

India, Pakistan head toward a showdown

by Ramtanu Maitra

The “goodwill” exhibited last February by India and Pakistan during the time of the “bus diplomacy” of Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee and Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, which culminated in the Lahore Declaration of the two countries, has all but vanished. Emphasis on “the importance of mutually agreed confidence-building measures,” spelled out in the Lahore Declaration, no longer seems valid, and the statements that are issued and policies defined daily from both Islamabad and New Delhi indicate that India and Pakistan have no other common ground but to meet on the battlefield.

India and Pakistan have now developed the capability to inflict upon each other mass destruction with the help of nuclear weapons. However crude these weapons are, that danger is real, and consequences are grave.

In her address to a conference of the Schiller Institute in the United States Sept. 5, Helga Zepp-LaRouche identified the crisis between India and Pakistan as one of three theaters in which the Anglo-American faction grouped around the British Commonwealth are working to detonate a nuclear war, for the purposes of destroying nation-states—particularly Russia, India, and China. It is those three countries, in concert with others, that could provide the impetus and power for the creation of a new monetary system as well as the construction of the Eurasian Land-Bridge, as the engine for the globe’s economic recovery. The Anglo-American instigation of escalating tensions between Taiwan and China, and the crises in the Balkans and Dagestan on Russia’s flanks, fall into the same category.

In the case of India and Pakistan, the Anglo-Americans are taking advantage of many problems between the two countries. Interventions in Pakistan orchestrated by outside forces over the last four decades, and a lack of will on the part of both India and Pakistan to resolve their disputes bilaterally, stand out. Among the many sources of embitterment of relations between India and Pakistan, the following overview may be considered as crucial.

Pakistan as a nation has been damaged by the geopolitical manipulations in the region. Whether the military or the politicians should be blamed for this calamity, is for the Pakistanis to discuss and decide. The fact remains that Pakistan was “used” during the Cold War days by some of the dirtiest geopoliticians of the Anglo-American nexus. They exploited and weakened Pakistan with the calculating mind of the Brit-

ish colonials who had ruled this vast subcontinent for almost 200 years, using the maxim of “divide and rule.” These geopoliticians include, to name a few, people such as John Foster Dulles and Henry Kissinger, and their British counterparts. Another major contributor to Pakistan’s downhill slide came from the former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, who immortalized himself in a photo-frame in 1980, lying prone somewhere near the Khyber Pass and pointing a Kalashnikov automatic towards Soviet-invaded Afghanistan. That intervention by the Carter administration (1977-81) to turn Pakistan into a drug-and-guns shopping center, following the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan, was perhaps the worst thing that could have happened to Pakistan.

Corruption of Pakistan by this Anglo-American bloc was done ostensibly to extract “benefits” for the West, at first against both the Soviet Union and China, and later against only the Soviet Union. In the process, the “ally” Pakistan’s social, economic, and political systems were either not allowed to mature to the desired levels, or were torn apart when such potentials emerged. A hands-on tinkering by these geopoliticians in Pakistan’s political system, ostensibly to serve the “West’s interest,” brought to the fore and to power a slew of army generals. These army generals, not unlike their mentors and backers in the country’s feudal landowning class, considered East Pakistan their colony and thus created the basis for the break-up of Pakistan and the formation of Bangladesh. India, under her then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, no doubt hastened the break-up, but every student of history understands that while the Indian intervention was the *coup de grâce*, the die had been cast years before.

Divide and rule

The Anglo-Americans damaged Pakistan’s political system by first promoting, and then turning against, such politicians as Mrs. Benazir Bhutto Zardari and Mian Nawaz Sharif. But they have done worse by destroying Pakistan’s economy. Possessing vast fertile lands and an irrigation system which made the Pakistani part of Punjab the most productive wheat and cotton-growing area in the entire Indian subcontinent, Pakistan’s feudal landlords yet remain the single most dominating social force in Pakistan. However, these feudals were courted and corrupted with absolute power by their Western counterparts in Britain and elsewhere. As a result, Pakistan’s industry was deliberately neglected and left underdeveloped. Virtually all finished products—manufactured and consumer—continue to be imported. Pakistan’s exports are still dominated by cotton and cotton-related products controlled by the feudals.

The vagaries of international trade, coupled with the deliberate depression of raw material prices by the cut-throat international cartels, and periodic misfortunes caused by irregular weather in the subcontinent, made Pakistan fully dependent on borrowed foreign exchange. This provided a perfect entry point into Pakistan for the International Monetary

Fund and the World Bank. Once the IMF took over the “financial engineering,” unemployment and illiteracy became Pakistan’s fastest-growing sectors. Having handed over the country’s economy to the IMF, Washington and London began to build up Pakistan militarily.

Meanwhile, New Delhi’s growing friendship with Moscow throughout the 1960s and 1970s, and the buying of arms from the West’s Cold War enemy, presented the opportunity for the Western geopoliticians to build up Pakistan as the bulwark against the eastward expansion of the communist Russia. The points of entry for this strategy were many. First, India and Pakistan were fighting over Kashmir. India, being a much larger nation and a beneficiary of “enemy” Moscow’s low-cost arms deals, was projected by the Anglo-American bloc as a mortal threat. India, in return, played its projected role to a tee and did little to change the geopolitical configuration into which the two countries were being locked.

Then, the Pakistani military, built up to have strong links to Sandhurst and the Pentagon, was chosen to be the master of Pakistan as a part of the Anglo-American bloc design. The latest, most sophisticated arms gave power to the military, made it look stronger, and put it in political control. This also put the fear of God into the minds of “Hindu India”—at least, that is what was preached in Pakistan. All those factors led to the massive intellectual corruption of Pakistan’s gentry.

But the “parting kick” the Anglo-Americans delivered to Pakistan in the 1980s was lethal—not only for Pakistan but also for the region as a whole, including India.

The 1979 invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union—a blunder whose full implications and ramifications Moscow never understood before the Soviet state vaporized like a slab of camphor in open air—provided the opportunity for the worst and the dirtiest from the Anglo-American geopolitical camps to dismantle Pakistan’s establishment almost completely. The worst and the dirtiest included showed them the importance of mass cultivation of opium, and how to develop the value-added heroin to meet the monetary requirements for arms and support to the anti-Soviet mujahideen. Pakistani drug-growers and drug-handlers became linked up to the international narcotics cartel, which showed them how to make “big money” by selling the product to the West. The worst and the dirtiest also brought in the criminals and the outlaws from various Muslim nations and trained them with arms—and, through the Western media, hailed them as “jihadis” against “godless communists.” They also strengthened the Pakistan Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) financially and brought the outfit under the top-down control of the MI6, CIA, the Mossad, SIS, and others seeking “action” in this strategically important area.

After that “parting kick” was delivered, it became a downhill journey for Pakistan. Although the Soviet Union left Afghanistan and soon afterwards itself got disintegrated, the “jihad” continued. What was set up in Afghanistan to fight the “godless communists” has now spread to Chechnya,

Dagestan, Pakistan, Kashmir, and Xinjiang in China, to weaken the sovereign nation-states.

If Islamabad wants to take care of the country’s economy and its abysmal social sector, a new prime minister will be brought in to replace the present one. It happened before, when the Washington-based Dr. Moeen Qureshi, a World Bank vice president, was flown in from Singapore to take charge of a caretaker cabinet in Pakistan in the early 1990s. Now, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto Zardari is waiting impatiently in London for a signal from the IMF to take over. A new entrant in the anti-Nawaz Sharif protest demonstrations is the British Intelligence-linked son-in-law of the late Jimmy Goldsmith: the political nonentity, Imran Khan.

India’s failure

Most of the problems that plague Pakistan and make it act unlike a nation, particularly at a time of crisis, do not dominate the Indian scene. But India has other problems that are serious and deep-rooted.

Following its failure to make the Non-Aligned Movement a success in the face of strong opposition from both of the Cold War proponents, India has become an inward-looking nation. It has remained so since the early 1980s. A series of wars with Pakistan, humiliating defeat at the hands of the Chinese in a border skirmish in 1962, and the courting of both Pakistan and China by the Anglo-Americans against India and India’s departed friend, the Soviet Union, weakened India’s will and determination. India, with a billion people, has become an “also-ran” in a race where the leadership of the world has been handed over to international mess-makers.

Having withdrawn into its shell, suffering from a weak economy, India muddled along. The collapse of the Soviet Union put India into a still more awkward situation politically and economically. Nonetheless, India was more careful than most developing nations in opening up its domestic economy to the forces of globalization. The process allowed India to develop a sense of confidence.

But its obsession with Pakistan remained as strong as ever, and set the country back further. India’s foreign policy machine has a hopper where the statements on Kashmir of various nations are fed. The machine then separates out, on the basis of whether the statement can be construed as pro-Pakistan or anti-Pakistan, India’s “friends” and “enemies.” The process has not only distorted India’s foreign policy, but its many institutions as well.

This pattern was finally broken through, when Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee launched his bus diplomacy with Pakistan in February 1999.

The potential for redefining Indian-Pakistani relations and resolving the Kashmir dispute bilaterally, was immense. For this reason, a series of destabilizing interventions was organized from outside India, to sabotage the possible *rapprochement*, and peace. On April 20, the coalition government, led by Vajpayee’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), was brought

down in a no-confidence motion carried by only one vote. In June, Indian intelligence identified a conspiracy hatched in May for an assassination attempt on Sonia Gandhi, by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, known to be linked to both British and Israeli intelligence.

Also in mid-May, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif exposed efforts to destabilize Pakistan, centered around a two-part lying documentary on his government released by the British Broadcasting Corporation.

While political tremors were shaking both New Delhi and Islamabad, the insurgency in Kashmir was turned on again, with Pakistani-backed “intruders” crossing over into India.

New Delhi, under the present BJP-led government, has come to the conclusion that it is impossible to develop friendly relations with Pakistan. This is true as far as it goes. Pakistan has trampled upon both the Lahore Declaration of 1999 and the Shimla Agreement of 1972, and was deploying Pakistani regulars in mujahideen garb inside the Indian part of Kashmir when the Declaration was being signed. The Pakistani Prime Minister was quoting a poem written by the Indian Prime Minister which called for peace for all, while his country was preparing for a war with India.

Efforts went abegging

Since 1980, Lyndon H. LaRouche and his colleagues have been involved in trying to untie the Gordian Knot that has brought India and Pakistan to the edge of nuclear conflict. With more than a billion people living in these two countries, both India and Pakistan woefully lack infrastructure — power, water, mass transportation, communication, and mass primary education.

In 1980 a document was prepared under the guidance of LaRouche for the development of India over a 40-year period. The document called for building the base for an agro-industrial development, the potential of which is vast and the exploitation of which, almost 20 years since, remains largely untapped. This document was circulated at the highest level in India, but the indirect control of international financial institutions over India’s finance authorities and “babus,” and assassinations of two Prime Ministers — Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi — did not allow development to take place.

Similar proposals for Pakistan’s railroad, water, and agro-industrial development also appeared in the *EIR* in the 1980s and 1990s. But, by then, Pakistan was deeply in control of the international drug-gun-smuggling intelligence networks. Moreover, the looting of Pakistan by the country’s feudal masters, with or without uniform, had allowed the IMF to gain full control of the country’s economy, dictating to Pakistan’s Washington-trained economists where to spend and where not to spend, and what to privatize.

Naturally, the railroads were put up for privatization, while the lack of investment in the water distribution and growing dependence on monsoon rain caused agricultural production to drop over the years, turning Pakistan from a

wheat-exporting to a wheat-importing nation. And the country, thanks to IMF diktats and the leadership’s inability to differentiate between a long-term developmental process and a short-term money-making process, was put into the strait-jacket of a huge and unpayable foreign debt. Now, economic decisions in Pakistan are dictated by the requirements of the IMF and debt repayment, not the development of its economy.

The last hope is the Eurasian Land-Bridge. That hope is still very much alive, because China has taken a real interest in its development. For India and Pakistan, as the *EIR* has pointed out in its special report, *The Eurasian Land-Bridge: The ‘New Silk Road’ — Locomotive for Worldwide Economic Development*, published in January 1997, the way to resolve the bilateral conflict and take responsibility for the development of the region — and not start a nuclear war of mass destruction — is through jointly building the southern Eurasian Land-Bridge connecting Southeast Asia to Central Asia and Europe through the Indian subcontinent. However, the brushing aside of the promises in the Lahore Declaration, and the conflict across Kashmir’s borders this summer, have set the clock back.

The situation is heating up

This summer, the pressures on Pakistan in particular caused the setting aside of the Lahore Declaration of February, and the outbreak of war this summer between India and Pakistan in the inaccessible hills of Kashmir, now called the Kargil War. Since then, India has refused to sit down for talks with Pakistan. Islamabad, in a state of desperation, is reacting to whatever India says. At the same time both are hardening their positions. Both the Indian and Pakistani military are buying arms. Although the arms procurements may only be to “strengthen” their armies, it could also mean a perception on both sides that the threat of war has increased and both armies are preparing for it.

During the Kargil War, the Pakistanis shot down an Indian MiG-21 and also a Mi-17 helicopter. On Aug. 10, days after the Kargil War had officially come to an end, the Indians shot down a Pakistani maritime surveillance aircraft which, the Indians claimed, had entered Indian airspace. Indians published the radar tracks of the intruding surveillance aircraft, although Pakistan continued to deny the airspace violation. There is no question that India has heated up the situation, although, at the same time, it justifies its action by claiming that the aircraft had violated the 1991 agreement between the two countries to avoid overflights across the border.

All three wars that India and Pakistan have fought so far have been confined mostly to the border areas, and none lasted long. It is evident that because of their force structure and the terrain, neither India nor Pakistan can occupy large chunks of other’s country without a long campaign. The economic weaknesses of both the countries will continue to act as a damper against a prolonged no-win conventional war.

Geographically contained, Pakistan remains vulnerable.

All its fuel comes through one port—Karachi, which can be sealed off by the Indian Navy in no time. India's large Army and a proven and well-supplied Air Force can cause immense damage to the Pakistani Army. This is a scenario Pakistan is afraid of.

In India, the sense of betrayal has made a large section of the population angry. This is also reflected in the policy now adopted by New Delhi. On the other hand, New Delhi is less worried about the Pakistani Army's capability to inflict heavy damage through conventional warfare. What New Delhi is concerned about is its inability to stop the Pakistan ISI-conducted irregular warfare which has kept the Kashmir pot boiling. The ISI has also spread its tentacles all along India's northeast, and even within Punjab. Some Indians are of the view that to defeat this irregular warfare is well-nigh impossible, and the only way this can be dealt with is by hitting Pakistan very hard. There are even talks, at the non-official level as of now, of severing diplomatic relations with Pakistan.

On the other side, the Pakistani establishment fears that India will carve up Pakistan yet again, as it did with its support for the creation of independent Bangladesh, formerly East Pakistan, in 1971.

Pakistan hopes that financial constraints will prevent India from carrying out a long-drawn-out conventional war. A short conventional war will only help one side or the other to capture some strategic positions along the Line of Control in Kashmir. This, however, does not pose an immediate threat to the people in general.

But both nations are now nuclear powers. Recently, India's National Security Adviser, Brajesh Mishra, claimed that the open nuclearization of both India and Pakistan prevented an escalation in Kargil. In other words, Mishra is trying to project nuclearization as a deterrent against a widespread war.

The same theme was sounded in the nuclear doctrine which India put forward for public debate in mid-August. Although the doctrine spells out at the outset the motto of the second strike/no-first-use, it suggests taking "punitive retaliation" against an adversary that dares to attack India. At the same time, the doctrine prepared by the National Security Advisory Board visualizes full-scale nuclear weaponization. The arsenal will contain a triad of aircraft, land-based missiles, and nuclear-powered submarines, all equipped to deliver nuclear bombs.

The concept of nuclear weapons as a deterrent has always been suspect, used to perpetrate a build-up of nuclear weapons by a handful of nations during the Cold War days. It is even more dangerous in the context of the subcontinent today. In an environment of escalating tensions fuelled from outside the region, the question will be whether Pakistan will be able to stand by and follow its no-first-use or second-strike dictum, even if it has one.

On the Indian side, a similar argument holds. If the irregular warfare by the ISI is to be prevented through regular war

by inflicting on Pakistan a mortal injury, it must be done via nuclear weapons. Over the years, conventional wars have become more and more time- and money-consuming. It has become very difficult to win a conventional war in case the other side is well-equipped. Pakistan is no doubt well-stocked with weapons and with well-trained Army regulars.

In short, if India or Pakistan should decide to settle their differences through war, such a war will tend now, under these conditions, to be a nuclear war. Such a war will have catastrophic impact on the populations of the two countries, and the rest of the world.

This is the danger posed. On the other side, avoidance of war has thus become of paramount importance. Within both countries, there are leaders who view the India-Pakistan crisis as a diversion fomented by those allied with the British-American-Commonwealth crowd, away from the proposals for a strategic alliance of Russia, China, and India, with Pakistan for security for Eurasia and the development of the Eurasian Land-Bridge. This was the subject, for instance, of a two-day conference in New Delhi attended by Prime Minister Vajpayee July 28-29 (see *EIR* Aug. 20, 1999), and has been the topic of discussions among the FRIENDS think tank in Islamabad under former Army Chief of Staff Aslam Beg. Thus, an alternative to war is at hand. This is the policy for war-avoidance, not nuclear deterrence and build-up.

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