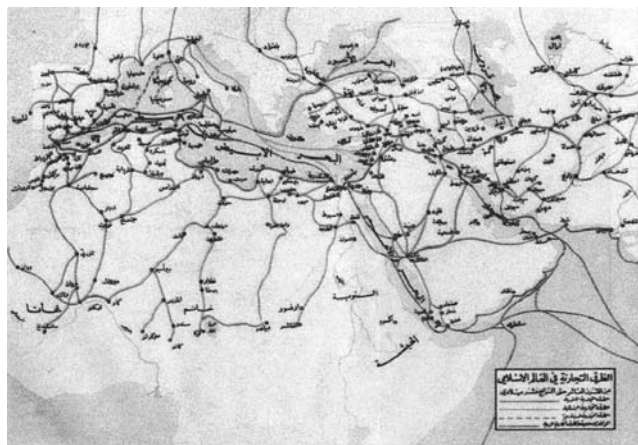
ter Ahmad Shah Masood. On June 24, the Chinese news agency Xinhua reported that Masood's forces, in anticipation of a major offensive by the Taliban, had purged its ranks of renegade commanders. A spokesman for the alliance told Xinhua that Cmdr. Taj Mohammed, who was in charge of the front line north of Kabul, had been arrested, together with three other commanders who had made a deal with the Taliban to switch sides and surrender their strategic positions when the Taliban started an offensive on Charikar, the Salang Tunnel, and the Panjshir Valley. A similar plot in 1998 helped the Taliban take over the northern city of Mazar-e Sharif, putting the Taliban on the border with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. This also helped them take control of the central Bamyan Mountains, where Iran-supported Shi'ite minorities are based.

The strategic importance of this incident is that, had the Taliban plot been successful, they would now have a major foothold on the way to the border with China, Kashmir, and Tajikistan. Masood's forces control 20% of Afghanistan, including Charikar, the Bagram Airbase, and the Salang Tunnel, which links the north and south of the country. This area extends along the Hindu Kush mountain range, where Masood is entrenched in the Panjshir Valley, an impregnable mountain pass. Masood's forces also control the narrow Wakhan Strip which extends eastward, along the Vanah River, to China, separating Tajikistan and Pakistan. The Wakhan Strip was made part of Afghanistan following an agreement by the British colonial government of India and the Russian Empire at the beginning of this century, bringing about a pause in the 200-year-old "Great Game" by creating this buffer zone between British India and Russian Central Asia. It is one of the very few passages between three of the world's highest mountain ranges: the Hindu Kush, Pamirs, and Karakoram. The Pakistan-controlled north Kashmir also lies on the border with the Wakhan Strip in the north and China in the east.

If the Taliban get control of that area, they would not be far from troubled Tajikistan, where the Russia-supported government is trying to deal with the Islamic opposition by offering them control of whole provinces. Thanks to joint Russian-Iranian pressure, the peace process in Tajikistan is moving ahead, albeit slowly. However, ambitions among factions of the opposition have had bloody consequences.

The Taliban would also be adjacent to the Chinese province of Xinjiang, where Islamic movements have been manipulated to play a destabilizing role in the region, by claiming independence. Most of these groups, such as the East Turkestan Liberation Movement, are based in Turkey and controlled by NATO-penetrated, "anti-communist" Sufi sects. These movements were very active in 1995-96, but have been weakened in the past three years, mainly because of the Chinese government's swift imposition of security measures, but also because of its concentration on development of this very poor region. The Karakoram Highway is also part of the geo-

FIGURE 2  
Ancient trade routes



graphy of the region. It is the only advanced transport link between the South Asian subcontinent and China. Between the 9th and 13th centuries, at the height of the Islamic Renaissance, it was one of the main tracks on the Silk Road, connecting the Middle East with the Indus River region and Kashgar in China, and farther to southeast China.

- On Feb. 16, an assassination attempt was made against Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov. The attempt involved a series of car-bomb explosions in Tashkent, the capital, as Karimov was arriving to attend a conference. The assassination attempt was later blamed on "Islamist" groups supported by the Turkish Nursi sect. This is part of the same pan-Turkic, "anti-communist" networks supported by NATO. Uzbekistan plays a central role in Central Asian affairs both politically and geographically. It also has played a leading role in countering British geopolitical games in the region and has resisted the moves of the International Monetary Fund and other financial institutions seeking to impose destructive economic policies on the nations of the region.

Looking at the map of this region, we find that it is in the center of the strategic triangle of Russia, India, and China. The destabilization of Pakistan, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan is exactly what Zbigniew Brzezinski (one of the strategic spokesmen of the BAC) considers important in what he calls the "Zone of Percolating Violence" (see Brzezinski's book *The Grand Chessboard*, p. 53; Lyndon LaRouche, "Mad Brzezinski's Chessboard," *EIR*, April 2, 1999). These conflicts are a potentially fatal impediment to the economic cooperation among the nations of Eurasia, and the wider prospects of extending the Eurasian Land-Bridge as a generator of history's greatest construction project, and accordingly leading the way to mankind's greatest scientific revolution so far.